

WYOMING GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Council Meeting Minutes — May 14–15, 2026

Location: La Quinta Inn – Gillette, Wyoming

Submitted by: Cathy Hardway, Administrative Specialist (*June 4, 2026*)

Day One — May 14, 2026

Call to Order: 3:02 p.m. by Chairperson Kim Bellamy

Attendance

Council Members Present

- Kim Bellamy
- Nikita Meyer
- Tess Reed
- Lucas Tronquet
- Maraia Rubin
- Rhonda Taylor
- Jeff Graham
- David Ray
- Heather Glaser
- Michelle Jarman
- Lynda Baumgardner
- Tehla Bates-Stayer
- Krystyne Ethridge
- Kathy Miller (*via Zoom*)
- Stephanie Olson (*via Zoom*)
- Feliciano Turner (*via Zoom*)
- Kelly Meyer (*via Zoom — 1st meeting*)
- Deana Smith (*via Zoom*)
- Amy Burns (*via Zoom*)

Council Members Absent

- Karl Knopf (*UE*)
- Elizabeth Forslund (*UE*)
- Nicky Harper (*UE*)

Staff & Support Present

- **Council Staff:** Penny Davis, Brittany Hankinson-McGovern, Cathy Hardway
- **Support Staff:** David Glaser, Jenise Redwing

Proceedings & Approvals

1. Approval of Agenda

- **Motion:** Nikita Meyer moved to approve the May 2026 Agenda.
- **Second:** David Ray
- **Result:** Motion carried.

2. Approval of Minutes

- **Motion:** David Ray moved to approve the February 2026 Council Meeting Minutes.
- **Second:** Lucas Tronquet
- **Result:** Motion carried.

Council Business

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Kim Bellamy reported that her written report was included in the Council packet.

- She continues to meet monthly with Executive Director Brittany Hankinson-McGovern and remains in regular contact through phone calls, email, and text messages.
- The Leadership Workgroup continues to meet monthly. Recent collaboration efforts included leadership attendance at Council events, such as the Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month Luncheon and the Art Gala.

Director's Report

Executive Director Brittany Hankinson-McGovern provided an update on Council activities and operations:

- **Council Membership:** Kelly Meyer was welcomed as the Council's newest member. Several additional membership applications remain pending with the Governor's Office. Members were reminded that appointments are made by the Governor, not by Council staff. Recruitment efforts continue in the north-central region of the state, specifically targeting three self-advocate members and one family member.
- **Staff Training:** Staff participated in several professional development events, including the *Disability Policy Seminar* (Washington, D.C. in March), the *Access and Functional Needs Conference* (April), and the *Greater Rockies Immersive Training (GRIT) Conference* (April). Shannon Buller continues to serve as a consultant for Five-Year Plan activities, with hours gradually decreasing each month.
- **Fiscal Update:** The Council is monitoring its budget closely and maintains a positive working relationship with state fiscal staff. The Notice of Award (NOA) has been received for the budget period of October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027.
- **Communications & Publications:** The 2025 Annual Report was published on March 17, 2026. The Council's newsletter, website, Facebook, and LinkedIn pages continue to be updated regularly.
- **Five-Year Plan:** The public comment period for the Five-Year Plan officially closed on May 4, 2026.
- **Projects & Events:**
 - *Wyoming Developmental Disabilities Conference:* Scheduled for October 14–16, 2026, at the Ramkota Hotel in Casper.
 - *WYABLE:* Expansion continues across Wyoming. Penny Davis will attend the National Association of State Treasurers (NAST) Conference in June to discuss ABLE programs nationwide.
 - *Collaborative Projects:* Updates on the Charting the LifeCourse and Uprising projects will be presented during Day Two.
 - *Partner Groups:* Members were requested to update staff regarding their participation in external boards, committees, and partner organizations.

Committee Reports

Budget Committee

The committee reviewed state and federal budget information alongside the Council's spending plan, reporting no significant concerns. The Council remains in a strong financial position.

Systems Change Committee

The committee reviewed state and federal legislative updates, including the policy white papers from the Washington, D.C. meetings. Members also discussed emergency preparedness and insights from the GRIT Conference regarding the exploitation of individuals with disabilities.

