

CAC MEETING February 2, 2024 Minutes

The CAC meeting for the Pittsburgh BBVS office was held on Friday, February 2, 2024 beginning at 10:00 AM. Some attendees were virtual and some in person at the BBVS office, 531 Penn Ave, Pittsburgh, PA.

In Attendance:

Tom Burgunder (GTCB President and CAC co-Chair); Danielle Dawgiello (District Administrator, Pittsburgh BBVS Office); Jeffrey Durmis (Assistant District Administrator, Pittsburgh BBVS); Carla Hayes (WCCB President); Chris Hunsinger (Secretary and Immediate Past President PCB); Greg Lazzur (PaTTAN rep); Harold Longmore (VR Supervisor, Pittsburgh BBVS office); Terri Lucas (Beaver County PAB); Andrew Pennington (CAP representative); Barb Peterson with Dora (BVRSP staff); Sherri Rodgers, Michael Zaken (CAC co-Chair).

Before we started the meeting, Tom acknowledged that the By-Laws of the group had not been updated since 2015. A more complete discussion of By-Law changes needed will be held during our May 2024 meeting since the old By-Laws were distributed to members rather close to the time of the February meeting.

At this time, we have three positions to fill in the organization. Two co-Chair positions and a Secretary who keeps minutes.

Carla Hayes nominated Tom Burgunder and Sherri Rodgers as the co-Chairs. Tom made motion to close those nominations and Sherri seconded. Tom nominated Chris Hunsinger to continue as Secretary. No additional nominations were forthcoming.

Approval of November 3, 2023 Minutes:

Sherry made motion and Tom seconded, no corrections, Minutes approved.

Staff and Hiring Updates from Danielle:

BBVS Pittsburgh hired a new social worker. The office now has 5 VRCs, 3 VRTs, 3 O&Ms, and 4 SWs. interviewing for the third clerical CA2 in March to be filled. In January 2024 rehired annuitant for part time for the year.

Statistics Update from Danielle:

365 VR cases, 17 rehab clearances, and/or closures, but 57 is the goal by the end of the fiscal year in June 2024.

SW 315 cases, goal is 127 closures, and 90 is the current closure amount. They have additional goals for VRC and O&M.

Specialized Services for Children 51 cases and adults 14 cases at present. O&M 94 cases with 33 successful; 72 is the goal. VRT 114, closures 117 when goal is 90. Not sure if the 114 or the 117 is the current case load at the time of the meeting and therefore the other one is the closures for the year. That would still put the VRT workload over the goal of 90 closures for the year.

Referral to Action Eligibility and Plan Compliance:

These numbers are for using the Rapid Engagement model. Only using these parameters for the vocational rehab side, not the social work side. Employment Plan has to be in effect within 120 days of original contact. For social work they try for 5 days from the referral to the next step and 15 days to contact.

We were made aware of a staffing issue for drivers.

These drivers assist the visually impaired employees when they have home visits with clients. The driver cannot be just a Lyft or Uber driver because this person acts as employee's eyes when looking at documents, or placing tactile markings, or other visual items. In the past, drivers were older people who wanted a part time job who got paid for their hours and went on about their business. The State has created additional paperwork which now means that for the most part it would make sense for a company to take on this contract and supply staff to take on the jobs.

Health Ride does non-emergency services in transportation. Mark, someone from Health Ride, did a bid to include the Pittsburgh office of BBVS because this company currently gives these services to the Erie office of BBVS.

Pre-ETS Programming Updates:

For this year, these would be summer programs for students:

Job shadow: Paid work experience, someone in Butler through ARC is doing a job at \$10.35 an hour for 90 hours.

Cranberry Municipal has approved for MY Work. ARC of Butler is the provider. Event planning, something at the splash park, a library in the building.

There are four students who could work as much as 8 weeks earning \$10.35 an hour. Michelle Markle is the VRC. BBVS is going to educate the ARC on accommodations. Barb from BVRSP told us that employers like these programs. BVRSP has the contract to manage these programs for the Uniontown area.

Paid Work Experience

Job Shadow

My Work - all give students a taste of what it is like to commit to getting to work each day.

Survey for Customers – Updates on Status:

The total of surveys sent out is 583 when the office included social work clients. They had 57 responses by the time of our Feb 2024 CAC meeting. That is just under a 10% response rate. 50% of the respondents are from Allegheny County, most over age 55.

Most wanted Assistive Technology for personal use. BBVS is trying to host events that would be decentralized - Cranberry, Westmoreland County and the local BBVS office. Looking for a Library or business for hosting. What would be the content? Next meeting about this project in week of February 5, 2024. Responses look like agency should be tailoring toward technology for older people.

The workshops will be at the mercy of the other workloads in the office. Having these events in May 2024. Will get to the remaining counties later. End of Spring/early Summer (TBD) - events based on the survey outcomes.

BVRSP Programming – Updates on Staff and Programs:

Barb and Dora working on summer program.

Also working on Adapt and ProMOTE. Art and Tracy are the teachers for ProMOTE. ProMOTE dates are April 29 thru May 24, 2024 and October 7 thru November 1, 2024.

BOS April 8 to April 19.

Tracy has come back to work after retirement. BVRSP didn't get its own line item in the Pennsylvania budget. Therefore, they can't offer programs statewide.

Outreach:

White Cane Day Committee:

Chris, Tom and Mike, as well as someone from BVRSP - either Barb, Dora, or an O&M. Harold from BBVS has volunteered. Mike is chairing the committee. He will send out invites.

Bring Your Child to Work Day:

This event is usually the last week in April. Staff from both Pittsburgh OVR Bureaus will be inviting their children at the end of April. BBVS expects to show the children information about how their parents work with Visual impairments, white canes, and Assistive Technology as well as some fun things.

WPSBC:

February 7, 2024 meeting:

Meeting with Valerie _____ and Ryan Reagan to review the new programs at the school. How can BBVS integrate these students with employment goals of BBVS? Can specialized employment make a difference? Michelle McCurdy has gone to the School for IEP and giving parents referrals.

Rachelle Rectenwald Should be contacted because she is leading the new program for people after aging out of the department of education.

BSR Update – Spero:

CVS, Giant Eagle, InspiriTec, Pitt, UPMC - Spero is creating a spreadsheet with contact info for employers, accessibility of jobs, info and workplace.

CVS is working with Rob Hodapp, Helen Keller, and BBVS. Cynthia Ingraham found a video in the CVS website from Massachusetts.

InspiriTec started a customer service training program which is accessible. 30 people in the training class, with 120 referrals.

Insight, affiliated with NIB, Accessibility testing training, don't guarantee a job.

Spero is pushing ProMOTE. 4 students going into the Apex program. How effective is the program and how many placements?

InspiriTec is using the Pennsylvania Unemployment program software to teach their clients.

CLUSIVE may have ceased operation.

VR Update:

Danielle was thinking that we ought to encourage people to do Bos or ProMOTE if they want to use computers. Informed choice allows the customer to choose which agency to work with.

Reviews compliance needs to be at 90% for VR customers. Measurable Skill Gain, Credentials, Grades. They now have systems in place to allow for identification of things that need tracking.

Accessibility Updates:

Nothing new on accessibility.

ILOB Program:

Now that they have 4 social workers, the biggest referral source is UPMC. CAP was part of the staff meeting in December 2023 to stress how that organization can assist clients.

Professional Connections Experience - BBVS is not yet doing PCE.

New Business:

No new business.

Next CAC Meeting – Friday, May 3, 2024

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by Chris Hunsinger