

MINUTES OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES
SPECIAL BOARD MEETING
March 27, 2025
NORTHVIEW

The purpose of the Special Meeting was for Discussion and Action on MCBDDS' Budget

I. Call to Order/Board Member Attendance

Board President, John Serr, called the March 27, 2025 Special meeting of the Montgomery County Board of Developmental Disabilities Services to order at 7:03 p.m.

Members Present In-Person: President, John Serr; Madeline Iseli; Heath MacAlpine; Ralonda Holt.
Members Present Remotely: Vice-President, Elizabeth Redmon; Secretary, Richard Schultze; Valerie Jones.

Staff Presenting: Interim CEO, Kamarr Gage; Chief Operating Officer, Andrew Kinder.

~ **Vision and Mission:** Mr. Serr opened the meeting by reading the Board's Vision and Mission.

~ **Moment of Silence** for Clinton J. Brown. Mr. Brown was a community leader and former Board President of MCBDDS.

~ **Visitors' Time:** Some parents/guardians in attendance requested that Visitors' Time take place before the Budget Discussion:

MOTION: Mr. Serr moved that Visitors' Time be moved up on the agenda to before the Budget Discussion. Mr. MacAlpine seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken: Mr. MacAlpine, yea; Ms. Iseli, yea; Mr. Serr, yea; Ms. Holt, yea; Ms. Redmon, yea; Mr. Schultze, yea; Ms. Jones, yea. The motion carried unanimously.

The seven parents/guardians listed below took turns speaking about how the cuts in the budget are negatively affecting the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families. They suggested strongly that we advocate for more funding since our allocation from the Human Services Levy has remained the same since 2009.

Parents shared that DD services have been a vital lifeline to sustaining family stability and in one case DD services helped a parent considering self-harm due to being overwhelmed with caring for their child. The parents also stressed the importance of consistent staffing at recreation events because staff know their loved ones and have established relationships. A few parents were unaware of information shared in town hall meetings about budget cuts and Kamarr clarified.

Since there was a significant amount of disappointment around our Recreation program going away, Kamarr shared that our Recreation program will be intact until the end of the year and then it will be moved to a community integration model. There may not be as many dances, etc. and the staffing will change to volunteers.

Connie and Sarah Santez
Janet Peasant
Joyce Brun
Bella McDowell
Natalee Mossing
Susan Komorowski
Jane Marie Sowers

II. Budget Discussion

Andrew talked through the budget that was provided to the Board Members.

In response to Mr. MacAlpine asking “To what extent are the reductions we are looking at Mandated/required services versus non-mandated/not-required services, Kamarr said so far we haven’t had to eliminate any non-mandated services but the services are scaling back.

Mr. MacAlpine said if we go ahead and do this and reduce expenditures by the amount recommended and the county provides the additional money needed for 2026, what will happen in 2027? Andrew said we will continue to be in a deficit. Mr. MacAlpine said “so, even if we reduce the expenditures and if there is no further forthcoming enhancement of revenues, then we are going to be back in this position looking at it again next time around. Andrew said “yes, year after year.” Mr. MacAlpine added that sometimes you have to get through what’s in front of you first though.

One of the visitors asked how hard it would be to have our own levy. Kamarr said we would need the Commissioners’ permission to go onto the ballot. Discussions about a third levy have taken place but it’s not something that can happen overnight or has been promised.

In closing the budget presentation, Andrew said three tiers (budget options) were previously prepared and reviewed by county leadership and they asked us to take pieces from each one and, in doing so, we came up with the budget being presented. We were asked by the county to obtain formal Board approval to present the recommended budget to the Community Review Team for their consideration. The budget reflects \$4M in reductions, and includes a one-time fund request of \$9.17M.

Ms. Iseli asked Andrew if we are pretty confident that the one-time fund request of \$9.17M will be issued in good faith. Andrew said it was stated as though it was high probability that would be something the county could absorb for 2026 but it was also made clear that they will not sustain the level of deficit we have for 2027.

Ms. Iseli said she knows there have been conversations about possibly returning to the purely DD levy and she asked Kamarr if we can raise the issue that we would like to revisit running our own levy in earnest and with sincerity. Kamarr said they are thinking about it. Mr. MacAlpine added that he is skeptical that we would be able to go out at this point in time with this history and run an effective campaign and pass it without fracturing the entire Human Services structure in Montgomery County. While some people see that as something that is holding us back, it has also at times in the past been something that has enhanced our ability to perform across multiple spectrums in Montgomery County and he thinks we should be careful about damaging that.

