

Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Idaho Council on Developmental Disabilities

Public Policy Committee

3:15 – 5:00 pm, July 25, 2013

Joe R. Williams Building, 700 W. State Street, First Floor

Committee Members: Jim Baugh, Jean Christensen, Julie Fodor, Matt Larson, Natali Pellens, Joe Raiden, Colleen Sisk, and Paul Tierney

Committee Members Absent: Matt Larson

Staff: Christine Pisani

Welcome Committee Members and Review Agenda

Christine welcomed everyone to the committee. Introductions were made and a photo was taken of the public policy committee.

Review Committee Roles, Responsibilities, and Timeline

Jim reviewed the role of the committee as it relates to the work of the full Council. He explained the responsibilities and the timeline for which the public Policy committee does most of its work.

Review how issues are chosen for Council Work

Christine explained the three different priority levels, what each level means and how we assign a level to an issue (page 5 of the public policy section in the packet). She also explained that the level the Committee assigned to each legislative issue is what is recommended to the Full Council. Sometimes other legislative issues come up throughout the session that we are not able to anticipate and those things usually get assigned a priority level by a conference call with the public policy committee.

Elect Committee Chair

Jim nominated Joe Raiden for chair. Joe was elected committee chair by unanimous consent.

Review and Approve Minutes of Public Policy meeting from April 25, 2013

Julie Fodor moved to accept the minutes from the April 25, 2013 minutes as written. Jean Christensen seconded. Motion passed.

Review proposed plans for Statewide Disability Advocacy Day Education Workshops and Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol

Christine reviewed the Council's involvement for the past three years in the statewide disability advocacy day education workshops as a member of the Consortium for Idahoans with Disabilities (CID). CID is the sponsor of the workshops. A committee made up of CID members has been convened to begin planning the statewide workshops and Disability Advocacy Day at the Capitol. Council staff has volunteered to participate in that committee.

The proposed statewide Disability Advocacy Workshops Dates:

- October 5 Coeur d'Alene
- October 12 Idaho Falls
- October 26 Moscow
- October 26 Pocatello
- November 2 Twin Falls
- December 7 Boise
- February 6 Day at the Capitol

Christine explained that at the CID strategic planning meeting taking place on August 27-28, the membership would be making a decision about the topics to be presented at the statewide workshops. Two topics for consideration include dental restoration, which the Council has been the lead agency for, and Medicaid Redesign (Expansion).

Natali asked about Medicaid Redesign, and Jim explained that there are about 110,000 people in Idaho who are without health care coverage and have income below 138% of the federal poverty level (which equals \$15,864 in annual income for 1 person and \$32,508 for a family of 4). If the Legislature agrees to expand coverage, health care insurance would be available for that number of uninsured.

Of that 110, 000 a very large percentage are people with disabilities. Jim estimates that:

- 4,400 people have a diagnosis of severe and persistent mental illness that are not currently covered, but would be with Medicaid Redesign (Expansion).
- Another group within the 110,000 is individuals with chronic health conditions.
- A third group of people includes a constantly shifting population of people with disabilities that have such significant disability that the Social Security Administration considers them unable to work. However it takes two years to be eligible for Medicare, so people have a two-year gap of being uninsured with health conditions going unaddressed or under-addressed.
- A fourth population includes people who have not accessed the SSI program for whatever reason.

USE Council Proposed Draft Language

Christine introduced proposed language that the USE Council has drafted. Tracy Warren, Council staff, is a member of the USE Council serving in the advocacy role as designated by state law. She was asked to collect feedback from the disability community about whether or not it would be supported or opposed. The discussion began with an orientation to the federal law in place that protects non-profit entities to hire people with disabilities at below sub-minimum wage and in segregated work settings. Christine explained that Council has historically opposed work settings such as these where people are not paid a living wage and are segregated from the typical community.

After a discussion to fully understand the intention of the proposed language, Jim moved that the public policy provide the following statement to the full Council for consideration:

“The public policy committee does not support this proposed legislation that is designed to support segregated work settings and the sub-minimum wages paid to people with disabilities. If proposed the Council would oppose it.”

Colleen seconded. Motion passed.

Introducing Legislation for Health Care Coverage for Certain Behavioral Treatments

Paul explained the need for insurance coverage to help pay for certain behavioral therapies, that are not currently covered through private insurance. Paul shared that he and his wife Richelle had done quite a bit of research on the topic and he believes there are 33 states in existence with private health care coverage to assist in paying for these specific treatments. Jim did not know the extent of the Health Care Exchange coverage for behavioral therapy services in its plan and that if the insurance companies in Idaho did not oppose offering this type of coverage that it would not be too terribly difficult to get it implemented. Jim agreed to research the Federal regulations regarding state coverage under the Affordable Care Act. He is also considering a discussion to take place with one or more of the insurance providers to see how receptive they would be to the idea.

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm