



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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## OVR Policy/Customer Satisfaction Committee Draft Minutes for May 12, 2022

### Members Present (P)

William Del Toro Vargas (P)  
Deb Arcoleo (NP)  
Julia Grant Barol (P)

Passle Helminski (P)  
Paul Fogle (NP)  
Susan Tomasic (NP)

### Not Present (NP)

Michelle Paonessa (P)  
Robert Wallington (NP)

**Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present:** Lee Ann Stewart, Cheryl Novak, Tracie Maille, Ralph Roach, James Whitonis, Ryan Hyde

**Guests Present:** Stacie Andrews (Hiram G. Andrews Center, HGAC), Jim Thomas (Hiram G. Andrews Center, HGAC), Marci Katona (Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, BVRS), Dawn Sokol (Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services, BBVS)

**PaRC Staff Present:** Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

### CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Mr. William Del Toro Vargas called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

### ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

No additions.

### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

There was no quorum for today's meeting.

### DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

#### Discussion of Nominations for Committee Chair and Vice Chair

#### Possible Action Item: Recommendation of Committee Chair and Vice Chair

- Members did not have quorum to nominate Committee Chair and Vice Chair.

#### Review and Discussion of Committee Budget and Goals for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

#### Possible Action Item: Recommendation of 2022-2023 Committee Budget and Goals

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas asked the Budget and Goals document be shared on the screen via Zoom and reviewed each goal with attendees.
- Ms. Passle Helminski stated a lot of Citizen Advisory Committees' (CACs') are not currently active and inquired about how to ensure the goal will be reached regarding Goal #3 Step 4. Ensure Citizen Advisory Committees' (CACs') access to OVR policies and procedures for review and comment, so that the Council may have an opportunity to incorporate CAC input into its own feedback. Inquired if CACs receive policies and procedures from OVR. Suggested ensuring this information also be shared with BBVS and ODHH. Stated her CAC in Erie, PA has a standing meeting each month which may be helpful for other CACs to ensure active participation and collaboration with employers, OVR, and stakeholders.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated that information is sent to District Administrators and probably did not make it clear to share it with their local CACs but could add that to their list of practices. Information is always shared with stakeholders and the public.
- Ms. Marci Katona stated that as the former District Administrator (DA) for the Pittsburgh area she understands the current struggle for membership and participation for the CACs and recently reached out to OVR staff regarding the goal of maintaining CAC meetings and communication. Collaboration and support to continue these improvements is much appreciated.
- Ms. Cheryl Novak stated that a lot of CACs have done a great job with sharing information about their meetings and shares that information with PaRC staff. Agrees there are also a lot of CACs that are working toward becoming more active. Stated she is currently working on updating a list of CAC information.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas asked OVR to outline more details about CAC functions and how they are staffed/organized. Inquired who is responsible for taking a lead role for each Committee and to ensure CAC members are being appointed. Suggested having a DA join a PaRC Policy Committee meeting within the next few months, inquired how the Council can assist with CACs, recommended OVR take a closer look at the structure of the CACs to create a model on how they should be designed throughout the Commonwealth to determine how often meetings should occur and OVR involvement. Stated the Council has not received very much public comment, and this may be due to lack of CAC activity.
- Ms. Cheryl Novak stated the purpose is to have members of the community have a voice and involvement within each of the District Offices and an opportunity to share thoughts and concerns about services. Meeting frequency varies from monthly to quarterly, District Administrators or their staff assist with their CAC operations directly. Each DA oversees the process of CAC activity and membership.
- Ms. Passle Helminski wanted to clarify that when OVR is mentioned it is also including BBVS and ODHH to ensure inclusivity. If PaRC Bylaws are approved next week the Council's new Governance Committee could be involved in overseeing/reviewing the PaRC's CAC involvement.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated that in the past creative ideas to increase CAC participation included evening meetings, virtual meetings, expanded options to join, and suggested more collaboration with the Council for additional ideas moving forward.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas asked OVR if the State Board could be more involved with the collaboration of CACs with their DA's and the PaRC.
- Mr. Ryan Hyde stated that DA's and other leadership staff will be asked to provide communication to re-invigorate CAC activity. Agreed asking the Board for participation or recommendations is a good suggestion.

- Ms. Michelle Paonessa inquired if deaf people are being involved and informed about CACs. Stated that the deaf community has not been informed about CAC involvement and would love to collaborate. Stated importance of being informed on how and when to participate, provided access to accommodations, and information about when to provide invitation to meetings. Agreed that it would be great to collaborate with the Council as well.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas agreed and stated that this is something that the attendees are trying to address and collaborate as this is not only an issue for those who are blind or deaf but an issue throughout all of OVR. This is also an issue for the PaRC which will provide assistance and make recommendations for next steps. Inquired if it would be possible to gather updated information from each CAC for every district including Bylaws. Inquired if CAC information could also be included on the OVR website.
- Mr. Ryan Hyde stated that the website is controlled by Labor and Industry, but they could request this information be placed on the site or within OVR's social media.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart and Ms. Passle Helminski agreed that CAC information is provided on the PaRC website.
- Members agreed to consider action steps for Goals #5 and #6 to better achieve these goals.

## **OVR Updates**

### **Update on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Statement of Work**

- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart reported that the CSNA Statement of Work has been forwarded to their Procurement Division. Once available, the final draft will be provided to PaRC and next steps will be outlined for procurement of the next CSNA project. RSA provided revisions for the State Plan 2-year Modification that will become effective in July 2022. One revision includes adding language to Description L to address Transportation Issues within the CSNA. OVR is currently working to improve transportation access for people with disabilities. The other revision requested by RSA is to include more measurables for the success of OVR goals and that language will be added to Description O; State Strategies of the State Plan.

### **Review and Discussion of OVR Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas inquired if OVR has the Council's previous recommendations on Customer Satisfaction Surveys.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated OVR has the Council's recommendations and currently have resource management difficulties along with lack of control over CWDS and will continue to work to resolve these issues to improve survey response and data collection.

## **Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC)**

### **Information about HGAC Customer Satisfaction Survey Process**

### **Information about HGAC Student Council or Student Advisory Committee**

- Ms. Stacie Andrews reported that there are two branches of the Student Advisory Committee. One covers Student Life issues and another cover Education issues and each meet monthly with HGAC staff and managers of the facilities at HGAC to streamline communication. Meeting minutes are also provided to HGAC management to address Student Advisory Committee concerns. Student Satisfaction Surveys are provided at the end of each service provided. Each Department has surveys for the students and that data is reviewed during HGAC management's data planning meetings for review of comments and data monthly. This

information is used for short and long-term planning. A member of the Student Advisory Committee is involved in the Student Code of Conduct meeting annually and surveys are also used to improve student involvement and input throughout other departments.

- Mr. Jim Thomas reported students complete and end of term survey on course and instructor performance to review data on instructor performance. Various surveys are completed with graduates of the education and training programs to collect data about student employment. Additional data is collected from student employers to evaluate training and education provided.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas inquired if Student Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public.
- Ms. Stacie Andrews reported that the meetings are comprised of students and HGAC staff.
- Mr. Jim Thomas reported Program Advisory Committees meet twice annually with employer and practitioners of each training field for comprehensive review. Public input is provided for all training programs. There are ten Program Advisory Committees that are comprised of at least three individuals.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas informed attendees that Committee is planning to add a goal for the HGAC and to request information regarding employment outcomes, deliverables, and data regarding the HGAC budget.

### **Schedule next Committee meeting**

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas requested staff assist with polling for Committee to meet within the next month via email.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM