

CAC MINUTES
Friday, October 9, 2020
10:00 a.m. Conference Call

Welcome & Introductions: Bob Mecca, LIFT opened the meeting. Also, in attendance were Chris Palmer, OVR; Carma Horner, Pitt Bradford; and Andrew Pennington, CAP. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Skype meeting was held.

Review of Minutes: No questions or changes.

OVR Updates

Chris Palmer, OVR informed that all DuBois OVR staff are still available to serve customers and employers during ongoing telework. All services are active and OVR is accepting referrals. OVR is entering the new federal fiscal year. The program year (per RSA) started July 1st.

October is NDEAM. The Business Services Reps are still available to talk with and assist remotely with customers and employers. BSRs are making contacts with employers.

November is AT month and historically OVR does an Assistive Technology fair in conjunction with PSU DuBois. The event this year was cancelled due to COVID. Doing something virtual had been discussed but there was not enough time available to make that work. LuAnn from PSU has found a free online training for their students and Chris will pass that information on. Anyone can sign up and participate; it is not Penn State exclusive. They are sending a letter out to previous vendors to let them know we hope to have the fair next year and to send the PSU information out.

OVR district offices are still closed for in person visits. Information is posted on our web page as well as OA's page.

OVR has had 3 waves of releases so far from the Order of Selection Waitlist. The first was in February, a second one in May and the third in August. OVR is actively working with those folks. Andrew Pennington of CAP asked if anyone came off the job retention in DuBois DO. Chris stated believing there was one in job jeopardy and just feels it is going to take some time. She has not heard statewide what those numbers look like, but staff is actively being trained, and it is being kept at the forefront. Andrew stated that the numbers he has heard have been generally low statewide as not many people are meeting the actual criteria to come off the waitlist for job retention. He indicated that most offices he has spoken to have very low numbers.

Agency Updates

Bob Mecca of LIFT stated that LIFT is still working remotely and providing services via technology. Bob likes that he can attend more meetings than ever due to use of technology without travel.

Bob reminded the CAC that if AT cannot be delivered directly to a person, they are using a no contact type delivery. It will be delivered to their front porch. Keeping services as safe as possible for all.

LIFT is still taking referrals; their standard is to return all phone messages/calls within 2 days. Andrew Pennington asked Bob if LIFT has been able to maintain all staff through COVID. Bob replied that they had. He

indicated that referrals are only down about 4 per month and that monthly statistics are maintaining for the most part.

Andrew Pennington of CAP updated that CAP is currently still working partially remotely but are phasing in meeting days in the office. CAP is currently providing all services such as information and referral, advocacy, and systemic advocacy -- they are open for all your needs. CAP will be participating with Philadelphia OVR (virtually) for transition for school to work at the autism conference.

Carma Horner of UPB stated that the semester will end for campus the week of Thanksgiving and finals will be virtual the first week of December. Students will return to campus January 19 with virtual days and in person if choosing. Faculty and staff have option of virtual and in person. With no spring break, end will be the end of April. All services for students with disabilities are continuing whether at home or on campus. Many students chose to not return – a lot of students with disabilities are schooling remotely. Carma feels that a positive thing with COVID has been having many professional development opportunities. She has been an advocate for so long for some of these things and it has been good that they have been so successful with it.

Carma informed that she has been transferred to a new department and has a new supervisor.

Andrew Pennington questioned what in-person school will look like for people with disabilities in the future. Carma stated not being sure whether they will still be able to offer these options to students with disabilities when things return to more normal. It is something she would like to advocate for, but everything is still up in the air. She has seen an uptick in the number of faculty members offering online classes and thinks it will be a bigger option for students moving forward as some staff do like it. Labs are the most challenging for online environment -- they are working on it, but it has been challenging.

Aimee Adamski, OVR shared information received from **Mark Morelli of PA Link** who was unable to attend today. PA Link has been finalizing the policy and procedures on the 3 million-dollar ACL-ADRC grant that the state was recently awarded for the PA Link. Money is to be spent on Virtual Management of ADRC Access Functions, Care Transition Services, Food Order & Delivery, Assistive Technology through Tech Owl, increase marketing of the PA Link Helpline & Outreach, Mitigate Social Isolation, and I & R Person Centered Counseling. Tech Owl is going to be awarded about \$600,000 to upgrade their assistive technology service, purchase new equipment and provide training. Adam Bell, the Lead Coordinator for the PA Link will be administering the Service area #4 allocation once money is released. They are awaiting final approval for the policy and guidelines and hope to announce it publicly within the next week.

Regarding Tech Owl, Bob Mecca of LIFT added that Rebecca at LIFT is their AT Coordinator. She can be reached at 814-781-3050 ext 204 for AT device needs. Bob stated that if an individual orders from techowl.org it will most likely be delivered by UPS; Rebecca is able to assist with those orders as well.

Carma Horner stated that she has used LIFT/Tech Owl and it was awesome. She appreciates LIFT's help.

Chris Palmer of OVR echoed Carma and Bob's previous remarks regarding the opportunities for professional development and the ability to attend many more meetings. She believes it will continue even after COVID.

Upcoming Events

Bob Mecca informed that the Fine Arts and Cultural Exhibition usually held in November has been postponed due to the pandemic. They look forward to getting back on track with things next year.

Chris Palmer informed that OVR is working towards a virtual job fair – it is still a work in progress. Career Links are working towards virtual job fairs as well. If you are not already doing it, look at our counties' CareerLink Facebook pages.

Carma Horner advised that this weekend is the "Hate Has No Home Here" rally on Saturday for Bradford and McKean County. It is going to be virtual on www.facebook.com/presbybradford They will have signups for dialogue as well. Due to the event being this weekend, Aimee will email this information out to CAC members at the conclusion of this meeting.

Next Meeting

Next meeting is scheduled for Friday, January 8th at 10:00 a.m. with an online virtual format. Invitation will be sent to CAC members prior to the meeting.