

West Virginia Developmental Disabilities Council  
Quarterly Meeting,  
April 28, 2020  
Conference Call, Charleston, WV

Minutes

**Members present:** Kenneth Accord, Doug Auten, Brandy Beery, Rhonda Blosser, Steve Brady, Cali Brill, Janie Cole, Lesley Cottrell, Delmar Davis, Julie Dial, Marc Ellison, Dawn Embrey-King, Tonya Eve, Lysay Frye, James Gallaher, JaQue Galloway, Susan Given, Richard Hammons, Jacqueline Proctor, Pam Roush, Tara Roush, Jon Sassi, and Sheila Zickefoose.

**Members absent:** Patty Combs, Randy Hill, Sherill Hoffman, Susan Loudermilk, Wanda Proffitt, Rebecca Stone, and Matthew Wink.

**Guests:** Nora Dillard (BMS) and Emily Hopta (DHHR).

**Staff present:** Christy Black, Linda Higgs, and Steve Wiseman.

**Call to Order, Welcome, Roll Call:** Due to the recent resignation of the Chair, Steve called the meeting to order and welcomed Council members. A roll call was taken.

**Introductions and Announcements:** Steve announced that Kristin resigned from the Council in order to be able to provide care for her elderly father. He stated that family always comes first and understood, but Kristin will be missed. She wants to continue to be involved with employment initiatives. Steve said the Council appreciates her expertise and hard work in this area. Steve stated that the next meeting is scheduled to be held in Summersville. Members will be informed as to how we will hold the meeting.

**Approval of January 28, 2020 Meeting Minutes:** Steve Brady asked the Minutes to be corrected to reflect Pam Ingram is with BBH rather than BHF. **Tara moved,** and **Lesley seconded** the motion to approve the Minutes as corrected. **Motion carried.**

## **New Business**

**Grant Renewal Applications** – Jon Sassi reported on behalf of the Grant Review workgroup. Members of the workgroup were Doug, Lesley, and Jon. A handout was provided to Members in their packets. Jon discussed the grant application for Vocational Services, Inc. The grant proposal requests \$76,760. Many of the activities required in the current grant involve videotaping, gathering parents together, and other tasks that require people to be face-to-face. Most of the grant activities have stopped due to the current pandemic. **Jon moved** and **Lesley seconded** the motion to do a no-cost extension of the current grant through September. The grantee can reapply for a second-year funding. There was no discussion. **Motion carried.**

Jon discussed the grant application for Mountain State Centers for Independent Living in the amount \$140,000. The proposal assists Governor appointed Members' participation. It supports cost associated with quarterly and other Council meetings. It supports people with I/DD and family members to attend training and includes training materials and training events. **Jon moved** to fund the proposal in the amount of \$140,000. **Sheila seconded** the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion carried.**

Jon discussed the grant application for Community Access, Inc. in the amount of \$215,000. This project supports Council's legislative advocacy, supports research, quality assurance, and training coordination. The proposal also supports social media, the production of video and other training products, and larger training such as SRV and PASSING, and State Plan initiatives. **Jon moved** to fund the proposal at \$215,000. Brandy seconded the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion carried.**

**Budget Update:** Steve gave a budget update. He stated the federal government is trying to be helpful. It is recognized that Councils across the country are hampered from doing their work due to the social distancing orders. Steve said that he has had conversations with grantees about this dilemma. Some FY2018 funding is tied up in grants and will not be spent before the end of the fiscal year. We will do the best we can to use it appropriately.

The Administration on Community Living finally released guidance on Council funding relative to COVID-19. Permission was given to extend by one year the length of time Councils can use the allotments for both FY2019 and FY2020. This will help the Council over the next two years. Starting with the Federal Grant Award for FY2021 and for each future year, the Council will have only two years to use the funding instead of three years.

The Council's two vacancies have slowed the use of the allotments. We did hire a person to fill the Administrative Assistant vacancy, but after two and a half days she returned to her old job. After a new recruitment effort, the job was offered to a second person, but she decided to stay at her current job. A second register has been received, and the position is currently being advertised through social media. It appeared we were ready to make an offer to a person to fill the Planner position. Since there were no names on the State register for that position classification, an advertisement on social media was required. That advertisement will end the second week in May. Hopefully, we will be able to hire by mid-May.

Both positions are in the Council's budget. Overall, the Council's funding is adequate to meet its needs.

