

**Quarterly Meeting**  
**May 18, 2020**  
**Via teleconference**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Members**

Neil Romano, Chairman  
James Brett, Vice-Chairman  
Billy Altom, Governance  
Wendy Harbour, Financial  
Rabia Belt  
Benro Ogunyipe  
Clyde Terry  
Andres Gallegos

**Staff**

Lisa Grubb, Executive Director  
Stacey Brown  
Kimie Eacobacci  
Keith Woods  
Netterie Lewis  
Nick Sabula  
Amy Nicholas  
Ana Torres-Davis  
Amged Soliman  
Joan Durocher  
Anne Sommers

**NCD Contractors**

Anthony Simpson  
Kadedra Walters

**A. Welcome and Call to Order**

Chairman Neil Romano called the meeting to order at 9:56 AM and welcomed Council members, staff and the public.

**B. Roll Call**

Chairman Romano conducted a roll call of Council members and staff

**C. Acceptance of the agenda**

**MOTION:** Mr. Clyde Terry moved to accept the agenda of the May quarterly meeting.

**SECONDED:** Chairman Roman

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

Neil Romano, Chairman, Aye

Billy Altom: Aye

James Brett: Aye

Rabia Belt: Aye

Benro Ogunyipe: Aye

Clyde Terry: Aye

Andres Gallegos: Aye

Wendy Harbour: Aye

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### D. Acceptance of January 2020 Council Meeting Minutes

**MOTION:** Mr. Clyde Terry moved to accept the agenda of the May quarterly meeting.

**SECONDED:** Rabia Belt

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

Neil Romano, Chairman, Aye

Billy Altom: Aye

James Brett: Aye

Rabia Belt: Aye

Benro Ogunyipe: Aye

Clyde Terry: Aye

Andres Gallegos: Aye

Wendy Harbour: Aye

### E. Chairman's Report

Chairman Romano shared the following in his report:

- The ADA-30 Anniversary celebration event has been canceled due to COVID-19;
- Had teleconferences with members of Congress to discuss the impact the pandemic has on people with disabilities;
- Lack of consideration of the inclusion of people with disabilities as part of the Emergency Medical Action Plan;
- The Executive Committee has decided to monitor COVID very carefully by looking at what we are hearing from agency officials, Congress and other individuals in the field;
- The Council has begun working on its bioethics series which gives us a better understanding of the problems regarding medical care for people with disabilities as well as the ability to speak with policymakers that are of major concern to the American people.

### F. Executive Director's Report

Ms. Grubb reported the following:

- On February 7 the country identified that we were in the midst of a pandemic. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) released guidance to agencies and employees responding to concerns about exposure to the coronavirus;
- All staff were required to complete or renew their telework training provided by OPM before moving to a full time telework posture and on March 13<sup>th</sup> NCD employees that were telework ready move into a voluntary telework environment;
- On March 17<sup>th</sup> OPM issued Memorandum M20-16 directing all federal agencies to maximize telework nationwide in the federal workforce. NCD responded to the detailed guidance on human resource flexibilities and immediately initiated actions to protect staff and to ensure the mission critical work of the agency continued;
- All remote staff were issued cell phones during this pandemic;
- NCD has been consulted and is recognized as a leader in ensuring the rights of people with disabilities are monitored during the pandemic by advising on rules and procedures to ensure the health and safety of all people with disabilities;

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- During this period of time, the Chairman issued 11 correspondences and coauthored correspondence with Vice Chairman Jim Brett;
- NCD is in final stages of installing and training for Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP), which will assist staff in maximizing communications while in full time telework mode;
- NCD is anticipated to remain in voluntary telework posture pending evaluation of the first wave of government employees in the D.C. area returning to work.

Ms. Grubb stated due to COVID-19 the Council's budget has changed significantly. The Executive Committee met on April 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the budget and revisited the agency's policy priorities. They were as follows:

- The Executive Committee voted to reallocate \$310,000 due to transitions in the spend plan due to COVID;
  - Fund the Medicaid Reimbursement solicitation;
  - Add additional funds for cybersecurity with a two-tiered plan;
  - Fund the agency's outreach and website design.

### G. Finance Report

Mr. Woods reported that the Council's budget was adjusted for the following reasons:

- Funding for the Puerto Rico project;
- Funding for the Medicaid project;
- Funding adjustments due to COVID-19;
- Funding for cybersecurity
- Funding for outreach and web design;

MOTION: Mr. Romano moved to accept the Finance Committee Report.

**SECONDED:** Mr. Andres Gallegos

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

Neil Romano, Chairman, Aye

Billy Altom: Aye

James Brett: Aye

Andres Gallego: Aye

Benro Ogunyipe: Aye

Clyde Terry: Aye

Rabia Belt: Aye

Wendy Harbour: Aye

### H. Governance Committee Report

Mr. Billy Altom stated the Governance Committee met with the Executive Committee to discuss the ADA event being canceled and the reallocation of the \$310,000.

