

## **CAC Meeting Minutes for 11/16/2018**

The CAC meeting was held at the office of BBVS at 531 Penn Avenue, First Floor, Pittsburgh Pa. at 10:00 a.m. on Nov. 16, 2018.

**In Attendance:** In the office: Tom Burgunder; Joe Wassermann; Barb Peterson; Rich Fischer; Chris Hunsinger; Shannon Austin, BBVS Pittsburgh District Administrator; and Larry Shock, BBVS Pgh Assistant District Administrator. Participating on the phone were: Mike Zaken, Sue Lichtenfels, Terri Luke, Carla Hayes, Bob Nagy.

The first item on the agenda was White Cane Day. There was good contact with people in Market Square about White Cane Day, with the help for white cane users from the BBVS office acknowledged by Mike Zaken. Joe made contact at that event with a couple of people who sounded like they were seriously thinking about learning some O&M skills either from BBVS or from BVRSP. Bonnie Dodson-Burk brought five O&M students from Pittsburgh Public Schools, which put a younger face on the event.

Barb Peterson from BVRSP said that they might be doing White Cane Day next year at more locations to gain more awareness. BVRSP had too many chocolate candy canes left over, 26 boxes, so they may change something about how they publicize the event or what they will actually be doing.

Shannon Austin suggested adding participants like employers in some way. In the past, BVRSP had done something with the pharmacy school at Duquesne University in conjunction with this event.

Second agenda item, was a report on Vision Works seminar held in conjunction with the PCB Conference on Oct. 19. Tom Burgunder reported about the logistics of rearranging the tables in the exhibit area and the issues with when vendors packed up because of crossed wires between the hotel and BBVS and PCB. Tom said everything else worked out well.

Shannon would like to revisit the employer side of the program with more interaction between employers and registrants in the future. The attendance for Vision Works attendance was lower - 110 people vs. 160 in 2017.

Cynthia Ingraham gave good information about hiring deaf-blind people in her keynote presentation.

Adam Blank had a lot of energy during his presentation at lunchtime. He gave the students an engaging talk. There were about 30 students in attendance. The exhibit area was filled. Shannon said that the room met ADA regulations for mobility. Tom said that he would like to read the ADA regulations so that he can make sure they are met when PCB meets with Harrisburg.

Shannon will do introductions for us in the Harrisburg BBVS office so that PCB can get a handle on whether they would like to make any presentation or have a full program in conjunction with the PCB Conference in October 2019 in Harrisburg. There may well be less space and flexibility in Harrisburg at the Crowne Plaza.

Carla Hayes complained that the panel she was on had more questions than time although she prepared answers for all of the questions. Shannon suggested that

perhaps we could make the panel smaller, do better answer guidelines and time guidelines as well. Shannon made the panel times longer at the Work Matters Summit program, which was held on November 2, 2018. That may have been an improvement.

Rich Fischer asked about NAVCOG being active all year at the Doubletree since it had been set up for the past two years for the PCB Conference. No answer from NavCog at the time of this writing.

Shannon gave a report on the Work Matters Summit. They had the employer section speaking to what GoodWill, the City of Pittsburgh, CVS, and UPMC are doing in the hiring of disabled people. There was a speaker who shared his experiences as a person finally diagnosed with Dyslexia as an adult who was then able to do more than paint lines on a parking lot as a job. In the break-out sessions, OVR/employer engagement, and Assistive Technology were conducted in the morning. The lunchtime speaker was a composer and professor in music who is on the autism spectrum. There were two afternoon break-outs. One on accessibility and one on Partnerships. One of the results of the day was that Shannon had contact from someone at the state Civil Service office who does training units for supervisors and asked about putting a unit together about reasonable accommodations. Highmark, UPMC, and PNC Bank also got in touch with Shannon about employment activity. That had all happened in less than ten days since the Work Matters Summit ended.

Shannon hopes that the Employment First goal set by the Governor will make agencies think about accommodation, accessibility, knowledge of what can indeed be done, and change paradigms within the State employment system. Chris Hunsinger mentioned that Ryan Hyde said the Civil Service will be using a new system in January 2019 that will allow people to apply for some jobs using this form online without actually having to do a Civil Service test.

Shannon pointed out that government offices are so compartmentalized in state government that they did not step outside their boundaries in the beginning. Gus Laffey and Becky Knaub from BBVS Central Office might have tested the new Civil Service site.

On the employment front, Terry Luke mentioned that the Keystone people are still looking to fill positions in Boyers. Shannon mentioned that the Erie office had been working with them and that she has been trying to get them to come to speak about the jobs with this office.

Mike Zaken made a motion that minutes for the August CAC meeting be approved. Rich Fischer seconded.

