



Council Meeting Minutes March 21, 2023

Members Attending

Alex Reyes (S.A.)
Andy Imparato (DRC)
Aubyn Stahmer (UCEDD)
Cathay Liu (F.A.)
Eric Ybarra (S.A.)
Harold Ashe (F.A.)
Jeana Eriksen (S.A.)
Joseph Billingsley (DHCS)
Joyce McNair (F.A.)
Julie Neward (F.A.)
Julie Gaona (S.A.)
Julio Garnica (S.A.)
Kara Ponton (S.A.)
Kilolo Brodie-Crumsey (F.A.)
Larry Yin (UCEDD)
Liz Laugeson (UCEDD)
Maria Marquez (S.A.)
Michael Ellis (F.A.)
Michael Rillera (F.A.)
Michael Thomas (DOR)
Nicole Adler (S.A.)
Nick Wavrin (CDE)
Rosanna Ryan (S.A.)
Viviana Barnwell (F.A.)
Wesley Witherspoon (S.A.)

Members Absent

Brian Winfield (DDS)
Harold Fujita (F.A.)
Julie Austin (F.A.)
Lee Bycel (F.A.)
Mark Beckley (CDA)
Marko Mijic (CHHS)

Others Attending

Aaron Carruthers
Anne De Medeiros
Beth Hurn
Brian Weisel
Bridget Kolakosky
Charles Ngyuen
Chris Arroyo
David Grady
Dena Hernandez
Disability Voices United
Jennifer Lucas
Jennifer Vu
Julie Eby-McKenzie
Ken DaRosa
Kristianna Moralls
Lisa Hooks
Maria Arredondo

Others Attending

(cont.)

Mary Ellen Stives
Michelle Cave
Miguel Lugo
Renee Bauer
Riana Hardin
Rihana Ahmad
Robin Maitino-Erben
Sarah
Scarlett VonThenen
Sidney Jackson
Tamekia Johnson
Tania Morawiec
Tim Jin
Tony
Victoria Schlussler
Yaritza Sanchez

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Wesley Witherspoon called the meeting to order at 10:31 A.M.

2. **ESTABLISH QUORUM**

A quorum was established.

Legend:

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3. **WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS**

Members and others in attendance introduced themselves.

Chair Witherspoon announced potential changes in the agenda order to accommodate the guests from the legislature and their schedules. He announced that Stephanie Jimenez from Assemblymember Arambula's office would be joining the meeting to present on AB 447 (Arambula), and Kyle Kruger from Senator Caballero's office to present on SB 37 (Caballero).

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There was no public comment on this item.

5. **CHAIR REPORT AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Council Chair Witherspoon announced a change to the agenda order, moving his report to item 5. He reminded Councilmembers to respond to staff emails in advance to ensure quorum at Council and Committee meetings.

The Chair shared that he presented in a national webinar hosted by the National Disability Employment Technical Assistance Center on March 16, in observance of Developmental Disability Awareness Month. The webinar spotlighted the accomplishments of DD Councils in fostering employment opportunities. Chair Witherspoon discussed SB 639 (Durazo) and the Council's report to phase out subminimum wage in California.

Additionally, the Chair shared photographs from his attendance at the Disability Rights California Inaugural Gala with Executive Director Carruthers. The gala featured live music, artistic displays, performances, and speakers who aimed to raise awareness about disability justice. The event brought together members of the disability community, leaders in social justice, and representatives from the state government, including Assemblymember Kalra and the California Lieutenant Governor.

SCDD committee reports were provided in the meeting packet. Chair Witherspoon asked that members read through these reports when they are able. The committee reports can be accessed online at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

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6. **RECOGNIZING OUTGOING MEMBERS**

Chair Witherspoon recognized Councilmembers Jeana Eriksen, Julie Austin, and Maria Marquez as their terms were expiring in March 2023. While Councilmember Julie Austin was unable to attend, the Chair encouraged members to keep her in mind throughout the discussion.

Councilmember Jeana Eriksen expressed her deep appreciation for the honor and privilege of serving on the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. Reflecting on her six-year term, she acknowledged the invaluable support provided by her staff and SCDD. Having held the desire to join the State Council since the age of 10, when she participated in her first disability rights protest, she took pride in the legislative decisions she made as a Councilmember, many of which were subsequently signed into law.

Councilmember Maria Marquez conveyed her deep appreciation to her fellow Councilmembers and SCDD staff for their continuous support. She recognized Director Carruthers, Committee Specialist Maitino-Erben, and Councilmember Yin for their encouragement throughout her time. She expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve on the State Council, and advocate for the rights of individuals with disabilities. She spoke about some of the meaningful connections she formed along the way and emphasized the significance of collective efforts in creating a better life for people with disabilities.

The Chair, Executive Director, and Councilmembers shared cherished memories, kind sentiments, and expressions of gratitude for the outgoing Councilmembers.

7. **APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

Action 1

It was moved/seconded (Adler [S.A]/ Reyes [S.A.]) and carried to approve the January 2023 meeting minutes as presented. (See last page of minutes for a voting record of members present)

8. **2023 LEGISLATIVE UPDATES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Deputy Director Bridget Kolakosky announced Natalia Castro, a self-advocate from the San Bernardino region, as the winner of the "There Should be a Law" contest. Natalia's proposal focused on addressing child and psychological abuse in her community by implementing background

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checks for nonprofits and churches. She was invited to participate in the Safety for All discussions and contribute to shaping a safety bill in 2024.

SCDD's policy priorities for the current year revolve around employment, safety, and housing. The criteria used to select and recommend legislation for SCDD's support were based on five factors. SCDD's support was limited to a maximum of 15 bills that specifically addressed the needs of the IDD/DD community, with the requirement that the bill language be available for evaluation by the Legislative and Public Policy Committee (LPPC). Opposition was encouraged where the bill posed a direct harm to the IDD/DD community. Additionally, if bills encountered delays or failed to progress during the committee process, the possibility of supporting additional bills was available.

As a supporter of a bill, SCDD would provide a letter of support and testify in Committee. As a bill sponsor, SCDD would assist Committee staff with analysis and hearings, advocate for the bill during votes, and advocate for it in the Governor's office.

The bills recommended for support by SCDD this year include AB 248 (Mathis), AB 545 (Pellerin), AB 447 (Arambula), AB 87 (Quirk-Silva), SB 483 (Cortese), SB 246 (Ochoa-Bogh), AB 222 (Arambula), AB 1568 (Wood), AB 244 (Wilson), SB 271 (Dodd), AB 1567 (Garcia, Carrillo, Connolly, Friedman, Papan), AB 280 (Holden), and AB 946 (Nguyen). Staff will watch bills of interest as they go through the legislative process and undergo amendments. The full presentation with additional bill information can be accessed at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

Stephanie Jimenez, legislative staff member from Assemblymember Arambula's office, presented on AB 447. The bill aims to enhance inclusive college programs for students with IDD/DD at UC's and CSU's. AB 447 outlines guidelines, expectations, and requirements to ensure the effectiveness of these inclusive programs. It expands the scope of opportunities available to students, encompassing academic courses, campus involvement, employment internships, and student housing. The proposed legislation establishes a certification program designed to enrich the lives of students with IDD/DD, promoting independence, meaningful relationships, and career skill development.

Kyle Kruger, representing Senator Caballero's office, presented on SB 37. The bill offers rent subsidies to older adults and adults with disabilities who are homeless or at a high risk of homelessness. The bill proposes

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that the Department of Housing and Community Development distribute grants to suitable nonprofit organizations and other entities equipped with the necessary resources to provide rent subsidies. The subsidies aim to prevent and alleviate homelessness for a substantial number of adults with disabilities.

