



**BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Minutes of Virtual Meeting  
May 13, 2025**

**Call Meeting to Order**

Immediate Past President, Tom Landry, called the meeting to order at 8:36 am and it was noted there was a quorum.

**Attendance**

**Present:** Daniel Bartz, Amanda Bouwman, Amanda Davis-Scott, Hansen Clarke, Dom Evans, Veronica Ibrahim, Tom Landry, Trina Tocco

**Absent:** Brian Calley, Jacqueline Cuevas, Teddy Dorsette III, Malkia Newman, Vincent Pinti, Jane Shank, Lois Shulman

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

**Guests:** Emily Henderson, McCall Hamilton, Ed Krugman, Attorney, Katie Curnow, Sharon Storch, and Mora Wilkevicz, PAIMI Advisory Council members, Carmen and Katie, Interpreters, Sean Bennett, member of the public

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Tom Landry asked for a motion to approve the amended consent agenda.

Amanda Bouwman MOVED to approve the amended consent agenda and Dom Evans seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Hansen Clarke announced he wanted to change his vote in accepting the audit report from aye to nay in the minutes for the February 25, 2025, board meeting. He believes the audit report to be defective, suggesting it does not follow the spirit of federal guidance on how you audit federally funded organizations nor does the audit provide the audit committee with the information it needs to fulfill

its duties. Under the bylaws, the audit committee is supposed to be able to assure the board that DRM is following all the laws, especially related to financial reporting, and the audit clearly says it renders no opinion on our compliance with federal laws that relate to financial reporting. Clarke feels the audit fails to clearly describe how it defines materiality, and it does not state what the threshold is.

Tom Landry stated, in the past, the auditors made suggestions in terms of procedures which DRM incorporated. The auditors provide similar services to other firms and explain everything in detail to the audit committee. Landry further stated the audit fulfills the board's contractual responsibilities with the federal government.

Clarke stated he does not have concerns specific to the handling of DRM finances although he is concerned about the lack of specificity in the audit report.

## **Executive Director Report**

**Michelle Roberts**, Executive Director, shared that the Federal Health and Human Services updated its grant policies to include civil rights assurances, which includes removal of both DEI and DEIA language for all grants. This reflects DRM's earlier decision to no longer use those terms on our website or publications. The new version of grant notice of awards excludes the ADA and 504 from the list of federal anti-discrimination laws. This means, per the notice of awards, there are many terms and conditions we abided by and agreed to based on requirements made by the previous Administration in order to draw down our federal awards. The Continuing Resolution, which was signed in mid-March, has caused great concern for P&As with funds not being made available. Roberts discussed what the current funding looks like for DRM. She also expressed concerns surrounding proposed cuts to Medicaid which our Attorney General and Governor are involved in litigation with other states to address.

Cost savings for DRM includes, but not limited to, six staff voluntarily reducing their hours and pay during the summer months, reducing monthly rent, and cleaning services being reduced to three times per week. Also, staff positions are being reviewed for consideration of consolidation and/or reassignments and possibly eliminating some positions. The DRM parking lot was recently repaved and any repairs or maintenance, including a new roof, will come out of DRMS' account. Roberts has also asked the State of Michigan to increase our state grant. Additionally, she applied for a grant from the Michigan Health Endowment Fund which would support education advocacy work, and a Pew Foundation grant to support a special work project the CAIR Team has already initiated.

Michelle and Kyle attended the NDRN Spring CEO and Legal Director meetings in April where Kyle led the training for new legal directors and received positive feedback. Michelle received some support from Congressional members after her Hill visits and felt most support was regarding the release of the remaining

Fiscal Year 25 funds. She will be back in Washington, D.C. in July for an NDRN board meeting and will conduct additional Hill visits.

Staff changes include the Program Assistant for the Rep Payee Team started working in mid-April. There will be additional staffing changes, however they have not been announced internally so they will be reported at the September board meeting.

Michelle reported we had five requests for grievance packets since the February meeting: three were in the PADD program (intellectual and developmental disability), one in our PAIR program (individual rights), and one in our mental illness (PAIMI) program. Four grievances were filed and have been responded to.

There was further discussion around DEI and transition language and that DRM, against their preference, is being very careful to no longer using any related language.

