

# **CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) TO THE READING OFFICE OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (OVR)**

Serving Berks & Schuylkill Counties, 3602 Kutztown Road, Suite 200, Reading, PA 19605

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## **MEETING MINUTES**

**NOTE:** Document is posted on [Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council \(PaRC\) website](#).

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TYPE:	Full Committee Meeting (Open To The Public)
LOCATION:	Virtual via Microsoft Teams & Call-In
DATE:	September 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2024
TIME:	1:00pm - 3:00pm (Approx. 2hrs.)
RECORDED BY:	Kim Baskett, RDG OVR District Administrator (Interim Secretary) Lee Buck, RDG OVR Clerical

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

#### **A. Meeting Start Time**

- 1:06pm

### **2. WELCOME & OPENING REMARKS**

#### **A. Welcome**

- Brian - reads heading details of meeting minutes.

#### **B. Mission**

- Generally, to identify challenges & make recommendations to the RDG OVR, and help advocate & serve people with disabilities in our community.
- Officially, Call Reading OVR Office for a "CAC To The RDG OVR Brochure."

#### **C. Roll Call**

- Brian D'Amico; Chair
- Angel Torres; Vice-Chair
- Andrew Pennington
- Helen Konnick
- Sally Kneipp
- Lee Buck; RDG OVR Clerical Assistant (Filling in for Kim Baskett RDG OVR DA)
- No updated members list for roll call.
- Goal for completion of new members list is Jan 2025.
- Kim Baskett could not attend today, busy interviewing 4 new positions this week and sent Lee as her designee.
- Judy Yeasted could not attend today, has all day training.

#### **D. Guest Introductions**

- Jim Whitonis, PA OVR VR Specialist (Representative Guest)
  - Brian - During PA OVR Statewide CAC Officers Meeting York OVR ADA & Supervisor to this meeting. I did send them invite email. As of now (1:15pm) I do not see them in our meeting.

### 3. PUBLIC COMMENTS: AGENDA ITEMS (3 Minute Limit)

- No one from public in attendance.
- Angel - Did Brian get email from Haley Penn?
  - Brian - Did get email from Haley. She wants to make a presentation about Youth CAC. I will reach out to her and possibly schedule for regular or special meeting.

### 4. AGENDA (Motion Needed)

- Brian - Gives brief description on Motions under Roberts Rules.
  - A. Motion needed to "Approve" Agenda for today's meeting of 09/10/2024
    - Motion made 1<sup>st</sup> Angel, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sally
      - i. Discussion - Additions, Deletions or Corrections (must be minor in nature)
        - Brian - Change "Recorded By" from Kim Baskett to Lee Buck in Kim's absence.
      - ii. All In Favor "Yes", All Opposed "No", Any "Abstentions"
        - In Favor - Unanimous, Opposed - None, Abstentions - None
        - Motion Approved

### 5. MINUTES (Motion Needed)

- A. Motion needed to "Approve" Minutes for prior meeting of 06/11/2024.
  - Motion made 1<sup>st</sup> Angel, 2<sup>nd</sup> Helen
    - i. Discussion - Additions, Deletions, or Corrections (can approve w/corrections)
      - Brian - Kim emailed minutes with today's invite. I emailed Kim and all members my updates to minutes for review.
      - Angel - Under Secretary Report the word "gage" should be spelled "gauge".
      - Sally - Under Section 7 - "Kim submitted ideas to Chris Harbert", Sally asked "Who is Chris Harbert?"
        - Brian - explained he was the person who coordinated the statewide CAC Chairs meeting. Jim maybe better to explain Chris's title?
        - Jim - Chris is an Administrative Officer 3 at PA OVR and liaison to PaRC and CAC's.
        - Sally - Minutes should reflect this clarification.
        - Brian - suggested he be invited to introduce himself.
    - ii. All In Favor "Yes", All Opposed "No", Any "Abstentions"
      - In Favor - Unanimous, Opposed - None, Abstentions - None
      - Motion Approved

### 6. CAC CHAIRPERSON - REPORT (Updates & Goals)

- A. Meeting Agenda Format
  - i. Revision Completed & Implemented
    - Brian - Revision completed and currently being used.
    - Brian - Helen suggested putting time frames/limits on agenda topics. Brian responded good idea. Right now that he does not want anyone to feel rushed but can consider for future meetings if needed.

