



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Voice: (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY: (888) 559-2658 Fax: (888) 524-9282

Email: [parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org](mailto:parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org) Website: [parehabilitationcouncil.org](http://parehabilitationcouncil.org)

## Executive Committee Meeting Minutes for October 3, 2023

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

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

**Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Present:** James Whitonis, Chris Harbert

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

### ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions.

### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

***MOTION was made by Ms. Lynn Heitz to approve today's agenda and past meeting minutes. Ms. Michelle Mitchell seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

### AGENDA ITEMS

#### FINALIZE OCTOBER FULL COUNCIL MEETING DRAFT AGENDA

- Members reviewed the Full Council (FC) meeting agenda scheduled for October 18, 2023, from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. The agenda includes action items regarding supported legislation and an application for membership.
- Ms. Michelle Gerrick (staff) explained that Ms. Joyce Bender, CEO and Founder of Bender Consulting Services will be providing her introduction during the FC meeting to explain what their organization does and what services they can provide to the Council. The PaRC through the awarded contractor, UCP Central Pa, is committed to Bender Consulting services for the current Fiscal Year. During the Commonwealth's bidding process of the PaRC Project's Administrative Services contract, the Commonwealth required that bidders meet certain requirements by committing to certified Small Diverse Businesses (SDBs) that are listed on the Pennsylvania SDB Portal. Services that were previously provided to assist the Council with meeting its needs and goals will now be provided by the SDBs that were identified and committed to during the bidding process which include Bender Consulting Services (consultation), SE&M Solutions (web maintenance and digital

media), Triangle Press (printing and outreach materials), and Interpreters Unlimited (translation and braille).

- Ms. Michelle Mitchell shared her concern about this bidding process not including input from the Council and inquired if the Council may offer input for what services and SDBs will be used in the future.
- Ms. Gerrick explained that the Council is not involved in the bidding process which takes place approximately every 5 years, however prior to each annual renewal process during the current 5-year contract members may offer input regarding services and SDBs.
- Mr. Fogle explained that this process and its requirements are determined by the Commonwealth and its procurement department not by those on the Council, its staff, or others attending the meeting today.
- Mr. Pennington shared concerns about members suggesting specific businesses as that could potentially signal financial or other types of impropriety in regard to the public interest.
- Ms. Heitz inquired what type of consulting would Bender be providing to the Council.
- Mr. Fogle explained that during the FC meeting Bender will be holding discussion or brainstorming sessions on what services they may provide to the PaRC.
- Members discussed the follow up process for questions provided during FC meetings to OVR. Questions that require follow up could be compiled and sent via email to OVR after each meeting.
- Ms. Mitchell suggested it may be more productive to provide 20 minutes for a narrative report from the OVR Executive Director allowing more time for discussion or a question and answer period. Members agreed on the importance of providing an opportunity for follow up to questions that were submitted previously and to allow more time during meetings for discussion as the Executive Director's report is given to members prior to each meeting and often reviewed by OVR during other PaRC stakeholder meetings.
- Mr. Fogle explained that Mr. Ryan Hyde has always been very accessible and that he will discuss with Mr. Hyde allotting more time for discussion and the process of following up to previously provided member questions for each FC meeting.
- Quorum was not maintained during today's Executive Committee meeting. No further voting could take place. The agenda and other action items for today's meeting will be forwarded for discussion and/or approval at the upcoming FC meeting on October 18, 2023.

## **2023 PaRC QUARTERLY FULL COUNCIL MEETING DATES & FORMAT OF EACH MEETING**

**Wednesday, February 14, 2024**

**Wednesday, May 15, 2024**

**Wednesday, August 14, 2024**

**Wednesday, November 13, 2024**

- Members held discussion about the dates and format planned for the 2024 FC meetings. Members liked attending the August Hybrid FC meeting in person and agreed it went well overall. Mr. Fogle suggested continuing the conversation

during the upcoming FC meeting for planning to hold November and February meetings as virtual only due to weather and other concerns and holding May and August as Hybrid meetings.

## **2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT**

### **Recommendation of member for the Member Story section**

- Members will continue discussion for planning of the Annual Report during the upcoming FC meeting. A volunteer to provide the Member Story will need to be identified. Success stories are included in both OVR documents that will be placed within this year's Annual Report.

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

### **CAREERLINK – Mr. Andrew Pennington, Chair**

- Mr. Pennington explained that the next meeting is scheduled for November 21<sup>st</sup>. Previous discussion included further collaboration between Workforce Development and OVR to discuss grants being offered to OVR customers. CareerLink accessibility was discussed, an accessibility check list was provided, and website accessibility for CareerLink and Workforce Development was reviewed.

## **GOVERNANCE**

### **Recommendation of Ms. Sylenthia Dent-Siebenlist's application for PaRC membership representing category of General Advocacy**

- Members reviewed the application for membership which will be further discussed during the upcoming FC meeting.

## **LEGISLATIVE**

- Members reviewed the legislation regarding service dogs that the Committee previously recommended to be supported. This will be discussed during the upcoming FC meeting.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

- The next meeting is scheduled for October 4, 2023. The Committee will be meeting with the new web maintenance and digital media team.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEE HGAC**

- Mr. William Del Toro Vargas will be attending CTI at HGAC's Career Fair scheduled for October 18 to 20, 2023. The next Committee meeting is scheduled for January 24, 2024.

## **AD HOC COMMITTEE OVR HEARING OFFICERS & MEDIATORS – Mr. Andrew**

## **Pennington, Chair**

- The last Committee meeting was held September 7, 2023. Mr. Chris Harbert was provided questions to review with OVR Leadership as follow up to PaRC's role with the selection of OVR Impartial Hearing Officers. Committee members recommended that PaRC have a representative at the beginning of the process so that when the Council reviews the candidate's information a member has already been informed on who the candidates are.

## **OVR UPDATES**

- Mr. Fogle provided an update about the plan for creating a member's only section on the PaRC website.
- Ms. Heitz explained that some OVR policies are provided for approval and review to the Council and then the Board while other policies bypass the Council and go directly to the Board. It would be beneficial to be provided some clarity on those policies and procedures.
- Mr. Fogle explained it was previously discussed for OVR to hold a training on policy approval, Council / Board responsibilities, and similar topics that were inquired about during the August FC meeting. This would be a good topic to ask for follow up on at the next FC meeting. Financial policies were reviewed by the Board recently which bypassed the Council. The Rehab Act states that changes in VR financial policies should be reviewed by the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

## **Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 PM.