Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

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PaRC CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) AD HOC COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes for July 27, 2026, 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Members Present (P) Not Present (NP)

Andrew Pennington (P)	Christie Cyktor (P)	Cindy Duch (P)
Passle Helminski (P)	Julianna Rodrigues (P)	Michelle Mitchell (NP)

Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) Staff Present: Chris Harbert

PaRC Staff Present: Christopher Todd

Guests Present: Brian D'Amico, Angel Torres, Tom Burgunder

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Mr. Andrew Pennington called the meeting to order after quorum was established.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Ms. Passle Helminski suggested the addition of discussing a reconfiguration of the CACs into all-inclusive entities consisting of OVR customers and OVR District Office staff.

MOTION was made by Ms. Christie Cyktor for approval of the agenda with additions and past meeting minutes. Ms. Passle Helminski seconded the motion. All were in favor.

<u>DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:</u>

FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION REGARDING STRENGTHENING PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AT THE DISTRICT OFFICE LEVEL

- Members reviewed previous questions that were provided to OVR regarding strengthening public engagement and agreed to provide those in the form of proposals for public input including the following.
  - Customer concerns expressed during CAC meetings must be consistently documented, communicated, and addressed through District Office staff

follow-up.
  - A chain of communication needs to be administered between the CACs, District Offices, and OVR leadership.
  - The role of District Offices should include responding to local concerns and providing follow-up.
  - District Offices should be responsible for responding to customer input that is received during CAC meetings.
  - CAC meeting information should be provided on the PA OVR and Commonwealth webpages to help improve public access.
  - Public Comment time should be included during CAC meetings to ensure District Office staff are made aware of emerging issues and concerns at the local level.

PUBLIC COMMENT (3 minutes each): following the committee's discussion

- Mr. Brian D'Amico provided Public Comment and stated that the committee has the opportunity to shape and improve how the CACs operate, provide recommendations on how the CACs are administered including the options of keeping them the same, administered by the State Board or the PaRC, or eliminating them altogether. Mr. D'Amico emphasized the importance of customers sharing any concerns they would like during CAC meetings. He explained that recommendations do not have to be limited to the revitalization options previously reviewed and that the PaRC can create their own recommendations to reshape the CAC operations. Mr. D'Amico explained that during previous meetings other CACs were used as example models to base operations upon and explained that the Reading CAC is the most active and organized with information provided on the PaRC website including their updated bylaws, meeting information, meeting materials, and a document for the public to register to attend CAC meetings.
- Mr. Andrew Pennington agreed that the committee is not required to adhere to the revitalization options document and explained that the committee is not deciding on a specific local CAC model at this time and that the committee is considering the recommendation of a hybrid model for CAC operations that would be administered by the CAC Chair, OVR, and the PaRC.

CONTINUE TO REFINE A PREFERRED OPTION & DEVELOP ACTIONABLE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Members agreed that the recommendations should include a mechanism for customers to share concerns during CAC meetings. There should also be a uniform method for OVR staff to effectively address those concerns at the District Office level. Customer confidentiality should also be protected during the CAC meetings. Personal issues and confidential information should be followed up by OVR staff offline, providing guidance to the customer in private. CAC meeting discussions should involve systemic concerns.
- Mr. Brian D'Amico explained that the public and OVR customers should be allowed to share any personal concerns they would like during CAC meetings. Adhering to

the Sunshine Act, Public Comment cannot be restricted. Members provided clarification that they agree the public may share any comments they choose during CAC meetings. Members discussed the recommendation that CAC meeting discussion and follow up to OVR customer concerns should protect confidentiality and focus on systemic issues. There also needs to be a mechanism in place for District Office staff to effectively address customer concerns and provide follow up to any confidential information offline.

- Members agreed that recommendations should ensure all necessary administrative support is provided to the CACs including assistance with scheduling, informing the public of meeting information, correspondence, expanding public and customer engagement, and improving CAC member recruitment.
- Mr. Pennington requested that each committee member prepare a written list of recommendations regarding CAC operations to be shared with the committee prior to the next scheduled meeting and discussed during that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT (3 minutes each): following the committee's discussion

- Mr. Brian D'Amico provided Public Comment and explained that the current system is not working, OVR and District Offices are not cooperating with the CACs. As a member of the public, Mr. D'Amico explained that he is not willing to spend taxpayer money to move administrative costs that should already be provided within the current system by the District Office staff. Mr. D'Amico emphasized that additional funding is not needed for administrative support as this should already be completed by the District Offices.

SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING

- Members requested that staff provide a poll to determine the date and time of the next committee meeting.

Adjourn

MOTION was made by Ms. Christie Cyktor to adjourn. Ms. Passle Helminski seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.