# **Virginia Board for People with Disabilities**

**Advocacy and Outreach (A&O) Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Date: March 18, 2015**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Nancy Briggs, Carina Elgin, Ron Lanier, Korinda Rusinyak, Board Chairman, Matthew Shapiro, Ed Turner, Travis Webb, Angela Yong West, A&O Committee Chair, and Rose Williams

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Marisa Laios

**VBPD STAFF PRESENT:** Barb Dodd, Katherine Lawson, Dr. Penni Sweetenburg-Lee, Kara White

**CALL TO ORDER:** The Advocacy and Outreach Committee was called to order by Angela Yong West at 9:35 am. Following introductions, the committee reviewed the Agenda.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES:** The committee reviewed the December 3, 2014 minutes. As there were no corrections needed, a motion for approval was made by Matthew Shapiro and seconded by Rose Williams. The **MOTION** was unanimously **APPROVED**.

**REVIEW OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING:** Ms. West reviewed the Executive Committee’s work of the morning. She reflected upon the content of the meeting including board member attendance, the Exec. Director’s update and the Board’s budget. She reviewed the Executive Committee’s discussion of possible Committee structure changes and possible changes to how the Assessment of the Disability System in Virginia is conducted.

**DISCUSSION OF STATE PLAN OBJECTIVES:** Molly Dellinger Wray and Jack Brandt provided an overview of the Leadership Empowerment Abuse Prevention Grant. (LEAP) They shared related activities of the Partnership for People with Disabilities, including a webinar for parents of children with DD which teaches abuse prevention and the ICAN Accessibility Project which helps individuals with DD access protective orders. The LEAP project staff assembled several committees to provide oversight to the LEAP project in the area of curriculum development, teaching strategies, project evaluation and sustainability. Following the review of five curriculums, the steering committee determined they would originate a curriculum. The curriculum was pilot tested, and amendments were made. Staff to the LEAP project then recruited and trained trainers, and developed uniform protocols for the training. Brochures for LEAP were distributed to the A and O Committee members, as well as samples of materials from the project. LEAP staff have developed materials to be delivered to non verbal individuals using colorful illustrative pictorials for every phase of the curriculum. Fifty four individuals have been trained to date, and project staff have scheduled trainings through July with a plan to train 107 by the end of July. VCU is seeking additional funds hoping to develop additional modules after the grant ends targeting individual support providers and possibly younger individuals with DD. The curriculum has four themes: “I am strong, my feelings are important, I deserve to feel safe, I deserve respect.” Materials also included a trust card, and resources to ensure individuals know how to report instances of abuse.

Barb Dodd provided a review of Visitor Statistics of the home page, the Facebook site, and the agency blog.

Facebook page likes continue to grow (1130 as of Feb. 12 up from 1011 on Oct. 1) and the most popular post was Dec. 22 (ABLE Act signed into law) reaching 4003 FB users with 137 likes/comments/shares and 102 clicks on the post

Ms. Dodd also reported that activity on va-board.blogspot.com continues to grow with the most popular blog post published in October (Supported Employment by Dr. Paul Wehman, guest blogger).

Kara White provided an update on the Partners in Policy Making Program. She said that a team has been assembled to review applications. She reviewed demographics among the applicants with the committee and indicated a contract is under negotiation with a hotel for the 2015-2016 class and a site visit is planned. There was then a discussion of the PIP Alumni connecting using social media. Agency staff discussed using Facebook as a way to increase connections among PIP alumni.

The committee discussed the importance of providing information to Ms. Dodd on stories of individuals with developmental disabilities living in the community. Ron Lanier reflected on a story involving a YLF graduate he had shared with the committee and Barb Dodd expressed appreciation for this content.

The meeting adjourned at 10: 50 a.m.