**Virginia Board for with Disabilities**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

***June 9, 2021***

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities held its regular quarterly meeting on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 via Zoom meeting.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ann Bevan,Phil Caldwell, Frank Carrillo, Allison Coles-Johnson, Parthy Dinora, Alexandra Dixon, Dennis Findley, Felicia Hamilton, Samantha Hollins, Ray Hopkins, Jocelyn Kilgore, Molly Korte, Richard Kriner, Donna Lockwood, Rachel Loria, Eric Mann, Dawn Missory, Madeline Nunnally, Kate Olson, Deanna Parker, Lindsay Pearse, Olivia Price, Eric Raff, Vasantha Rayman, Chandra Robinson, Matthew Shapiro, Maya Simmons, Alexus Smith, Edmond Turner, Frederique Vincent and Niki Zimmerman.

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** Dianna Banks**,** Sarah Krantz-Ciment, Dennis Lites (left early) Cindy Rudy, and Theresa Simonds.

**CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:** Board Chair, Mr. Matthew Shapiro, called the June 9, 2021, Board meeting to order at 12:45 p.m. The Chair gave instructions for the protocols for the Zoom Board meeting. The Chair noted that Caroline Raker has resigned from the Board.

**ROLL CALL/INTRODUCTIONS:** The Chair did a roll call/introduction for the Board members. Ms. Teri Morgan, Executive Director, welcomed everyone to the meeting and did a roll call/introduction for the Board staff.

**APPROVAL OF MARCH 10, 2021 MINUTES:** The Chair asked if there were any changes to the March 10, 2021, Board Meeting minutes. The Chair called for a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes.Mr.Eric Mannmade a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes, andMr. Frank Carrillo seconded. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**  There was no public comment.

**RECOGNITION OF OUTGOING BOARD MEMBERS:** The Executive Director, Ms. Teri Morgan, recognized each of the outgoing Board members and gave them special recognition for their service on the Board. Ms. Morgan stated that all of the outgoing Board members will receive a certificate of recognition and a special gift. Ms. Morgan noted that some of the Board members are eligible for reappointment and asked those Board members that are eligible to consider applying for reappointment.

**REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE AND VOTE ON SLATE OF OFFICERS:** Mr.Eric Mann, Chair of the Nominations Committee, thanked Mr. Henry Street, Director of Administration, for all of his support. Mr. Manngave a brief report on the Nominations Committee meeting and announced the slate of officers. Mr. Shapiro, Board Chair, asked if there were any nominations from the floor. There were none. Mr. Mann then made a **MOTION** from the committee to accept the slate of officers and at large members as follows: Alexus Smith, Chair; Alexandra Dixon Vice Chair; Sarah Krantz-Ciment, Secretary; and, Jocelyn Kilgore, Ed Turner and Molly Korte as at large members. The Committee Chairs to be appointed by the chairperson.

The Chair called for a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the selected nominees with the exception of Sarah Krantz-Ciment as she was not in attendance to accept the nomination. The **MOTION** passed unanimously.

After further discussion, Mr. Mann confirmed that the committee communicated with Ms. Krantz-Ciment and that she did accept the nomination. Mr. Mann made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** Sarah Krantz-Ciment as Secretary for the 2021-2022 slate of Officers. Ray Hopkins seconded the **MOTION.** The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**PRESENTATION OF SFY 2022 BOARD OPERATIONAL BUDGET:** Mr. Henry Street presented the SFY 2022 operational budget to the Board for approval. He noted that there was a 9% increase in our overall budget from last year. This is due in part to state employees receiving a 5% pay increase starting in July, and this year the Youth Leadership Academy (YLA) and Partners and Policy Making (PIP) programs will take place in the same fiscal year. This is the first time in a few years this has happened. YLA was to take place last year but was cancelled because of the pandemic.

