



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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Hiram G Andrews Center (HGAC) Ad hoc Committee Meeting Minutes for October 12, 2022 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

William Del Toro Vargas (P) Julia Grant Barol (P)
Paul Fogle (P)

Lynn Heitz (P)

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

Hiram G Andrews Center (HGAC) Staff Present: Jill Moriconi, Chris Zakraysek, Jim Marker

PaRC Staff Present: Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Jeanette Alexander called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM after quorum was established.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol for approval of the agenda. Ms. Lynn Heitz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Hiram G. Andrews Center (HGAC) Updates

- Ms. Jill Moriconi reported on continued difficulties and efforts for in-person attendance to return to pre-COVID-19 levels. Efforts include streamlining admissions process, increasing admissions staff, outreach efforts at post-

secondary locations, partnering with businesses to meet the needs of the workforce, evaluation of pre-employment training programs, recently placed a program in escrow due to lack of industry demand, and working on a new program potentially for 2023 that would train students for the Child Care / Child Development Associate Program. Another priority is to increase and improve marketing efforts which include a website upgrade and virtual tour. Student placement and employment is another priority which have to meet OVR, RSA, and accrediting body performance measures. Career Services department has been moved into the education department and Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI) to be more directly aligned with programs. Customer Service is another priority to meet the needs of students, employers, and stakeholders. Additional focuses include increased hiring, improved data collection, and capital improvements of the center's facilities and equipment.

- Mr. Paul Fogle inquired if all of the apprenticeships and job placement programs are located in Johnstown.
- HGAC staff stated that apprenticeships are located throughout the Commonwealth which include call centers, trades, the culinary field and a multitude of different occupational fields. Placement and externships look at partnerships across the state and work with various OVR District Offices.
- Ms. Lynn Heitz inquired who is working on placement of blind customers with HGAC given the daunting inaccessibility. Stated improvements for accessibility should include individual programming and courses, availability of braille and assistive technology. Stated HGAC has a history of inaccessibility for the blind community and that people who are blind are capable of completing many programs such as auto mechanics if given the opportunity through accessibility.
- Ms. Moriconi stated that HGAC is working with BBVS to identify improvements in accessibility, CART, assistive technology, assessments and training, initiatives to implement a GPS system, consultation with advocacy groups for assistive technologies, and are consulting with board members and experts to make improvements and ensure accessibility is done right. Agreed that HGAC needs to do better and that current programs offer the opportunity to provide reasonable outcomes.
- Ms. Julia Barol inquired what data is being collected and what additional data will be collected moving forward.
- HGAC staff stated that data collection includes admissions, discharge, job placement, cohorts, continuing education, referrals, trends for current and upcoming terms, customer satisfaction, and employer satisfaction. Reported a current benchmark of 4.2 out of 5 for customer satisfaction. Employers are contacted at 6-, 12-, and 18-month intervals and includes a 95% satisfaction of graduates. Lotus Notes was established in the 1980s for data collection and HGAC is currently switching to Focus School Software. Implementation began pre-COVID and went live in October 2021.

Discussion on the Structure / Exploratory Function of the Committee

- Members stated that there is interest in learning more about what the HGAC does,

making better connections with staff and programming, student advisory committees, program development processes, and providing public awareness of the work HGAC does.

- HGAC staff reported there are currently two student advisory committees to ensure every current and active student has a voice and has opportunities to meet with management. Meetings are held monthly and are set up to deal with systemic issues. There are other processes set up to deal with individual complaints. One committee meets to discuss training programs and externship placements and the other meets to discuss student life, including dormitories and dietary issues. Staff would be happy to prepare a presentation on member questions and topics discussed today including students' methods to provide input to management.
- Members inquired about HGAC providing presentations and information on the student advisory committees and hearing from students themselves. Inquired if the Council could start receiving the customer and employer satisfaction surveys. Inquired about setting up a tour for PaRC members to attend.

Determine Ad hoc Committee Budget and Goals / Steps to Achieve Goals

- Members agreed upon the goal to improve collaboration and transparency with the public and the HGAC. Data collection would include graduation rates, customer satisfaction, employment retainment, employment outcomes, and fiscal fiduciary reports.
- Members determined that the goals and objectives of the committee are to improve public awareness of the mission of the HGAC, review customer and employer satisfaction surveys, review program and evaluation development, review of data collected by HGAC, review and improve accessibility for those who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, deaf-blind, and hard of hearing. Agreed to meet quarterly with HGAC staff the month prior to any PaRC Full Council (FC) Quarterly meetings.
- HGAC staff provided confirmation with members regarding providing Customer and Employer Satisfaction Surveys, HGAC data, and presenting at the February 15th FC meeting on the HGAC and Commonwealth Technical Institute (CTI) educational programs and supported services.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol to adjourn. Ms. Lynn Heitz seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.