



Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission  
December Monthly Meeting

December 18, 2025, Meeting Minutes

## Meeting Location

Remote Zoom Meeting link

## Attendance

### Members Present

- Melita Bell
- Rick Callahan
- Dr. Margaret Cage
- Jillian Copeland
- Miles Cox
- Tracy Craig
- Onesta Duke
- Jake Didinsky
- Justin Hack
- Sue Hartung
- Dorne Hill
- Lisa Klem
- Lisa Lorraine
- Swapnika Madhavarani
- Lori Mitchell-Keller
- Karla Nabors
- Steve Riley
- Eric Salzano
- Yvonne VanLowe
- John Whittle
- Najla Wortham
- Carmen Zahra

### Members Not Present

- Jenn Lynn

- Carmen Smith

## Proof of Quorum

16 voting members of the Commission were present.

## Staff Present

- Crystel Britto
- Karen Gipson
- Kim Mayo
- Dr. Patrice McGhee

## Guests

- JP
- Carmen Frazier Holt

## Guest Speakers

- Nicole Lindsay, Arc Montgomery County Empowering Abilities Program

## Handouts

- December Meeting Agenda
- November Meeting Minutes

## Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:04pm.

## Welcome and Introductions

Chair Riley welcomed attendees and performed a roll call.

## Review and Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

The chair reviewed the IDDC's purpose.

The November 20, 2025 meeting minutes approved with an amendment to add a note stating that Chair Riley interrupted a conversation between Jake Didinsky and David Rice (two individuals with disabilities) to call time to move on to the next agenda item. The approval of the minutes was motioned by Jake D. and seconded by Miles C.

## Review and Approve Meeting Agenda

The approval of the minutes was motioned by Lori M. and seconded by Carmen Z.

# Meeting Minutes Agenda Items

## Speaker

1. Nicole Lindsay, Project Director, Arc of Montgomery County Empowering Abilities Program, provided an overview of the program.
  - a. The Direct Support Professional (DSP) Fellows Program is a 10-week program in which people with disabilities are trained to support other individuals with disabilities. Participants learn the essentials of DSP work, inclusionary practices, CPR, and first aid. They are also paired with mentors and attend a career fair curated specifically for them.
  - b. Participants are paid minimum wage. Program hours are Monday through Friday, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The program is funded by the Montgomery County Government.
  - c. The first cohort of fellows was certified in June 2025. The Arc plans to host a second cohort in 2026. Applicants should apply via the Arc Montgomery County website.
  - d. Jake invited Nicole to attend the IDDC's Community Engagement Committee meetings. Nicole also presented to InterAcc in November.

## Old Business

1. Committee Updates
  - a. Policies and Programs, Lisa Lorraine, Chair
    - i. Perrie Briskin will attend the January 2026 IDDC meeting. The committee will invite members of the IDD community to participate in the meeting.
    - ii. The committee drafted a primer on how to navigate the redetermination process. However, the committee learned that the Maryland Department of Health is drafting a similar document. As a result, the committee's draft is currently on hold.
    - iii. The committee proposed the following changes to the membership makeup of the IDDC (see meeting materials email dated 12/17):
    - iv. Proposed Makeup of the Voting Members of the IDDC  
(The six non-voting members would remain the same)  
Total Members: 29  
Voting Members: 23

Constituency A (IDD + Family Members): 15 seats (65%) comprised of:

1. Self-Advocate (people with IDD) seats: 5 (22%)
2. Family members, guardians, or support staff of individuals with IDD (Family members of adults can only be considered for membership if the person with a developmental disability is unable to advocate for themselves) seats: 5 (22%)
3. Mix of Self-Advocate and Family member/guardian/support staff seats: 5 (22%)

Constituency B (Service Providers/Advocacy Organizations): 7 seats (30%)

Commission on People with Disabilities (CPD): **1 seat** (4%)

- v. At least 3 of the Constituency A seats should be filled by people who receive self-directed services or participate in the self-directed services community.

- vi. Several commissioners expressed concern about subjectivity of language related to family members of adults serving on the IDDC. It was noted that this language comes directly from the Maryland DD Council.
  - vii. Lisa will draft a current state vs future state document to outline the changes to the IDDC membership
  - viii. The commission voted to adopt the committee's membership proposal with changes. The vote was motioned by Jake D. and seconded by Rick C. and was approved by unanimous consent, with a roll call vote.
- b. Special Education, Yvonne VanLowe, Chair
    - i. The committee met with Grace Rivera-Oven on December 18, 2025, current Board of Education (BOE) President and former Chair of the Board of Education Special Populations Committee. The committee shared its special education priorities, highlighting the second priority, and also received an overview of the Special Populations Committee's current work plan.
    - ii. The committee met with Dorie Flynn, Executive Director of MANSEF, on December 8, 2025. The committee shared its special education priorities with MANSEF and learned about the organization's purpose and mission.
    - iii. The committee is working to implement its priorities. The initial focus is on hosting a virtual listening session in the first quarter of 2026. Date, time, and logistics will be shared soon. The Special Education Committee welcomes support from the Community Engagement Committee.
  - c. Community Engagement, Jake Didinsky, Chair
    - i. No report. Time was yielded to the Policies and Programs Committee. Jake noted that a new chair will be needed for this committee. Additionally, Jake encouraged continued participation in the Community Engagement Committee.
2. Update on 11/24/25 meeting with the County Executive (CE) to discuss County employment of people with IDD.
    - a. The CE was supportive of our request to restart a Montgomery County Government hiring program for people with IDD and stated he would direct department heads to look at hiring people with IDD.
    - b. Crystel shared that internal meetings would occur.
  3. Update on reappointment process. No news at this time. Still waiting for the County Executive's Office to initiate the process.
    - a. Jake noted that he was appointed to the IDDC nominating committee; however, a new member of the IDDC will need to be appointed.

## New Business

1. Vote to authorize an introductory letter to new Councilmember Shebra Evans.
  - a. Lisa Klem will help draft the introductory letter.
2. Jake D to speak to Commission on experience and resignation

- a. Jake moved that Miles Cox fill his spot on the nominating committee. Lisa Lorraine seconded. The motion was approved.
  - b. Jake announced his resignation from the IDDC. He intends to attend meetings as a member of the public. Jake expressed gratitude for the Commission's existence and by resigning wants to send a signal that we must do better.
  - c. The chair thanked Jake for his service and wished him the best.
3. Pyramid Awards- potential collaboration with the Commission on People with Disabilities.
  - a. The Commission on People with Disabilities had this award for many years. Sue H brought up her interested in exploring if this is something that the IDDC can reinstate. Sue will bring this back to the Commission for further discussion at a future meeting.
4. Tracy acknowledged Jake's comments/announcement and expressed her appreciation for his service.

## Public Comment

- None.

## Next Meeting

The next meeting will be January 29<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34pm.