**Designated Stipends Allotment:** Steve stated that we had cancellations of many of the events scheduled for this year. Most of the training events scheduled for this fiscal year will be, or are planned to be, rescheduled for next year. Steve recommended to plan for \$44,000. **Lesley moved** that the Council allot \$44,000 for designated stipends and **Sheila seconded** the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion carried.**

**Call for Investment Allotment:** Steve stated that it is questionable if we should put out a Call for Investment (CFI) at this time due to the unknown impact of COVID 19, but that in three months the Council may want to issue one. Steve recommends that the Council hold off on the CFI for now and he will work with the Executive Committee.

**Nominating Committee:** Sheila reported out on behalf of the Nominating Committee. Members of the Committee were Rhonda, Lesley, Sherill, and Sheila.

She stated that the Committee received applications for second terms from seven of the nine Members eligible. Sheila **moved** to submit applications for Kenneth Accord, Brandy Beery, Rhonda Blosser, Marc Ellison, Tonya Eve, James Gallaher, and Susan Loudermilk to the Governor for appointment to terms ending June 30, 2024. **Richard seconded** the motion. There was no discussion. **Kenneth, Brandy, Rhonda, Marc, Tonya, and James** abstained from voting. **Motion carried.**

**New Member Applications:** Sheila reported that the Committee reviewed applications to fill two expiring terms and two terms of Members who did not reapply for a second term. **Sheila moved** to forward applications from Janice Bostic (Fayette Co.), Kim Hawkins (Kanawha Co.), Ashley Stewart (Wyoming Co.), and Jessica Sykes (Berkeley Co.) to the Governor for appointment to terms ending June 30, 2024. **Delmar seconded** the motion. There was no discussion. **Motion carried.**

**Election of Council Chairperson:** On behalf of the Nominating Committee **Sheila moved** to appoint Brandy Beery as Chair of the Council for a two-year term ending June 30, 2022. **JaQue seconded** the motion. There was no discussion. **Brandy** abstained. **Motion carried.**

**Election of Executive Committee Members:** Steve stated there are three members whose terms are up on the Executive Committee. The three are interested in continuing. No one else asked to be included. Steve asked the Council to approve them by verbal vote. **Susan moved** to elect by verbal vote rather than ballot. **Marc seconded** the motion. Motion carried. **Jon moved** to approve **Doug, Lesley, and Delmar** for another two-year term as Executive Committee Members. **Rhonda seconded** the motion. **Doug, Lesley, and Delmar abstained.** There was no discussion. **Motion carried.**

**PIP Update:** Christy gave an update on the Partners in Policymaking program. She stated that the program has one more weekend which is the graduation weekend. It was originally scheduled for April but has been postponed until June 26 and 27 due to COVID 19. A decision will be made in the near future as to how the Council will hold graduation. Christy stated that program will have 29 graduates. Nine participated virtually primarily. The virtual sessions did work.

Christy will be participating on a webinar to see how other Councils are providing the program virtually.

**Final Legislative Report:** Christy gave a final Legislative Report. She stated that there were 2,389 bills introduced this session. 386 bills passed and 6 bills were vetoed by the Governor. Typically, there are between 1,800 to 2,000 bills introduced. It was a very busy session with lots of relationships made. Christy discussed bills that the Council followed. She stated that all the line items that the Council followed in the budget bill were level funded except for IDD Waiver which received a \$19 million increase to clear the waitlist. Christy stated that the Legislative Interim Committees have yet to be scheduled.

Steve stated that we have grave concerns about the possible treatment of people with developmental disabilities and their families. This is particularly a concern when there are stressors such as we experience now, and they are people who are vulnerable and generally devalued in society. There are things that we recognize, and we need to get ahead of because we don't want history to repeat itself. Healthcare is one of those areas. We saw this play out early on in certain areas and localities, for example, how ventilators might be rationed. Kansas has an executive order which states that ventilators could be removed from people who already have them and given to those who are perceived to have a better "quality of life." People with disabilities are generally perceived as having less quality of life. We appreciate Disability Rights of WV (DRWV) for sending a letter to the Governor and DHHR officials to keep them aware of people's civil rights. The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) has also put out a letter. We have made our contacts quietly with DHHR. We are interested in the sanctity of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and safeguarding everyone's wellbeing.

Steve asked members to complete the feedback form and scan and send to him or Linda. If members do not have the ability to scan, then they can mail them.

**Adjournment:** Marc moved to adjourn, and Steve Brady seconded the motion.