
Disability Awareness Resource Team (DART) Minutes
February 9, 2021

Call to Order – The meeting was held virtually via the GoToMeeting platform. DART Co-Chair, Joel Cooper called the meeting to order at 2:02 p.m.

Members Present:

Pat Angerman (Goodwill)

Mary Kay Balaguer (MWSW/ES)

Jordan Blanchard

Hank Bostic (Disability Network)

Gary Clark (LEO)

Joel Cooper (Disability Network)

Dan Dunn (Comerica)

John Fiore (MRS)

Leatrice Fullerton (Disability Network)

Jonathan Groker (MRC)

Carrie Headworth (LEO/Veterans)

Ben Hoger (MWSW PATH)

Sarah Hutchinson-Chee (Goodwill)

Kathy Lentz (ISK)

Ramona Lumpkin (Recovery Institute)

Sarah Mannschreck (Disability Network)

Sharon Meyer (Speedway)

Jill Murphy (MRS)

Kathy Olsen (MWSW)

Alicia Reed (Arc Calhoun County)

Christopher Roach (BSBP)

Sheldon Schwitek (Arc Community Advocates)

Chad Timmerman (MWSW/PATH)

Caller 01

Approval of Agenda

The February 9, 2021 meeting agenda was approved by consensus of members present.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of November 10, 2020 were approved by consensus of members present.

COVID-19 Service Delivery

As part of the agency updates, members were asked to share concerns and situations related to COVID-19 vaccine distribution as well as provide any other pertinent information and announcements regarding their agency.

Ramona Lumpkin reported some customers of the Recovery Institute have a fear of getting the vaccine. Joel Cooper reported the vaccine fact sheets are helpful tools that can be used to educate others about the vaccine. All agencies can help educate the general public on vaccine safety and how to access and schedule appointments. Some individuals who do not have internet access, making a phone call is their only option and often they are unable to get through due to ongoing busy signals. Multiple agencies who work with individuals with disabilities are asking that vaccine priority be given to people with disabilities ages 16-64. In Kalamazoo County, the public health department is meeting weekly with partners to share update regarding COVID-19 and vaccine distribution.

Christopher Roach reported the Michigan Career and Technical Institute (MCTI) has reopened for in-person learning and the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons residential training center in Kalamazoo recently petitioned the State to reopen. He reported administrators continue to work from home and are expecting to return to the office on May 1, 2021. BSBP also petitioned the Kalamazoo Health Department to get the vaccine administered at their facility as this would be helpful to consumers who are legally blind. He noted accessibility is a concern because many of the current vaccination sites such as the health department, Bronson and WMU are only scheduling appointments online. He did note that Meijer was reported to accept phone appointments.

Work Group Updates

Curriculum - At Your Desktop Training and Resources

Jill Murphy reported the committee is working on a training module on the topic of disability awareness and etiquette. Another topic might be on the topic of COVID symptoms for long-haulers.

Kathy Olsen reported the Desktop Training modules are posted on the Michigan Works! Southwest website. To access the training modules, viewers should select the About tab, then select Board, then scroll down to the DART heading <https://www.michiganworkssouthwest.org/about/board/>. She encouraged members to share the modules with staff and partners.

Program – Disability Network of Southwest Michigan – Tips for Online Meetings

Leatrice Fullerton and Sarah Mannschreck from Disability Network of Southwest Michigan gave a presentation pertaining to *Tips for Online Meetings*. The handouts were emailed to members following the presentation.

Joel Cooper reported many additional presentations and trainings are offered by Disability Network of Southwest Michigan. More information about the trainings and other events can be found on their [website](#) or individuals may contact Disability Network directly.

COVID-19 Service Delivery and Agency Updates – continued

Integrated Services Kalamazoo (ISK) – Kathy Lentz

Work Group Updates

Collaboration

Kathy Olsen requested that individuals send updates to the Partner Matrix to her at olsen@upjohn.org.

Work Group Updates

Emerging Issues Related to Employment and Advocacy

Joel Cooper reported HB4910 and HB4911 were opposed by many organizations that serve individuals with disabilities however both still passed. The Governor was asked to veto them which she did. Agencies are hopeful that language would change, and these issues will be revisited.

Sheldon Schwitek reported there are a number of other emerging issues. One such issue is a \$2/hr. raise for frontline workers.

Agency Updates

Integrated Services Kalamazoo - Kathy Lentz reported supported employment is providing more services than prior to COVID. They have noticed some customers who do not feel safe in the community are pausing on returning to employment. ISK is working with the State on other supportive services such as transportation.

Michigan Works! Southwest Service Centers – Mary Kay Balaguer reported KRESA's staff working at the Service Center were given the opportunity to get the COVID-19 vaccination. Professional development for staff includes the DART desktop training modules and Anti-Bias, Anti-Racist (ABAR) training. The ABAR training consists of six sessions, each two hours in length for 40 employees. Staff continue to hold partner meetings virtually for each Service Center and having been doing outreach to increase participation. A recent partner meeting for St. Joseph County had 18 attendees. Employer of the Day hiring events and employability skill workshops are being held virtually and a number of new workshops are being introduced. Service Centers will be opening for testing by appointment only.

Veterans Services – Carrie Headworth reported a military friendly virtual job fair is scheduled for February 17, 2021 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Current plans are for State workers to return to the office on May 1, 2021.

Disability Network Southwest Michigan – Hank Bostic reported various training opportunities offered by Disability Network Southwest Michigan are posted on their website on the events page. There is also information regarding a number of peer support group meetings available on the website.

Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) – John Fiore reported the Michigan Career Technical Institute (MCTI) has reopened with a limited number of students attending.

Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) – Chris Roach reported BSBP has been holding virtual instruction sessions and they are hoping to engage with students in-person by mid-March as it is difficult to teach travel skills virtually.

Goodwill Industries of Southwestern Michigan – Sarah Hutchinson-Chee reported the Goodwill Stores are open and the Goodwill facility on Alcott is open. A lot of the services have shifted to being offered virtually. Goodwill has launched a Get Help Program across all six counties they serve. Help can be accessed by emailing gethelp@goodwillswmi.org, or by calling or texting 269-422-0327. John Dillworth recently retired, and the new CEO at Goodwill is Michael Jones.

Arc of Calhoun County – Alicia Reed reported the Alternatives to Guardians booklet is available for individuals residing in Calhoun County. Services continue to be provided using safe COVID protocols.

Recovery Institute – Ramona Lumpkin reported on concerns pertaining to the tent city where many homeless individuals are seeking shelter from the elements.

Disability Network Southwest Michigan – Joel Cooper reported the transition to virtual workshops has opened doors and accessibility for many individuals.

Professional Development Opportunities

It was noted that professional development opportunities could be found on the websites listed below. Some opportunities may offer continuing education credits.

- Disability Network Southwest Michigan – See website for upcoming events <http://www.dnswm.org/>,
- APSE Michigan -See website <https://apse.org/chapter/michigan/>

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 13, 2021 from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Kathy Olsen, Quality Assurance/Project Coordinator and WDB Liaison
Michigan Works! Southwest