Five-Year Plan Committee

The committee reviewed and recommended two projects to the full Council for final approval:

- **Inclusive Postsecondary Education (IPSE) Grant**
 - *Context:* A recommendation to fund up to \$30,000 for the University of Wyoming WIND program to develop leadership and self-advocacy curriculum for students in the IPSE program.
 - **Motion:** Lucas Tronquet moved to approve funding of up to \$30,000 for the University of Wyoming WIND IPSE Program.
 - **Second:** Lynda Baumgardner
 - **Abstention:** Michelle Jarman
 - **Result:** Motion carried.
- **Charting the LifeCourse Extension**
 - *Context:* A recommendation to approve a contract extension and additional funding to expand medical transition content, provide training opportunities, and support conference presentations.
 - **Motion:** Lucas Tronquet moved to approve the Charting the LifeCourse contract extension in the amount of \$14,855.
 - **Second:** Rhonda Taylor
 - **Abstention:** Michelle Jarman, Krystyne Ethridge
 - **Result:** Motion carried.

Leadership Elections

Elections for Council Chair and Vice-Chair were conducted electronically via QR codes and voting links. Per Council bylaws, one position must be held by a family member and the other by an individual with a developmental disability.

- **Council Chair:** Kim Bellamy was elected to her first full term (her previous service was completed via a special election to fill a vacancy).
- **Council Vice-Chair:** Heather Glaser was elected to her first term in this position.

Adjournment

- **Motion:** Lucas Tronquet moved to adjourn the General Council meeting.
- **Second:** David Ray
- **Result:** Motion carried.
- **Adjournment Time:** 4:42 p.m.

Day Two — May 15, 2026

Call to Order: 8:34 a.m. by Chairperson Kim Bellamy

Note for Record: Before proceedings began, Brittany Hankinson-McGovern noted an oversight from the previous day. Day One should have technically been placed in recess until today rather than formally adjourned.

Attendance

Council Members Present

- Kim Bellamy, Nikita Meyer, Tess Reed, Lucas Tronquet, Maraia Rubin, Rhonda Taylor, Jeff Graham, David Ray, Heather Glaser, Michelle Jarman, Lynda Baumgardner, Tehla Bates-Stayer, Krystyne Ethridge, Kathy Miller (*via Zoom*), Stephanie Olson (*via Zoom*), Feliciana Turner (*via Zoom*), Kelly Meyer (*via Zoom*), Deana Smith (*via Zoom*), Amy Burns (*via Zoom*).

Council Members Absent

- Karl Knopf (*UE*), Elizabeth Forslund (*UE*), Nicky Harper (*UE*).

Staff & Support Present

- Penny Davis, Brittany Hankinson-McGovern, Cathy Hardway, David Glaser, Jenise Redwing.

Leadership Elections

Elections for Committee Chairs were conducted electronically via QR codes and voting links:

- **Five-Year Plan Committee Chair:** Nikita Meyer was elected to her first full term (following her prior special election service).
- **Systems Change Committee Chair:** Tehla Bates-Stayer was elected to her first term in this position.

Council Business

Five-Year Plan (2027-2031) — Public Comment and Logic Model

- **Public Feedback:** Public comments closed on May 4, 2026. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive but did not require shifting the plan's overall direction. Practical suggestions from the public will be added as key activities. Staff aims to finalize the logic model by the end of June.
- **Federal Requirements:** A new mandate from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) requires an "if needed" objective. This allows the Council to support emerging needs during public health emergencies or natural disasters without executing a formal state plan amendment.
- **Plan Focus Areas:** The upcoming plan includes specific objectives on increasing the understanding of exploitation identification and prevention to enhance personal safety. It will also continue targeting guardianship issues, building support for changes to Wyoming statutes, and expanding competitive integrated employment. The final proposed plan and public comment report will be submitted to the ACL for review.

