

Background:

Draft minutes from the November 13, 2009, Project Development Committee meeting are included for review.

**Project Development
Committee**

Agenda Item III.

Expected Action:

The Project Development Committee will take action to approve the minutes.

TEXAS COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2009

DRAFT MINUTES

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Susan Vardell, Chair	Don Henderson, DADS
Kimberly Blackmon	Diana Kern
Margaret Christen, TEA	Deneesa Rasmussen
Brenda Coleman-Beattie, Council Chair	Rene Requenez
Kristen Cox	Joe Rivas
Kathy Griffis-Bailey, DSHS	

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Andrew Crim	Dana Perry, Vice Chair
John Morris	

STAFF PRESENT

Jeri Barnard	Patrice Leblanc
Belinda Carlton	Roger Webb
Joanna Cordry	

GUESTS PRESENT

Sharon Gamble, TDHCA	Emilio Requenez, Attendant
Sheila Holbrook-White, TX Citizens Fund	Linda Harman, Attendant

CALL TO ORDER

The Project Development Committee met on Friday, November 13, 2009 in Salon G Room of the Crowne Plaza Hotel - 6121 North IH-35, Austin, Texas 78752. Committee Chair Susan Vardell called the meeting to order at 8:35 A.M. A quorum was present.

I. INTRODUCTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS, STAFF AND VISITORS

Committee members, staff and guests were introduced.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public comments were received from Sheila Holbrook-White of TX Citizens Fund giving a brief overview of one of the TCDD funded transportation project ending in 2010. She encouraged the committee to consider continuing funding support for transportation focused projects.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Committee reviewed minutes of the August 6-7, 2009, Committee meeting.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the August 6-7, 2009, Project Development Committee meeting minutes as presented.

MADE BY: Diana Kern

SECOND: Kristen Cox

The motion **passed** without opposition.

IV. CHAIR'S REPORT

Committee Chair Susan Vardell asked for volunteers to represent the Committee on an ad hoc workgroup that will develop performance measures for future TCDD public policy collaboration activities. Diana Kern and Rene Requenez volunteered to represent the Committee. Members agreed by consensus for Diana Kern and Rene Requenez to represent the Committee.

V. SELECTION OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVE

Council Policies provide for each committee to select a representative to the Council's Nominating Committee. After discussion Rene Requenez volunteered to serve as the representative on the Committee.

MOTION: For Rene Requenez to serve as the Project Development representative to the Council Nominating Committee.

MADE BY: Kathy Griffis-Bailey

SECOND: Margaret Christen

The motion **passed** without opposition.

VI. CONSIDERATION OF FUTURE FUNDING ACTIVITIES

Planning Coordinator Joanna Cordry reviewed with members information and updates related to possible future funding activities.

A. DADS Volunteer Advocate Pilot Project Overview

Cordry gave a brief overview of the DADS Volunteer Advocate Pilot Project. TCDD staff have developed, in coordination with staff of the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS), an executive summary of the request from DADS to consider funding at least one, but no more than two entities to implement two pilot projects to demonstrate Supported Decision-Making activities.

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of a Request for Proposals for two volunteer advocate pilot projects (1 urban and 1 rural) with funds of up to \$75,000 available for each site for up to 3 years.

MADE BY: Joe Rivas

SECOND: Diana Kern

The motion **passed** without opposition. Kathy Griffis-Bailey abstained. ([Attachment 1 as approved.](#))

B. Transition Project Executive Summary

Cordry gave an overview of The Transition Project Executive Summary that was approved by the Committee in February 2008. The Committee discussed the project and asked staff to bring back updates and information to the Committee in February on interagency efforts in response to HB1230 that created an interagency task force on employment issues coordinated by DARS (?) and/or other activities similar to those proposed in this Executive Summary.

C. Responses to Meaningful Relationships RFI

Cordry reviewed with the Committee the five ideas that were submitted in response to the Request for Ideas (RFI): Developing Meaningful Relationships. Cordry also reviewed a proposed curriculum offered by Council Member Joe Rivas and reviewed various other models noted by committee members. The committee requested staff to bring back more information to the February meeting on the service club idea, the training and technical assistance idea, a curriculum to be used for training, information related to "speed dating" relationship support services, and possibly holding small focus groups only for people with developmental disabilities to discuss experiences and gather ideas.

D. Inclusive Faith-based Communities Project Executive Summary

The Committee reviewed the Executive Summary for an Inclusive Faith-based Communities project that would provide support, information, and technical assistance to Faith-Based Communities wanting to more fully include people with developmental disabilities. This project will fund 2 symposiums that will allow groups to network, share information, create action plans for their communities and support implementation of those plans.

