



**Disability
Rights**
Michigan

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Minutes of Virtual Meeting
September 16, 2025**

Call Meeting to Order

Immediate Past President, Tom Landry, called the meeting to order at 8:33 am and a quorum was present.

Attendance

Present: Daniel Bartz, Amanda Bouwman, Hansen Clarke, Jacqueline Cuevas, Amanda Davis-Scott, Teddy Dorsette III, Dom Evans, Tom Landry, Lois Shulman, Trina Tocco

Absent: Brian Calley, Veronica Ibrahim, Malkia Newman, Vincent Pinti, Jane Shank

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

Guests: Emily Henderson, McCall Hamilton, Sharon Storch (Vice Chair of PAC), and Mora Wilkevicz, PAC member, Helen and Amanda, Interpreters

Nomination of new board member

Landry MOVED to accept and approve Joelle Gurnoe-Adams' application, and for her to be elected to the board of directors and Hansen Clarke seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Landry asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Daniel Bartz MOVED to approve the consent agenda and Amanda Bouwman seconded.

A vote was taken.
AYES: all
NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Executive Director Report

Michelle Roberts, Executive Director, thanked board members for electing Joelle Gurnoe-Adams to the board. Joelle enjoyed her time on the PAIMI Advisory Council and is looking forward to continuing involvement with DRM and the board.

Roberts stated that SAMHSA, who funds our PAIMI program, had awarded our fifth and final grant award for the current fiscal year, and a few days later, took it back, which was just over \$130,000. Roberts reached out to Congressional members requesting assistance and Representative Dingell prepared a letter for the delegation to sign, which was sent to Health and Human Service Secretary Kennedy. On September 3rd, the funds were returned to DRM. Every year P&As must apply to SAMHSA for a designated amount which has been over \$900,000 in years past and this year we were told to apply for \$330,000, a 66% cut. If that amount is different after appropriations, then a revision will be made to the budget. As of last week, all P&A programs progressed through the Senate and House and are level funded without any cuts. DRM was awarded just under \$20,000 from Disability Justice Alliance, which was an increase from last year. As of today, we anticipate level funding from our state grant from the Department of Health and Human Services which is around \$194,000 and has been for many years. A couple of new grants were applied for but unfortunately, we were not awarded funds.

Roberts shared DRM will be receiving attorney fees from the KB lawsuit, and around 82% will go back to the PAIMI program and the remainder will go to the PADD program.

Staffing updates include Mitchell Sikon, an attorney on the Education Team, who left in May to join a private law firm. Legal Director, Kyle Williams, resigned in July for a different position, and Nick Gable agreed to act as Interim Legal Director. Once FY26 funding is confirmed, Roberts will decide on a permanent Legal Director. A few other positions were eliminated due to lack of funding or lack of work.

A grievance update consisted of seven requests for a grievance packet since the last board meeting. Five of those requests were from people who were eligible for our PAIMI program, and one person submitted a grievance which was responded to and closed. One request was under our TBI (traumatic brain injury) advocacy program, and a grievance was filed, which was responded to and closed. One request was under the PABSS (Social Security Beneficiary) program, and a grievance was filed, responded to, and has been closed.

Other updates include Roberts' being appointed to the state's Medicaid Advisory Committee to serve a two-year term. The committee reviews all proposed Medicaid policies and changes to existing Medicaid policies.

Roberts indicated she has been asked again by NDRN to provide training to the new P&A CEO class in October, which will be in New Orleans. That training will be followed by an NDRN board meeting which she will also be attending, and it will be her last meeting as her term is ending.

President's report

Landry reminded board members they must complete annual forms and get them to Theresa as soon as possible. A link was provided to board members for ease and convenience.

Public comment

None.

PAIMI Advisory Council update

Vice Chair Storch provided a council update stating there are currently 13 members, and two members will reach their term limits at the end of September. Chair Veronica Ibrahim's term will end in February, and the council will be electing a new Chair and Vice Chair. If anyone is interested in joining the council, please have them contact a council member or Theresa or Michelle.

