



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council

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Executive Committee Meeting Draft Minutes for January 26, 2022 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

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

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

Other Members Present: Paul Fogle (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Present: Cheryl Novak, Lee Ann Stewart, Ralph Roach, Shannon Austin

Staff Present: Michelle Gerrick, Chris Todd

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Passle Helminski stated she would like to have added to the agenda elections for the Legislative Committee for Chair and Vice Chair. The Committee would also like to make a recommendation to Executive Committee to write a letter to the current Legislative Committee Chair for not responding to emails, phone calls or attending Committee meetings.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

Quorum was not met for this meeting.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

DISCUSSION of DRAFT AGENDA FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETING 02/23/22 TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- Melissa Hawkins has requested that a break be provided on the agenda for the interpreters and CART
- A suggestion was made after last meeting to include 2 Public Comment periods
- Social Media Committee & Karen Beaston, web designer to present the new PaRC website
- Overview of Updated PaRC Bylaws

FC Reports: In addition to the standing OVR reports, potential reports could include an Update on Transition as Kim Robinson shared that there is a lot happening. Transition Committee is scheduled for meeting this Thursday.

POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVE DRAFT AGENDA FOR FEBRUARY 23, 2022 FC MEETING

- Ms. Passle Helminski reviewed the draft agenda for the upcoming Full Council (FC) meeting which includes a break for interpreters, two Public Comment periods, overview of the website and the Bylaws, conference and committee reports, and OVR reports.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala inquired about specifying that the first Public Comment period be about agenda items and the second a general Public Comment period.
- Members agreed the Public Comments were okay as they are listed.
- Ms. Cindy Duch agreed that report from OVR regarding Transition services should be included in the FC agenda.
- Ms. Cheryl Novak stated that overviews of the Financial Needs Test (FNT), Supported Employment, and Audiological Services could potentially be included in report given by Ms. Shannon Austin during FC meeting and that she would ask her about it if she is not able to join the meeting.
- Ms. Shannon Austin agreed to give update on FNT during the FC meeting.

RECRUITMENT

Update: January 7, 2022, PaRC received Julia Barol's (Community Rehabilitation Provider) and Lynn's Heitz's (Sensory Disabilities) approval for appointment to the Council as of September 21st, however, both are currently awaiting the Oath of Office forms

OVR has inquired with L&I and is awaiting guidance from Governor's Office

Current Openings on the Council:

State Workforce Development Board

Young Adult

CAP (Currently awaiting approval of Andrew Pennington)

Openings on the Council as of July 2022:

Business/Industry/Labor – Susan Soderberg: Lancaster County (Central)

Cognitive Disabilities – Passle Helminski: Erie County (Western)

Intellectual Disabilities – Deb Arcoleo: Lancaster County (Central)

IDEA Parent Training & Info. Center Representative – Cindy Duch: Allegheny County (Western)

Rehabilitation Counselor – Juliet Marsala: Philadelphia County (Eastern)

Review and approve potential applicants:

Jessica Keogh: application, letter of recommendation and resume attached
Jessica has confirmed her interest in membership and may best serve in the following capacity:

Representative of a parent training and information center established pursuant to Section 671 of the individuals with Disabilities Education Act,

Representative of disability advocacy groups representing:(I) Individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory and mental disabilities, and (II) Individuals' representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves.

Current or former applicants for, or recipients of, vocational rehabilitation services.

Robert Savakinus: application, letter of recommendation, and resume attached

Robert has confirmed his interest in serving on the council and believes that he would best serve in the *Business, Industry/Labor or Voc. Rehab Counselor* category.

POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVE JESSICA KEOG AND ROBERT SAVAKINUS FOR MEMBERSHIP TO THE COUNCIL

- Ms. Passle Helminski informed members she already is asking for associates to apply to the PaRC during her CAC meetings.
- Ms. Cindy Duch informed members she is awaiting replies from staff regarding recruitment efforts through her current employer at the parent training and information center.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala stated that she does not think applicant Mr. Robert Savakinus would be eligible for the Voc. Rehab Counselor category based on his resume.
- Mr. Paul Fogle informed members that he does not think Ms. Jessica Keogh would be eligible for Representative of a parent training and information center position on the Council and to be eligible would have to fall under the category of Representative of disability advocacy groups representing:(I) Individuals with physical, cognitive, sensory and mental disabilities, and (II) Individuals' representatives of individuals with disabilities who have difficulty in representing themselves or are unable due to their disabilities to represent themselves.
- Ms. Passle Helminski asked staff to request from applicants, assurance if they would be eligible with the previously discussed slots.