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of an RFP for an Inclusive Faith Based Communities Project with funds of up to \$50,000 per year available for up to 2 years.

MADE BY: Diana Kern

SECOND: Joe Rivas

The motion **passed** without opposition. ([Attachment 2 as approved.](#))

E. Consideration of “Next Steps” for Projects Ending

The Committee reviewed the analysis of grant projects ending in 2010 and 2011 to determine possible future actions. The Executive Summary for the Texas Tech Inclusive Teacher Training project authorized the project for an initial three years, with years 4 and 5 subject to a review and positive performance of the project. The Committee directed staff to bring back more information regarding updates and possible activities to continue to promote youth leadership efforts.

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of 2 additional years for the Texas Tech Inclusive Teacher Training project for up to \$200,000 per year.

MADE BY: Kathy Griffis-Bailey

SECOND: Diana Kern

The motion **passed** without opposition.

F. Future Project Funding Priorities

Grants Management Director Patrice LeBlanc reviewed with the Committee the Future Funding Priorities list. Recommendations were made to move the DADS Volunteer Advocate project to item 3 and the Healthy Relationships project to item 4.

MOTION: To recommend restructure of the Future Funding Priority List.

MADE BY: Rene Requenez

SECOND: Joe Rivas

The motion **passed** without opposition.

G. Unsolicited Idea Recommendations

The Committee briefly reviewed four Unsolicited Ideas received by TCDD and directed staff to bring back more information regarding the Direct Services Workforce Training and Retention idea to the February meeting. The Committee also agreed to recommend the TDHCA/TCDD idea for funding:

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of up to \$50,000 per year for one year for the TDHCA/TCDD Contractor-Training Component of the TDHCA Home Free Barrier Removal and Rehabilitation program.

MADE BY: Kristen Cox

SECOND: Deneesa Rasmussen

The motion **passed** without opposition. ([Attachment 3 as approved.](#))

VII. OTHER DISCUSSIONS ITEMS

The Committee reviewed available funding for additional grant projects during fiscal year 2009. LeBlanc informed members that the current amount for 2009 was approximately \$300,000.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Committee Chair Vardell adjourned the meeting at 10:15 AM.

Roger A. Webb, Secretary to the Council

Date

ATTACHMENT 1

Future Funding Proposal Executive Summary Volunteer-Supported Decision-Making Advocate Pilot

Background:

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) has expressed interest in expanding awareness of alternatives to guardianship in the community of judges, attorneys, and other guardianship professionals. In 2007, the Council began reviewing the training and continuing education requirements of judges and attorneys who practice law in guardianship proceedings and determined the process is complex and involves a large number of organizations. In February of 2008 the Council approved an Executive Summary outlining a plan to explore the establishment of partnerships with some of these organizations to provide training to judges and attorneys about alternatives to Guardianship. That Executive Summary is attached.

In 2009, the Texas Legislature passed HB 1454 directing the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) to develop a pilot program to promote the provision of supported decision-making services to persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities and other cognitive disabilities who live in the community. HB 1454 also provides for HHSC to establish a workgroup by 1/1/2010 to provide input related to pilot project activities. HHSC directed the Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) to develop and implement the pilot program. DADS determined that such a pilot program, if implemented as described in HB 1454, would require \$200,000 per year. However, the legislature provided no additional funding for the program.

Staff from DADS approached TCDD to discuss whether or not TCDD might be willing to provide funding for the initiative. During the August quarterly 2009 meetings, the Project Development Committee asked Council staff to work with DADS to develop a more detailed proposal for further discussion at the November 2009 meeting. The Project Development Committee also asked TCDD staff to work with DADS concerning funding to support people with developmental disabilities and their family members to participate on this workgroup as appropriate.

HB 1454 directs DADS to provide an evaluation report with recommendations to the legislature before each regular session, which will require DADS to publish their first report in December of 2010. DADS staff therefore anticipate that activities related to the implementation of the pilot program will need to begin by spring-summer 2010 in order to meet the reporting requirements set by the legislature.

Council staff and DADS staff have met to outline expectations and discuss ways in which the intended outcomes may be achieved effectively and efficiently. DADS originally proposed for TCDD to provide funds to DADS to sub-contract for the pilot projects through DADS' procurement process. After further discussions, DADS and TCDD staff agree that the option of TCDD directly awarding funds to the pilot project(s) also merits consideration, although DADS staff must have further discussion with the author of the bill before making a final determination that this would meet the intent of the law.

TCDD grants staff suggest that direct funding of the pilots would allow TCDD to monitor project implementation more effectively than to monitor “through” DADS.

