



**Disability  
Rights**  
Michigan

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING  
Minutes of virtual meeting  
May 10, 2022

**Call Meeting to Order**

President Jane Shank called the meeting to order at 10:01 am.

**Attendance**

**Present virtually/by phone:** Jane Shank, Paul Palmer, Mark Stephenson, Selena Schmidt, Melody Arabo, Hansen Clarke, Marie Jackson, Tom Landry, Brian Calley

**Absent:** Jill Busha, Davin Hemmila, John McCulloch, Mark Wiedelman

**Staff present:** ~~Michelle Roberts, Theresa Diebolt, Mark McWilliams, Rebecca Kasen, Elham Jahshan, Sara Koroniotis, Michele Brand, Nick Gable, Rachel Huddleston, Kris Keranen, Kyle Williams~~

**Guests:** Christin Nohner, McCall Hamilton Lobbying firm

**Approval of Agenda**

President Shank made a revision to the agenda to add a break around 11:30 and add workgroups under New Business.

Michelle Roberts asked that there be some flexibility in time for some staff to report to the board in case they join after the time allotted on the agenda.

President Shank asked for a motion to approve the revised agenda.

Tom Landry MOVED to approve the revised agenda and Mark Stephenson seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

**Approval of Minutes**

President Shank asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2022, board meeting.

Paul Palmer MOVED to approve the minutes and Tom Landry seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

## President's Report

President Shank welcomed Marie Jackson to the board and asked her to tell a little about herself. Ms. Jackson shared that she had been a member of the PAIMI Advisory Council for Disability Rights Montana for many years and served as a chairperson. She is a former Detroit public school teacher and graduated from University of Michigan Law School. She served as a deputy director of Childcare Coordinating Council in Detroit, was a Peer Support Specialist, was employed by care givers as a proposal writer and received a great deal of training. She is very interested in disability rights and is happy to serve on the PAIMI Council as well as the board.

Shank thanked board members for participating in the retreat and mentioned the presentation by Mark Friedman and his team on inclusion and how the board can benefit from that. She went on to say that a workgroup will be looking at diversity, equity, and inclusion to assist the board in providing better support to Michelle and DRM. It was asked that board members take a look at implicit bias and expand their knowledge. She asked the board to think about ways to recruit new members. Additionally, the executive committee will be looking at the bylaws to be more effective. Another board retreat will be scheduled some time in the fall.

Shank reminded members of the board portal that is accessible on the DRM website and has all meeting materials, documents, and contact information. If members need assistance in accessing the portal, they can contact Theresa.

## Executive Director and Staff Reports

Executive Director, Michelle Roberts, began by welcoming Marie Jackson to the board of directors and thanked her for serving as chair of the PAIMI Advisory Council.

Michelle mentioned federal funding and shared that we do not have our grant awards for fiscal year 2022 and we are more than halfway through the year. Because we do not have those funds, we do not know how much we will have in each of the grants or how much will be available, therefore funds were moved around until we get the grant awards. This happens when we spend the grants as expected and do not have large amounts of carryover. She did get notice that we will get a \$21,000 increase in our intellectual and developmentally disabled (PADD) grant, a \$7,000 increase in assistive technology (AT), an \$8,000 increase in voting advocacy (PAVA), and a \$6,000 increase for traumatic brain injury (TBI).

We will also see an increase in the beneficiaries of Social Security (PABSS) program of \$71,000 and have not seen an increase in that grant for a long time. We have also received a \$5,000 grant from Promote the Vote which is nonprofit organization in Michigan that Rachel Huddleston's team has been partnering with over the last year.

Roberts said we completed our contract for diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) with Quincy & Associates and shared that it has been a very positive experience for our organization. We have formed a DEI committee within DRM that is made up of 10 individuals to carry out our commitment in moving forward as an organization. She also noted that we are in the process of updating our mission, vision, and values.

It was asked if there is anything we can do to expedite receiving the grant awards and if the increases we are receiving are consistent with expectations on the budget. Our national organization and federal funders all know we await these annual grant awards, and it is kind of out of our hands and must go through the process. Some P&As have had to get a line of credit to pay bills and payroll. The increases are in line with our expectations of next year's budget however we always under budget to be on the safe side.

Mark McWilliams gave an update on the Vaccination Advocacy team stating there are people left behind in the healthcare system who want vaccinations and cannot get them. We are looking at long term changes in access to healthcare and have found three groups of people to target; people who are not able to leave their home, residents and staff at adult foster care homes, and people living in public housing. We have been scheduling mobile clinics for these groups of people and have been very successful in getting shots in arms.

