

Disability Rights Arkansas, Inc.

Board of Director's Meeting

Minutes

The Board of Directors of Disability Rights Arkansas, Inc. (DRA) met on July 26, 2017 in the Regions Building DRA Office, 400 West Capitol, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201.

Members Present:

Cherokee Bradley, President
Teresa Dodson, Secretary by phone
Fred Reinhardt, Vice President
Mark George
Julie Petty
Kimberly Marshall, Treasurer
Veronica Tess-Myers

Staff Present:

Tom Masseau
Greg Hankins
Yvonne Sterling
Debra Poulin
Susan Pierce
Thomas Nichols
Cassie Howell
Sharon Cowell

Members Absent:

Kim Weser
D'Andre Jones
Lorrie Thiel

President Bradley welcomed all board members and staff and called the meeting to order at 10:10am.

Consent Agenda:

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following items:

- a.) Approval of Agenda
- b.) Minutes from August 20-21, 2017 Board Meeting
- c.) Minutes from DRA Executive Committee Meeting June 26, 2017
- d.) Minutes from DRA Finance Committee Meeting May 15, 2017
- e.) Minutes from DRA Finance Committee Meeting June 19, 2017

President Bradley asked if everyone had received and reviewed the consent agenda and if there were any questions. There were not any questions.

Mark George moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Kimberly Marshall seconded and the motion passed.

DRA Executive Director and Staff Reports:

Executive Director Report:

Tom Masseau opened his statements with good news going forward that Fiscal Year 2018 budget appears be level funded. He discussed that part of the President's budget released would combine several programs into one. The three groups that would be merged into one program were State Independent Living Councils (SILC), DD Councils, and the State Traumatic Brain Injury Programs. The impact is unknown at this time.

Tom reported that the past quarter had been very busy with a lot of time consumed by the pending lawsuit against DRA. He stated that Motions were moving forward with no change and no ruling as of yet. He said that a positive outcome was expected and that the attorneys were working well together. Cherokee Bradley asked if we were at fault on anything and Debbie Poulin replied that due to the advice of the attorneys, they were not able to discuss the matter. Kimberly Marshall inquired about any liabilities incurred that would directly affect the budget and Tom replied that it was unknown at this time. Debbie said that DRA would pursue counter claim for disclosure of info.

Tom stated that the Administration on Community Living (ACL) will be awarding 3 states with a grant to provide monitoring to the Home and Community Based Services Settings. Partners for Inclusive Communities has approached him about applying for the grant. We would have to have funding from the grant to hire additional advocates to monitor. He advised that he would work with self-advocates to conduct the trainings in the settings. The deadline to apply is July 26th. He will keep us updated.

Tom reported on the three Self-Advocate Trainings held by Darren Morris. The one held in Fayetteville was very successful with 43 people attending. Mark George added "kudos" to Darren and Tom for the training being very well received. Tom discussed the rewards of the training explaining that it is an eye opening experience and it is a process that evolves as it goes. The Hot Springs SA Training was disappointing with no attendance. However, the Little Rock SA Training was better with close to 20 in attendance. Julie Petty added that Tom, Darren and she were members of the SABE Program Committee.

Tom let the members of the DRA Board know that his term as Vice-President of the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN) Board of Directors will continue for another year. Once the year is complete, he will become the President-Elect for one year. As the Vice-President of

NDRN, Tom chairs the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) which provides recommendations to NDRN on training and technical assistance throughout the network.

Tom chaired the NDRN Dues Structure workgroup over the summer. This workgroup was put together to review the structure of NDRN related to dues. NDRN dues have not been increased or revisited since 1984.

Legal Director Report:

Debbie Poulin stated that she invited three attorneys to talk and continued by saying that they have taken on a systemic approach and have more calls from the community and able to act on them systemically. She first introduced Cassie Howell, then Thomas Nichols and Sharon Cowell.

Cassie Howell gave information pertaining to AR Choices Waiver issues. This waiver is a medicare waiver for the aging and physically disabled. Currently hours are being cut for nurses who go out and conduct the ARPath Assessment which is an algorithm process which no one can really figure out. The nurses used to use their own discretion on hours spent on this assessment but since hours have been cut and time not allotted properly there is not a waiting list. This process was used to divide individuals into RUGS-Resource Utilization Groups and doesn't address issues and doesn't include people and family care givers. Legal issues have risen and this is being looked into by attorneys.

Thomas Nichols informed the board members on the Client Assistant Program (CAP) housed within Disability Rights Arkansas. Under CAP, we cannot do take class action lawsuits. DRA has started taking cases to the Dispute Resolution Administrative Review process. We have had a good percentage of positive outcomes by taking individual cases at hand. This is helping us make systemic changes. Debbie Poulin added that we try to solve issues on the smallest level through a non-hearing process with good success. We are making a difference and raising the bar.

Sharon Cowell spoke on a recent case in which a client who turned 18 and had an issue with his school. He can stay until 21 yrs. of age. School pushed the plan to graduate him without him or his parents knowing. He will now stay in school until he can graduate and meet the requirements needed to graduate. This process will help other kids. We were able to reach settlement agreement and an IEP was created last week. We had an advocate in the school to guide the process and there are other counties needing attention.

FY 2017 Report on Priorities and Objectives for Third Quarter:

Susan Pierce stated that the DRA Website had been down along with Facebook a Twitter and that has now been resolved.

Susan Pierce reported that DRA Staff opened 255 new service requests in the third quarter which was down 14% over the second quarter and that 68 of those requests did not fit into DRA priorities and objectives.