Mr. Phil Caldwell made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the 2022 Board Operational Budget. Mr. Eric Raff seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**REPORT OF THE GRANT REVIEW TEAM COMMITTEE ON COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS:**

Ms.Chandra Robinson, the Grant Review Team leader, provided preliminary information about the grant review process. Ms. Robinson noted that sixteen Letters of Interest were received during Phase I of *the Creating Inclusive Communities & Strengthening Self Advocacy* RFP’s; from those, the Grant Review Team (GRT) selected 10 applicants to receive full proposals. Ms. Robinson stated that after extensive review, the GRT chose 5 proposals to recommend to the Board for funding totaling $487,364.

Mr. Jason Withers, Grants and Contracts Manager, gave a brief review of the four Creating Inclusive Communities RFP applications that are being recommended for funding.

Mr. Dennis Findley made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the GRT’s recommendation to fund the following four proposals: 1) Brain Injury Services of SWVA, Providing a Link for Survivors; 2) Children’s Assistive Technology Service, Making Assistive Technology Accessible and Meaningful to Early Intervention Families in Rural Southwest Virginia; 3) James Madison University, Ability First: Transforming Homes and Communities in Rural Areas of the Shenandoah Valley; and, 4) Virginia Commonwealth University, TIDE (Training on Inclusion, Diversity and Equity).

Ms. Alexandra Dixon seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously. Parthy Dinora and Alexus Smith abstained.

Mr. Jason Withers gave a brief review of the Arc of Virginia’s proposal for the *Strengthening Self Advocacy in Virginia* RFP. The Chair called for a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the GRT’s recommendation to fund the Arc of Virginia’s Strengthening Self-Advocacy proposal. The **MOTION** carried. Kate Olson abstained.

**STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**INVESTMENT COMMITTEE:**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The Chair, Ms. Alexus Smith, called the meeting to order at 10:50 am.

**GRANTS AND CONTRACTS EXPENDITURES/MONITORING:**

Mr. Jason Withers, Grants and Contracts Manager, provided updates on recent activities and expenditures regarding 7 grant projects.

**UPDATE ON DATABASE MANAGEMENT PROJECT WITH dLCV:**

Mr. Withers provided an update on the project with the disAbility Law Center of Virginia (dLCV) to develop a database that will be used to manage the storage, retrieval and reporting of abuse, neglect and exploitation data provided by the Department for Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS).

**APPROVAL FOR STAFF TO MAKE AN AWARD TO ENTITIES TO COMBAT COVID-19:**

Mr. Withers informed committee members that the Administration for Community Living (ACL) recently notified DD Councils that if requested, funding would be provided to assist with critical services to help communities combat COVID-19. In April of 2021, staff to the Board submitted an official request to ACL to receive the funding that would be made available to the Virginia Council. This funding, provided under the American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”), is designed to break down barriers that would allow for expanding vaccine access in communities. Examples of activities provided from ACL for which these funds may be used include: Education about the importance of receiving a vaccine; Identifying people unable to independently travel to a vaccination site; Helping with scheduling a vaccine appointment; Arranging or providing accessible transportation; Providing companion/personal support; Reminding people of the second vaccination appointment if needed, and/or providing technical assistance to local health departments or other entities on vaccine accessibility.

Ms. Samantha Hollins made a **MOTION** to recommend that the full Board **APPROVE** allowing Board staff to release an RFP and/or fund other allowable vaccine access activities and for staff to make an award to one or more entities to conduct projects designed to address critical service needs for communities to combat COVID-19. Mr. Ed Turner second the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT:** Ms. Allison Coles-Johnson, the Committee Chair, made the following report.

The Chair, Ms. Allison Coles-Johnson, called the meeting to order at 10:50 am.

The Chair noted that the agenda was adopted and the minutes were approved with changes.

**Partners in Policymaking (PIP) Program Quarterly Report:** Dr. Penni Sweetenburg Lee, Director of Training & Alumni Development Programs, provided an update on the quarterly report which acknowledged the Training staff and acknowledged the return of staff member Ms. Evette Wingfield-Woodley. She reported that there were 26 confirmed applicants who were accepted into the PIP program.