Proposed Focus Areas and Objectives for FY2026

The PAIMI Advisory Council met and reviewed and approved the Proposed Focus Areas and Objectives for FY2026 on August 26, 2025. Minor changes were made this year and those were in focus area 2 and 5. In focus area 2, the COVID and vaccination related activities were removed as that grant ended, and the project no longer exists. Focus area 5A was modified to include all oversight entities instead of just the State Department of Education. It now includes the Office for Civil Rights, Michigan Department of Civil Rights, and Vocational Rehabilitation. Focus area 5D was deleted, which was specifically for students who are eligible for services to assist with post-school life. A part-time position was previously created in the Marquette office to support this work but after receiving very few calls for assistance, the position was eliminated. Future calls for assistance with this can still be addressed under other existing focus areas.

It was noted there are vulnerable disabled adults who would like to see DRM continue vaccine work. Roberts responded saying we can still provide services for individuals related to accessing vaccinations; however, we do not have a

dedicated objective due to not having dedicated funds. Further discussion was held regarding homebound individuals, vaccines and discrimination.

A suggestion, and revision, was made to add the word “governmental” to 5A.

Tom Landry MOVED to receive and approve the amended Proposed Focus Areas and Objectives for FY2026, and Daniel Bartz seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Committee reports

Development/Nominating Committee

The committee recommended the following officers:

- President – Malkia Newman
- 1st Vice President – Daniel Bartz
- 2nd Vice President – Lois Shulman
- Treasurer – Trina Tocco
- Secretary – Amanda Bouwman
- Immediate Past President – Brian Calley

Tom Landry MOVED to approve the election of officers and Dom Evans seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Committee assignments were noted, and an updated roster was distributed and is posted on the board portal.

Additional board members are needed. Anyone interested may contact DRM for an application and more information.

Hansen Clarke MOVED to appoint Tom Landry as director emeritus and Lois Shulman seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Budget & Finance Committee

Tom Landry said a budget has been approved by the committee and is based on the information available about potential grant awards although it may need to change once grant awards are made at the federal level.

Michele Brand explained the estimated revenue spreadsheet which she conservatively created. She went on to explain the proposed agency budget adding there are currently 43 staff and there is no discussion about future layoffs pending federal government funding decisions.

Tom Landry MOVED to approve the proposed budget for FY2026, and Dom Evans seconded.

A vote was taken.

AYES: all

NAYS: none

Motion carried.

Brand discussed the financials as of June 30, 2025, and referred to the narrative which was distributed prior to the meeting. She also explained the attorney fees that were received and the distribution of those funds.

Public Policy Committee

Emily Henderson discussed the anticipated government shutdown as well as the \$677 million less dollars that Michigan will have for fiscal year 2026 due to federal tax code changes. As of this date, the Governor has only signed 12 bills this year. We are watching House Bills HB4218, which would make changes to the state's Recipient Rights Advisory Committee, and HB4219 would require individuals who are in inpatient care to receive notice of their rights, whether written or verbal, however it needs to be properly communicated to them. Both bills recently passed the House however 4218 was changed at the last minute by the bill sponsor and removed DRM, the ARC Michigan and The Mental Health Association in Michigan from the bill and instead solely prohibits staff in the Governor's office from serving on that committee. The bill sponsor indicated they plan to add DRM and other groups back in once it gets considered in the Senate.

Old Business

None.

New Business

Landry stated there are proposed amendments to the bylaws that have been suggested by Attorney Mark Lezotte and he asked for a motion to approve them. Discussion was held and it was decided to have a separate meeting with Mark Lezotte to obtain clarification about the recommended changes and further discuss amendments to be made to the bylaws.

Executive Session/Adjourn

The board meeting was adjourned and members moved into executive session at 11:27 am.

Executive session was adjourned at 11:30 am.

Minutes prepared by:



Theresa Diebolt, Executive Assistant

Minutes approved by:



Amanda Bouwman, Secretary