

**Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Monday, January 25, 2021**  
**MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES:**

Shari Brightful, Kathy Fogel, Damon Johnson, Alexander Shay, Pat Petrone, Suzanne Erb, Ali Skula, Andrew Pennington, Joe Murphy, Nick Claxton, Lynn Heitz, Melissa Good, Nick Claxton

**WELCOME:**

Suzanne Erb explained how to use Skype and welcomed everyone. Shari Brightful introduced all the attendees.

Suzanne Erb asked for approval of the minutes from the last meeting. Andrew Pennington accepted the minutes and Shari Brightful seconded. The minutes are approved.

Suzanne Erb introduced the speaker, Alexandra Skula from the Department of Health.

Ali Skula gave a presentation from the Community Preparedness Department for the City of Philadelphia on the Covid Vaccine.

In late August Ali participated in microplanning as it relates to the vaccine. All plans for vaccine distribution go through this group. Currently working on 3<sup>rd</sup> version of vaccine plan. You can visit their website for the most up to date information. They are receiving about 20,000 doses each week and this will continue for the foreseeable future. It will take a while to distribute this vaccine. They are recruiting new providers each day for distribution and are still in early Phase because they do not have much vaccine to distribute. So far they have distributed 83,000 first doses and 21,000 second doses, currently vaccinating people in phase 1A and 1B.

Multiple vaccines are being developed currently. Once it passes criteria it moves on to phase 2 and then phase 3, clinical trials. Then it goes to FDA for approval.

Emergency Use Authorization is the process that helps facilitate medicines and vaccines during public health emergency. Vaccines have to be 50% effective. They were able to develop vaccines quickly. Ali how this was able to happen.

The two vaccines currently approved are Pfizer and Moderna. They both require two doses. It is unknown how long the protection of these vaccines last. May need a booster.

Explained the vaccine trials and how they were conducted and gave details on the genetics and technology used. Ali described some symptoms that might happen after vaccine is given (side effects), how this builds immunity (immune response) and how the vaccination works.

The phases were described by the presenter and where they are (phase) in giving out the vaccine, how they are giving out the vaccine, providers, places of distribution, etc. Vaccine distribution strategies were clarified. There is a pre-registration form. It will take months to get through phase one based on the number of vaccines they are receiving (20,000) per week and the approximate number of people in this first phase (500,000).

Included resources if anyone wants to learn more regarding the vaccine and distribution.

If there are any questions, can take questions via email, [alexandra.skula@phila.gov](mailto:alexandra.skula@phila.gov). Also, if anyone has questions, Suzanne can pass them along to Alexandra.

Link for people to pre-register: [covid/vaccine/interest.@phila.gov](https://covid/vaccine/interest.@phila.gov)

There is an email inbox for any questions: [covidvax@phila.gov](mailto:covidvax@phila.gov)

Adrienne Ewing is on the Vaccine Advisory Committee.

Alex Shay will send out Powerpoint presentation.

Suzanne asked if Nick had anything he wanted to add? It seems Nick is unavailable.

#### **UPDATE FROM PHILADELPHIA BVRS:**

Shari Brightful – BVRS is continuing to advocate for vacancies. Currently on a hiring freeze. Looking to fill 7 counselor vacancies, 2 early reach coordinators, promote a VR supervisor as LaKeysha McLaurin resigned early in January.

Goals – January, 2021 assisted 88 individuals in obtaining competitive integrated employment. Has had staff meeting early in January discussing how they can best serve their customers.

Budget – has been sufficient. We have funds to provide support to individuals. Still struggling with providers invoicing in a timely manner. Possibly a delay in providing payment. Has about 1.9 million dollars that have not yet been invoiced.

Working on early stages to develop a transition unit. There are a growing number of students interested in our services. We have very limited individuals in our compliment but that does not mean we do not provide services. Will provide more information as we have more updates.

Andrew Pennington – asked if everyone came off the waiting list as of January 4, 2021? Wanted to know how many people. Suzanne would like the information also. Shari will email the information.

Shari was asked by Andrew Pennington to elaborate on the area where providers are having problems invoicing. Shari said it seems to be across the board. The invoices are not very timely, some dating back to July, 2020.

## **UPDATE FROM PHILADELPHIA BBVS:**

Damon Johnson – in regard to staffing, we just posted for a Social Worker 2 position as of January 15, 2021. Has requested two more social work positions to central office, requested to fill the business service representative and a Clerk Typist 2. Waiting for response regarding these positions.

Staff report – Vocational Rehabilitation 18 successful closures – 26's, 50 customers still on waiting list

Social Workers closed 43 cases, met their goals

Vocational Rehabilitation Technicians closed 18 customers

O&M closed 11 cases

We have a new program, related to PETS, Strive On. Twenty-three students were accepted into the program which assists students with college prep and employment. There will be two programs, one in the spring and one in the fall.

There is a workgroup for O&M and VRT's to go back into the field. Had training last week regarding what to expect when they return. Can go back based on need and safety. Damon explained what this means (job jeopardy, students, etc.). We are preparing with PPE, masks, etc. for them to go back into the field.

Damon announced he will be leaving OVR as of next Friday, is taking a position at Temple University in the office of disability.

Suzanne Erb thanked Damon for his service to BBVS customers and the community and wished him good luck at Temple. Is assuming Alex will be taking over temporarily once again.

Suzanne Erb - Does not have anything specific to report today except the state department of health information is not accessible. Suzanne asked Lynn Heitz to speak on this since she was the one having the most information.

Lynn Heitz – State Department of Health's website is not accessible as to where she could get her covid vaccine. The information is totally inaccessible to a screen reader and is in the process of writing a letter to the Secretary of Health for PA describing the inaccessibility.

Lynn congratulated Damon on his new position.

Suzanne Erb asked if there are any questions for Lynn and asked if she was going to reach out to Alexandra Scula. Lynn said Dr. Rachel Levine. Alex Shay said Governor Wolf appointed Allison Beam. Lynn asked to send it to her email and Suzanne requested an email also.

## **ASB PROGRAMS – Lynn Heitz:**

Starting January 4, 2021 – ASB has virtual programs for assistive technology, two times per week. They are sending equipment to people who participate.

Offering mobility training Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday.

Eight workshops on different apps for i-Pad.

Eight different programs they are working on virtually.

They are working on adding an art class and a ballet class.

ASB is scheduled to reopen on June 30, 2021 but Lynn does not perceive this actually happening.

Lynn asked if anyone had any questions.

Suzanne ERB said she will add ASB to the agenda from now on so Lynn has a dedicated time to speak.

Suzanne ERB said we are updating the email list for CAC meetings and to let her know if we need to add your name to the list.

Suzanne said Network for Training and Development will have interesting trainings coming up this year. [www.networksfortraining.org](http://www.networksfortraining.org).

We need to think about a date for the next meeting. It was decided to hold the next meeting April 26, 2021 at 10:00 A.M.

Suzanne asked if there was any other business.

Shari Brightful thanked Suzanne for scheduling the presenter. Suzanne said if anyone has questions for her she will pass this information on.

Andrew Pennington asked where Damon is going. Suzanne said Temple. Andrew wished Damon the best of luck.

## **CAP - Andrew Pennington:**

CAP - still working virtually, services are going on as usual. He has been attending virtual statewide meetings. Services seem to be slow, at best. Suzanne Erb asked if there were any questions for Andrew.

Suzanne ERB - Motion to adjourn – assumes everyone accepts the motion. Will see everyone on April 26, 2021.