Dr. Sweetenburg Lee invited and encouraged Board members to zoom in on major PIP events such as, November 6th for Capital Day, Delegate Delores McQuinn will be the moderator, and April 2nd for PIP graduation. The graduation will be an in-person event. The committee discussed Board members reaching out to the new Partners to help engage them. Dr. Sweetenburg Lee thought this was an excellent idea and will follow up with committee members.

**Training Alumni Association**: The alumni development program has been working with alumni from across the state and from all four regions. The program has been very active. Expansion of partnerships with community groups and other stakeholders is occurring on an ongoing basis. The goal is to diversify and expand outreach as much as possible. A key date is August the 7, 2021, which will be the annual program retreat. This retreat will be virtual and currently 30 or more alumni have registered. By the end of the retreat, the alumni will have developed plans for the coming year.

**YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (YLA) Program Quarterly Report:** Dr. Sweetenburg Lee shared some of the exciting marketing items that have been developed for the Youth Leadership Academy as well as the other training programs. She reported that there were 20 participants confirmed, but unfortunately, six have since declined participation. Some of the participants who declined were accepted last year and, because of COVID and the cancellation of the 2020 YLA, were told that they were eligible for the 2021 YLA. However, some have graduated and moved on to jobs or internships and are not available. Others had exhaustion from online instruction and needed a break. It was also reported that some parents have been overwhelmed and unfortunately missed some of the correspondence and e-mails. There are now 14 confirmed and excited participants. Youth leadership alumni staff will assist with the program and will be engaging in various activities. Highlights of the schedule of activities were reviewed including Capitol Day taking place on July 13th with keynote speaker Levar Stoney, Mayor of Richmond. There will also be legislators present and Delegate Delores McQuinn will serve as the moderator. Participants in the program will be receiving an exciting gift box with a variety of items, including a book written by an alumni. Graduation will take place on July 15th at 11:30 a.m. followed by the showing of the movie "Crip Camp." Dr. Sweetenburg Lee thanked the Board for their support and also gave a special thanks to Mr. Ben Jarvela and Ms. Megan Weems for all of their support putting together the program booklet, brochures, pamphlets, and other marketing items.

**Communications REPORT:** Mr. Ben Jarvela, Director of Communications, gave the communications update reporting that they've been very busy putting together media materials and websites, working with Project Living Well, and getting feedback from self-advocates on projects they are working on. Mr. Jarvela reported continued work on assessments and that they will be focusing a lot more on infographics because they find that they get more media attention. Mr. Jarvela reported they have secured a contract with the software company Meltwater and that he was able to negotiate and get a great price for this product. Meltwater provides the ability to search for content with greater ease as well as the ability to drill down to search information, target media outlets, reporters and content creators and the software allows for more personalization and customization of searches. In addition, the Program Performance Report highlights is being worked on and should be out in the next couple of weeks.

**POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC):** Mr. Phil Caldwell, Committee Chair, made the following report.

Mr. Phil Caldwell thanked Ms. Clare Huerta, Ms. Nia Harrison, Ms. Linh Nguyen, Mr. Ben Jarvela, and the rest of the staff for all of their hard work. Mr. Caldwell stated that their policy meeting went very well and that they had a lot of active discussion. Mr. Caldwell asked Ms. Huerta to review the recommended 2022 assessment topics.

**ASSESSMENT UPDATE:** Ms. Clare Huerta, thanked the Policy Advisory Committee for a great meeting. The two topics that the Policy Advisory Committee is recommending for 2022 assessments include 1) the “School-to-Prison Pipeline” which focuses on disparate impact of disciplinary policies that disproportionately suspend, expel or otherwise secludes people with disabilities who are black, indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) from their typical learning environment; and, 2) Information access which will look at how individuals with disabilities and their families learn and access the information they need. Including barriers they have to accessing and using the needed information and recommendations and strategies to improve information access in Virginia. Ms. Huerta pointed out that this is an area that the Board highlighted as very important during the State Plan development process. It is proposed that if approved by the Board, this assessment will be carried out through a RFP.