Ms. Iseli added that, having been involved in a number of levies herself, she would ask for the ability to, at the very least, conduct high-quality, sincere, and professional research into the feasibility of either a third levy or a purely DD levy to pick back up on the one that was passed way back in the 70's. Ms. Iseli said she would like to have the benefit of highly-informed data so that we as a community in a collaborative effort could make good decisions for the entire community.

Mr. Serr added that the issue with the 1977 levy is that the state house just passed a bill to eliminate replacement levies. Ms. Iseli said it passed the house but it hasn't been finalized.

Mr. MacAlpine asked Andrew if the \$9.17M one-time funds are levy dollars or county general revenue dollars. Director of Human Services Planning and Development, Jessica Jenkins was in attendance and she said traditionally that would come from levy reserves.

Mr. Serr read a statement before the following motion was finalized:

“It is the duty of each member of a county board of developmental disabilities services to enact policies that are in the best interest of the persons receiving services and the county as a whole—to achieve the greatest good for the greatest number for the longest time. I know each of you understands this duty and joins me in taking it to heart.

Our legacy programs and services have each been mission-driven in express purpose of enabling people with intellectual and developmental disabilities to live fuller, more productive, and more rewarding lives. Those legacy offerings were in the best interest of the individuals we serve and in the best interest of our society, whose greatness has always been—and will always be—its goodness. I wish we could continue each legacy program and service in full. I'm sure you agree that higher standard of service and care is what this community deserves.

However, because we provide lifelong services to people with developmental disabilities and the scope of individuals' needs is expanding, we must consider the long-term sustainability of the Board, which is essential. We cannot spend money we do not have and must, as the law requires, operate within our means under a balanced budget.

Working collaboratively with the County has bought us more of a budget to balance with. Hopefully, we will have \$9.2 Million in one-time funds we didn't have before we began actively collaborating, and we'd be derelict not to consider the great deal of good we can do for a great many people over the course of the year.”

Ms. Iseli added that she too very much appreciates the collaboration with the county but she wants to reiterate that she would like to extend that collaboration to do a joint investigation into the feasibility of revisiting the original 1970's era DD levy, and the possibility of potentially putting that on the ballot at some point. Ms. Iseli stressed again to revisit this with professional rigor in terms of voter impact and feasibility and all of the important considerations thereof.

Mr. Serr agreed stating that it's very important that we consider as many different avenues as we can to increase funding so that the people we serve get the services and programs they deserve, though we would also never want to plan that in such a way to harm the Human Services Levy because to hinder that would be to hinder us and those we serve.

Ms. Redmon agreed on a lot of what the visitors were saying on how important the programs are that we are losing. The Recreation program is much more than just a fun recreation program, it connects people and has a big impact as a whole. Ms. Redmon also hopes we pursue the levy issue because we do need the funding to support the community.

Ms. Jones echoed on what has been said. She could feel the emotion coming from the visitors when they were speaking. None of this is anything anyone wants to deal with and it's very difficult to do and Ms. Jones said she would wholeheartedly agree that we need to find another way to generate revenue because ultimately something different has to happen. Reductions can only go so far without wiping out services that are very, very much needed. She agrees that going back to our own DDS levy is something that needs to be entertained.

Mr. Schultze said his heart goes out to the visitors who commented. It was very genuine and heartfelt but we have to live within our means and those are dictated by the county and we need to do whatever we can to increase those means to better serve the population.

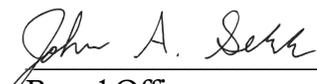
III. Approval of Budget

MOTION: Mr. MacAlpine moved that the Montgomery County Board of DD Services authorize the Interim Superintendent to proceed with the 2026 Budget recommendations as presented and to make the same recommendations and one-time fund request of \$9.17M to the Community Review Team for CY2026. Ms. Holt seconded the motion. A Roll Call vote was taken: Mr. MacAlpine, yea; Ms. Iseli, yea; Mr. Serr, yea; Ms. Holt, yea; Mr. Schultze, yea; Ms. Redmon, yea; Ms. Jones, yea. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Visitors' Time took place earlier in the meeting before item II. Budget Discussion

V. Adjournment

There being no further business to present to the Board, the meeting was adjourned.
Time: 8:30 p.m.



Board Officer

April 15, 2025

Date

**The next regular meeting of the Montgomery County Board of DDS
will take place at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2025
at Northview 8114 N. Main Street, Dayton, OH 45415**

Board Secretary/jn

Reviewed and approved by Interim CEO

Date approved by Board Secretary: March 31, 2025