

DISABILITIES ADVISORY COUNCIL (DAC)
MEETING
Final Minutes
September 5, 2007

Members Present: Jessie Chapman, Betty Friedrichsen, Larry Friedrichsen, Julie Palmer, Edward Senft, Elaine Senft, Dave Wilber, Edward Zeigler

Members Absent: Van Johnson

Guests Present: Pat Meyer (Governing Board Member)

Staff Present: Colleen Miller, Sherry Confer, Kim Mendella, Leigh Amason, Julie Kegley

**Call to Order/
Welcome/Introductions:** Dave Wilber, Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 and asked that Council members, and staff introduce themselves

Public Comment: No public comment was offered.

Agenda Adoption: skipped

June 2007 Minutes: Minutes for the July 2007 meetings were provided to Council members prior to the meeting. Mr. Wilber asked Council members to review and make recommendations for change. Elaine Senft questioned the wording pertaining to the introductory to the Work Session. Ed Senft went on record stating that during the work session discussion on Goal 4 that the word 'institutionalized' was used in a "derogatory and insensitive manner". He continued by reading his version of the revised minutes for that particular section. Ms. Senft made a MOTION to accept the minutes as amended and Mr. Senft SECONDED the MOTION. The amended minutes were passed with unanimous approval.

Executive Director Update: Colleen Miller, Executive Director, referred to the Progress on Priority section of the council packet. She highlighted a few updates on what VOPA is currently working on. Several suggestions came forward from council members on how to increase the public awareness of service animals, particularly

in public schools. Ms. Miller talked specifically about the work completed by the Resource Advocacy Unit and the reason why the objective regarding outreach to the public about VOPA's work was dropped. Public outreach was absorbed into the other objectives with a focus on more strategic public education outreach.

Ms. Miller then turned attention to the Litigation report to discuss with council members regarding updates on specific cases.

FY08-09 Objectives Work Session

Julie Kegley, Staff Attorney, handed out the list of goals and focus areas that were approved by the Governing Board. She stated that the intent of this work session was to discuss the actual objects for next year by going through each individual goal to come up with suggestions regarding possible cases/investigations/collaboration that VOPA may do to achieve those prescribed goals.

Goal - People with disabilities are free from abuse and neglect

Ms. Miller and Sherry Confer, Deputy Director, facilitated a discussion on the use of using annual reports to look for trends in community settings.

Goal - Children with disabilities receive an appropriate education

Ms. Miller told the council that the focus area on "transition from school to work" was included this year after a few-year absence based on the information obtained on the web-based survey. Jessie Chapman stated that it often falls to the parents to provide oversight and often parents are not knowledgeable about the process. Suggestions of fact sheets and the need from VOPA to uncover the precedence of a system changing case and pick up those cases only due to limited resources. Mr. Senft suggested that the office hour program should be extended in certain school district.

Goal - People with disabilities have equal access to government services

Ms. Senft stated that it might be appropriate for some people to move into the community, it might be more appropriate to move people back into facilities as they age and their needs change. The council discussed the idea of continuum of care in particular the movement from nursing homes and similar facilities to/from hospitals and the levels of care at each.

Goal - People with disabilities live in the most appropriate integrated environment.

The council asked Ms. Miller to clarify some terms and surround "advocacy", "lobbying" and "education and their possible role with regards to lobbying. Mr. Wilber asked about fact sheets on alternatives to guardianship. Ms. Miller responded that at this point there are some publications but they are not published. VOPA is looking at alternatives to guardianship but at this point do not want to inform the public of these possibilities if they are not honored in psychiatric facilities. Mr. Wilber suggested looking at other states' best practices with regard to off-campus activities for training center residents to encourage improvement in the area for state facilities.

Goal - People with disabilities are employed to their maximum potential

The council discussed the Client Assistance Program and how people are being turned down by the Department of Rehabilitative Services for employment support and very few people are contacting VOPA about the appeal process. VOPA suspects that DRS is not informing people of their appeal rights or they are just overwhelmed with the paperwork involved. Discussion turned to the 'order of selection' about how people are picked to receive services during times of reduced resources at DRS.

Goal - People with disabilities have equal access to appropriate and necessary health care

The council talked about medical care in ICF/MRs and data collection that VOPA could collect. Ms.

Miller mentioned that this focus area has been on VOPA's list of objectives for a long time based on surveys and the complaints received by the Resource Advocacy Unit. The Governing Board wanted to expand the issue to look at waiver homes to identify the medical issues there. Ms. Chapman identified the issue that it is difficult to treat people who are born outside the state to prove citizenship required for Medicaid. This is especially important for those who are hospitalized and cannot speak and therefore denied medical help.

Lunch

The Council adjourned the meeting for lunch at 12:15 and reconvened at 1:10.

Governing Board Reports:

Pat Meyers, VOPA Governing Board member, provided a summary of the last Governing Board meeting in June noting that newest member, Charles Cooper, attended and joined the Finance Committee. Ms. Meyers briefly explained By-Laws changes to the Governing Board, as well as state law changes to the FOI Act. The Governing Board discussed the Executive Director job description and the changes to staff policies surrounding staff vacation time and challenging behaviors. The Governing Board also discussed the proposed 2008 budget to formalized in this September.

Governing Board Committee Reports

Public Awareness and Goals Committee (Pat Meyer)

Council feedback for Board/staff

The committee looked at all the comments made on the public survey as well as the comments made by the PAIMI Council and DAC council. The committee decided to remove the focus on outreach as a separate goal and instead infuse outreach in all the other goals.

Public Policy Committee (Pat Meyer)

More discussion required for certain 'philosophical' issues, in particular the rebuilding/renovating of training centers. The Governing Board did not want to come up with a specific statement but rather gain other viewpoints and perspectives to be continued at another time.

Internal Policy Committee (Julie Palmer)

Took forward to the Governing Board several policies: public awareness, office holidays and case management. The Committee also introduced a new policy concerning challenging behavior that required more extensive work.

Finance Committee (Ed Senft)

Mr. Senft had nothing further to add to Ms. Meyer's report on the budget from the Governing Board report.

Other Business

Announcements

Ms. Miller announced that Sherry Confer has been promoted to Deputy Director. Ms. Confer is now head of the Best Practices Unit that is responsible for internal and external quality assurance.

Ms. Confer announced the creation of the Executive Assistant position filled by Kim Mendella.

Membership

Ms. Mendella spoke of the recruitment process and the recent public survey that provided a list of over 100 people who were either interested in the PAIMI or DAC councils. Information about VOPA and an application form were mailed last week and there were a few phone calls made in response.

Officers

Ms. Confer stated that both Mr. Wilber's and Van Johnson's term as chair and vice-chair [respectively] will end soon and it was suggested that they should continue the office until their terms ended. Ms. Senft MOTIONED that Mr. Wilber and Mr. Johnson are re-nominated and re-voted into their current office. Larry Fredrichsen SECONDED the MOTION. The motion was accepted with unanimous approval.

Meeting Date

The council discussed possible meeting dates in the month of December for the next DAC Council Meeting. The council decided that the next DAC meeting should be held December 12, 2007

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, Mr. Sentft

MOTIONED the meeting should adjourn. Betty Friedrichsen SECONDED the MOTION. The meeting was adjourned with unanimous approval at 1:45 p.m.

FINAL MINUTES

December 11, 2007

Date