



MINUTES

of the meeting of the
Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders
July 19, 2022

The Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders held a public meeting on July 19, 2022, beginning at 3:45 p.m. at the following locations:

Teleconference meeting was conducted via Microsoft Teams Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting for the Nevada Commission on Autism Spectrum Disorders was called to order at by Commissioner Lozano at 3:45pm.

2. Roll Call

Ms. Russell took role at 3:45 pm. Members present were Commissioners Trisha Lozano, James Howells, and Julie Ostrovsky.

A quorum was declared

3. Public Comment

Public comment was provided by Ms. Cheryl Dinnell, executive director of the Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition (NLRC). She introduced the Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition, and stated that this past year, the coalition has transitioned from a being a nonprofit into a public advisory body like the Autism Commission. Furthermore, Ms. Dinnell stated that the coalition will be working on issues surrounding caregiving and caregiver support, such as respite. She (Ms. Dinnell) explained that respite is the number one request that family caregivers make for themselves. Many individuals with disabilities and special health care needs would have a primary caregiver who supports them most often without any compensation or pay, and the COVID pandemic raised the coalitions consciousness that these caregivers are an essential support that has long been taken for granted. Ms. Dinnell stated that during the pandemic, the coalition was often left standing alone when other supports and services were shattered due to COVID pandemic. The demands and pressures experienced by the caregivers brought them to breaking points, essentially creating two vulnerable persons. Ms. Dinnell continued that while the ADSD Commission is advocating for people with autism and autism spectrum disorders, NLRC will be advocating for those important caregivers in their lives. She (Ms. Dinnell) stated that it is probable that this commission and the NLRC) could be working together when appropriate and laid out that supports for caregivers would positively influence the long term supports that people with disabilities rely on. Ms. Dinnell shared that the coalition recently submitted a recommendation to the joint Interim Standing Committee for Health and Human Services. This

recommendation included to engage family caregivers using evidence supported and culturally sensitive family caregiver assessments to determine the willingness, ability, and the needs of a family caregiver to provide long term support and services. She explained that such an assessment would provide with information regarding family caregivers, social determinants of health, specific risk factors related to stress and depression. Such assessment could also identify environmental cultural barriers that might put caregivers and individuals with disabilities at risk. Ms. Dinnell explained that an extensive body of research documents the negative physical, emotional, and financial consequences that caregiving brings, and that such research data has been collected through caregiver assessments. Ms. Dinnell continued that family members have stepped into the role of a caregiver to meet these long-term support needs without specific education, training, or even an understanding of the sacrifices and tradeoffs they'll be required to make. She stated that Nevada does not have a system of caregiver assessments to address the health and wellbeing of family caregivers, even at logical points such as a hospital discharge. The coalition is planning to fill this gap where those long-term care responsibilities are placed on family caregivers. Ms. Dinnell shared that as a family caregiver herself, she had never been asked if she felt confident about or could handle the treatment care, or which supports are needed at home. Ms. Dinnell stated that the coalition feels that all care transitions should take into consideration the needs of the family caregivers responsible for carrying out the plan. Ms. Dinnell expressed the hope that the commission will be supportive of this recommendation too. She offered her contact information as well as the link to the coalitions' website, where an introductory video can be found. Also, Ms. Dinnell shared the next meeting details of the coalition (Monday, August 15, 10:00am through 12:00pm, virtual meeting via zoom or Teams) and invited interested individuals to join. The coalitions' meetings are posted on the same ASD website for Nevada Boards and Commissions on which the commissions' information is posted, so Ms. Dinnell.

[Ms. Russell informed the commissioners that commissioner Korri Ward has joined the meeting]

4. For Possible Action: Approval of Meeting Minutes from the Previous Meeting held on May 24, 2022

Commissioner Ward requested the following corrections to the meeting notes draft: Related to the presentation of Ms. Casalez, the meeting minutes state that there is a self-directed program through the Regional Centers. She (Commissioner Ward) had called to confirm this and learned that the discussed program is not a self-directed one, but that it is a home-sharing program. Madame Chair Lozano suggested to not change the minutes as they reflect the discussions had, but to, in the future, invite presenters back to address questions that came up.

On motion by Commissioner Ostrovsky, seconded by Commissioner Howells, and approved with a unanimous vote, the meeting minutes of the meeting on May 24, 2022, were accepted and approved as presented

5. For Information: Autism Treatment Assistance Program (ATAP) Updates

Ms. Samantha Jayme, Health Program Manager 3 for ATAP, presented program updates to the commission. The presentation was shared on screen and Ms. Jaime stated that it will be available on the website as well.

