



**BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING**  
**Minutes of virtual meeting**  
**December 12, 2023**

**Call Meeting to Order**

President, Paul Palmer, called the meeting to order at 8:36 am. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

**Attendance**

**Present:** Daniel Bartz, Amanda Bouwman, Brian Calley, Hansen Clarke, Teddy Dorsette III, Chris Land, Tom Landry, Paul Palmer

**Absent:** Jacqueline Cuevas, Amanda Davis-Scott, Davin Hemmila, Malkia Newman, Vincent Pinti, Jane Shank

**Staff present:** Michelle Roberts, Michele Brand, Theresa Diebolt, Nick Gable, Rachel Huddleston, Elham Jahshan, Kris Keranen, Sara Koroniotis, Mark McWilliams, Sarah Palacios, Kyle Williams, Simon Zagata

**Guests:** Emily Henderson, McCall Hamilton, Laura Clark, BEI III and Marilyn, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services, Mora Wilkevicz, PAIMI Advisory Council

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

President Palmer asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Brian Calley MOVED to approve the consent agenda and Tom Landry seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

**Executive Director and Staff Reports**

Michelle Roberts, Executive Director, shared that all Program Performance Reports (PPRs) have been submitted and since we improved our processes, we

were able to complete them ahead of the deadline. Roberts was very pleased and stated these were some of the best reports.

Roberts informed everyone that the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA) who funds our PAIMI program will be conducting a three-day on-site review May 7 through May 9. She received a 71-page self-assessment document that will need to be completed and staff will be spending the next five months preparing for the review. We will be scheduling meetings with Board members, PAIMI Advisory Council members, and staff to prepare everyone. The reviewers will want to speak to everyone and will be meeting the Board and PAC separately without any DRM staff present.

Roberts gave an update on grievances since the last board meeting sharing there were four requests for grievance packets, three of whom were PAIMI eligible and one who was eligible for our PAIR program, protection and advocacy for individual rights. From those requests, no grievances were filed.

Roberts gave a staffing update stating there were no resignations, one employee has been out on FMLA leave and an offer was made for the representative payee program for the program assistant position. Additionally, Judy Lindstrom, in our Marquette office is preparing to retire in June after nearly thirty years with the agency, so we will be looking to fill her position as well.

Roberts mentioned the board training put on by LaToya Blizzard at NDRN, which seven board members attended, went very well. She is looking forward to future board development opportunities.

Sara Koroniotis stated the Representative Payee Team has conducted 55 reviews between July and September. She stated after the quarter, they are almost 50% complete for the 135 reviews to be completed this fiscal year. Sara and her team are hopeful to hire a program assistant soon.

Rachel Huddleston shared the Communications Team has been busy keeping the social media platforms updated and has been contacted by other organizations asking how they can make their websites more accessible. We had a successful Lugnuts event and are hopeful to work with them in making the stadium more accessible. Our second Rockin 4 Rehab fundraising event was also successful, and Rachel is hopeful to work with Dr. Fabiano on future events.

Huddleston joined the newly formed legislative Disability Caucus and is excited to announce that Kris Keranen, Director of Education, and Kristen Milefchik from our Vaccine Team will be doing presentations at a meeting in the Spring.

With election year coming up, Rachel Prevatt, Voting Engagement Specialist, will be working with the Secretary of State on a couple projects as well as continuing

work on the “Know Your Rights” guide with Promote the Vote. The team has been working with board member, Teddy Dorsette III, on voting videos and those should be ready for viewing soon. Further, they will be working with Detroit Disability Power on some of their voting activities in the spring.

**Simon Zagata** stated his team is continuing work on the discharge issue at psychiatric hospitals. He eagerly shared a CAIR Team advocate got a substantiated recipient rights complaint against the CEO of a CMH. A system is currently being established to track when clients or callers make recipient rights complaints and the timeline of responses. Jen Baker, an advocate on the CAIR Team, and another advocate went to the upper peninsula to monitor all the prisons. Calls and new cases have come from those visits and data is being collected.

