



# Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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## Legislative & Public Awareness Committee Minutes for March 28, 2025, from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM

Members Present (P)

Not Present (NP)

Christie Cyktor (P)

Lynn Heitz (P)

Julia Barol (P)

Joan Myers Goodman (P)

Passle Helminski (P)

Michelle Mitchell (NP)

William Paz De Melo (NP)

**PaRC Staff Present:** Chris Todd

**OVR Staff Present:** Chris Harbert

**Guest Present:** Michael Kiel, Pennsylvania State Board of Vocational Rehabilitation

### CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Christie Cyktor called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM once quorum was established.

### ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions.

### APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND PAST MINUTES

***MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski to approve the agenda and past meeting minutes. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

### Committee Chair / Vice Chair for Fiscal Year 2025-2026

- Ms. Julia Barol nominated Ms. Christie Cyktor for Committee Chair for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Ms. Cyktor accepted the nomination. Ms. Passle Helminski nominated Ms. Lynn Heitz for Committee Vice Chair for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Ms. Heitz accepted the nomination.

***MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski for approval of Ms. Christie Cyktor for Committee Chair for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and Ms. Lynn Heitz for***

***Committee Vice Chair for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

## **Committee Goals for Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

- Members reviewed the Committee goals and had no changes.

***MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski for approval of the Committee goals for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

## **State and Federal Legislative Watchlists**

- Ms. Julia Barol suggested adding to the watchlist for tracking purposes the potential Legislation for State Civil Service reform.

## **State and Federal Position Papers**

- Members reviewed the State and Federal Position Papers. Ms. Julia Barol suggested that the Committee look at the 2018 State Position Paper on State Civil Service reform to ensure that the Council aligns with those recommendations. Members requested that information be shared with the Committee prior to the next meeting.

***MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski to add support of [HB487](#) An Act amending Title 62 (Procurement) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in source selection and contract formation, further providing for supplies manufactured and services performed by persons with disabilities and [HR10](#) A Resolution directing the Joint State Government Commission to conduct a study of how Home and Community-Based Services waivers can be improved to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities, including programs administered by the Office of Long-Term Living and Office of Developmental Programs, to the PaRC State Position Paper. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. All were in favor.***

## **Discussion / planning for meetings with Legislators and/or their staff**

- Members confirmed that they have received the calendar invitations for the planned meetings with State Legislators and/or their staff scheduled for May 15, 2025, from 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM and May 19, 2025 from 12:30 PM to 3:30 PM. Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR explained that 2 members of the State Board of VR are interested in attending those meetings and members agreed to share the calendar invitations with Board members that are interested. Members provided State Legislators that they would like to be provided invitation to the meetings which include newly elected members of the General Assembly, Labor and Industry Committee members, and PaRC member local Representatives. Members

discussed talking points for the planned meetings with Legislators which include education about VR, the importance of fully funding OVR, transportation, and the State Civil Service reform.

- Members discussed potentially mailing the PaRC brochures to Legislators.
- Mr. Chris Harbert, OVR informed attendees that a success story publication is being worked on to highlight OVR's work in all 67 counties and will keep everyone up to date on advocacy materials.

### **Public Comment**

- Ms. Passle Helminski provided comment as a member of the public informing attendees that she will be representing Team Achilles USA in London, England.

### **Schedule next meeting**

- Members agreed to hold the next Committee meeting on April 29, 2025, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

### **Adjourn**

***MOTION was made by Ms. Passle Helminski to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Julia Barol seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.***