

**West Virginia Advocates, Inc.**  
**Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**Charleston Office, Charleston, WV**

**January 10, 2009, 1:15 p.m.**

**Members Present:** Pam Akers, Clifton Clark, Terry Dilcher, Robert Hardesty, Ted Johnson, and Stuart May

**Members by Telephone:** Jamie Bailey and Terrie Roberts

**Members Absent:** Paula Mieczkowski (unexcused) and Joellen Zacks (unexcused)

**Guests:** Dave Sanders and Robin Hughes

**Staff Present:** Clarice Hausch, Susan Given, and Barbara Criner

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and asked for any additions or deletions to the agenda.

***Motion: Mr. May moved that the November 8, 2008, minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.***

Mr. Johnson stated that the Executive Committee will meet on the alternate months from the Board meetings.

**Program Director's Report**

Ms. Given referred to her report. She noted that another death had occurred at Sharpe. WVA had been denied access to records and a suit has been filed in order to access the records. Mr. May asked why this was filed in state court rather than federal. Ms. Hausch responded that it takes longer to file through federal court. Ms. Given added that when it is moved to federal court the state will pay the expenses.

Ms. Given reported that advocate Todd Hawkins had resigned and that advocate Sue Edwards has assumed the duties of meeting with the DRS counselors throughout the state. Ms. Given noted that WVA did not prevail in the PAAT case.

Ms. Given reported that the Wrights Law Boot Camp was a great success. There was a good turnout with positive feedback. A set of the Wrights Law books will be donated to each county library. Mr. Johnson requested that other agencies be notified when this is done so they can refer individuals to these resources.

Ms. Given reported that the Families Conference was held November 14-16 and that this was one of the best conferences they have presented.

Mr. May asked for a copy of the Wrights Law books.

The meeting went into closed session at 1:45 p.m. and reconvened at 2:55 p.m.

#### Finance Committee

Mr. Clark reported that the Committee had met and discussed the December financials. He noted that we have not received the final Notice of Grant Awards for the programs but have received Continuing Resolutions for partial FY 09 funding.

Mr. Clark reported that the Committee had also discussed the 12.00% increase in the PEIA health insurance premiums that will go into effect July 1. WVA currently has a capped amount of \$611 per month which the agency pays for an employee's health coverage. This increase will increase the cost in the WVA budget only for employees with single coverage. Premiums for family coverage will be significantly more than the capped amount. Payment of the entire increase will be the employee's responsibility.

He noted that the Committee will review this matter in more detail and will present the information to the Board prior to the effective date of the increase. He also asked for input from the Board. Mr. May suggested that the Committee look at cafeteria plans and review the amount that WVA provides for total benefits. The contract with PEIA will be review to see if there are any limitations. Mr. Hardesty also suggested reviewing what state employees pay for their health coverage.

Mr. Clark stated that the Committee will consider all this information and requested that Board members send suggestions to either himself or the Executive Director.

Mr. Clark reported that the Committee had also discussed the WVA policy that requires employees to be in payroll status on the last day of the month in order to ensure that their health coverage would not be cancelled the following month.

***Motion: Mr. Clark moved that the current policy requiring that an employee be in pay status at the last day of the month in order to have insurance coverage the following month be amended to "the employee be in pay status or on authorized unpaid leave in order to receive health benefits for the following month." Seconded by Mr. May. Discussion followed.***

Ms. Hausch noted that this is not a PEIA requirement and that it could potentially create hardship for employees in the event they were off due to extended illness or an accident on the last day of the month. The Committee members were in agreement that this should not present a hardship for employees. Current policy requires that if an employee is out on an unpaid 30-day leave, the employee will be responsible for that month's premium. This policy will be continued. ***Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.***

Mr. Clark then reported that the Committee had reviewed the requirement that Board members contribute to the agency, either financially or by donation of their time. He suggested that Board members ask their employers for a contribution on their behalf to WVA. He also noted that Board members need to clarify what they can or are willing to contribute.

Mr. Johnson agreed that it is becoming more important to have unrestricted funds in order to be able to do projects that federal grants will not sponsor. Ms. Hausch added that PAIMI would not approve attendance for clients to the Wrights Law Boot Camp.

Mr. Clark also suggested that the Board members donate time to fund-raising. He added that he believes this is very important to do so. As WVA is a state-wide agency, fund-raising efforts could be conducted state-wide. Ms. Akers noted that Wal-Mart in some areas will match fund raised at their stores.

Mr. Clark suggested that Mr. Johnson prepare a letter to send to all Board members asking how each would be willing to help.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Personnel and Policy, Membership, Resource Development, and Quality Assurance committees had not met.

#### Executive Director's Report

Ms. Hausch referred to her report identified as #4 of the Board mailing. She reported that staff has made great progress in preparing for the PAIMI review. She complemented Ms. Given for all her work in the Wrights Law Boot Camp.

#### Unfinished Business

There was nothing to report.

#### New Business

Mr. Johnson referred the Board to the PAIMI Program Prompts identified as #6 in the Board mailing. This information was then reviewed.

A discussion then followed concerning the By-Laws requirements for the position of Vice President and composition of the Executive Committee.

***Motion: Mr. May moved that the By-Laws be amended to remove the position of Vice President. Seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.***

A discussion then followed concerning composition of the Executive Committee.

Mr. Johnson stated that the current members of the Executive Committee include: Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Hardesty, Mr. Clark and Mr. May. The By-Laws require an additional member.

***Motion: Mr. Clark moved that Pam Akers serve on the Executive Committee. Seconded by Mr. Hardesty. Motion carried; none opposed; Ms. Akers abstained.***

A discussion then followed concerning who should sign the membership contract with the National Disability Rights Network (NDRN). The Board members were referred to the contract identified as #9 of the Board mailing. Mr. Clark stated that he felt that both the Executive Director and a member of the Board should sign the contract.

*Motion: Mr. Dilcher moved that both the Executive Director and the President of the Board of Directors sign the NDRN membership contract. Seconded by Mr. Hardesty. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.*

Mr. May asked what NDRN's role is if the federal funders have issues with the agency. Ms. Hausch responded that if the P&A is doing a good job, NDRN will run interference. Copies of the annual PPRs are given to NDRN for their review.

Ms. Akers thanks the Board for approving her attendance at the Wrights Law Conference. She reported that she had learned a great deal and will do research on school drop outs in Mercer County. She will present this information at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Johnson noted that the next Board meeting will be held on March 14. No further business appearing, the meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.

Transcribed by Barbara Criner