

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

November 8, 2008, 1:15 p.m.

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

Members by Telephone: None

Members Absent: Jamie Bailey, Terry Dilcher, Paula Mieczkowki, Terri Roberts, and JoEllen Zacks

Guests: None

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

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:25 p.m. He noted that the Board mailing contained an incomplete set of the September 20, 2008 minutes. A complete set of minutes were then distributed.

Motion: Mr. May moved that the September 20, 2008, minutes be approved as presented. Seconded by Ms. Akers. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.

Mr. Johnson asked for additions or deletions to the agenda.

Ms. Hausch requested the addition of Mutual of America. Mr. Johnson noted that he will schedule a meeting with the Executive Committee and individual meetings with each director in order to set goals and committee assignments for the year.

Mr. Hardesty reported that the Personnel Committee had met to discuss closing WVA offices for the Christmas holiday. Mr. Clark reported that the Finance Committee had discussed this request and the recommendation was to close WVA offices during the week of Christmas. Ms. Hausch added this would be the work week containing Christmas Day. December 24th and 25th are paid holiday leave. Staff that wished to take off the week would use annual leave for the remainder of the days. This would be cost neutral for the agency.

Motion: Mr. Hardesty moved that the offices of West Virginia Advocates be closed during the work week containing Christmas Day. Seconded by Mr. Clark. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.

Ms. Hausch gave a brief update concerning the change to the travel policy which requires employees to notify their insurance company that they may at times use their personal vehicles

for business use. She reported she had discussed this at a staff meeting and advised staff that a rental would be available if they chose not to use their personal vehicle.

Program Director's Report

Ms. Given referred to her report identified as #5 in the mailing.

Advocate Linnie Simiryian is researching software for a commercial monitoring tool that will capture more complete information to improve our work at the hospitals. Ms. Given noted that Advocate Linda Leasure has resigned her position and that Matt Hastie has taken over the monitoring at Bateman Hospital.

The contract for the Wrights Law Conference requires that we have 150 registrants. We currently have 160 persons registered and can accommodate up to a total of 250 persons. Radio announcements and newspapers advertisements have been purchased. Approximately 43 people are being helped through DDC stipends.

Ms. Given reported that approximately 70-75 people attended the Employment Training. Three attorneys provided their services pro bono and CLEs were available for attorneys. She added that six attorneys who attended the training noted that they would be willing to partner with WVA for employment discrimination cases.

Ms. Given reported that all counties with the exception of Pendleton County had been served last year. There were no service requests from that county and we have provided outreach to the county this current fiscal year.

Ms. Given reported that approximately 13,000 folders have been distributed state-wide to DRS offices. Advocate Todd Hawkins has resigned his position but we have trained staff to complete this outreach project. Mr. Johnson asked if this outreach would be tracked and Ms. Given responded we would track by the service requests.

Ms. Given reported that WVA has contributed financially to the Families Conference. This conference is being sponsored by the WV Families Support Program and is scheduled for November 14-16. Approximately 250 persons have registered to attend and several WVA employees will present at the conference.

Ms. Given noted that DHHR had appealed Benjamin H to the US 4th Circuit Court. This will be in discovery state through March. Ms. Hausch added that WVA will use PADD funds to provide for witnesses.

Ms. Given reported that four grievances concerning the closure of service requests had been received in FY 08. She distributed a FY 08 Summary of Fund-Raising Income generated from vending machine activities. She reported that \$129 had been received from the sale of snacks and from employee donations. There remains a balance of \$216 for the cost of the machine.

Executive Committee

Mr. Johnson noted that the Committee had not met.

Finance Committee

Mr. Clark reported that the Finance Committee had met this past Thursday. John Galloway, auditor from Gibbons & Kawash, CPAS, met in closed session with members of the Committee. No staff was present. The audit is expected to be completed in January at a cost of approximately \$11,000. Mr. May added that he hopes to recruit Lee Disnoff, CPA, to join the Finance Committee. Ms. Hausch added that the closed meeting with the members of the Finance Committee is a new requirement of Sarbanes-Oxley in which the auditors meet annually with the Board without presence of accounting staff. She added that we still have not recruited an outside person to sign off on the general journal entries generated by staff.