FY18 Priority and Objective Survey on Survey Monkey is available on social media. It will be sent to a compiled list of clients from the last two years and sent with closing letters. We want to hear from the public and will run the survey until middle of August. Julie Petty was concerned that people in the company of others would not be able to answer honestly. Julie asked for about 30 surveys for an upcoming group she will attend. Susan said we will email, hand out, and mail as many surveys as possible.

Susan referred back to website and the revisions taking place. She will be adding Congressional Reports along with Program Performance Reports. She said that she is adding a page of Success Stories because people like to read them. Cherokee Bradley questioned if we had enough stories. Susan replied "yes" and that the more specific the stories are the more people identify. We have a lot of people who want to tell their stories. Susan said the Darren Morris will be working on You Tube videos for Self-Advocacy Network Development (SAND) grant and that it would be a sub-site connected to the DRA website.

Tom discussed DRA staff changes including the resignation of attorney Sam Kauffman and the addition of attorney Caroline Boch, who will start in August. She is a graduate of Harvard from Hot Springs, AR. She has experience in Public Interest work and has good writing skills.

A short break was taken for lunch from 11:45-12:00 and the meeting continued.

DRA Executive Director and Staff Reports continued:

Discussion on FY18 Priorities and Objectives:

Currently, the proposed objectives are as follows:

1. Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation
2. Community Integration
3. Access
4. Education
5. Employment
6. Self-Advocacy/Training

Other issues that were identified included:

Managed Care – contract review; rights training; case management

Education – training for parents

Prison work –

Jails – lack of mental health services, evaluation process

Homelessness – HUD grants (MH Screening and Services), outreach, patient dumping

Foster Care – transition, training

Voting –

Financial Entitlements

The prison work encountered by the agency is very difficult and utilizes a great deal of resources. However, there are no other advocacy groups advocating on behalf of prisoners with disabilities. This presents a huge dilemma for agency staff because prison work is very important. After discussion, it was determined that we would eliminate prison work from this year priorities and objectives.

Tom added that the priority and objective survey was created to help plan for areas we need to address. He said that DRA is getting better at looking at the needs and issues of the state.

President Bradley said that DRA should carry on as usual and asked if there was a motion to accept staff reports.

Julie Petty made a motion that staff reports be accepted. Mark George seconded and the motion passed.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

DRA Financials:

Financial Quarterly Report:

Greg Hankins handed out a revised Finance Report. He said the amount changed was \$3267.00. Greg went over the financial report and Kimberly Marshall added that we would not have to go into resources. Greg is working on the FY18 budget and Tom is working on a salary progression for staff. Cherokee Bradley stated that she wanted to discuss raises coming in September and that she wanted a miniature environmental plan and she was stating this on the record in writing and with board support.

Fred Reinhardt made a motion to accept the Financial Quarterly Report. Julie Petty seconded and the motion passed.

DRA Investment Policy

The Investment Policy was brought up by President Bradley. Kimberly Marshall stated that Mark George was very helpful in helping getting the Investment Policy “ironed-out”. The policy had been emailed earlier that morning by Tom Masseau.

Veronica Tess-Myers made a motion to accept the Investment Policy. Julie Petty seconded and the motion passed.

Discussion on FY18 Budget

Tom Masseau discussed his wish list for the FY18 Budget. He said that DRA staff is currently at 17 staff members and he said that we have money in CAP, PAIR, and PAAT and this money should be spent by adding an additional advocate to help in these areas. He also discussed the need for additional space. DRA Board members agreed that additional space and addition of personnel should be contingent upon receipt of acquisition of upcoming grants. Debbie Poulin stated that space is an issue and we need to look into going paperless to help with the storage needs of the office. Tom stated he has quotes on going paperless. President Bradley concluded that budget and grant acquisition will factor into decision on space in September.

Tom asked if there was a motion to accept the financial report.

Discussion on process to evaluate the Executive Director:

President Bradley opened a discussion on how to evaluate the director and suggested Survey Monkey for the process. Fred Reinhardt offered to be the recipient of the evaluations. The deadline to provide feedback is August 30, 2017.

Reports:

PAIMI Report:

Veronica Tess-Myers left the meeting a few minutes before she was able to give the PAIMI report so President Bradley briefly discussed the Strategic Plan and The PAIMI Retreat that will be held in September.

Board Governance Report:

Fred Reinhardt informed the Board of the need for selection for new Board Members. Fred stated that applications have been on hold and that 2 new member were needed. President

Bradley notified the Board of the resignation of Lorrie Thiel and that Veronica Tess-Myers had reached her last term as PAIMI Advisory Chair. She also added that Kim Wesser had reached the end of her term as well as herself. Cherokee Bradley said that Julie Petty has been nominated for her position as the president and that Kimberly Marshall has been nominated for secretary. She said that Teresa Dodson has the roll of secretary and can continue in role until successor is named.

DD Council Report:

Kimberly Marshal reported on the D.D. Council meeting in Jonesboro at Abilities Unlimited and Miracle League. Tom Masseur added that he was seeing progress and that the D.D. Council is doing really great things and that David Deere will be looking at SAND Grant to make necessary changes.

Other Business:

The board discussed the September 2017 Annual Business Meeting. Agenda items will include:

FY 18 Budget

FY 18 Issue Areas

Evaluation of Executive Director

Elections

 Board officers

 New board members

There was also a discussion with two potential nominations for officers.

Set Fiscal Year 2018 Meeting Dates:

The next meeting will be September 27, 2017.

Teresa Dodson, Secretary

Date