TCDD State Plan Goal and Objective:

Goal 10: People with developmental disabilities and family members will have the supports and services they need to be able to participate actively in their communities.

Objective 9: Collaborate with other organizations and agencies to develop and promote innovative systems that support the principles of Self-Determination and/or asset building, through which individuals have the opportunity to self-direct their own lives and to truly be included in their communities.

Expected Outcome: One or two volunteer advocate pilot(s) to promote and provide supported decision-making services developed in accordance with the specifications of HB 1454 (81st Legislature (R)) and with TCDD expectations and/or requirements presented in this Executive Summary.

- The pilot(s) will demonstrate the use of supported decision-making services as one possible alternative to guardianship in at least one rural community and at least one urban community.
- At least 10 individuals with intellectual disabilities will be served in each pilot location (community) each year that project activities take place, with a majority of those individuals also meeting the federal definition of developmental disabilities.
- Information, including pilot project evaluation reports, related to the benefits and the limitations of using supported decision-making advocates as an alternative to guardianship will be provided to the legislature and will be easily accessible to guardianship professionals and service providers, (including social workers, nurses, and psychologists) who work with individuals who have developmental disabilities for at least 5 years after TCDD funding is completed.
- DADS coordinated workgroup will provide input into the pilot projects as appropriate.

Project Description: TCDD staff propose that TCDD fund, through a competitive proposals process, one or two entities to implement one or two pilot program(s) to promote the provision of supported decision-making services to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Project activities must take place in at least two sites: at least one in a rural area and one in an urban area. Each program will serve a minimum of 10 individuals each year of funding.

Organizations eligible to apply for funding to coordinate a pilot program include non-profit organizations, self-advocacy organizations (as defined in HB 1454), a local mental retardation authority, or a collaboration of any of these types of entities. The entity/entities must demonstrate a commitment to the principles of Self-Determination (as defined by the Center for Self-Determination); peer-to-peer services training; person-centered planning; and preservation of the rights provided by state and federal law of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including those rights defined by the 1999 Olmstead decision.

In TCDD's Request for Proposals process, extra consideration will be given to qualified applicants that propose feasible plans to establish relationships with organizations that provide training to guardianship professionals so that they might have information about supported decision-making services as an alternative to guardianship. These organizations include, but are not limited to:

- Texas Center for the Judiciary (one of the main providers of judicial education for statutory probate and county courts at law)
- The Texas Association of Counties (TAC) (an organization that specifically targets constitutional county court judges, and that works in partnership with Texas Tech School of Law to provide two conferences a year that satisfy the continuing education requirements and to host four regional trainings that offer continuing education)
- At least one private entity that provides CLE courses for attorneys, such as a local bar associations, private organizations such as the Defense Research Institute and the National Business Institute, and law schools

DADS will be responsible to convene a workgroup to develop the general rules and overall structure of the pilot programs as provided in HB 1454. This workgroup must include individuals with developmental disabilities and individuals with other cognitive disabilities and their family members, at least one representative of a self-advocacy organization, and others interested in alternatives to guardianship. DADS and TCDD staff will jointly determine best approaches to apply input from the workgroup to TCDD funded pilot projects. TCDD Public Policy staff may participate as a member of the workgroup. TCDD staff will ensure that DADS receives quarterly reports from the projects, and DADS will provide ongoing assistance to the projects to facilitate project evaluations. DADS staff shall be solely responsible for drafting the required reports to the legislature. Additionally, DADS will make available, in print and/or on their website, information regarding the development and intended outcomes of the pilot programs for interested individuals.

Proposed Funding Amount: Up to \$75,000 per project per year, for up to three years. *TCDD may also provide support for travel expense for public members of the workgroup appointed by DADS for members who do not have organizational support for that participation.*

Proposed Duration: Up to three years of funding will be provided to up to two entities to complete the pilot program activities noted under "Expected Outcome" and "Project Description" in this Executive Summary. Funding may be provided for the full duration to implement the project activities if project milestones are met, and all reports and the continuation requests are submitted within 10 business days of due dates. If milestones or deadlines are not met during any year of the project, the TCDD Executive Committee may determine not to continue funding the project. Funding would also be provided for up to three years for the public members of the workgroup.

Other Considerations:

An interagency agreement would be drafted between DADS and TCDD to outline specific roles and responsibilities prior to the posting of an RFP.



