



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council

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Executive Committee Call Written Review September 28, 2021 9:00 AM

Committee Members (P = Present) (NP = Not Present)

Cindy Duch (NP)	Passle Helminski (P)	Juliet Marsala (P)
William Del Toro Vargas (P)	Rob Wallington (P)	John Seely (P)
Michele Leahy (P)	Paul Fogle (NP)	

Other Members: None

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR): Cheryl Novak (P)

Staff Present: Michelle Gerrick (P) Chris Todd (P)

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

Mr. William Del Toro Vargas made a motion to approve today's agenda and the approval of the previous meeting minutes. Mr. Rob Wallington seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

DRAFT / DISCUSS AGENDA ITEMS FOR NOVEMBER FULL COUNCIL MEETING

- Ms. Michelle Gerrick reported a speaker from the Administration of Community Living (ACL) for the Full Council meeting in November will be available.
- Ms. Passle Helminski would like Ms. Melissa Hawkins to be asked to give a report from the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala suggested that the State Workforce Board provide a verbal report at the Full Council meeting in case members have questions. Also requested updates on 14C certifications from OVR. Asked for report

from Office of Long-term Living regarding referral pathways for employment services.

- Ms. Cheryl Novak said that she will ask Ms. Kim Robinson to provide report on the 14C certifications.
- Ms. Michele Leahy asked for data from OVR at next Full Council regarding OVR referrals regarding the Work Incentives Planning and Assistance (WIPA) programs and their providers.

DISCUSSION / RECOMMENDATION ON THE FORMAT OF 2022 FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS (VIRTUAL, IN-PERSON, HYBRID)

- Ms. Michele Leahy and Mr. William Del Toro Vargas are in favor of hybrid format for 2022 Full Council meetings until the pandemic ends.
- Mr. Robert Wallington stated that he would not attend 2022 meetings in person until the pandemic ends in the interest of safety for his family.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala stated she would not be willing to attend 2022 meetings in person in the interest of the safety of her family.
- Ms. Passle Helminski stated that she would be willing to attend 2022 meetings in person depending on the number of cases and brought up concerns about not being able to reach a quorum in the past when a hybrid format was made available.
- Ms. Michelle Gerrick stated that the additional cost of a hybrid meeting would be approximately \$4,000.00 for a total cost of anywhere from \$8000.00 - \$10,000.00 and asked members what could be put in place to ensure that enough members would attend in person to ensure that the hybrid format would be cost effective.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala asked staff to poll all members to get a sense of how many would be willing to attend in person in 2022 to ensure a hybrid format would be productive.

DISCUSSION / RECOMMENDATIONS ON 2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT

- Mr. Rob Wallington said the draft of the 2020-2021 Annual Report presented to members was professionally done. Other members agreed.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala suggested taking a screen shot for a group photo of members attending a Zoom meeting to include in the Annual Report.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala suggested asking Mr. Anthony McCloskey if he would submit his story for the Annual Report member story.
- Ms. Michelle Gerrick asked if members would like to include the OVR highlights.
- Ms. Michele Leahy agreed that would be appropriate and suggested including success stories of OVR.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas suggested adding the Order of Selection being re-opened being included in the report.

- Ms. Juliet Marsala suggested OVR outcomes, social impact data, employment data, and wage data from OVR also be included.
- Ms. Cheryl Novak informed members that success stories and other OVR data mentioned is included in the OVR Executive Director Quarterly Reports that are made available to the public and the PaRC chair before each State Board meeting and could probably be included in the PaRC Annual Report.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala suggested the OVR outcome data could be used but the customer permissions for OVR would not provide permission for PaRC to use in their own publications. She believed PaRC would have to pursue authorization to use that information.
- Ms. Michelle Gerrick informed members that the OVR Highlights do include OVR data regarding customer employment, student data, wages, a map of customers being served and other charts and graphs of previously mentioned data.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala confirmed that data would be impactful and appropriate to include in PaRC publications.

DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATION FOR PaRC ATTENDANCE AT THE National Rehabilitation Association (NRA) and National Home and Community Based Services Conference (HCBS) Conferences

- Ms. Michele Leahy recommended members attend the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Conference to better understand how funding effects employment services and the finances of those who are employed that receive waiver funding and/or Social Security.

Ms. Michelle Leahy made a motion to recommend that members virtually attend the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA). Mr. William Del Toro Vargas seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- Ms. Passle Helminski stated that both Ms. Juliet Marsala and Ms. Michele Leahy informed members that they volunteer to attend the HCBS Conference in person scheduled for December 2021.
- Ms. Michelle Gerrick reminded members that only two members are permitted to travel out of state under the Commonwealth's travel reimbursement guidelines

Mr. Robert Wallington made a motion for Ms. Juliet Marsala and Ms. Michele Leahy to attend the HCBS Conference in person. Mr. William Del Toro Vargas seconded the motion. Ms. Michele Leahy and Ms. Juliet Marsala abstained. The motion passed.

- Ms. Michelle Gerrick asked members if approval from Full Council was required before planning for members to register for the conferences.

- Ms. Juliet Marsala stated that the matter should always be submitted for vote at Full Council and if there were objections that any costs accrued for planning purposes due to the timing of the events could be recouped later.

DISCUSSION ON RECRUITMENT AND WAYS TO EFFECTIVELY TRACK THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS WHO IDENTIFY AS A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY OR A LIVED EXPERIENCE TO ENSURE THAT THE COUNCIL ALWAYS MAINTAINS A MAJORITY REPRESENTATION WHILE REMAINING DILIGENT TO THE SENSITIVE NATURE SURROUNDING THIS INQUIRY

- Ms. Juliet Marsala suggested that a voluntary form could be submitted knowing they are not required to disclose information and that the information will not impact their eligibility. Also suggested reinforcing language that encourages recruitment of those with a disability or lived experience of a disability.
- Ms. Michele Leahy stated that members need to ensure member leadership continues to be represented by those with the lived experience of a disability and those that have used disability services.

Ms. Juliet Marsala made a motion to accept the PaRC Membership recommendation for Andrew Pennington to represent the Client Assistance Program (CAP) pending the proper forms are submitted and application process is successfully completed. Ms. Michele Leahy seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION OF UCP'S LEGAL TEAM'S RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS PRESENTED IN REGARD TO THE PaRC COMMITTEE'S OBLIGATION TO FOLLOW THE SUNSHINE ACT

- Members were in agreeance that the Sunshine Act law should continue to be followed for all PaRC Committee meetings.

PASSLE HELMINSKI'S UPDATE ON THE NEED FOR VOLUNTEERS TO READ THE MISSION STATEMENT AT THE BEGINNING OF FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS

- Ms. Passle Helminski informed members that she will ask for a volunteer to read the Mission Statement at each Full Council Meeting.

Adjourn

Ms. Juliet Marsala made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. William Del Toro Vargas seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned.