



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

Council Meeting Minutes Monday, March 16, 2026

Present:

Kevin Armstrong, Angie Auldridge, Rich Bauernschub, Damon Briggs, Kalani Brown, Laura-Sun Cefaratti, Laura Paloma Chavez, Amanda Distefano, Bill Georg, Kay Han, Kimberly Hubscher, Marlana Hutchinson, Jarred Jones, Tiffany Joseph, Theresa Kuhns, Sam Livingston, Meghan Marsh, Dee Sapp, Justin Stocker, Katelyn Szymanski, Maureen van Stone, Lauren Whiteman

Absent:

Carmen Brown, Meeka Caldwell, Kathy Hargett, Karenna Jones, Kim McKay, Marcus Whitman

Staff:

Rachel London, Jenn Raulin, Chris Rogers

Guests:

- Eli Braun, parent
- Rashida Kondey, FREE of Maryland

The meeting was called to order by Dee Sapp, Council Chair, at 3:35 pm.

Welcome and Introductions – Dee Sapp

- Dee Sapp welcomed everyone to the Council meeting.

Public Comments

- Rashida Kondey shared about her organization, FREE of Maryland. They are a DDA provider in Montgomery and Prince George's counties.

Approval of Minutes

- M/S/P to approve the December 11, 2025 minutes.

Discussion with Hannah Dier, Governor's Legislative Office

- Hannah discussed the partnership between the Council and the Governor's office. She talked about their conversations about disability and healthcare issues.
- Hannah talked about the Governor's budget proposal and answered questions about the proposed cuts to the DDA budget.

Council Chair Report - Dee Sapp

- The Executive Committee reviewed small grant proposals. There were a lot more proposals this time than in the past, showing an increased interest in our funding. In total, the committee voted to fund more than \$76,000 in small grants. Vice Chair Rich Bauernschub announced the committee's funding decisions:
 - Goal 1: funded 3 small grants for a total of \$13,000
 - Goal 2: funded 11 small grants for a total of about \$33,000
 - Goal 3: funded 7 small grants for almost \$30,000

Executive Director Report - Rachel London

- The Council should get the rest of our FY26 money by the end of March.
- The Governor's budget proposed \$155 million in cuts to DD services.
 - The Council advocated continuously for no cuts. We've advocated to make sure people keep the services they need to live in the community, whether through community providers or self-direction.
 - The Senate restored \$23.1 million in general funds (and \$23.1 million in matching federal funds) to DDA community services to reduce the cuts. This is the largest restoration of funds for any issue or program in the state budget. It shows how difficult the state budget deficit is this year.
 - The Senate is still cutting \$126.9 million in general funds from DDA services. About \$62 million of these cuts come from provider budgets. About \$64 million is cut from self-directed services. There are no winners in these cuts, and people will face disruptions in

services. The Senate did reject the proposal to cap person-centered plan budgets at \$500,000. This cap would have had impacted people with the most complex support needs.

- The process is not over. The budget must pass by April 6.

Council Budget – Rachel London

- Rachel reviewed the FFY 2026 budget. The Council spent about \$238,000 in Quarter 1. Most of this supported State Plan activities. This includes staff time and grant payments. We will discuss the budget more at the June Council meeting.

State Plan Goals, Objectives, and Activities – Jarred Jones

- There is a motion from the State Plan Work Team to approve the draft State Plan Goals, Objectives, and Activities. S/P from the full Council to approve.

State Plan Public Outreach – Chris Rogers

- Chris reviewed the State Plan planning process. The Council released a public survey, reviewed the results, and held work team meetings on specific issues. The State Plan Work Team used this information to create specific recommendations, which the full Council approved at the December meeting.
- Next, we will release the Goals and Objectives for public review from April 1 through May 15. There will be a public input survey for people to give feedback. We will also host 3 Zoom meetings for people to provide comments.

DD Day at the Legislature – Jenn Raulin

- Jenn showed photos from DD Day at the Legislature and the These Are Our Lives rally in Annapolis.

Meeting adjourned at 5:06 pm.