### **Guest Speaker**

Nick Gable, Senior Attorney, introduced Ed Krugman and paid tribute to him for the work he did in the Waskul litigation as well as for DRM. The case was recently settled, and Ed joined the litigation team for the case in 2017, less than a year after the case was filed. Ed had retired after being a very successful insurance lawyer in private practice. He then went to work for the National Center for Law and Economic Justice (NCLEJ) as a volunteer attorney. Ed expressed his gratitude to Nick, Kyle and DRM and said this case has been the most rewarding experience in his professional career. Tom Landry thanked Ed on behalf of the Board.

### **President's report**

Nothing to report.

### **Staff Reports**

**Kris Keranen** referred to the education section in the Q2 Snapshot (progress report) and discussed the litigation against the Department of Education. Oral arguments have been scheduled and the case has been pushed out by the Judge until July.

**Simon Zagata** discussed two House bills regarding an investigation project and Office of Recipient Rights reform. He shared some details about the CAIR Team's investigation at Women's Huron Valley and the issues with inmates who use wheelchairs not having aids to assist them when necessary.

**Sarah Palacios** referred to her portion in the progress report and shared an update on calls and intakes the advocates have been handling.

**Elham Jahshan** stated the Employment Team continues working with Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS) and the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP) on their policies to ensure they are following federal regulations.

**Rachel Huddleston** reported the federal funders ended the vaccine grant at the end of March which was supposed to end in June, and staff attended one clinic last quarter. She also noted the transportation map is still one of the highest visited links on our website. Regarding voting, the contract with the state on the Voter Assist Terminals (VAT) machines is ending soon, and DRM was invited by the Bureau to be part of the Voting Systems Advisory Committee which will involve selecting VAT machines and ensuring they meet the standards and needs of our clients.

**Sara Koroniotis** stated the Rep Payee Team completed their busiest quarter completing 61 reviews which affected 2,485 beneficiaries. They are in the final quarter of their fiscal year and are exceeding their target at 131%, and she is happy the team is fully staffed.

**Kyle Williams** gave an update on the children's class action stating the settlement has been preliminarily approved which means the judge issued an order to preliminarily approve the settlement, and it has gone out for notice to the public. The hearing to approve the final settlement is scheduled for August. Kyle also gave an update on some of the individual cases they have been working on in the last quarter.

#### **PAIMI Advisory Council update**

Michelle Roberts referred to the meeting minutes which were provided prior to this meeting. Additionally, there were two new members appointed to the Council and orientation has already been completed.

#### **Public comment**

None.

#### **Committee reports**

##### **Budget & Finance Committee**

Tom Landry referred to Michele Brand's narrative explaining the overages and said the reduction of rent will help with funds. Overall, we are on target with the budget.

Hansen Clarke recommended the Board revise the Bylaws concerning the treasurer's responsibilities and authorities in section 7.8. He stated it

essentially gives the treasurer authority to have custody over all the funds belonging to DRM and collect interest, dividends, rents or other invested funds.

### **Public Policy Committee**

Emily said they are beginning to see some movement on budget recommendations and, depending on what happens federally with Medicaid, will impact what will happen with Medicaid in Michigan. If a budget is not passed by September 30<sup>th</sup>, we will enter a government shutdown.

### **Old Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Landry stated proposals for a new audit firm have been submitted and an audit committee meeting is scheduled for June 3, 2025. A special board meeting to approve the new audit firm needs scheduled so the audit committee can identify new auditors on behalf of the board and make a recommendation in time to allow the board to vote prior to the September meeting. This will allow time for the new auditors to begin field work without delay. Typically, the audit committee interviews potential auditors with DRM management and then makes a recommendation to the full board.

Tom Landry MOVED that the audit committee and DRM management select new auditors and make a recommendation to the full board, and board members be allowed to vote by email prior to the September board meeting and Amanda Bouwman seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Abstained: Clarke

Motion carried.

An additional discussion was held regarding the new auditors.

Hansen Clarke recommended in the future that the board request an auditor present the audit to the audit committee as well as to the full board.

Tom Landry MOVED the new auditors will provide a full presentation annually to the audit committee and an abbreviated presentation to the full board at the board meeting and Hansen Clarke seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

**Executive Session**

The board meeting was adjourned and members moved into executive session at 10:29 am.

**Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:51 am.

Minutes prepared by:

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Theresa Diebolt, Executive Assistant

Minutes approved by:

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Daniel Bartz, Secretary