Our first round of surveys resulted in 177 responses on barriers in getting vaccinations. As a result, we started reviewing access to public transportation. The State is ending its contracts for mobile clinics which we have relied on to administer shots. We are looking at funding mobile clinics through our grant and have been in touch with one of the vendors that provides statewide mobile vaccinations.

Rebecca Kasen gave an update on the CAIR (Community and Institutional Rights) team stating they have been working on a discharge project that started about a year ago when they noticed many people with intellectual disabilities on the discharge list at Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital (KPH). The problem was individuals were not being discharged. The CAIR team learned that many people involved in the process of discharge do not really know how the process works. They found that psychiatrists were saying patients were actively engaging in behaviors that they did a year ago to keep them from being discharged out of concern they would be discharged to the streets. Kasen continues to work with

Dr. Mellos to ensure clinicians are writing accurate reports for their patients. Judges have asked DRM to present on the discharge process.

Kasen highlighted one of their cases stating that a woman had been on the KPH discharge list for years and Community Mental Health (CMH) did not make it a priority because they claimed they could not find placement for her. DRM got involved and requested records and assisted in finding placement for her. We continue to find the best approach in assisting with getting people off the discharge list. Further discussion was held.

Elham Jahshan gave an update on the Employment team stating they have been working on focus area 3 which is increase access to integrated, competitive employment for those who receive services from vocational rehabilitation and centers for independent living.

Jahshan shared a case that one of the advocates worked on involving a client who was not receiving accommodations at Michigan Career & Technical Institute (MCTI). During our investigation, we learned that MCTI has a universal design approach to their program, but the specific accommodations were not made known in any written format. We met with MCTI staff, and they agreed to provide a detailed list of accommodations available to the students and their families. As a result of advocacy on behalf of a client who needed accommodations to fully participate in the STEP-UP program at Michigan Career & Tech. Institute (MCTI), staff agreed to put available accommodations in writing, so students and their families are informed, up front, what accommodations are available from now on. This impact benefits over 220 students.

Sara Koroniotis reported on the Rep Payee team sharing they conducted 63 reviews between January and March and 2913 beneficiaries were impacted. They are currently in last the quarter of their fiscal year and finished 113% for number of reviews they were targeted to conduct.

Koroniotis was asked to be part of a workgroup with our national organization to look at ways to interview individual payees and be more impactful as opposed to the current form used for organizational payees.

The Rep Payee team received an outcome of one of their reviews which was an organizational payee who is a housing provider. They reported that one of the residents of their home has an individual payee who had not been paying the cost of care or rent on time. DRM submitted a request to Social Security and learned that the individual payee was serving two family members. DRM contacted the individual payee who did not want to cooperate however with assistance from the local Social Security office, the payee agreed to a review. They learned the payee was taking funds from the beneficiaries' accounts and reported the findings to

Social Security who in turn found the payee inept and would determine if the beneficiaries could be their own payee or needed a new one.

Rachel Huddleston gave an update on the Communications team saying they issued Number 2 of the print Exchange -featuring the Vaccine Advocacy team on the cover. The print Exchange reached 11,725 individuals. Our social media platforms have seen an increase in visitors.

The team published the CAP brochure in Spanish and Arabic on the website, including Word versions for accessibility and inclusion.

The Communications team opened two marketing campaigns at the end of Q2. Assistive Technology and Transition: School to Adult/Work Life. The goal is to increase AT and Transition clients at DRM. Partnering with Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC). They participated in a transition event at MSU and the football team and met a lot of parents who brought their children to learn more about transition.

They are also partnering with The Bureau of Elections to feature the VAT machine and will do some statewide campaigns with them.

Michele Brand gave an update on IT saying she has been very busy with changing the domain because of the name change to DRM. She was happy to announce that we will be having a couple interns working on the legal team. HR has been busy with staff resigning and new staff being hired.

Kris Keranen reported on the Education team sharing one of the legal cases they have been working on involving a client who moved to Michigan as a young boy. He and his family came from Mexico and speak Spanish and the client is deaf. When he went to school, instead of being provided with appropriate language services, they put him in a classroom with students with cognitive impairment. He never had access to services suitable to his disabilities throughout his school years. DRM filed due process which enabled him to get immediate services. However, we filed an appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States in which we sought damages under Section 504 and the ADA. After IDEA issues were settled without a hearing, the Court has requested a reply from the school district. The school district requested two extensions to their deadline for response. Since then, the Supreme Court issued another decision on another case and undid about 50 years of Section 504 law & issued a decision that discrimination under Sec 504 no longer entitles a person to damages for discrimination. They made Section 504 into contract law. The litigators are looking to amend our complaint and request financial damages that our client lost if he would have had access to language services.