Mr. Caldwell noted that the PAC vetted these topics and is interested in assessment topics that would be meaningful in moving the system forward on multiple levels.

The Chair, Mr. Shapiro, called for a **MOTION** to recommend **APPROVAL** for the 2022 assessment topics, the “School to Prison Pipeline” and Information Access. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**PROJECT LIVING WELL UPDATE:** Ms. Linh Nguyen updated the Committee on Project Living Well including information on the website and downloads of reports. She also reviewed the status of reports being developed and reports that are in the final review stage before being published.

**POLICY/LEGISLATIVE UPDATE:** Mr. Caldwell reported that Ms. Huerta and Ms. Harrison provided a policy update and reviewed policy work that Board staff have been doing since COVID and since our last meeting.

**APPROVAL TO RELEASE RFP TO CONDUCT INFORMATION ACCESS STUDY ASSESSMENT:**

Ms. Alexus Smith discussed an RFP for the assessment on information access. The goal of the RFP is to select a grantee to deliver a clear and concise written report to the Virginia Board by May 1, 2022. The report will compressively assess qualitative and quantitative information about how and where people with developmental disabilities and their families access information about community services and supports across the life-span. Including, whether the information accessed provides them with the information they need and the systematic barriers to accessing useful information. It will also include recommendations and strategies to improve how information about the system of services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities is accessed and used. In addition, the assessment will address non-Medicaid funded community-based services and supports which may include but are not limited to, Social Security benefits, financial supports for people with developmental disabilities, and family support.

Mr. Withers noted that the grantee will regularly update the Board about progress. Progress updates may include quarterly reports, interim deliverables, and oral presentations to the Board on their preliminary research, research methods, findings, recommendations, and the report outline. He stated that staff is estimating funding available for this RFP of approximately $100,000. This was referenced in the supplemental packet that was e-mailed to Board members last week.

Ms. Olivia Price made a **MOTION** to recommend to the full board **APPROVAL** for the release of an RFP to fund an assessment to study information access per the goal and the scope as outlined. Ms. Kate Olson seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT:** Ms. Teri Morgan reported that she is expecting the public health emergency to end in July. When that public health emergency ends, the Board’s ability to meet virtually is also expected to end. Ms. Morgan stated that she anticipates that the September 15th Board meeting will an in-person meeting and will take place at the Four Points Sheraton hotel.

Ms. Alexandra Dixon stated that it sounds like it’s up in the air and inquired when we will have confirmation of the Board meeting having to be in person? Ms. Morgan stated that when the public health emergency ends, it is likely that the Freedom of Information Act flexibilities allowing virtual meetings will also end. Communication that the director has received indicates that the governor will not extend the public health emergency.

Ms. Ann Bevan stated that it might help if Board staff send out a quick e-mail to confirm the status of the public health emergency and if the September meeting will be in person. Ms. Morgan stated that she can send out an e-mail when she receives additional information.

[Full details of each subcommittee meeting can be viewed here.](https://vaboard.org/boardmeetings.htm)

**THREE BOARD ASSESSMENTS: FINDINGS AND APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Ms**.** Nia Harrison discussed the first assessment topic of institutional supports which focused on Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID). Ms. Harrison shared a PowerPoint presentation and reviewed background information on the origin of ICF/IIDs. Ms. Harrison reviewed key finding in the areas of minimizing utilization of ICD/IIDs, minimizing ICF/IID cost, ensuring health and safety in ICF/IID, and improving coordination of ICF/IID oversight.

Ms. Harrison stated that staff is recommending some additions to two recommendations. She directed Board members to the list of assessment recommendations provided in the Board packet. The Board Chair, Mr. Shapiro, asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he asked if there was a motion for approval.