A short discussion followed concerning continuing resolutions and carry over funds.

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

PAIMI ADVISORY COUNCIL

Mr. Johnson reported that the Council requested that he present a request to the Board to seek a federal grant concerning stigmatizing of mental health issues. The report will focus on 18-25 year olds. The Council had discussed WVA partnering with WVMHCA. The WV Mental Health Planning Council has already agreed to partner.

Motion: Mr. May moved that West Virginia Advocates partner with WV Mental Health Consumers Association and the Mental Health Planning Council in a project to alleviate stigmatizing of mental health issues to serve a larger population. Seconded by Ms. Akers. Discussion followed. Mr. Hardesty asked if we are authorized to pursue. Ms. Hausch responded that we are and this would be a good way to provide additional services. Mr. May noted he would like to see an agreement along with the outcomes. Mr. Johnson noted that staff from the three agencies would meet. ***Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.***

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Hausch referred to her report identified as #4 in the mailing. She reported that representatives from Mutual of America, who administers our pension and Tax Deferred Account (TDA), had notified us of the Department of Labor's (DOL) requirement to have an actual plan document for the TDA account. They have prepared the required document which must be filed by December 31, 2008. Mr. Hardesty gave a brief summary of the DOL requirement. Members requested they be provided copies of this information prior to any Board action. Mr. Johnson suggested a conference call to discuss the TDA information and Mr. Clark suggested having the Finance Committee review benefits.

Ms. Hausch then discussed the check-signing process and noted that we need to have checks signed in a timely manner. Mr. Clark requested that he be contacted by phone if he has not responded to our e-mails. He also requested that staff bring checks to his office for his review and signature. Mr. Johnson requested that if Mr. Clark is unavailable to sign checks that staff contacts the next person on the list. Signatures on the account also include Robert Hardesty and Ted Johnson.

Ms. Hausch then discussed stipends for the Wrights Law Conference. She reported that the PAIMI federal funders will not fund any Special Ed activities, including stipends for parents to attend this conference. David Majik WV Children's Mental Health, has authorized \$3,000 in stipends. In order to process the requests, he requires someone to fund the expense and then invoice him for reimbursement. Ms. Hausch noted there is approximately \$1,300 in the fund-raising account. She asked that with a written commitment from Mr. Majik, would the Board be willing to advance funds from this account in order to allow three people to attend the Conference.

Motion: Mr. May moved that with a receipt of a written commitment of reimbursement within 90 days from the WV Children's Mental Health, that approximately \$1,300 of the fund-raising account be used as an advance to pay expenses associated with stipends for PAIMI parents to attend the Wrights Law Conference. Seconded by Mr. Hardesty. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.

Ms. Hausch reported that PAIMI has scheduled March 10, 11 and 12, 2009 for the PAIMI review. Mr. Johnson stated that as some of the PAIMI Council members and Board members have not met, perhaps this presents an opportunity to schedule a get-together in January. Ms. Hausch added that Lolita Crews will be training the Board on the PAIMI review process.

The meeting went into executive session at 3:15 p.m. and back in session at 3:30 p.m. Mr. Johnson stated that the next meeting will be held January 10, 2009.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

Ms. Akers noted that she would be interested in attending the Wrights Law Conference. A discussion followed and the Board agreed this qualifies as Board training. Ms. Akers was requested to provide a summary of the training to the Board.

Motion: Mr. May moved that WVA pay for expenses associated with Ms. Akers to attend the Wrights Law Conference and that she provide the Board with an update of the conference. Seconded by Mr. Hardesty. Motion carried; none opposed; no abstentions.

Ms. Akers requested that she be given committee assignments. Mr. Johnson responded that he intends to meet individually with all directors for this purpose.

No further business appearing, the meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Transcribed by Barbara Criner