Ms. Jayme presented monthly caseloads numbers for June 2022, including number of new applications (71), active children (974), average age of active children (8.7 years), inactive children (8), and average wait time from application start to becoming active or drop (33 days). The presentation furthermore included information related to ATAP caseload growth. Overall, the wait time for children reduces from more than 1000 days several years ago to 33 days now, so Ms. Jayme. Information was also provided on community

outreach events in the community, which seem to impact referral numbers. Ms. Jayme showed that most children are currently served under a straight ATAP funded plan, especially under insurance assistance plans. Ms. Jayme furthermore shared information regarding trends in professional workforce development (including an increase in numbers of BCBA's). Related to the number of consultants, Ms. Jayme stated that many of them have sat for their tests, but that they are just not seeing as many consultant level individuals. Ms. Jayme explained that consultants are people that have a small case load of ATAP children and are working to get their BCBA or BCaBA. Related to the RBT level growth, she (Ms. Jayme) stated that they are finally seeing the provider numbers going back up which would be exciting because the numbers dropped significantly during the pandemic. Ms. Jayme stated that she was on the ABA board today and that it sounded like professionals are still having some issues with the FBI backgrounds check, but that this issue is being addressed and staff is being credentialed.

Furthermore, Ms. Jayme stated that, per the commission's request, in future presentation the information on provider numbers will be broken down by providers and by regions to show which providers serve North, South, and rural areas.

Ms. Jayme also shared information on active children with (767) and without (193) an ATAP provider, by plan-type. She stated that since the LCB audit, ATAP would serve all children, and if a child does not have a provider yet for various reasons, then ATAP would provide service coordination for this family. Service coordination goals could then include finding a provider, finding community resources, enrollment to Resource Centers if they qualify.

Ms. Jayme stated that although the RBT provider rate is going up again, the workforce is still not sufficient to serve all children who need services.

Related to the ATAP age-breakdown, Ms. Jayme shared, per the commissions' request, how many children in different age ranges are active versus in waiting status. She pointed out that ATAP receives many referrals for children in the zero through 5 age-range, which would show that the collaboration with early intervention services and a smooth transition between programs works well, in addition to ATAP's community outreach activities.

Ms. Jayme also stated that she had met with Commissioner Lenise Kryk to discuss the commissions' proposal to increase the hours of the ATAP extensive plan. The discussion included that the subcommittee and the commission could extend the proposal and include all straight ATAP plans (not only the extensive plan) to keep the concept consistent. She (Ms. Jayme) would now wait for further information from the subcommittee/ commission to move forward.

6. For Information: Discuss ATAP Budget and the Commissions Objectives as it Relates to Insurance Assistance Distribution, Policy on Supervision, and Impacts of SB96, – (An Act Relating to Disability Services; Requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to Seek an Increase to Certain Reimbursement Rates Under the Medicaid Program and the Autism Treatment Assistance Program (ATAP) for a Registered Behavior Technician (RBT); and Providing Other Matters Properly Relating Thereto), to the ATAP Budget

This agenda item was tabled to move to the next agenda item 7, Presentation from Nevada Early Intervention Services

7. For Possible Action: Review and Approve Draft Letter to Nevada State Governor on updates of the Commission as it Relates to Commission Objectives and Progress of the Commission

Commissioner Lozano presented a draft of the letter for review. The letter was shared on the screen with the commission. The letter draft was discussed with the commissioners.

It was agreed upon that the commissioners will review and make editing suggestions by the next meeting, in which the commission then could finalize the letter. Ms. Russell will email the draft to the commissioners.

Commissioner Ostrovsky suggested to add a section on the commission's vacancies. She stated that this information would provide the Governor's office with information on the challenge to fill positions. Commissioner Ostrovsky stated that many boards and commissions have vacancies, and that there are plans on improving the marketing for boards and commissions, and she would like to have this commission included in this.

Commissioner Ostrovsky asked if the Governor's office was made aware that this letter will arrive with delay, and Jennifer Frischman, ADSD Agency Manager, stated that she could do this on the commission's behalf.

Commissioner Lozano recommended that the letter could be provided to ATAP for completing / updating their data.

On motion of commissioner Ostrovsky, seconded by Commissioner Howells, and approved with unanimous vote, the presented letter draft will be sent to all commissioners and to the ATAP staff for edits, additions, corrections, and updates. The edits will be sent to Ms. Russell, and the letter can be finalized at the next meeting.

8. For Possible Action: Review and Approve Draft Letter to Nevada State Legislators on behalf of the Commission as if Relates to Commission Objectives and Statistics on Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders

A draft of the letter was shared on screen, and the commission members discussed edits. Approved edits were life-edited in the draft document by Ms. Russell.