**Kris Keranen** stated the recent staff changes at the Attorney General’s office has slowed down the lawsuit against the Department of Education. She shared her concerns with the challenging education calls they continue to receive and issues with keeping kids in school and the struggles families face. Kris went on to say they have been getting quite a few calls regarding children getting injured at school.

**Sarah Palacios** reported DRM received over 4,700 calls in fiscal year 2023 which is similar to what we have been receiving in years past. She reminded everyone her team consists of advocates who are generalists and take all types of calls. They listen to problems and issues all day long. They report on calls that are similar in nature if they see a pattern.

**Elham Jahshan** stated her team works mostly with vocational rehabilitation services in Michigan who assists people with disabilities to find jobs and careers. She shared a case involving a client who is blind and wants to be an international lawyer. The client provided all the information and wanted to go to Italy to participate in a study abroad program. She had a grant and submitted a request for assistance with airfare and food. Bureau of Services for Blind Persons did not agree with her goals and denied her request. The team fought hard to get the client what she needed, and the client is in Italy taking her classes.

**Mark McWilliams** shared the Vaccine Team provided around 300 COVID vaccinations in quarter 4 which was the slowest quarter since this project started. Quarter one was about triple that amount. In addition, we were able to provide around 761 flu shots under a separate grant which was more than our goal. We are still doing clinics and continue to receive calls for homebound shots. The project is starting to wind down and we will be wrapping up this grant at the end of June 2024. A link to the summary, Disability Health Equity Report, of the project can be found on our website.

Kyle Williams reported substantial progress has recently been made on two major lawsuits. We filed a settlement agreement with MDHHS in the Waskul litigation and we received a favorable decision from the Court of Appeals in the CB vs Livingston County Community Mental Health case which relates to service provision and enforcement of administrative hearing.

#### President's report

President Palmer thanked Michelle and staff for their reports.

#### Public comment

No public comment was made.

#### PAIMI Advisory Council update

Christopher Land expressed the council finished up the annual report (ACR) and that he is very pleased with the work DRM is doing. He also shared the council is working on a plan to do more outreach.

#### Committee reports

##### Budget & Finance Committee

Hansen Clarke was happy to report we ended fiscal year 2023 in excellent shape and expenses were under budget by 10.5%. He thanked Michelle Roberts and Michele Brand on their great leadership and work. Clarke went on to state we had a couple large carryovers in PAAT and PATBI. He mentioned the vaccine grants are reported separately and he thanked Mark McWilliams on his excellent leadership. He met with the auditors and stated they had nothing but positive comments and assessments about DRM.

Hansen Clarke MOVED to receive and accept the Budget & Finance Committee report and financial statements and Tom Landry seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

##### Public Policy Committee

Brian Calley mentioned foster care issues in Michigan and how kids do not have advocates who follow them to ensure they are placed correctly in new schools as some kids are moved around a lot. Legislation has been introduced and he is hopeful to add accountability to those entrusted with the care of foster children, so they are able to stay on track for graduation.

Emily Henderson discussed the two bills that were recently signed by Governor Whitmer. The first one being Institutional desecration, essentially preventing individuals from being the target of hate crime, which includes people with disabilities. And the second one being the "Justice for Allie" bill which makes it a crime to knowingly take advantage of an adult's vulnerable status to manipulate, coerce or otherwise force them to provide sexually explicit material of themselves. Henderson mentioned a few things she/we will be watching in the coming year.

### Old Business

Board members were reminded to get their annual forms to Theresa Diebolt as soon as possible. A new link was provided to members to ease the process.

### New Business

The annual Ernie Reynolds essay contest is underway, and members were asked to volunteer to serve on the committee. Tom Landry and Amanda Bouwman agreed to participate in this year's contest committee.

### Adjourn

President Palmer adjourned to Executive Session at 10:35 am.  
Executive Session commenced at 10:40 am and adjourned at 11:34 am.

Minutes prepared by:   
Theresa Diebolt, Executive Assistant

Minutes approved by:   
Daniel Bartz, Secretary