## B. Meeting Minutes Format

### i. Revision Completed & Implemented

- Brian - Revision completed and currently being used.
- Brian - This format hopefully will be easier to follow along and an easier read for everyone in the future.

## C. By-Laws

### i. Review & Revise In Progress

- Brian - Review and revisions are nearly done. Goal is to approve at December meeting and implement in Jan 2025. He will contact members individually to discuss. Important for members to review, give their input and understand our by-laws. We need a good comprehensive set of by-laws to help guide our CAC into the future.

## D. Membership Application Form

### i. Review & Revise In Progress

- Brian - All members need to be reappointed at Dec 2024 meeting. All members should fill out a new Membership Application form and have it submitted to Kim before the Dec meeting. Important for members to communicate with each other.
- Brian - Asked Reading OVR "Where current member's previous applications are located?" Kim didn't know and no one else seems to know. This is another reason why it is important to get new applications filled out. I will be in touch with all members to fill out before Dec. meeting.

## E. Membership Status Form

### i. Creation In Progress

- Brian - The Status form will be in conjunction with application form. Currently no communication on status of your membership after applying. This form will be a reply to the application form. Well act as a type of welcome form.

## F. Brochure

### i. Review & Revise In Progress

- Brian - Goal is to first get by-laws adopted in Dec. meeting. Possibly 1<sup>st</sup> meeting in 2025 we can discuss updating our Brochure. Brochure will then match our by-laws. Helen mentioned creating an Outreach program. Outreach is good idea and important. 2025 Possible create Outreach committee/workgroup. Helen possibly chairing that committee. Updating brochure would be part of the outreach.

## G. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Helen - Agrees with membership status. She did not know when meetings were until she received the invite a few days before meeting. That will help let people know and put in their schedule.
- Sally and Angel agreed.

## 7. CAC VICE-CHAIRPERSON - REPORT (*Updates & Goals*)

### A. PA OVR Statewide CAC Officers Meeting on 07/09/2024

- i. Meeting Highlights - Minutes Distributed
  - Angel - Meeting was held virtual and very informative. He highlighted agenda items that were important and discussed. Jim gave presentation on Purpose of CAC. There are 12 of 17 CAC's statewide are active. Kim gave presentation on OVR Application Process. Both presentations were excellent. Next meeting to be scheduled for Oct or Nov.

### B. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Sally - "Did you talk about challenges recruiting new CAC members?"
  - Angel - Yes recruitment was discussed. A transcript was emailed to all members to read for more detail?
  - Brian - Yes. I emailed agenda, minutes & transcript. Minutes are also on RDG OVR CAC webpage online at [parehabcouncil.org](http://parehabcouncil.org).
- Angel - Yes, recruitment was discussed along with social media and hopefully will be addressed at next meeting.
- Brian - I did attend meeting. Opening remarks given by Ryan Hyde, OVR Executive Director. OVR will be flat-funded the next 2 years. Provided update on programs. OVR budget approx. \$200m; 79% from fed, 21% from state. PA budget usually passes in Oct. Received increase from state but federal is flat funding and is national. No COLA.
- Brian - Agreed with Angel on Jim and Kim's presentations were excellent and recommended putting them up on the PaRC's website. Suggested possibly in 2025 have Kim and Jim do presentations for our CAC.

## 8. CAC SECRETARY - REPORT (*Updates & Goals*)

### A. Vacant - Member Needed

- i. Interim Secretary: Kim Baskett, District Administrator
  - Brian - No permanent secretary yet. One is needed. Kim is interim secretary. Lee is filling in today's in Kim's absence. Kim gave Lee nothing to report today under Secretary Report.
- ii. Flyer Highlighting Vacancy
  - Brian - Possibly create flyer highlighting vacancy. Part of outreach in 2025.
  - Brian - Spoke to Chris Harbert at OVR re taking minutes. OVR has ability to use in their CART vendor Archive Captioning. Transcription Services would

be exactly what was said. PA OVR utilized at our PA Statewide Officers Meeting. It worked well and is posted on our PARC webpage.

B. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Andrew - "Can we use Otter A.I.? It's a note-taking app that is used in other meetings I attend."
  - Brian - Using A.I. is good idea but I don't know anything about Otter AI. I can check into and follow up.
- Brian - Goal is trying to clean up, organize and archive our past minutes. A lot of errors and issues that need to be address. Our September 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 minutes are missing on the PARC website. Our Dec 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 minutes and our March 12<sup>th</sup> 2024 minutes are uploaded but are the same document. Those same March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 minutes, are not approved minutes with Sally's corrections. It's important to have cooperation from everyone to get our minutes corrected and going forward have correct minutes recorded. I'm asking from all members, RDG-OVR, and PAOVR to please cooperate and help me get these minutes cleaned up.
- Angel - PARC website still lists Angel as Chair & Brian as Co-Chair. Also still shows Kim's title as Acting DA.
  - Brian - I will follow up with Kim & Jim to make those corrections.

9. RDG OVR - REPORT (*Updates & Goals*)

- Brian - Kim could not attend today. She gave Lee her report to read into minutes. Kim let me know Lee would not be answering any question today. If members have questions please ask them at the end of report and Lee will document them for Kim to answer at a later time. Turn over to Lee to give RDG OVR Report.

A. Staffing Data

- Total compliment: 30
- Vacancies:
- Assistant District Administrator (ADA) = 1 was hired
- Vocational Rehab Counselors (VRC) = 3 being interviewed 1 waiting for approval.
- Business Services Representative (BSR) = 1 candidate
- Local Office Fiscal Assistant (LOFA) = 1 interviews in progress

B. Customer Data

- Current Open VR cases = 1,739

C. Current Programs & Announcements

- New Early Child Hood Education Certificate Program.
- New Project Search site at the Reading Double Tree. Two sites in Berks and one in Schuylkill County.

D. New Programs & Announcements

- Flat funded for 2024-2025 budget.
- New Pre-Ets work structure.

E. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Brian - How is eligibility numbers higher the intake numbers last month?
- Brian - Last meeting, Kim explained there is no waiting list, just has customers in the cue to be assigned. How many customers in cue waiting to be assigned?
- Brian - Can Kim please provide a list of employee titles and breakdown of employee by title? Example would be DA = 1, ADA = 1, Supervisors = 5 VRC = 10 etc.
- Brian - To clarify for members in previous meetings I asked in April 15, 2019 minutes and on into 2020 meetings minutes it does say OVR created a waiting list. That's why I asked about waiting list. I'm concerned we don't go back to waiting list.
- Andrew - Asked for repeat of question about eligibility numbers that he may be able to clarify.
  - Brian - During last meeting under Customer Data it was reported that from 07/01/2023-05/31/2024 Initial Interviews = 861 and Eligibilities = 863. How is the eligible number higher than intake number?
  - Andrew - attempted to clarify questions 1 & 2. Timeframes are by law to determine eligibility and time extensions. The numbers ebb and flow according to various circumstances and do not correlate (intake vs. eligibility) to each other necessarily and there may be rollover from previous time periods.
  - Sally - explained perhaps a better understanding of the status codes will explain this question better.
  - Brian - stated that he wanted more clarity from Kim due to Kim's PARC presentation and possibly asks Kim to give Service Process Presentation at future meeting.

10. AD-HOC WORK GROUP (*Create*)

A. "2025 Notice of Meetings Ad-hoc Work Group"

- i. Objective: Recommend Places, Dates, & Times of 2025 CAC Meetings.
  - Brian - Goal to create this Ad-Hoc work group to focus on making recommendations for 2025 CAC meetings. Start Date 09/11/2024 with a projected end date of our 12/10/2024 meeting. Will focus on places like OVR, AIM, Career Link, School, Healthcare facilities. Dates like 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> meetings on a Tues or 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> meeting on a Fri., and times like 1pm - 2pm or 4pm-6pm. Workgroup must coordinate site locations in advance. Will need to coordinate with Kim at RDG-OVR. Dates & times to integrate other members. Goal is to get more people involved in CAC.
- ii. Appointment Of Chair & 2 Members
  - Brian - Goal to appoint 1 chair and 2 members to workgroup. Spoke to Angel prior and asked if he would like to accept chair.
    - Angel - Will accept appointment as chair of workgroup.