Agency Reports

- **Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) — Deana Smith:** The Wyoming Supreme Court reversed a preliminary injunction on ESA accounts, allowing the state to reopen and administer the program for the 2026-2027 school year during ongoing district court litigation. The Special Education Teacher Boot Camp is scheduled for July 28–29 in Cheyenne; Teacher Con will take place August 3–4 in Casper. The Ascend 307 state development grant is entering year three, focusing on readiness and employability skills starting from pre-K.
- **Wyoming Department of Health, Aging Division — Maraia Rubin:** Jeff Clark was appointed Senior Administrator of the Aging Division, and Maraia Rubin was promoted to Community Living Section Manager. The division received \$1.9 million for senior services, with \$16 million allocated to the Wyoming Home Services program alongside extra funds for senior nutrition. An active request for application is open to secure respite care providers in Albany, Hot Springs, and Natrona counties.
- **Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) — Michelle Jarman:** WIND is in the needs-assessment phase for its next five-year plan. In partnership with DVR, WIND is hosting a summer camp experience on the UW campus for students with disabilities (ages 16–21) from July 19–22. ECHO sessions for health, education, and assistive technology will launch this fall.
- **Protection and Advocacy (P&A) — Stephanie Olson:** CEO Andy Lemke will serve on a new legislative subcommittee created by the JJC to study and recommend updates to the Wyoming guardianship code.
- **Parents Helping Parents (PHP) — Krystyne Ethridge:** PHP delivered over 3,000 instances of support and attended 50 meetings this quarter. PHP is seeking funding to train local businesses statewide on ADA compliance and inclusivity. The *Stronger in the Classroom and Beyond Conference* will take place September 19 in Cheyenne and virtually.
- **Wyoming Independent Living (WIL) — Amy Burns:** The statewide Peer Advocacy Conference will run August 12–14 in Casper. Registration is open, and limited travel stipends are available for self-advocates.
- **Wyoming Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health (MCH) — Feliciano Turner:** The program is drafting its annual report and application for federal maternal and child health block grant funding. The upcoming state action plan will open for public comment soon. MCH is also reapplying for the highly competitive pediatric mental healthcare access grant (only 25 awards nationwide).

Presentations & Project Updates

Waiver Presentation — WDH Healthcare Financing

- **Presenter:** Hannah Ostheimer
- **Summary:** Provided a comprehensive overview of the Community Choices Waiver and the DD Waiver, which deliver community-based options to Wyoming citizens. Slide presentations were distributed to members via follow-up email.

Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC)

- **Presenter:** Carrie Glantz
- **Summary:** Significant progress was made in ambassador training and public engagement. Two staff members from WIND and two from PHP have completed training, with two more currently in progress. The Spring ECHO series averaged 50 attendees per session. Introductory webinars reached 32 live participants (71 total registrants received recordings). An in-person workshop in Laramie engaged 20

participants, yielding highly positive feedback from parents regarding transition tools. Upcoming workshops are slated for Pinedale and Jackson, and CtLC worksheets will be introduced at the upcoming UW summer camp.

Uprising

- **Presenter:** Terri Markham
- **Summary:** The project addresses broader exploitation trends, including labor trafficking, financial manipulation, and online catfishing. Two distinct training tracks are being designed: one broken into 15-to-20-minute segments for individuals with IDD, and a 60-to-90-minute professional/caregiver video training. Companion resources like grab-and-go cards and conversation starters are also in development. A survey to map community blind spots is planned for deployment in early June, with responses due late June or early July.

Refocus Discussion

- **Lived Experience and Impact:** One member shared how their parents successfully fought for their integration into general education classes, leading to academic successes that would have been lost in a segregated setting. Another member shared a personal account of intervening to protect a sibling from a violent threat, highlighting real-world safety hazards.
- **Preventing Exploitation:** Members emphasized the critical importance of training vulnerable individuals to recognize when they are being exploited (sexually, financially, or via labor/catfishing) by people they know and trust.
- **Membership and Outreach Strategies:** Inspired by other agency models, the Council discussed hosting informal regional receptions to connect with local leaders, families, and legislators. There is a pressing need to recruit members from tribal communities and the northern part of the state. Members were urged to utilize personal channels (e.g., Special Olympics, regional social media groups) and distribute the New Membership Flyers.

Action Plan

- **Leadership/Council Training:** Annual Leadership Training for the Leadership Team is scheduled for August 12 (required in-person attendance).
- **August Meeting Relocation:** The August Council Meeting was moved from Alpine to Riverton due to accessibility considerations.
- **New Member Orientation:** Shifted to an annual September training schedule to prevent dangerous November winter travel.
- **Technical Support:** Transitioned from a single large session to customized, one-on-one sessions to address individual member needs.
- **Conference Updates:** Reminded members of the upcoming conference on October 14–16, 2026, at the Ramkota Hotel in Casper. Speaker and presenter applications are live via the newsletter and website.

Adjournment

- **Motion:** Rhonda Taylor moved to adjourn the General Council meeting.
- **Second:** David Ray
- **Result:** Motion carried.
- **Adjournment Time:** 11:51 a.m.

Submitted by: Cathy Hardway, Administrative Specialist

June 4, 2026