Ms. Olivia Price made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the recommendations as amended for release to the Governor, through the Secretary of Health and Human Resource and the general public. Ms. Alexus Smith seconded the **MOTION**. Deanna Parker and Ann Bevan abstained. The **MOTION** passed.

Ms. Clare Huerta, Deputy Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs, gave a presentation on the assessment of residential services available in the Developmental Disabilities (DD) waivers. Ms. Huerta provided an overview of the assessment’s key findings related to shared living, independent living supports, and supported living services; three new residential services available in the DD waivers after the waivers were redesigned in 2016. In addition, she reviewed some of the related services that support people to live independently as well as the area of individual empowerment, which is important in making sure that people can live in the setting that they choose to.

Ms. Huerta briefly discussed several recommendations to improve access and opportunity for more independent living options through the services assessed, including the related services and individual empowerment. The Board Chair, Mr. Shapiro, asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he asked if there was a motion for approval.

Ms. Katherine Olson made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the residential services assessment recommendations for release to the Governor, through the Secretary of Health and Human Resource and the general public. Ms. Frederique Vincent seconded the **MOTION**. Deanna Parker and Ann Bevan abstained. The **MOTION** passed.

Ms. Huerta gave a presentation on the assessment of day and employment services available in the DD waivers. Ms. Huerta provided and overview of key finding for supported employment and integrated day services. In addition, she reviewed the role of individual empowerment in accessing these services and making a meaningful choice. During Ms. Huerta review of individual empowerment she noted that the findings were consistent with the findings from the assessment of residential services. Ms. Huerta briefly discussed three types of services, individual supported employment, group supported employment, and workplace assistance services.

Ms. Huerta directed Board members to the list of assessment recommendations provided in the Board packet. Ms. Huerta briefly discussed several recommendations to improve access to employment and integrated day services, as well as recommendation to increase individual empowerment. Ms. Huerta and Ms. Morgan answered a question from a Board member regarding peer mentors supports. The Board Chair, Mr. Shapiro, asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he asked if there was a motion for approval.

Mr. Ed Turner made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the employment and integrated day services recommendations for release to the Governor, through the Secretary of Health and Human Resource and the general public. Mr. Dennis Findley seconded the **MOTION**. Deanna Parker and Ann Bevan abstained. The **MOTION** passed.

**REVIEW OF BOARD MEMBERS SURVEY RESULTS:** Ms.Nia Harrison provided a presentation on the responses and recommendations from the May Board member engagement survey.

Ms. Morgan stated that the staff team wants to understand the feedback provided in the survey at a deeper level and determine how staff can better support the Board. Ms. Morgan referenced the survey feedback and that Board members are interested in presentations and continuing education during Board meetings. She informed the Board that she’s been working with Dr. Vivian Jackson, who is with the National Center for Cultural Competency at Georgetown University, on a plan to provide training to staff and the Board on cultural and linguistic competency. This is an area that Board members expressed is highly important and is incorporated in our new state plan. Ms. Morgan stated that there's a lot of room for improvement on how we engage diverse communities and that this is an area we want to strengthen. Ms. Morgan noted that Dr. Jackson is going to be conducting staff training and will also coming to the September and December Board meetings to work with the Board.

Ms. Morgan further discussed the survey and staff’s interest in more specific feedback on the Board packet and if there are ways that we can improve our efficiency and engagement of Board members. Discussion ensued. Ms. Allison Coles-Johnson recommended providing Board members with additional time to process the information presented and to provide feedback. Ms. Morgan agreed, and stated that she will send specific questions to the Board for additional feedback via email.

Ms. Morgan answered questions from Board members about the possibility of forming an Ad Hoc Committee to further discuss the survey responses and additional feedback and bring recommendations to the Board. Several Board members volunteered to serve on the Ad Hoc Committee.

Ms. Morgan thanked the Board staff team for all of their work.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** None

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Chair thanked Board staff, interpreters, and captioners for all of their hard work. The Chair adjourned the meeting at 3:32 pm.