- Brian - Would like 2 other members to possibly volunteer for work group.
- Andrew - would be happy to volunteer for workgroup. Will these meetings be hybrid for those of us not local?
  - Brian - Yes, the workgroup would come up with the recommendation.

#### B. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Brian - Angel will chair workgroup, and Andrew will be volunteer member. Will report recommendations to CAC at Dec meetings.

### 11. MEMBERSHIP UPDATED RE/APPOINTMENTS

#### A. 2025 Membership Re/Appointments

##### i. Review Members For Reconsideration

- Brian - sent email on 9/6 with outdated members list and would like updated list by Jan 2025. Current members are Brian, Angel, Kim, Andrew, Sally, Judy, Helen. Looking for approx. 10 names. Brian looking for recommendations of names from list (or other names) to contact and see if they are interested in CAC.

##### ii. Contact Members For New Application

- Brian - I will contact recommended people for new or reappointments.

#### B. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Angel - Recommended contacting Renee Deesing.
- Sally - May need time to think about this. Put on next meeting agenda?
- Angel - Maybe wait for Kim sine she may have received communication from people not wanting to participate.

### 12. NEW BUSINESS & ANNOUCEMENTS (*Mission Related*)

#### A. National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM)

##### i. Month Of October 2024

##### ii. Theme "Access to Good Jobs for All"

##### iii. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam>

#### B. Members Comments & Questions (i.e. Challenges / Recommendations)

- Helen - Use digital outreach? This has worked in other areas she has lead before. Helen will email a copy of the NDEAM newsletter she worked on previously.
- Brian - encourage members to add topics of interest to agenda. Can always contact him to bring items to the agenda. Discussion at last meeting on PARC Handbook. Handbook file name says updated 2023 but document says 2017. Handbook has wrong names for agenda and minutes contact. Jim is our contact for posting on PARC website.

### 13. OTHER BUSINESS & ANNOUCEMENTS (*Disability Related*)

#### A. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)

- Brian - encourage members to add topics of interest to agenda.

### 14. PARTNERS & RESOURCES

- A. (Rdg OVR) Reading Office Of Vocational Rehabilitation Contact Info.
  - i. See Above Letter Head
- B. (Pa OVR) Pennsylvania Office Of Vocational Rehabilitation Contact Info
  - i. Phone: 800-442-6351 / TTY: 866-830-7327 / [www.dli.pa.gov](http://www.dli.pa.gov)
- C. (Pa RC) Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council Contact Info
  - i. Phone: 888.250.5175 / TTY: 888.559.2658 / [parehabilitationcouncil.org](http://parehabilitationcouncil.org)
- D. (Pa CAP) Pennsylvania Client Assistance Program Contact Info
  - i. Phone: 888-745-2357 (voice/711Relay) / [www.equalemployment.org](http://www.equalemployment.org)

#### 15. NEXT MEETING

- A. Date - December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 (1:00pm - 3:00pm Approx. 2hrs.)
- B. Members Comments & Questions (*Challenges / Recommendations*)
  - None

#### 16. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NON-AGENDA ITEMS (3 Minute Limit)

- No one from public in attendance.

#### 17. CLOSING REMARKS

- A. Members-at-large
- B. Officers
  - Angel - The PA OVR State Board Meeting will be on 9/12/24, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM.
- C. Chair
  - Brian - Good meetings and going in right direction. Appreciate members and important to have member input. Always feel free to make comments and suggestions. Trying to keep agenda focused to address important things and keep things moving forward. Right now meetings focused on becoming more organized, structured, consistence. Need good foundation to build along with comprehensive set of by-laws. Lastly thank you to Lee for stepping in today and taking our minutes.

#### 18. ADJOURNMENT (*Motion Needed*)

- A. Motion needed to "Approve" Adjournment for today's meeting of 09/10/2024.
  - Motion made 1<sup>st</sup> Sally, 2<sup>nd</sup> Angel
    - i. Discussion - Additions, Deletions, or Corrections
      - None
    - ii. All In Favor "Yes", All Opposed "No", Any "Abstentions"
      - In Favor - Unanimous, Opposed - None, Abstentions - None
      - Motion Approved
- B. Meeting Ending Time
  - 3:03pm