



Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board

Monday, March 22, 2021 4:30-6:00 pm
Virtual Zoom Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Board Members Present:

Ken Larson
Caroline Applebee
Gina Bring
David Charleston
Megen Porter

Valerie Billmire
Jeffery Hart
Raegen Miller
Artemis Langford

Board Members Excused:

Alysa Oradat

Board Members Absent:

Aaron Perzigian
Kathy Kershner

Guests Present:

Kait Whiteside, Max Higbee Center
Nicole Mathey, Kulshan Supported Employment
Emily Aagard, Cascade Connections
Beverley Porter, Arc of Whatcom

Scott Watling, DDA
Shannon Neely, DDA
Dana Weber, Board Applicant

Staff:

Jessica Lee, DD Specialist; Amber Wolpers, DD Specialist; Ann Beck, Supervisor,
Ashley Geleynse, Coordinator

1.  Call to Order & Introductions

The meeting was called to order and introductions were conducted. Quorum was present.

2.  Minutes Approval

Jeffery motioned to approve the January minutes; Raegen seconded. The motion passed and minutes were approved. (A. Langford not present for vote.)

ACTION January 25, 2021 minutes approved. Aye 8, Nay 0, Abstain 0



3. Nominating Committee – New Board Members

New members were introduced. There is one more applicant, Dana Weber, whose recommendation has gone to Council. Arrissia Owen-Turner has resigned from the board.



4. Max Higbee Center Updates

Kait Whiteside was introduced as the director of the Max Higbee Center, a nonprofit that supports teens and adults with developmental disabilities to build community, life skills and health through recreation. In 2018, a waitlist was created for programs due to space limitations at the former facility. With assistance from the County, the City and other funders, a full renovation of a new space at 1400 N State St began in February 2020. Kait gave a virtual tour of the new space. The center also provides community based services and has a 1:1 mentoring program.

The center is accepting placement applications for small, in person, cohorts starting April 5th. They are taking a slow and steady approach to beginning programming again because many clients are at high risk for COVID-19.

5. Affordable Housing, Homelessness, and DD Discussion

Ann Beck gave an overview of the “Point in Time” Count, an annual count of individuals experiencing homelessness in Whatcom County. This year there were no volunteers, and outreach and shelter staff conducted the count. Jessica provided an overview of data from the [report](#), including the % of individuals who self-identify with disabilities, as well as other indicators and trends impacting individuals with disabilities and their family members. Board members and audience guests discussed how individuals with DD and their families might be disproportionately impacted by the affordable housing crisis in Whatcom County.

6. Brief 2021 Legislative Updates

Bills must pass out of their legislative house of origin by the end of this week in order to still be viable. Jessica will highlight successful legislation and budget items at the May meeting, assuming there is no special session. The Federal Rescue Plan Act has passed, which will give Washington State legislatures more confidence in approving legislation and budget solutions to address COVID impacts. We anticipate, for instance, that funding to extend educational services for those individuals who aged out of school (and were unable to benefit from transition services due to COVID) is being considered.

7. Public Comment

The Developmental Disability Administration sponsors the Community Summit each year, an event designed to bring together stakeholders in the DD community. The summit will be virtual this year, and registration will be free of charge to Washington State residents.

Ann shared a link to the “*Bellingham for Everyone*” campaign through the Whatcom Housing Alliance, as well information about COVID-19 vaccine and testing access.

8. Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned by Ken Larson at 5:55pm

Next Meeting: Monday, May 24, 2021. This meeting will be virtual on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted by Ashley Geleyne, Coordinator

HD Staff

Jessica Lee

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