MOTION: Mr. Romano moved to accept the Governance Report.

**SECONDED:** Mr. Andres Gallegos

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Roll Call Vote: Unanimous  
Neil Romano, Chairman, Aye  
Billy Altom: Aye  
James Brett: Aye  
Andres Gallego: Aye  
Benro Ogunyipe: Aye  
Clyde Terry: Aye  
Rabia Belt: Aye  
Wendy Harbour: Aye

Chairman Romano reported that celebrating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is still a priority and the council will explore other options commemorating the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ADA.

**I. Legislative Affairs Report**

Ms. Anne Sommers welcomed Ms. Kimie Eacobacci as the Council's Legislative Affairs Specialist for Ms. Pheobe Ball has taken a position on Capitol Hill for the Education and Labor committee.

Ms. Sommers discussed the following things that are of most concern to people with disabilities and the responses from legislators. Regarding COVID-19. She added that the Council continues to work very closely to Hill staff and the National Association of State Treasurers on interagency coordination around the ABLE Act.

The items of greatest concern to people with disabilities during this pandemic are as follows:

- Surrounding rationing of care;
- People with disabilities are at a greater disadvantage in several states; extreme high infection;
- Institutional settings and group homes which restricted access to personal protective equipment for healthcare workers and personal care attendants;
- Restrictive visitor policies including hospital quarantines which for people with disabilities such restrictions can strip an individual of communication and other forms of vital assistance;
- The effect of state and local restrictions on home and community-based services providers;
- Data collection on disability demographics within statistics being kept on COVID-19-paid leave, sick days for family caregivers of adults with disabilities and ensuring that the economic impact payments for all people with disabilities including adult dependents.

Ms. Sommers stated that the LAO team has been preparing for the Progress Report's release this summer as well as preparing around the communications plan, report edits and layout and if the virtual workforce is still happening there is a possibility for a virtual

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release. She added that she and Nick Sabula are exploring options to bring needed updates to the agency's website and LISTSERV.

#### **J. Policy Report**

Ms. Joan Durocher outlined the projects that are underway:

- Medicaid project;
- Puerto Rico project examining the Puerto Rican residents with disabilities;
- Finalizing 2020 Progress Report – aiming at release during ADA anniversary;
- Finalizing ABILITY ONE Report-release in Fall;
- Kickoff of accessible medical diagnostic equipment project- fall release;
- FEMA, other federal agencies and the disability community are pulling together in response to COVID-19

#### **K. Public Comment**

Ms. Rabia Belt read a written comment which states that the parents of children with autism needs to school to reopen and wants to Council to be an advocate for opening the schools during the pandemic.

#### **L. Unfinished Business/New Business**

Chairman Romano asked Ms. Grubb if she would create a group to gather ideas how we could celebrate the ADA anniversary.

Ms. Belt stated after the country emerges from the pandemic that there will be a massive amount of PTSD especially from essential and front-line workers. The Council may want to think about providing guidance on its website in this regard. In response, Ms. Durocher stated that she, Ms. Sommers and her team have created a COVID-19 web site and that would be a great place to place any mental health resources.

Ms. Wendy Harbour stated that there are many essential workers experiencing mental and physical issues due to COVID-19 causes long-term heart problems, kidney failure and other physical difficulties.

Mr. Andres Gallegos asked if the Council meeting is unable to meet in person for its October meeting would it be possible to meet via Zoom or Microsoft Teams. Ms. Grubb stated that either of those platforms could be a possibility.

Ms. Amy Nicholas reported that she met with the National Governor's Association (NGA) and their main interest was that of emergency management. The Council sent a letter to them regarding the states' actions regarding COVID-19 and followed up by sending a draft guidance that they were sending to emergency managers and states for us to review. Ms. Nicholas stated the association asked if the Council participate in

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teleconference calls regarding COVID-19. MS. Nicholas also shared that Ms. Laura Strange (NGA) is participating in the FEMA roundtable discussions and look forward to working with the Council in its future endeavors.

**M. ADJOURNMENT**

MOTION: Mr. Romano moved to accept the Governance Report.

**SECONDED:** Mr. Andres Gallegos

Roll Call Vote: unanimous

Neil Romano, Chairman: Aye

Billy Altom: Aye

James Brett: Aye

Andres Gallego: Aye

Benro Ogunyipe: Aye

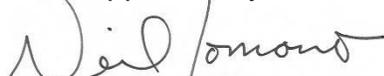
Clyde Terry: Aye

Rabia Belt: Aye

Wendy Harbour: Aye

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Date Approved by the Council: July 24, 2020



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Signature

Neil Romano

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Printed Name