ATTACHMENT 2

Future Funding Proposal Executive Summary Inclusive Faith Communities Symposium

Background:

The Texas Council for Developmental Disabilities (TCDD) exists to create change so that all people with developmental disabilities are fully included in their communities and exercise control over their own lives. TCDD's numerous grant projects have worked to remove barriers related to the education, housing, employment, transportation, healthcare, and recreation needs of people with disabilities. These categories describe almost all of the needs that people living in a community experience with one notable exception: participation in a faith community of one's choice. TCDD recognizes that a range of issues exist related to specific faith communities' ability and willingness to welcome and fully include people with developmental disabilities. These issues include attitudinal barriers, physical accessibility issues, and inadequate knowledge about supporting people with developmental disabilities. At the same time, TCDD acknowledges that many faith communities in Texas have done a great deal to advocate for and to serve the needs of Texans with developmental disabilities.

In 2008, the Council amended its State Plan to include an objective to collaborate with leaders of faith-based organizations in order to compare experiences and share resources so that formal and informal community supports available to people with developmental disabilities may be increased. Council staff began to explore the issue by connecting with individuals and groups who expressed interest and held two meetings, one in Austin and one in Houston. In addition, Council staff attended a one day symposium held at a church in Houston at which individuals from the surrounding area networked, exchanged information about what was working and what challenges they were having. The organizers were also able to gather enough financial support to bring a nationally recognized expert to the area to speak to them. The symposium was very well received, and many attendees expressed an interest in being able to connect with others on a statewide level.

Prior and subsequent to the symposium, staff heard from individuals in other areas of the state who were interested in having the opportunity to network/connect with others, and who were wanting both to receive training that would enable them to help their own faith communities to be more fully inclusive and to help others when possible by sharing what strategies they have found to be successful. Although some communities are working well together, almost all felt as if they needed more information related to providing behavior supports, accessing other community resources when needed, overcoming attitudinal barriers within their communities, and adapting religious education for individuals with cognitive disabilities. Additionally, a specific barrier identified was the difficulty of forming collaborative relationships between diverse groups – including community-based providers as well as people who are of different denominations and/or religions. Sponsorship of a symposium by an “outside” organization like TCDD might bring together groups that might not otherwise connect.

State Plan Goal and Objective:

Goal 10: People with developmental disabilities and family members will have the supports and services they need to be able to participate actively in their communities.

Objective 11: Collaborate with leaders of faith-based organizations to compare experiences and share resources to increase the formal and informal community supports available to people with developmental disabilities in their communities, by September 30, 2011.

Proposed Activity:

TCDD will fund 2 conferences to be held over 2 years to provide information, networking opportunities, and support to faith-based communities wishing to promote inclusion for people with developmental disabilities.

Expected Outcome:

At least 10 faith-based organizations from at least 4 communities from around the state will actively participate in a Symposium on Creating Inclusive Faith-Based Communities and will return to their communities with 1 year action plans designed to improve the inclusiveness of their particular faith community. Appropriate supports will be provided to assist each community participant to develop a plan specific to their needs, and follow-up support will be arranged to ensure that they are able to implement the plan.

Project Description:

Two Statewide “Creating Inclusive Faith-Based Communities” Symposiums will be held. The planning and implementation of the Symposium will be guided by an ethnically and geographically diverse Project Advisory Committee that will include representatives from multiple denominations and religions, at least two adults with developmental disabilities, at least two parents of children with developmental disabilities, and at least one faith-based initiatives liaison from a governmental or quasi-governmental agency. The topics to be included in the agenda will be developed by the Committee, but must include sessions about providing behavioral support to promote inclusion as well as identifying and addressing other barriers to inclusion. In addition, the Symposium should include sessions designed specifically for the leadership of faith-based communities.

Following the Symposium, the grantee will provide participating communities with the support, technical assistance, and – if necessary - stipends to be able to implement their plans. The Symposium held in the second year should include an added component to allow participants from the first year share their progress, barriers encountered, and solutions discovered.

Proposed Funding Amount:

\$50,000 per year, for two years.

Proposed Duration:

TCDD funding would be offered for two years.

Other Considerations:

A commonly accepted means of reaching ethnic minority communities is through faith-based communities. In fact, the group with whom TCDD staff met in Austin was almost

exclusively African American. Staff expect that a Symposium focused on Faith-Based Communities would be an effective means of increasing the diversity of the communities participating in TCDD activities.

ATTACHMENT 3**UNSOLICITED IDEAS***To Be Completed By Submitting Person or Organization*

Individual or Organization Submitting Idea: Texas Department of Housing and Community Services (TDHCA) Staff via TCDD Public Policy Staff	
Contact Person: Sharon Gamble (TDHCA) <i>(Note: TCDD Public Policy Specialist assisted TDHCA in submitting this idea and can also provide additional information.)</i>	Submittal Date: 10-8-09
Mailing Address: P.O. BOX 13941 Austin, TX 78711-3941	Phone Number: (512) 475-3800
E-mail Address: Sharon.Gamble@tdhca.state.tx.us	

****By submitting this idea to TCDD, the organization and/or individual understands that other organizations may use this idea, with or without giving credit to the submitter.****

Ideas must not exceed one page, and the font must not be smaller than 12 pt.