Another case the team is involved in focuses on the Michigan Department of Education's (MDE) legal obligation to ensure that noncompliance with IDEA they have identified is corrected, both for the student named in the complaint, and for all students. The claims against MDE would result in what we hope to be a procedural change in how they ensure school districts comply with the law once noncompliance is identified by the department.

Kyle Williams gave an update on the litigation team stating they have made a tremendous amount of progress on the KB litigation. They filed an amended complaint adding five new plaintiffs (young and diverse) and they will be great representatives of over 100,000 kids that will be impacted by any final settlement. A motion for class certification was filed and the state has alleged that we have conceded and have sufficient facts to certify the class. Williams is very pleased with the progress on this case.

In the Waskul case, they are moving through discovery and well over 2,087,000 pages of documents have been received, reviewed, and annotated which translates to over 577,000 documents. This case involves the most vulnerable and needy people in Michigan, and we are very happy with the progress that has been made on this case as well as the issues we are moving through the courts.

An update on the Harris case we have reached a tentative settlement and is pending approval for a judge to approve it. The family will hopefully get some closure on this case. We will be discussing post-settlement issues with MDOC.

Additionally, DRM defended a client in civil litigation, which we do not normally do, because he was denied accommodations and succeeded in getting his case dismissed.

## Public Comment

There was no public comment.

## PAIMI Advisory Council Report

Chair Jackson referred to the minutes from the PAIMI Advisory Council meeting held on April 19, 2022, that were emailed to the board prior to this meeting and asked for a motion to receive and file them.

Tom Landry MOVED to receive and file the minutes and Selena Schmidt seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

## Public Comment Procedures

President Shank referred to the public comment procedures document that was emailed to everyone prior to this meeting and would like to adopt these for the board of directors. She advised that the word "Council" will be replaced with "Board" where applicable and use these for board protocol for public comment.

Paul Palmer MOVED to adopt the public comment procedures and Brian Calley seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

## Committee Reports

### 1. Budget & Finance Committee – Brian Calley/ Michele Brand

Brian Calley referred to the balance sheet and income statements that were emailed out stating it all looks good and deferred to Michele Brand for further explanation. Brand mentioned a few grants being over budget however once we receive the increases, they will not be over. She is a little concerned about under spending on the AT grant, but overall, she is not concerned with the budget.

Tom Landry MOVED to accept and approve the Budget & Finance Committee report and Mark Stephenson seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

### 2. Public Policy/legislature report – Christin Nohner

Christin Nohner stated that RWC Advocacy rebranded and is now McCall-Hamilton Advocacy & Public Affairs. She explained the process of the budgets moving in the House and Senate.

Nohner gave a brief update on DRM issues surrounding behavioral health, mental health supports in schools, behavioral health workforce, community-based services and in patient psych facilities and she will be watching these issues.

On the legislative policy side, Senate and House have different approaches to addressing concerns on our behavioral health reform system. We do not expect any movement on bills before the election.

There is a package of bills moving through the Senate that she has been keeping an eye on around dyslexia to expand services in schools including more screening as well as providing guidance in training for developing expertise within schools. MDE would be required to provide a resource guide.

As for election reform and any concerns around voting, we have not weighed in directly but are monitoring the bills.

We are following medical rationing as well as education issues and guardianship bill packages and will update DRM and the board, as necessary.

Tom Landry MOVED to accept the public policy report and Brian Calley seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

### Old Business

President Shank stated since they had already discussed the board retreat and diversity, equity, and inclusion and public comment procedures, there is no further new business.

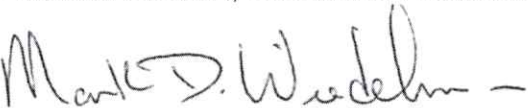
### New Business

President Shank asked Brian Calley to talk about consent agenda and how it works. Calley explained how the process works and saves time during board meetings. Anyone can ask for an item to be taken off the consent agenda, at any time, and discussed and voted on during the meeting. Otherwise, everything included in the consent agenda is voted on with one vote.

### Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned to executive session and the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes prepared by:   
Theresa Diebolt, Executive Assistant

Minutes approved by:   
Mark Wiedelman, Secretary

Meeting dates for 2022  
Tuesday, September 20, 2022  
Tuesday, December 13, 2022