

THE GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE
FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

MEETING MINUTES

September 7, 2018

Location: PA Department of Education's Heritage Room
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126

Members in Attendance:

Alcidonis, Rodelyn	Keltz, Lynn
Austin, Margie	Molczan, Jessica
Badger, Josie	Oakes, Ken
Bartoli, Frank	Otarod, Ellaheh
Deibler, Everett	Pennington, Stephen
Doan, Kim	Roth, Terry (Chair)
Giambrone, Charles	Sayko, Madelaine
Goldstein, Sarah	Snyder, Rev. Sally Jo (Vice-Chair)
Hammersla-Quick, Michele	Tuszynski, Heidi
Hill, Elizabeth	Walker, Shirley
Jones-Furlow, Mary	

Absent Members:

Moran, Tim (Unexcused)	Radecic, Peri Jude (Excused)
Polishan, Roseann (Excused)	Seidl, Katherine (Excused)

The following Member has resigned since the May 25, 2018 meeting: Kay Lipsitz.

Representatives of the Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities:

Dept. of Aging: Amanda Black
Dept. of Banking: Becky McDicken
Dept. of Education: Keith Focht
Dept. of Labor and Industry: Denise Verchimak (OVR), Melissa Hawkins (ODHH)
Dept. of State: Peter Speaks
PA Developmental Disabilities Council: Dana Thompson
PA Housing Finance Agency: Roberta Schwalm

Also in attendance was Devon Grant, Executive Director.

Welcome and Call to Order

Executive Director Devon Grant called the meeting to order. Members and guests then introduced themselves.

Strategic Planning

Mr. Grant explained that today's meeting will be focused on strategic planning. He then introduced the facilitators for the day:

Keith Chase
(717) 763-7211 x2108
kchase@gfnet.com

Toby Fauver
(717) 508-7273
Tfauver@rocklandconsult.com

Mr. Fauver first set out the Strategic Planning objectives for the day:

- Review the Vision and Mission Statements
- Review Major Focus Topic Areas
- Discuss Issues and Opportunities
- Review Organization / Operation
- Set Priorities
- Discuss Implementation, and how to measure results moving forward

Mr. Chase next asked for short responses on if it were a year from today and we really made accelerated progress, what are some examples of what we might accomplish going forward?

- Ms. Roth answered that she would like to see us have more of a connection between the people within government who are implementing policy and the advocacy community outside of government.
- Rev. Snyder would echo that - every segment of the Commonwealth knows who we are, that we exist, and what we do.
- Ms. Tuszynski would like to see some power behind this group. With the knowledge and the power that people have here, we could really give some good advice. She would also like to see more secretaries show up and even the Governor.
- Ms. Badger would like to see that more individuals outside this group who are individuals with disabilities know that we are here but also go to us, talk to us about potential issues that we can discuss.
- Ms. Austin would like to see a bill passed, perhaps concerning adult protection.

The following major focus topic areas were then discussed:

- Education
- Employment
- Health Care, including mental health and substance abuse
- Housing

- Transportation
- Voting

It was also discussed throughout the day that there might be issues that cut across all of these major topics; for example:

- Budget / funding
- Data
- Education / training – public, state agencies, other organizations
- Partnerships / strategic alliances
- Who needs to be at the table?
- Bias / attitudes / ableism
- Learning from other states

Mr. Fauver and Mr. Grant reminded the group that this committee is an advisory committee. Although one strength of the group is the varied perspectives each individual member brings, the members should focus on what issues the group should address as an advisory body rather than just particular advocacy issues they may deal with outside this committee.

The group identified issues under each major focus topic area. As issues were discussed, they were also identified as either an internal strength, an internal weakness, an external opportunity, or an external threat / challenge. Once those discussions were finished the members identified the most important issues by placing sticker dots next to those issues they felt are most important. The results of the discussion and the voting are contained in the attachment to these minutes.

Mr. Fauver also reminded the group that a strategic plan should be a living document. It is not a document to refer to three years from now and ask "how did we do?" It is something that should be used and referred to. Complete items can come off, and new topics can be added. And then, every two, three, four years, the group may want to revisit it and go through an exercise like this again. The items should be tracked, and the strategic plan should become a regular agenda item at the meetings.

Mission / Vision

Next, the Mission and Vision of the GAC were discussed. Mr. Fauver quoted the Mission Statement adopted by the original members of the GAC:

The Governor's Advisory Committee for People with Disabilities will establish recommendations for the Governor's Cabinet, serve as a liaison to stakeholders, and advocate for the equality of individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Grant then read from Executive Order 2006-09 which established the GAC. "The responsibilities of the [Governor's] Cabinet [for People with Disabilities] shall be the following:

1. Make recommendations to the Governor on policies, procedures, regulations, and legislation that aid people with disabilities in Pennsylvania.
2. Serve as the Governor's liaison to people with disabilities on policies, procedures, regulations, and legislation that affect people with disabilities in order to ensure that State government is accessible, accountable, and responsive to people with disabilities.
3. Serve as a resource to all departments, commissions, and agencies under the Governor's jurisdiction to ensure that these government entities are cognizant of the needs of people with disabilities and their respective services and programs are accessible to those individuals.
4. Work with the Administration and agencies to monitor the hiring, retention, and promotion practices of the Commonwealth relating to the employment of people with disabilities in order to ensure that there are no discriminatory practices within the Commonwealth."

Mr. Pennington asked if these were the same responsibilities listed on the GAC's website - <http://www.dhs.pa.gov/communitypartners/GovCommitteeforPplwDisabil/>. Mr. Grant responded that they were.

Mr. Grant further commented that the Employment First Act (Act 36 of 2018) establishes a permanent Governor's Cabinet for People with Disabilities. It remains to be seen how that will affect any of the GAC's activities. Pursuant to the Employment First Act, the Governor's policy office is taking the lead on implementing the Employment First Act.

The facilitators then suggested that as the Mission and Vision of the GAC are reviewed, the group may want to think about it in terms of:

- Connect: People, Programs, Policy, Process
- Collaborate: Problem solving
- Convene: Constituents, Stakeholders, Sectors (public, private, faith based, other), Subject matter experts
- Consult: Cabinet

Operation / Organization

The group then discussed the Operating Guidelines that were adopted previously. It was recommended by the facilitators that the Operating Guidelines be reviewed in light of today's discussions. Other recommendations included gathering and using data to show the impact of recommendations made by the GAC, making sure the recommendations are tracked in some way, and confirming the authority of the GAC.

Ms. Roth then suggested perhaps the GAC could meet six times per year rather than four. Mr. Grant will make the request to the Dept. of Human Services, as that is the Department that funds the GAC. Work groups would meet via phone between the meetings. She further suggested that a portion of each GAC meeting be devoted to information and recommended action from one or two of the work groups.

[Post-meeting Note: DHS Sec. Miller indicated that the number of meetings should stay at four per year.]

The structure of sub-committees was then discussed. Mr. Fauver stated that other groups that have had sub-committees have a member of the group act as chair of the sub-committee, but that members of the sub-committee were not required to be members of the group. This allows non-members to participate. It was also suggested that each member of the GAC be required to serve on a sub-committee.

Mr. Alcidonis stressed the importance of communication with the Governor's office.

Also, the group recognized the importance of reporting out to external groups and stakeholders, not just to the Cabinet.

The discussion wrapped up with comments around the need for accountability to the Executive Order, the need for some sort of tracking of the GAC's activity and recommendations, and the need to measure results.

Adjournment

After thanking Mr. Fauver and Mr. Chase for volunteering their time to assist us, the meeting was adjourned.