It was suggested that we check with Lynn Fox about PATTAN and about a School for Blind Children employees becoming members of this CAC group now that she works at WPSBC.

Joe Wassermann asked for more possible information about where we stand in relation to the new director of BBVS. When the ACBP meeting was held, John Horst stated the PCB position that we would like to be a part of the selection process. John asked why they want our opinion through the year at the local CAC meetings and the ACBP meeting, and then don't have any plans to include us in any way for filling a position like director. Ryan Hyde told us that the OVR Director position would

probably be filled in January 2019, and then that person would go on to announce the position of Director of BBVS. Shannon said that she didn't even have these dates that Ryan gave us, but since the ACBP meeting was after the election, he knew that some things would stay the same and no one would be swept out of a position.

**Staff updates.** There is nothing new on positions that can and can't be filled. They finally have Spero Pipakis set to start work Thanksgiving week. He will get to use some of the new hiring modules that have been devised for employees. Also, Spero will be getting some advice from the Business Services Reps at OVR who already have a system in place for working with employers.

Shannon said they have interviewed a social worker and are waiting for the hiring authorization. They are still working on the VRT position that will be shared with Erie office, who will use that person as a O&M specialist. Interviewing for this at the end of November 2018. Hopefully both will be onboard in January 2019.

There were some glitches in posting positions, figuring out which list to use because of the changing job hiring system. Some of the delays that the old system had built into it have been eliminated with the new NEOGOV system.

Shannon went briefly over the office goals with closures and all were met. The office was at 110% of goals. The new placement goals for jobs is now more than 90 and not 82 as was in 2018. Offices are looking at strategies to place people and review the cases when people are either in Status 20 or Status 22, which are the status situations where employment is close on the horizon. They hope to use Spero as another contact to see what people might need as well as a job coach.

The Business Services Rep can do a lot of coordinating with other offices, contacting employers, locating resources, shadowing jobs to know how they are done.

Mike Zaken asked about in what kinds of jobs are BBVS customers being placed. This information and answer to Mike's question will be another agenda item for the next meeting.

Shannon asked Barb to speak to what kinds of NIB work BVRSP is doing. Barb said that the work is primarily manufacturing work.

The office had been working on a strategic plan.

Discussion ensued about outreach. The outreach efforts might be around companies, community services, collaboration partnerships and linkages, agencies involved in blindness, more on aging adults, coordinating services for aging, and working with the Helen Keller group.

Joe asked a question about why older blind cases take so long when you can't spend more than \$500 per person. Shannon said some of the delays are health related for older adults, some are staff related not having enough staff to serve the person.

Shannon said that the criteria for doing jobs and figuring out who gets service and when is a local office decision. People at the top of the list are those with job jeopardy, safety issues, impending institutionalization, limited family support and going off to college.

We asked what information has to be in the case before referral to additional staff. Shannon will share the criteria for the cases used in this office.

Larry Shock gave a report about using the Helen Keller National program. Someone wanted a community based evaluation for a deaf-blind client who is in a waiver program. That had been done in the past and BBVS didn't think doing it again would get a better result. The waiver people were at first not happy with using this outside person to help with the issues involved. BBVS took advantage of the expertise of the Helen Keller National organization with Cynthia Ingraham their regional representative for Pennsylvania. Once they called her to consult, they put together a list of five deaf-blind individual that they could ask her for help with and asked her to speak at the Vision Works Expo on Oct. 19. Cynthia spent several days in town working with the cases. The waiver people finally saw the advantages for Natasha of Cynthia, a new counselor, hearing aids and O&M issues that might be revisited. Because of the complicated issues with the Community Services agency, OVR, and Waiver program coordinating services for NB, a deaf-blind client, BBVS was looking for additional advice on solutions.

They also got some advice about workplace issues for SR, another deaf-blind client who is working at a personal care facility.

Cynthia spoke with another deaf-blind client who has been placed in retail who is satisfied with this position and had several positions that failed for her in the past. Cynthia suggested that BBVS do articles for JVIB to spotlight success stories letting people know about the good things happening in the office. That is a task for 2019. She suggested documentation with videos and pictures showing how jobs are adapted for people being placed.

Cynthia talked about the new position being started in Pennsylvania. Cynthia also talked to two other deaf-blind consumers, but Shannon didn't have information about success or outcome with those people.

There was no old business.

New business consisted of giving us the dates for the 2019 CAC meetings.

Meetings for 2019 will be on February 1, May 3, August 2 and November 1, 2019. Tom Burgunder moved for adjournment Rich Fischer seconded.

Respectfully Submitted by Chris Hunsinger

Sent from my iPhone