



**Disability
Rights**
Michigan

**BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S MEETING
Minutes of virtual meeting
May 9, 2023**

Call Meeting to Order

President, Jane Shank, called meeting to order at 8:31 am.

Attendance

Present: Jane Shank, Hansen Clarke, Tom Landry, John McCulloch, Malkia Newman, Paul Palmer, Mark Wiedelman

Absent: Davin Hemmila, Brian Calley, Marie Jackson

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

Guests: Emily Henderson, McCall Hamilton, Christina Agle, Mary Whiteford

Approval of Consent Agenda

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

There was a question regarding the financial report so the motion will include everything in the Consent Agenda excluding the financial report.

Mark Wiedelman MOVED to approve the consent agenda excluding the financial report and Malkia Newman seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Executive Director and Staff Reports

Michelle Roberts, Executive Director, shared that a PAIMI Advisory Council member, Chris Franklin, recently passed away. He was an active council member who represented the Michigan Indian community, served our country, and served on the Michigan Indian's Council. DRM will make a donation in his honor.

Michelle recommended revising the Bylaws to include non-voting board members to allow someone who is interested in serving on the board when their schedule may not allow them to attend regular meetings. New language would allow a member to attend meetings as their schedule permits, however they would be a non-voting member and would not count toward the minimum required number of members.

Michelle reminded members of the grievance process and that it is a PAIMI requirement to report this information to the board. She indicated there were four grievance forms requested since the last board meeting and all were from PAIMI-eligible individuals. Out of those four, two grievances were filed. Simon Zagata responded to one and Michelle responded to the other and both files have been closed.

Michelle was happy to report the restructuring of the organization has been going well as we continue to work through minor issues and concerns. Information and Referral (I&R) advocates have been placed on each team instead of all being on one team.

Michelle shared the Elder Abuse Task Force has worked on some bills that have been introduced but have not moved as far as they hoped. The ultimate goal for these bills is to reduce unnecessary guardianships and strengthen available alternatives.

Simon Zagata, Director of Community and Institutional Rights (CAIR), gave a presentation to the PAIMI Advisory Council on the Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (NGRI) settlement and will be presenting it to SAMHSA and the P&A network as well.

Mark McWilliams talked about his new role as Director of Advocacy. The review of focus areas for FY2024 has commenced and staff will be reviewing them at the next in-service before they are presented to the PAIMI Advisory Council. Once the Council has approved them, they will be presented to the Board for approval.

Mark is also responsible for quarterly reporting and annual narrative reporting to our federal funders. The reports are currently being revised so they will look a bit different next time you see them.

Mark stated the Vaccine Team has been collaborating with organizations, 10 being in the metro Detroit area in the last quarter, and additional partnerships continue to be made in this quarter.

Sarah Palacios introduced herself and stated her new role as Intake/Date Supervisor allows her to take a close look at data and how it can be used to better serve our clients.

Elham Jahshan shared the Employment Team has been working on issues involving Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and education services. She gave some details

about a couple clients who were pursuing post graduate degrees and had difficulties with MRS when they contacted DRM. Her team was able to negotiate with MRS and obtain tuition fees and other costs for the clients to continue their education.

Sara Koroniotis reported the Rep Payee Team is in their last quarter for their fiscal year which ends July 31. They met their target goal of completing 135 reviews. She explained the different types of reviews and shared some details of one of the reviews conducted by her team. She has two new staff which makes a total of 7 representative payee specialists.

Kris Keranen shared the Education Team has been focusing more on systemic work even though they continue to take individual cases. Kris went on to share they took a case for a 15-year-old student with an IEP for Specific Learning Disabilities who had been expelled from school. As a result of advocacy, the student returned to school, received compensatory services, and district-wide corrective actions were ordered.

Rachel Huddleston stated the Communications Team has been working on getting a lot of our stuff translated into Spanish including our website. As a result of board member comments, the Ernie Reynolds Essay Contest is on our website with links to some stories shared with us. Using the Assistive Technology (AT) grant, DRM is partnering with a few organizations for a new marketing campaign that will soon be implemented. Using our PAVA grant, we have a new voting video which will be used throughout the state for training clerks and volunteers at the polls.

