

CAC MINUTES
Friday, July 9, 2021
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; Andrew Pennington, CAP; Diana Kreydt, PSU DuBois; Mark Flacinski, parent advocate; and Kelly King, The PEAL Center. Due to the Covid-19 Pandemic, Virtual meeting was held.

Review of Minutes: No questions or changes.

OVR Updates

Chris Palmer, OVR informed the CAC that OVR staff has received notice of returning to the physical worksite on July 19th. The rest of staff in addition to critical functions will be in the office and able to be in field sites like Careerlinks, itinerant points and schools. The office will not yet be open for face to face during this phase 1. We will be able to get deliveries and daily mail at the office.

Andrew Pennington of CAP asked Chris if there has been any guidance for outbreaks like the Delta variant. What are the district offices doing to keep at bay any spreading? Chris advised only staff are coming back initially before opening to the public. The district offices have plexiglass barriers, ionizers are in the works, and staff are equipped to telework should we be directed to.

In other news, Chris discussed that the Order of Selection Waitlist is now expired for the MSD. It is still in place for SD and NSD which is how it has been for years. Those who are found eligible and MSD are being served and moved to plan status with no wait. This is huge news for OVR. The letter to stakeholders was shared on the meeting invite and reviewed during the CAC meeting. Andrew Pennington acknowledged that it was early but asked if there has been any uptick in referrals yet. Chris can't speak for other offices, but DuBois referrals are steady. She does feel we will see an increase. Andrew noted that has been his push with all the CACs he is involved with and is glad to hear that DuBois has a steady number of referrals. OVR does such great work and he is hopeful that referrals continue. He has heard of some significant drops in major cities around the country.

No new staffing changes to report. Provider updates – the DO is working with providers to ensure capacity to handle new customers. Pre-ETS continues to evolve; it is an emphasis within the agency. They are actively working on some transportation options/Provider agreements If you know of transportation providers who may be willing to do an agreement, let Chris know.

Refer to links for OA and DLI on the agenda for the most up to date OVR information.

Agency Updates

Kelly King, The Peal Center stated that they are in the planning of some training over the next year with Department of Health to bring some similar regional health training to the area including School to prison pipeline and the impact of those with disabilities. If anyone is interested, let her know.

Carma Horner, UPB stated that things are changing daily. As of today, campus is closed to visitors. Unvaccinated students or students who choose not to disclose, must wear masks everywhere. Vaccinated students must wear them indoors. Students must have a negative test or be vaccinated to return to campus. There are lots of hoops for people who are not vaccinated as the campus wants people to choose vaccination. There are incentives for vaccination as well. Classes will be in person for fall – no virtual. Carma is not sure what will happen for students wanting an exemption. Pitt has an interim president and a lot of open positions and other interim staff. They expect full workforce back in August and are having in person orientation before classes start. Andrew Pennington asked Carma what is being done about nursing students. Carma noted that Pitt does have quarantine rooms, and that students should have sheltered in place 7 days at home and 7 days at campus and will need two negative tests as well. Andrew added that there has been so much done to adapt in all aspects of business procedures to get through this pandemic.

Andrew Pennington, CAP informed that CAP is back to work in the office; they are still staggering some days partially at home for everyone. He is at home on Friday. He is involved in several policy groups with OVR, is still doing casework and working on several things that will be coming out in the future.

Mark Flacinski, Parent Advocate said that not much has changed with his family. His daughter is doing fine. When the pandemic started, she was working at the Best Western and they felt it wasn't safe, so the position was terminated. She got a position at Elk Catholic and liked it, but they are on summer break, so she is home. She is keeping busy with other activities this summer.

Diana Kreydt, PSU DuBois advised that like Pitt, Penn State is going back August 15th, but staff are able to be on campus 1 day a week; she is there on Tuesdays. Everyone will be back to the way it was before Covid. Masks will not be mandatory. They are doing incentives to get the vaccine as they can't enforce mask wearing. They are asking students who are not vaccinated to wear masks, but no way to enforce it because they can't ask the students. They have no chancellor right now and are being told it will be about a year until they get one. Chris Palmer noted for those unfamiliar, that Penn State DuBois does not have housing, thus there is a distinction between Carma Horner's (Pitt) and Diana Kreydt's (PSU) reporting

Bob Mecca of LIFT updated the CAC that LIFT is stepping up a lot in return to the office. Mondays will be all staff with Tues/Wed/Thurs having pairs of staff available. They are starting to see consumers face to face and still seeing some people via zoom as well. This will save LIFT money in mileage as they cover 6 counties; the downside is that they can't see the individual's home to see if they need help with any living issues. LIFT's numbers are very comparable to pre-covid. They have a board meeting on Monday at 1:30 p.m. It will be a hybrid meeting with some board members attending via zoom and some in person.

Chris Palmer asked Bob if LIFT hopes to get back to doing the expo, etc. in the future. Bob said that yes, they want to get back to the events they held before.

Upcoming Events

SWAG (Statewide Advocacy Group), which LIFT is a part of, is planning a virtual IL conference on September 14-16, 2021, for people with disabilities statewide as well as providers of disability services. There will be work groups throughout the day followed by fun activities. They are going to show Crip Camp one day and then will have discussions. Years ago, Bob did a similar camp through IUP and it was life changing for him. Carma Horner noted that the documentary was fantastic. One of the other days they will have CIL-ebriety

Squares game. There will also be a talent show where individuals with disabilities will be asked to send in 3 or 4 minute videos of their talent which will be voted on. Josh Blue, a comedian with disabilities, is one of their keynote speakers. Chris asked who this conference will be available to. Bob noted that it is available to individuals with disabilities, their families and agencies who provide services to people with disabilities. There is a \$10 fee unless you are a consumer of the CIL. Bob was congratulated by the CAC for being the most tenured CIL Executive Director in the state.

Kelly King asked how will people find out about the conference. Bob will get information to Chris Palmer and it can then be forwarded to the CAC. Kelly then asked if they are targeting this service area or more widely across the state. Bob informed that it is statewide. They are hoping for 400 attendees, but more are welcome. Chris Palmer asked if someone must participate for the whole conference or can they participate in smaller segments which fit their schedule. Bob believes you can do whatever you are able to do. He noted there would also be an award ceremony. Andrew Pennington asked Bob to please let the CAC know when registration is available.

Andrew Pennington, CAP, on a more personal note informed that he will be out the month of August. He and his wife are expecting their first child. He will be available by email if anyone needs him. Congratulations to the Pennington family from all.

Next Meeting

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