Action 2

It was moved/seconded (Ybarra [S.A]/ Ashe [F.A.]) and carried to adopt the Legislative and Public Policy Committee's recommendation to support the following 13 bills: AB 248, AB 545, AB 447, AB 87, SB 483, SB 246, AB 222, AB 1568, AB 244, SB 271, AB 1567, AB 280, and AB 946. (See last page of minutes for a voting record of members present)

9. COUNCIL BYLAWS: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS AND UPDATES

Executive Director Carruthers and Legal Counsel Weisel presented the recommended changes to the Council's Bylaws as proposed by the Executive Committee. The Bylaws, which govern the Council's operations, were last reviewed, and amended in May 2018. The Executive Committee, in collaboration with Legal Counsel, identified areas for updates. Some of the changes were technical, such as incorporating the use of gender-neutral pronouns. Additionally, more substantial revisions were made to align the Bylaws with the evolving practices of the Council over the past five years, taking into account the impact of the pandemic on their work. The revisions ensure that all current practices align with the established rules. A plain language version of the Bylaws was also prepared by Legal Counsel Weisel.

A comprehensive list of updates/changes made to the Bylaws and the plain language version can be accessed at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

Action 3

It was moved/seconded (Reyes [S.A]/ Ybarra [F.A.]) and carried to approve the suggested amendments to the Council's Bylaws and Plain Language Guide. (See last page of minutes for a voting record of members present)

10. CYCLE 46 PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

SCDD grants are awarded annually to community-based organizations to enhance services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. The Program Development Grants (PDG)

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support the Council's efforts to meet federal and state mandates, fostering the development of innovative programs and services.

The State Plan Committee met on February 2nd to discuss the Grant Cycle 46 process, area of emphasis, and timeline. On March 2, 2023, they reviewed the scoring criteria and project descriptions. The Cycle RFP will be released on March 27th, followed by the Bidders Conference on April 25th, and proposal submission deadline on May 22nd.

State Plan Chair Kilolo Brodie and State Plan Manager Rihana Ahmad presented the project descriptions for Cycle 46 Request for Proposals (RFP). The project descriptions were developed based on suggestions from Disability Expert Advisory Panels (DEAPs) and incorporated feedback from State Plan Committee members. They focused on four key areas: education, employment, health and safety, and self-advocacy. Each description identified specific issues, gaps, or systemic problems that the proposed grant proposals aimed to address, highlighting the intended outputs, outcomes, and impact. The complete timeline of important dates regarding the Grant Cycle 46 process and project descriptions can be accessed at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

Additionally, a new online submission platform, Grant Vantage, was introduced to streamline the application process and ensure complete submissions. Technical assistance sessions were scheduled on April 6, May 2, and May 15 from 11am to 12pm to support applicants in navigating the new platform. More information can be accessed at <https://scdd.ca.gov/grantinformation/>.

Action 3

It was moved/seconded (Ellis [F.A]/ Ybarra [S.A.]) and carried to approve the Cycle 46 project descriptions and increase the allocated funding amount to \$300,000 for Cycle 46 (See last page of minutes for a voting record of members present)

11. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT AND STAFF REPORTS

Executive Director Carruthers shared updates on the ongoing advocacy efforts to eliminate subminimum wage by January 2025. Senate Bill 639, co-sponsored by the Council and Disability Rights California (DRC), became effective in January 2022, requiring the release of a transition plan by January 2023. Deputy Directors Tania Morawiec and Bridget Kolakosky presented a comprehensive transition plan at the January Council meeting and provided testimonies in budget committee hearings

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in February and March. Councilmember Maria Marquez also traveled to Sacramento in February to testify with the Executive Director at the Assembly Budget Committee hearing. The transition plan set specific timelines, with the goal of eliminating subminimum wage by January 2025. Establishing an Employment First Office in the Health and Human Services Agency was highlighted as a top priority, with Senator Durazo championing the cause and submitting a budget request for its establishment.

He also discussed the Showcase of Cycle 44 Grants which highlighted successful projects funded by the Council. These included Chime Institute's work on inclusive education, the Down Syndrome Connection of the East Bay's collaboration for mental health support, Parents Helping Parents' efforts to address mental health needs in Spanish-speaking families during the transition from school to adulthood, and Path Point's focus on mental health and utilizing "Dialectical Behavior Therapy Skills" and "Mental Health First Aid" to teach proactive skills.