PaRC NEW WEBSITE

Michele Leahy, Chair of Social Media committee to provide update on PaRC website and make recommendation of additional expense related to purchasing

images for the new site to ensure diversity of all races and disabilities.
Additional cost includes 10 images for approx. = \$994.00

POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF ADDITIONAL EXPENSE RELATED TO PURCHASING IMAGES FOR NEW PaRC WEBSITE TO ENSURE DIVERSITY

- Ms. Michele Leahy stated she wanted to thank members for being so helpful and engaged. Last update to the website was 20 years ago and wanted to ensure that the new site covers accessibility and diversity. Stated issues with finding images that portray diversity of disability and race along with difficulty finding images that are not overused on many other sites that are free to use or inexpensive. Had staff screen share photos that could be potentially purchased that would solve those issues by showing more diversity and are asking for an increase in the website budget.
- Ms. Cindy Duch stated that she believes there is money in the budget for the extra expense, likes the pictures that were shown, and how they show people who are at their jobs.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala inquired if there was thought to reaching out to providers for images to highlight employers, asked if we looked at other sites that are minority owned or disability owned, and asked how members decided to use DisabilityImages, who from her understanding are no longer minority or disability owned after being bought out from another company.
- Ms. Michele Leahy explained that this was just one of many websites that were explored for images for the site, DisabilityImages was owned by people with disabilities and did not know they were bought out, and that members have gone to providers asking for images but has the problem that access to the images would only be for a limited time based on the photo releases. Will provide a full presentation of the site during the Full Council meeting that includes a history timeline, links to resources, Council information that is all much more engaging and fully accessible for users than the current site.

PaRC BYLAWS UPDATE / GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - Paul Fogel

POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVAL OF ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

- Mr. Paul Fogle reported that Committee is about half way to three quarters way through the review of the current Bylaws document, Committee members and staff have been very helpful with the process, Committee is suggesting the formation of a Governance Committee that would determine process for elections, Council vacancies, logistical concerns for meetings, will provide more detailed language regarding the Governance Committee in the future. Committee is also ensuring the

Member Handbook syncs with the Bylaws that will go in depth for member reimbursement and other concerns and looking to remove the decision making matrix. Hopes to have the final recommendations on the Bylaws update ready for a vote by May 2022.

- Ms. Passle Helminski stated that a Governance Committee would also review the Bylaws, Member Handbook, and other documents annually.

CSAVR SPRING CONFERENCE

Virtual Conference (agenda not yet available)

Tuesday, April 12th 12:00 noon - 5:00pm ET

Wednesday, April 13th 12:00 noon - 5:00pm ET

Thursday, April 14th 12:00 noon - 5:00pm ET

Conference Registration Fees

Early bird through March 14, 2022

Full Conference

State Agency Personnel & State Rehabilitation Council:

Early by 10/15 \$180.00

Late: \$195.00

Group Rate 5-8 State Agency Staff ONLY:

Early by 3/14 \$850.00

Late: \$900.00

Single Day Registration Member:

Early by 3/14 \$40.00

Late: \$55.00

Single Day Registration Non-Member:

Early by 3/14 \$50.00

Late: \$65.00

Non-CSAVR State Agency Staff, Business Partner, or Individual

Attendee:

Early by 3/14 \$200.00

Late: \$215.00

POSSIBLE ACTION: APPROVE COUNCIL MEMBERS REGISTRATION FEE OF CSAVR CONFERENCE

- Ms. Michele Leahy expressed interest in attending the CSAVR Conference. Mr. Paul Fogle stated he could attend one day of the Conference.

DISCUSS AUGUST AND NOVEMBER 2022 FC MEETING FORMAT

POSSIBLE ACTION: To Conduct another Member Survey

- Ms. Passle Helminski highly recommends that the Council remains virtual for FC meetings for the remainder of the Calendar Year 2022. Will need assistance with adding that to the FC Agenda and would like this to be discussed at the next FC meeting due to contractual obligation/concerns with the Hilton Hotel for future meetings.

- Ms. Cindy Duch, Mr. Paul Fogle, Ms. Michele Leahy, and Ms. Juliet Marsala agree with preference to remaining virtual due to remaining concerns over COVID-19 pandemic.
- Ms. Michele Leahy suggested that another poll would not be necessary at this time due to results of last poll.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE:

POSSIBLE ACTION: TO APPROVE PaRC STATE POSITION

PAPER/LEGISLATION AND FEDERAL POSITION PAPER/LEGISLATION

- This information was not discussed.

FISCAL REPORT FOR 2nd QUARTER (OCTOBER, NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2021)

POSSIBLE ACTION: TO APPROVE THE FISCAL REPORT FOR 2ND QUARTER

OVR UPDATES

- This information was not discussed.

ADDITIONAL COMMITTEE UPDATES/REPORTS TO INCLUDE CONFERENCES AND OTHER COMMITTEES THAT PaRC MEMBERS SERVE ON

- Ms. Cindy Duch provided report from the Employment 1st Oversight Commission meeting; they received updates from HGAC, Community Health Choices, MCO discussion, ODP, CAPS (a small program that supports people with autism), conversation with the Governor's Office asking for measurable goals, objectives, and recommendations from the Employment 1st Oversight Commission.
- Ms. Juliet Marsala reported on her attendance of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Conference; Medicare and Medicaid strategic focus for 21-22-23 and beyond for addressing health disparities, focus on the American Rescue Plan Act and how states can collectively disperse those funds for the enhanced 10% Federal match which include opportunities for employment. Association for Community Living (ACL) outlined strategy for next 3 years of joint housing partnership with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and elevating HCBS.
- Ms. Michele Leahy reported on her attendance of the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Conference; would like to echo the items Ms. Juliet Marsala reported, sessions that covered employment did not teach attendees how to recreate their success with discussed projects, disappointed in lack of accessibility at the conference, lack of

focus on employment regarding integration and community, and was very pleased with one session that covered Community HealthChoices (CHC) engagement.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned.