

infoNET Editorial Board Meeting Minutes November 17, 2023

Attendees: MJ Conaway, Julie Bergeson, Caitlin Owens, Amy Campbell, Kevin Harris, Brooke Lovelace, Carlyn Crowe, Lindsay Hommer

Welcome and Introductions

All attendees were welcomed.

Review of Stakeholder Meeting:

October Capitol Chat was a stakeholder meeting to get ideas about restructuring to increase viewership and participation.

Poll results:

52% (11) of respondents took action after learning about something at the capitol chat and 67% (14) knew where to find the recordings.

An idea is to have a pizza dinner during the MYM! Conference and conduct a focus group to get more accurate poll results.

52% (11) always/usually read the "This Week at the Capitol" weekly emails. They were asked if they took action after reading the emails and 44% (8) stated they did.

78% (14) of people do not watch Capitol Snapshots. When asked why they did not watch them, some responses were that they didn't know about them 78% (14), they were too long 12% (2), they didn't know where to find them 5% (1), and they prefer written correspondence 5% (1). Some things that could be done to improve Capitol Snapshots are: include interview with legislator 44% (8), shorten them 39% (7), focus on one issue 28% (5), interview with advocate or expert 17% (3), other 33% (6). An improvement that is being discussed is to shorten these videos making them to two-three minutes long and focus on one topic.

Respondents were asked if they used the Take Action Center. 44% (8) said yes. They were also asked if the Take Action Center would be useful to advocates with disabilities and 88% (15) said it would be.

Campbell stated they wanted to see what resources people were using. 67 % (10) used Bill Tracker, 67% (10) used the Advocacy Toolkit, 53% (8) used newsletters, 53% (8) used calendar/public forums, 47% (7) used the legislative guide, 47% (7) used policy

Creating change with and for persons with developmental disabilities so they can live, work, learn and play in the community of their choosing.

briefs, 47% (7) used the Take Action Center, 40% (6) used trending topics, 33% (5) used the video library, and 27% (4) used breaking.

Respondents were asked if they thought they would use the 2024 caucus guide. 71% (10) said yes. When asked if they planned to caucus this year, 57% (8) were not sure, 29% (4) said no, and 14% (2) said yes.

Changes planned:

Campbell shared template flyer that Libby Schwerts designed for Bill of the Week. They would like to have a standard format that they use each week. These will be put in a weekly email and will be the focus of the Capitol Snapshot. Conaway stated that he thought the photo is too big on the flyer. Crowe thinks "Bill Overview" needs to be bigger. Lovelace stated that it will need to be screen reader tested before we send it out. Campbell agreed. Conaway suggested "desired outcome" instead of "position." Harris stated same language needed to be used throughout all platforms.

Crowe stated she will be creating Issues Briefs that will be on a similar format as Bill of the Week. For each section of the Legislative Agenda, there is a QR code. This QR code will link to a policy brief on the DD Website. The target audience for these are legislators and advocates. Campbell would like feedback once we start using these.

Next Stakeholder Meeting at MYM! Conference (Fall 2024):

Campbell suggested doing a pizza dinner one of the nights during MYM! Conference to have a true stakeholder meeting. Bergeson and Owens thought this was a good idea.

Review Fall Issue:

Focus on employment/NDEAM:

Campbell stated that this issue was almost entirely focused on employment. This issue had an introduction to National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM). Judy Warth wrote a review about what the Blueprint for Change is. The government shutdown has since been fixed since this issue came out. An update was done about the Health and Human Services (HHS) happenings such as the dashboard, Hope and Opportunity in Many Environments (HOME) meetings, HHS alignment, Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation, and Medicaid town hall meetings.

Campbell stated there was a section in the issue that addressed that voting was important.

Readability/Content:

Creating change with and for persons with developmental disabilities so they can live, work, learn and play in the community of their choosing.

Harris likes that the fall issue separates areas more and is visually more easily to follow. He also thought pictures were missing when specific people were referenced. It's nice to be able to put a face with a name. Campbell agreed more pictures are needed. Bergeson wondered if plain language summary could possibly be called something more creative or something simple, such as "summary." Harris liked just calling it "summary." Crowe liked that attention is being brought that plain language is important. Campbell suggested writing why we do plain language. Lovelace suggested referring readers to the inclusive communication document.

Plan for Winter Issue:

Capitol Chat (December 1):

- Liz Matney (IME) invited to talk about HHS priorities. Carrie may be there.
- Political party chairs have been invited for a caucus Q&A. No replies have been received though from either party. May just be talking about the caucuses.

Winter Issue:

- Highlight anything we know about HHS changes, proposals.
- What to expect in 2024 (boards/commissions, tax cuts, HHS).
- Session timetable, caucus reminder, any committee changes
- Will start to track retirements ahead of March 15 (deadline to file candidacy papers)

Harris asked if the waiver reform is not happening until 2025. Campbell stated she thought that legislation will be passed in 2024 and implemented in 2025.

Lovelace stated that last year the winter issue did not come out until after the Governor's priorities are made available. Campbell stated she can wait until then again, this year.

Crowe suggested focusing on DD Council priorities also such as the workforce, the changes made at Vocational Rehabilitation (VR), and special education. Crowe spoke with Representative Brent Siegreest and he has agreed to a meeting. Rep. Siegreest is the Area Education Agency (AEA) executive director of the Association of AEA's. He has been very helpful in understanding AEA funding. Campbell stated that there are some people that may be trying to get rid of AEA's which will impact special education. Owens asked what their end game is. Campbell stated she wasn't sure. Owens stated this will negatively impact children with special needs. Bergeson stated the "What can you do" on InfoNET are critical. Bergeson stated these should be included on all publications. Providing questions to ask legislators would also be helpful.

Other Things Ahead:

Creating change with and for persons with developmental disabilities so they can live, work, learn and play in the community of their choosing.

Session Begins January 8:

- Jan. 19 (bill draft requests)
- Feb. 16 (first funnel)
- Mar. 15 (second funnel)
- Apr. 16 ("last" day)

Iowa DD Council Events:

- Virtual Open House (Jan. 4 @ Noon)
- Capitol Day (Jan. 24 @ 2-4 pm rotunda)
- Capitol Advocacy Days
- Take Your Legislator to Work is year-round!

Reminder: 2024 Meeting Schedule:

Proposed Dates:

- Friday, February 23, 2024 (Noon-1)
- Friday, May 31, 2024 (Noon-1)
- Friday, August 23, 2024 (Noon-1)

Other Business:

Harris asked if the audio from capitol chat and capitol snapshots could be put into podcasts. Campbell will look into doing this. Owens offered technical assistance with this.

Lovelace stated that the pop-up to join the network is on the DD Council website. Asked for people to test this.