Pennsylvania Rehabilitation Council (PaRC)

55 Utley Drive, Camp Hill, PA 17011

Voice: (717) 975-2004 or (888) 250-5175 TTY: (717) 737-0158 Fax: (888) 524-9282

Email: parc@parehabilitationcouncil.org Website: parehabilitationcouncil.org

Legislative & Public Awareness Committee
Minutes for June 25, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Members Present (P)		Not Present (NP)
Christie Cyktor (P)	Lynn Heitz (P)	Julia Barol (NP)
Passle Helminski (P)	Dorian Rhodes (P)	Julianna Rodrigues (NP)
Michelle Mitchell (P)		

PaRC Personnel Present: Chris Todd, Michelle Gerrick

CALL TO ORDER

This meeting was conducted through Zoom. Ms. Christie Cyktor called the meeting to order after 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. Lynn Heitz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS:

Discussion and Possible Recommendation for Pennsylvania Legislative Services (MYPLS) Communication Connection Service Renewal

- Ms. Christie Cyktor explained that the MYPLS Communication Connection Service is an annual subscription the Council utilizes to distribute the PaRC Bi-monthly Newsletter to State Legislators and their staff. The service also provides helpful updated contact information for all state Legislators and their staff and is used for other Council outreach. The cost is $2,000.00 for 1-year subscription renewal beginning September 1, 2026, and is within the Council's FY 2026-2027 budget.

MOTION was made by Ms. Lynn Heitz to recommend that the PaRC renews the

Pennsylvania Legislative Services (MYPLS) Communication Connection Service annual subscription. Ms. Passle Helminski seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Continued Discussion of Centers for Independent Living (CILs) Funding

- Members discussed the Commonwealth's Management Directive that changed the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) funding to a reimbursement process. Members will inquire with the Council's Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) representative on how to move forward with recommendations for CILs to receive funding in advance.

Update on VR Funding Letter Sent to PA Legislators

- Ms. Christie Cyktor informed members that On June 1, 2026, Pennsylvania State Legislators were provided with the PaRC Legislative Committee's letter of support regarding the proposed $1 million increase in the State Fiscal Year 2026 budget for the Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR), including $500,000 for the Bureau of Blindness and Visual Services' Specialized Services program and $500,000 for the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing's Support Service Provider (SSP) program for individuals who are Deafblind.

Discussion of Potential Outreach Efforts with Veterans and How VA Programming May Align with PaRC

- Members discussed potential outreach efforts to partner with Veteran organizations. Members would like to invite a presenter to discuss how Veteran programming aligns with the PaRC mission and how the Council can support Veterans with disabilities regarding employment. Mr. Dorian Rhodes will reach out with his contacts with the Veteran Service Organization and Veterans Administration and follow up regarding a potential presenter for the August 12, 2026, Full Council meeting.

Review of PaRC State and Federal Legislative Watchlists

- Members reviewed the PaRC State and Federal Legislative Watchlists.

Schedule next meeting

- Members requested that staff poll for a meeting for July 31, 2026, from 11:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

Public Comment

- Ms. Lynn Heitz provided Public Comment inquiring if PaRC's letter of recommendation for an audit of SEPTA was provided to the Commonwealth's

Auditor General. PaRC staff confirmed the letter was previously provided to the Governor's Office and agreed to gather the requested information and follow up with the committee.

Adjourn

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