Additionally, two employment-related grants were awarded this year: the NEON grant from the US Department of Labor and the SWITCHE grant from the Department of Education. Partnerships and grants were also discussed, such as the Bridging Aging and Disability Community of Practice in collaboration with various organizations and the Service Access and Equity Grant issued by the Department of Developmental Services. The Council also expressed interest in additional opportunities, including plain language training, promoting Supported Decision Making for youth, and enhancing data analytics for Qualtrics information.

Executive Director Carruthers provided updates on vaccine work, highlighting the distribution of PPE during the pandemic and ongoing efforts to administer vaccinations and boosters. He also recognized Public Information Officer Michelle Cave for spotlighting the contributions of Black Americans with disabilities during Black History Month and State Plan Manager Rihana Ahmad and her team's work in developing an online grant application portal.

Debra Adler provided a public comment on this item. She shared her personal experience as a parent involved in one of the studies conducted by the Down Syndrome Connection of the East Bay. According to Ms. Adler, her participant received exceptional services, and the program proved to be a positive experience for them both. She also emphasized

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the challenges faced in finding a suitable therapist and expressed gratitude for the State Council's selection and funding of the grant.

Gilda Giron, the Director of Outreach and Leadership Training with Disability Voices United, also provided a public comment. She announced the commencement of the application process for the third round of their Emerging Leaders Program. The program, consisting of five training sessions, aims to equip individuals with disabilities and their families residing in California with the necessary skills to assume leadership roles in their communities and advocate for systemic change. Ongoing support will also be provided after the completion of the training sessions. The sessions were scheduled for Thursdays from 4:30 to 6:30 pm throughout May and early June. The deadline for submitting applications is March 31st.

12. STATEWIDE SELF-ADVOCACY NETWORK (SSAN) REPORT

SCDD SSAN representative Maria Marquez provided Councilmembers with an update from the most recent SSAN meeting on March 9th and 9th, 2023. The next SSAN meeting will be on June 7th and 8th, 2023.

13. SCDD 2023-24 DRAFT BUDGET

Executive Director Carruthers presented the 2023-2024 SCDD draft budget. Information was provided for the current and upcoming fiscal years. Both years present a balanced budget. Executive Director Carruthers gave summaries on sections of the budget including personal services, general office expenses, communications services, in-state and out-of-state travel, training, facilities operations, utilities, information technology and community program development grants. Further updates will be provided at the May 2023 Council meeting and members will vote on whether to approve the budget for the new fiscal year.

The full presentation can be accessed at <https://scdd.ca.gov/councilmeetings/>.

14. NEXT MEETING DATE AND ADJOURNMENT

The next Council meeting will be held on May 23, 2023. The meeting was adjourned at 3:34 P.M.

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Name	Action 1 Minutes	Action 2 Support Bills	Action 3 Bylaws	Action 4 Cycle 46
Adler, Nicole	For	For	For	For
Ashe, Harold	For	For	For	For
Barnwell, Viviana	For	For	NP	For
Billingsley, Joseph	For	For	For	For
Brodie-Crumsey, Kilolo	For	For	For	For
Ellis, Michael	For	For	For	For
Eriksen, Jeana	For	For	Abstain	For
Gaona, Julie	For	For	For	For
Garnica, Julio	For	For	For	For
Imparato, Andy	For	For	For	NP
Laugeson, Liz	For	For	For	For
Liu, Cathay	NP	For	For	For
Marquez, Maria	For	For	For	For
McNair, Joyce	For	For	For	For
Neward, Julie	NP	For	For	For
Ponton, Kara	For	For	For	For
Reyes, Alex	For	For	For	For
Rillera, Michael	For	For	For	For
Ryan, Rosanna	For	For	For	For
Stahmer, Aubyn	For	For	For	For
Thomas, Michael	NP	For	For	For
Wavrin, Nick	For	For	For	For
Witherspoon, Wesley	For	For	For	Abstain
Ybarra, Eric	For	For	For	For
Yin, Larry	For	For	For	For