We are looking forward to this year's fundraiser event, Rockin for Rehab, scheduled for November 4 at Eagle Eye Golf Course with a 70's theme. Please check out the details on our website and consider joining us or sponsoring the event! Our Accessibility/Assistive Technology outing at Jackson Field in Lansing for the Lugnuts game is on September 3.

Kyle Williams reported on the children's class action for crisis mental health services in the community stating they have spent a large amount of time with individual class representatives of the lawsuit ensuring they will be receiving benefits under the final settlement agreement. We are focusing on ensuring young individuals get evaluated and diagnosed and receive services and supports that are suitable for them in the community. The program, created as a result of this lawsuit, MI Kids Now continues to be developed and we get updates on hiring, training, workgroups and outreach from MDHHS.

Kyle spoke about the Waskul case targeting the direct care worker crisis the state's been experiencing for more than a decade. They moved into mediation and stayed the case until the end of July to try and finish up settlement discussions.

DRM attorneys presented at the Access to Justice Seminar at Wayne State Law School highlighting the legal work done by the agency and encouraging law students to pursue a career in public interest.

DRM attorneys also provided a legal training to students at the University of Michigan Law School focusing on trial skills for soon-to-be attorneys.

The Legal team has welcomed an advocate from the I&R Team who will focus exclusively on issues facing individuals with traumatic brain injuries and issues surrounding access to Assistive Technology.

President report

President Shank applauded and thanked DRM staff and the work they continue to do.

Jane wanted to publicly thank Mr. Chris Franklin for his service and knows he provided a lot of impact, not only to the PAIMI Advisory Council, but in many other aspects.

Jane discussed member recruitment and that we are out of compliance with our Bylaws as to the minimum number of board members. Discussions will continue regarding non-voting members and changing our Bylaws to reflect that.

Public comment

A written public comment was submitted to DRM by fax and emailed to board members.

Mary Whiteford thanked everyone for allowing her to join the meeting and will consider submitting her application to join the board.

PAIMI Advisory Council update

President Shank shared Chair Jackson was unable to attend the meeting and asked if anyone had any questions of the minutes from the last PAIMI Advisory Council meeting. Michelle Roberts mentioned we have invited Mr. Franklin's wife to join our next PAIMI Advisory Council meeting.

Committee reports

Budget & Finance Committee

Michele Brand saw no issues and indicated we are utilizing underspent grants by spending more and spending less of the grants that we should.

In technology, we have been getting new laptops and expanding our VPN access due to the hybrid workforce.

Human resources has been busy with the reorganization and people taking leave time as well as some recent new hires.

Tom Landry MOVED to accept the Budget & Finance Committee report and financial statements and John McCulloch seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Public Policy Committee

Mark Wiedelman reported he received an email from Oakland County Health Network (OCHN) regarding various proposed budgets for the new State budget regarding direct care worker compensation. The Governor's proposed budget recommended \$1.50/hour increase, the House recommended \$2.50/hour wage increase and the Senate's version recommended \$0.65/hour increase.

Emily Henderson added that advocates across the state, especially around Lansing, are pushing for the House recommendation of the additional dollar on top of the Governor's proposal of \$1.50/hour. Originally, advocates asked for a \$4.00 increase but that may not be feasible. Discussion was held and the range of wages for direct care workers is \$10.00 - \$25.00.

On the policy side, guardianship legislation has been discussed and we are waiting on the House package which are the Elder Abuse Task Force's bills. We are also following issues surrounding mental health access in schools, school safety funding and special education allowances.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

A board membership application for Daniel Bartz was submitted to the board for review and approval. Discussion was held regarding his application and qualifications to serve on the board.

Mark Wiedelman MOVED to approve Daniel Bartz to the Board of Directors and Malkia Newman seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Executive Session

Paul Palmer MOVED to go into executive session and Mark Wiedelman seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned to executive session at 10:47 am and executive session adjourned at 10:50 am.

Minutes prepared by:

Theresa Diebolt
Theresa Diebolt, Executive Assistant

Minutes approved by:

Malkia Newman
Malkia Newman, Secretary