2. Background & Statement of Need: What is the problem or issue?

A lack in accessible and affordable housing is one of the most significant obstacles people with disabilities face in achieving self-determined lives. People with disabilities frequently depend upon government-subsidized “affordable housing.” The Fair Housing Act (FHA) requires just 5% of the total units in this type of housing to be accessible for persons with mobility impairments, but the minimum access required under the law often does not meet the specific access needs of the individual resident. FHA also requires a landlord to allow a tenant to make accessibility modifications, but the individual must pay for the changes. TDHCA has developed an architectural barrier removal program that pays for home modifications for individuals who cannot afford to purchase them on their own. The new Home Free Barrier Removal and Rehabilitation Program, with \$2 million in general revenue, will provide grants, up to \$15,000, to low income persons with disabilities to make their apartments or homes accessible. However, this program does not have a training component for contractors, who may not understand which accessible building standards to follow or fully understand how to make appropriate modifications based on the unique needs of the individual resident.

3. Description of Idea: What would solve this problem or address this issue?

TCDD public policy staff recommended to TDHCA’s board that they develop a contractor-training component for the HFBR program. Such training and technical assistance would ensure that contractors are compliant with law and building codes for architectural barrier removal and the modifications would be individualized based on the unique needs of the resident. The TDHCA board agreed to dedicate \$50,000 (GR) for this training, but requests an additional \$50,000 from TCDD to develop training and technical assistance activities and a compendium of best practices in barrier removal.

4. Demographics: What group or groups of people would this help?

The program will help low-income (at or below 80 percent annual median family income) Texans with disabilities across the state. The training program will be targeted to consumers, contractors and public housing agencies who receive HFBR funds. The program will also consider opening the training to others for a fee. The long-term goal is to build capacity of knowledgeable contractors and consumers.

5. Possible Partners: What kinds of organizations or people could help to solve this problem?

TDHCA is the administering entity for HFBR. They develop contract requirements that each HFBR contractor must adhere to. Therefore, it is anticipated that TDHCA would be the only entity that could ensure its contractors receive the needed technical assistance and training. However, partnerships with local public housing agencies, disability or community organizations would be logical collaborators to ensure home modifications are made to suite the individual resident’s needs.

UNSOLICITED IDEA: Sub-Committee Review*To be completed by the TCDD Sub-Committee with Staff Support*

Type of Project: *Demonstration, technical assistance, training, capacity building, or other type of activity.*

Technical assistance, training, capacity building

Is this an activity that is allowed under the DD Act, TCDD Policies, and Federal and State laws, and is it consistent with TCDD's Mission Statement?

(IF NO, note the reason below, but THE IDEA SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED FURTHER.)

Yes.

Is idea appropriate for TCDD to consider for a future activity given TCDD's goals and priorities? (Consider things such as: Does the idea promote inclusion? Is the idea innovative? Is it likely to positively impact a group of individuals who are considered unserved or underserved? Is it likely to substantially impact a large group of people? Are there significant Public Policy implications? Would it build beneficial partnerships? Are there other characteristics of the idea to make it worth Committee discussion?)

The project activities – providing training to individuals/organizations receiving contracts to do work – is not particularly innovative, but is not often done. The idea would promote inclusion if the barrier removal program is used by people living in housing units that are not just for people with disabilities, which is likely. It could possibly impact a large group of people as contractors and other housing professionals who receive the training will then have the knowledge to work with other people in their community.

The idea results from ongoing collaborative work between TCDD public policy staff and staff from TDHCA; it reflects interest by TDHCA to implement, in partnership, a recommendation originally made by TCDD.

Is idea a good fit with existing State Plan Goals? If "YES," which Goal and Objective? If 'NO,' does the sub-committee recommend an amendment to State Plan? (Aug 15 only!)

Meets Goal 7, Objective 1: Collaborate with other organizations and agencies to increase affordable, accessible, community-integrated housing units in Texas, by September 30, 2011.

Sub-Committee Recommendations:

The Sub-Committee recommends the Project Development Committee consider this project as it would provide training that would be of benefit to the individuals receiving the training and the people who then are served by those individuals. However, a one-time training/technical assistance project is not likely to create systems change and/or lead to lasting change unless it can be supported over the long run. A reproducible training package or perhaps a certification process might be more in line with the Council's desire to create systems change.