



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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OVR Policy & State Plan / Customer Satisfaction Committee Draft Minutes for June 7, 2022

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

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

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

Michelle Paonessa (NP)
Robert Wallington (P)
Lynn Heitz (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: Lee Ann Stewart, Cheryl Novak, James Whitonis

Project Staff Present: Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

Moderator of Zoom Present: Suzanne Dunleavy

Interpreters Present: Jessica Bentley Sassaman

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

Ms. Passle Helminski motioned to approve the agenda and past meeting minutes. Ms. Lynn Heitz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Review and Discussion of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Statement of Work Draft

- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated that the CSNA Statement of Work draft is to be provided for procurement of a vendor to create the assessment over the next

three years. OVR leadership met with Policy Committee members in March to discuss requirements of the assessment and additional targeted goals, which are not requirements. As the CSNA is a Federal requirement, OVR cannot make a lot of changes to the focus of the project. There are five prescribed minimal requirements for the CSNA that collect data that will fulfill the needs of individuals with disabilities within the state. The additional targets include technology needs and the needs of immunosuppressed groups.

- Ms. Lynn Heitz stated that she would like to ensure that all documents provided by OVR are accessible to blind individuals. Would like to ensure that all documents are accessible to ensure that a vendor who is blind will be provided an equal opportunity to bid.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated that it is important that all OVR documents are vetted to ensure accessibility for all individuals and that it is a requirement stated in the language of the CSNA Statement of Work that accessibility is ensured. Will inform procurement to ensure that the invitation for bid is in an accessible format.
- Ms. Julia Barol inquired about the section that mentions the approval and improvement of Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRP) and what specifically is required as far as trainings, benchmarks, reports, and other information.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated that CRPs will be asked to provide information about their services and what changes are being made to help meet their needs.
- Ms. Lynn Heitz asked if providers will be assessed on their ability to work with individuals who are blind or visually impaired.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated that this is a very broad assessment that usually begins with gathering data from the census in Pennsylvania and compare that with National data. The blind, visually impaired and deaf-blind population will be a part of that assessment. There is no discrimination within disability groups and more specifics that are focused on targeted goals. Each three-years targeted goals are explored but this is not required. Possibly the next cycle could focus on a specific disability group for the targeted goals which will be a part of the development of the next State Plan. Inquired if there was a particular resource that could be partnered with to provide insight in understanding the needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired.
- Mr. Paul Fogle inquired if there was a requirement for a sub-contractor with disability experience to focus on different disability groups.
- Ms. Lynn Heitz suggested that Sky's the Limit Communications may be a resource to partner with regarding understanding the needs of individuals who are blind and visually impaired. Voiced concerns about Temple University, Institute on Disabilities because of her less than satisfactory experience with her internship in 2005.
- Ms. Julia Barol explained that there have been many positive changes in leadership and throughout Temple University, Institute on Disabilities that should also be considered.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart assured members that representatives from the PaRC Policy Committee could be included in the first meeting with the agency that is awarded procurement of the next CSNA to ask questions from the onset of the project.

- Ms. Passle Helminski suggested that going forward ODHH and BBVS are included in the CSNA SOW development to provide comments.

Mr. Paul Fogle motioned that the Committee support the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Statement of Work Draft. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Discussion of Nominations for Committee Chair and Vice Chair

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas nominated Ms. Lynn Heitz for Committee Chair. There were no additional nominations for Chair and Ms. Lynn Heitz is recommended for Committee Chair by acclamation.
- Ms. Passle Helminski nominated Mr. William Del Toro Vargas to Vice-Chair. Mr. William Del Toro Vargas removed the nomination and expressed that he would like to provide other members the opportunity to do so. Mr. William Del Toro Vargas nominated Ms. Julia Barol for Vice-Chair. There were no additional nominations for Vice-Chair and Ms. Julia Barol is recommended for Committee Vice-Chair by acclamation.

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

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas stated that he would like to add a Step 6 to Goal #3 to invite the Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC) to provide updates regarding their Student Advisory Committee. Stated potential efforts for the Council to assist HGAC with creating a Student Advisory Committee that is open to the public. Inquired about request for information and updates about Citizen Advisory Committees (CAC).
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart informed members that staff from HGAC at the last meeting did report on the activities of their Student lead Committees and that Council members would be welcomed by HGAC to schedule a tour of the facility to learn more about HGAC.
- Ms. Passle Helminski and Mr. William Del Toro Vargas suggested adding action steps to Goal #3 Step 4 including:
 - a.) Ensure that all CACs will provide meeting information to the Council.
 - b.) Share the structure of all CACs across the Commonwealth.
 - c.) All CACs provide the Council with their meeting agendas and minutes after each meeting.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas recommended adding a Step 4 to Goal #4 that states: Provide recommendations to make the surveys accessible to all customers.
- Members discussed the importance of providing accessible surveys and increasing survey responses.
- Ms. Lynn Heitz inquired about having clerical staff use the randomly generated list of customers to contact them by phone to receive survey feedback.

- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart informed members that this summer interns employed at OVR will possibly be starting to make person to person calls to the improve survey process.
- Ms. Passle Helminski stated the importance of having a representative of the Employment First Oversight Commission from the Council report to the Policy Committee on the happenings of the Commission and the I Want to Work bill.
- Members agreed on the importance of filling the soon to be available slot on the Commission as the current member will soon be cycling off from the Council.
- Members discussed steps for Goal #5 including:
 - 1.) Evaluate the data included in the interim report and the final report in a timely fashion.
 - 2.) Based upon the results of the CSNA meet with OVR leadership to collaboratively develop the goals and priorities of the next State Plan.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart provided information about the process of the CSNA and State Plan. Included in a section of the State Plan is the results of the CSNA in chart form, which is information about the general population of Pennsylvania's residents. This information is used to develop the goals and priorities of the State Plan. Next Spring 2023 Council will be invited to meet with OVR to begin to review the CSNA that will be completed in September 2022 to develop the goals for the next State Plan which will go into effect in July 2024.
- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas suggested the continuation of the development of the Committee goals for the next meeting due to time constraints.

Public Comment

- Ms. Lynn Heitz stated to OVR staff to please not take her comments personally and appreciates the efforts of taking her comments and notes.
- Ms. Lee Ann Stewart stated she understood and thanked the member for her comment.

Schedule next Committee meeting

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas and Ms. Lynn Heitz requested that staff poll members to hold a meeting for July 19, 2022, if possible.

Adjourn

Mr. Paul Fogle motioned to adjourn. Ms. Passle Helminski seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.