Discussion points included defining the target audience of the letter. Ms. Frischman (ADSD Manager) provided input that the commission could decide on sending out multiple letters at different times, and targeted to specific legislative bodies, as applicable.

On motion of Commissioner Ostrovsky, seconded by James Howells, and approved with unanimous vote, the draft of the letter will be continued to be edited by the commission, then revisited in the August commission meeting, with the plan of sending out a finalized version September 1st and December 1st.

9. For Possible Action: Review and Approve the Current Community Strategic Report, to Include Discussion of Resources, and Finances in Preparation for Upcoming Strategic Report

Commissioner Lozano suggested dedicating a future commission meeting to this strategic report, and asked Ms. Russel to re-send the work that was already done to the commissioners. It was also discussed to potentially meet in person for working on this strategic plan. Jennifer Frischman, ADSD Manager, clarified that the commission can meet in person, utilizing a State-conference room. However, no travel expenses can be covered.

On motion by commissioner Ostrovsky, seconded by Commissioner Howells, and approved with

unanimous vote, the strategic plan will be placed on hold until a date can be secured within the next five months when the commission can meet in person.

10. For Possible Action: Discussion and Approval of Co-Chair Replacement for Workforce Development Subcommittee and Subsequent Recruitment.

The commission discussed that commission members and other individuals attending this meeting can continue to raise interest and to inform others about vacancies on this board. No interested individuals were identified at this time.

This agenda item was tabled to move to the next agenda item 11, the approval of subcommittee roles and responsibilities.

11. For Possible Action: Approve Subcommittee Roles and Responsibilities as it Relates to the Current Community Strategic Plan, Including Approval of Public Entities and/or Members to be Contacted to Participate in Each Subcommittee, in Preparation for the Upcoming Strategic Report

This agenda item was tabled to move to the next agenda item 12, discuss and approve agenda items and discuss future commission meeting dates.

12. For Possible Action: Discuss and Approve Agenda Items and Discuss Future Commission Meeting Dates

Commissioner Lozano suggested to invite the Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition (NLRC) to present their data and the needs of the community and parents.

Commissioner Ostrovsky suggested to keep the letter to the Governor on the next agenda.

Commissioner Ward suggested to invite Steven Paul Lowski, one of the authors of the Burns report.

Commissioner Ward asked for clarification and input related to potential costs for presentations of presenters. Jennifer Frischman, ADSD Agency Manager, clarified that there may not be costs involved if the presenters do not come in person. Ms. Frischman offered to contact Mr. Lowski for discussing options and conditions for a possible September presentation date.

On motion by Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Howells, and approved with unanimous vote,

- for the August meeting: the Nevada Lifespan Respite Care Coalition (NLRC) will be invited to present,
- for the August meeting: Ms. Casalez will be invited to clarify questions related to Regional Center self-directed programs mentioned in the minutes of May
- for the September meeting: Mr. Lowski will be invited to discuss the Burns report
- the August meeting will be held on 08/16/2022 at 3:45 pm
- the September meeting will be held 09/20/2022 at 3:45 pm

13. Public Comment

Julie Ostrovsky encourages the commissioners and everyone on this call to reach out and contact those you work with in the autism community and encourage them to apply for a vacancy on the Commission.

14. Adjourn

On motion of Commissioner Ward, seconded by Commissioner Howells, and approved with unanimous vote, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Autism Commission Members

Trisha Lozano (Chair), *Vacant* (Co-Chair), Julie Ostrovsky, Korri Ward, Lenise Kryk, James Howells.

NOTE: Items may be taken out of order, combined for consideration, and/or removed from the agenda at the Chairperson's discretion. The public body may combine two or more agenda items for consideration. The public body may remove an item from the agenda or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda at any time. The public body may place reasonable restrictions on the time, place, and manner of public comments based on viewpoint.

NOTE: We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who have disabilities and wish to attend the meeting. If special arrangements for the meeting are necessary, please notify ASD Children's Services as soon as possible and at least five days in advance of the meeting. If you wish, you may E-mail ChildrensServicesQA@adsd.nv.gov. Supporting materials for this meeting are available at: 3208 Goni Road, Building I Suite 181, Carson City, Nevada 89706 or by contacting ASD Children's Services at (702)486-9816 or by E-mail at ChildrensServicesQA@adsd.nv.gov.

Agenda and supporting materials posted at 3208 Goni Rd, Building I, Suite 181, Carson City NV, 89706 and online on the following site:

<http://adsd.nv.gov/Boards/Autism/Autism/> <https://notice.nv.gov/>