



Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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Executive Committee Meeting Minutes for July 28, 2023

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

Paul Fogle (P)	Susan Tomasic (P)	Michelle Mitchell (P)
William Del Toro Vargas (NP)	Michele Leahy (P)	Lynn Heitz (NP)
Julia Grant Barol (P)	Andrew Pennington (P)	Jessica Keogh (P)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Present: James Whitonis, Cheryl Novak, Danielle Schmidgall

Staff Present: Chris Todd

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Mr. Andrew Pennington inquired about an addition to the agenda to discuss the message received regarding Ms. Brenda Bowersox.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

MOTION was made by Ms. Susan Tomasic to approve today's agenda with additions and past meeting minutes. Ms. Jessica Keogh seconded the motion. All were in favor.

AGENDA ITEMS

PaRC COMMITTEE UPDATES (5 minutes each) **CAREERLINK**

- The next CareerLink/WIOA Committee meeting is scheduled for August 15th at 1:00 PM.

GOVERNANCE

- The Governance Committee welcomes new members and has an opening for Vice Chair. There is one pending application under review. The Committee meets again on September 28th at 2:00 PM.

LEGISLATIVE

Recommendation / Discussion: MYPLS (PA Legislative Services) for access to

government relations contact information database and email blast service. Recommendation / Discussion: State Position Paper and HB151, HB181, HB1135, H.R.2840, and H.R.2941

- Pennsylvania Legislative Services (MYPLS) Communication Connection Service has been vetted by the Legislative / Public Awareness Committee and is being recommended for purchase. The service provides updated contacts of State Legislators and a means for the Council to continue / expand outreach efforts. Members agreed this is a vital service and is often used with other organizations.
- Members stated they review the State Position Paper and legislation being recommended by the Committee.

MOTION was made by Ms. Jessica Keogh to move forward to Full Council the recommendation to purchase Pennsylvania Legislative Services (MYPLS) Communication Connection Service. No second is required for Committee recommendations. All were in favor.

MOTION was made by Ms. Susan Tomasic to move forward to Full Council the recommendation to approve the PaRC State Position Paper and support for HB151, HB181, HB1135, H.R.2840, and H.R.294. No second is required for Committee recommendations. All were in favor.

POLICY

Recommendation Discussion: Description (a) Input of State Rehab Council – Combined State Plan

Recommendation / Discussion: Description (I) State Goals & Priorities - Combined State Plan 2024-2028

Recommendation / Discussion: Final Draft Driving and Vehicle Services Policy

- Mr. Andrew Pennington stated that Ms. Lynn Heitz did a great job working to move forward with OVR Policies and Drafts for the State Plan Descriptions A and L.
- Members agreed that Ms. Lynn Heitz and the Policy Committee did a great job moving forward with the many drafts for the State Plan and OVR Policies. Mr. Paul Fogle and Ms. Susan Tomasic agreed the drafts have been reviewed many times by both Policy Committee and Executive Committee and are prepared to move forward.
- Ms. Julia Barol inquired about the most recent member recommendations for additions to Description L.
- Mr. Jim Whitonis explained that those have been forwarded to OVR Leadership for review and does not anticipate any problems. Strategies for one of the additions will have to be included and we should be good to move forward with the changes.

MOTION was made by Mr. Paul Fogle to move forward to Full Council the draft of Description A of the 2024-2028 State Plan. No second is required for Committee recommendations. All were in favor.

MOTION was made by Mr. Paul Fogle to move forward to Full Council the draft

of Description L of the 2024-2028 State Plan. No second is required for Committee recommendations. All were in favor.

MOTION was made by Mr. Paul Fogle to move forward to Full Council the draft of the OVR Driving and Vehicle Services Policy. No second is required for Committee recommendations. All were in favor.

TRANSITION

- The next Transition/Education Committee meeting is scheduled for August 31st at 2:30 PM.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Ms. Michele Leahy explained that the committee currently only has two members including herself as Chair and welcomes new members to join to continue this important work as her term will be ending on the Council in July 2024. The next Committee meeting is being scheduled for September.

AD HOC COMMITTEE – HGAC

- The next HGAC Committee meeting is scheduled for August 23rd at 2:00 PM.

AD HOC COMMITTEE - HEARING OFFICERS & MEDIATORS

- The OVR Impartial Hearing Officers (IHO) / Mediators Ad hoc Committee plans to continue discussion regarding the appeals policy and PaRC's role in the selection process of OVR IHO/Mediators. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for September 7th at 2:30 PM.

FINALIZE AGENDA FULL COUNCIL HYBRID MEETING 08/02/23

- Members requested that a moment of silence to honor the life of Ms. Brenda Bowersox be added to the beginning of the FC meeting.
- Members reviewed the draft agenda and did not have additional changes.

MOTION was made by Ms. Susan Tomasic to approve the August 2nd Full Council Meeting agenda. Ms. Michelle Mitchel seconded the motion. All were in favor.

FISCAL REPORT – 4TH QUARTER

- Ms. Michelle Mitchell reported that April 2023 expenses were \$2,778.73, May 2023 expenses were \$4,693.49, and June 2023 expenses were \$4,987.08 with total 4th Quarter expenses at \$12,459.30. PaRC expenses for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 totaled \$19,090.46 and were from October 2022 to June 2023. Travel is the Council's largest expense. Since COVID, the Council's expenses have been lower, however

expenses are starting to increase as members begin to attend in person meetings and conferences.

MOTION was made by Ms. Julia Barol to accept the PaRC 4th Quarter Fiscal Report. Ms. Susan Tomasic seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION: CALL FOR PAPERS FOR NCSRC FALL CONFERENCE

- Members requested that the discussion regarding the NCSRC Fall Conference be added to the agenda as a discussion, no recommendations or actions would be required at this time.
- Mr. Paul Fogle explained that with the August 10th deadline to submit a proposal for a presentation at the NCSRC Fall Conference there would most likely not be enough time. Members agreed and stated that it would still be highly beneficial to the Council, OVR, and other organizations to have one or two members in attendance at the October Conference as the Council and OVR has a lot of good things to share and could present that information informally.
- Ms. Julia Barol expressed her interest in attending the Fall Conference and stated that she has not yet heard back regarding her application that was submitted to the NCSRC to be considered for appointment to the Council.

DISCUSSION: 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF THE PASSAGE OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

- Members agreed that a commemoration of this year's 50th Anniversary of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 should be a discussion item added to the FC meeting agenda. This event could potentially be a webinar and should be held jointly by the PaRC, OVR, Client Assistance Program (CAP), Provider Networks, Developmental Disability Council, Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), and others.
- Members agreed that the event may also include topics such as National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) held annually each October and honoring the life, vital contributions, and many accomplishments of Disability Activist Ms. Judy Heumann.

Adjourn

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