

**Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy (VOPA)**

**Protection and Advocacy for Individuals with Mental Illness (PAIMI) Advisory  
Council Meeting**

**VOPA Conference Room – Richmond, VA**

**Final Minutes**

**January 8, 2011**

<b>Members Present</b>	Elaine Caudill, Mike Newcomb (Chair), Yvette Lane, Ali Parker (Vice-Chair), Sara Singhas
<b>Members Absent</b>	Kathy Harkey, Steve Hornstein, Van Johnson, Sandra Musselwhite
<b>Guests Present</b>	Jackie Brown, Byron Stith, Angela Thanyachaeron
<b>Staff Present</b>	Sherry Confer (Deputy Director), Kim Ware (Data Analyst)  For portions: David Hominik (Disability Rights Advocate), Colleen Miller (Executive Director)
<b>Welcome/ Introductions/ Public Comment</b>	Mike Newcomb, Chair, called the meeting to order. Mr. Newcomb asked everyone present to introduce themselves. There was no public comment.
<b>Review of November 2010 Meeting Minutes</b>	Mr. Newcomb referred the Council to the draft November 2010 minutes in the meeting packet. Members had a few comments about the issues discussed at the last meeting. With no changes to be made, Elaine Caudill made a MOTION to accept the minutes as written. Ali Parker SECONDED the MOTION. The motion carried unanimously.
<b>Training: General Assembly Bill Tracking Process Review</b>	David Hominik, Disability Rights Advocate, discussed the bill tracking process. Mr. Hominik provided handouts which detailed the various screens from the Virginia General Assembly website. Mr. Hominik also provided information on how to track bills through the Citizen Guide on the Legislative Information System (LIS) website. Mr. Hominik also answered questions that were raised by Council about the bill submission process.
<b>Executive Director's Report</b>	Colleen Miller, Executive Director, provided an overview of the federal performance reporting process. Ms. Miller discussed the difference between the PAIMI Advisory Council Report and the PAIMI Performance Progress Report. Ms. Miller thanked the Council for their meaningful input.  Ms. Miller provided an update on the Supreme Court case heard on December 1, 2010, and expects a decision in a few months. This case is a result of an action to attempt to access peer review materials from investigations of incidents at institutions operated by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS). Ms. Miller answered the Council members'

questions about the court case.

Ms. Miller reviewed what VOPA could and could not do working under the federal grants. Ms. Miller indicated that VOPA could educate policy-makers but could not lobby. Ms. Miller indicated VOPA could give advice on a bill's implication but can never a lead on a bill.

Ms. Miller discussed the Auxiliary Grant Program and her hopes that it will be addressed during the 2011 Virginia General Assembly. Ms. Miller informed the Council that the Auxiliary grant is a supplement to Social Security and can be used to supplement housing needs. In Virginia, the Auxiliary grant is limited to individuals living in assisted living facilities (ALFs). VOPA believes that Auxiliary grant money should go with the person and not the facility. Ms. Miller expects the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) to introduce new legislation this year.

**Lunch – Network**

PAIMI Advisory Council members and guests networked with VOPA staff.

**Executive  
Director's Report  
continued**

There was additional discussion among Council members and staff about potential legislation that had heard about. There was also a discussion about how well organized the Intellectual Disability (ID) community is compared to the Mental Health (MH) community.

Ms. Miller reminded everyone if they heard about legislation that might impact individuals with disabilities to notify VOPA. Ms. Miller frequently posts a legislative update on the VOPA website during the General Assembly session.

**Work Session:  
Council  
Development**

Ms. Confer asked the Council what would be helpful to members to become better advocates in the community. A member suggested that an orientation would be helpful to learn about what the expectations of an Advisory Council member, terms, and Council positions.

Ms. Confer stated that Council members were ambassadors to VOPA and to the community. Ms. Confer asked what Council members needed to perform the role of ambassador. Mr. Newcomb noted a few advantages of being an ambassador such as being a role model within your community, spreading the word about PAIMI Advisory Council and VOPA activities, and creating a knowledgeable network about mental health issues. It was suggested that handouts and brochures be made available for members to distribute.

Ms. Confer also advised that VOPA staff had developed a curriculum for individuals with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) on self-advocating and asked if that would be of value to Council members. Someone suggested that it could be a training at an upcoming Council meeting.

Ms. Confer distributed a self assessment form and a list of past trainings for members to identify trainings they would like to have again. Ms. Confer then distributed the VOPA Governing Board Policy on public activities for members to review on their own time.

Mr. Newcomb asked about the possibility of members conducting trainings at Council meetings. Members can research a topic and present that information at the meetings. Members discussed the advantages of this idea such as learning from other members' experiences in the mental health field. Ms. Confer said the presentation must be tied to disability rights and VOPA's work.

**Greetings from the Governing Board**

Angela Thanyachaeron introduced herself as a member of the VOPA Governing Board. Ms. Thanyachareon said the Board met last September and the next meeting is scheduled for January 28, 2011. The Board may have a retreat in April and the details are still being discussed.

**Other Business**

**Membership**

Guests present were given the opportunity to address the Council and talk about why they wanted to become members of the PAIMI Advisory Council. The potential members were excused from the meeting while the Council Members present voted on their membership. The vote for council membership was unanimous for Jackie Brown and Byron Stith. Mr. Newcomb congratulated and welcomed the newest members to the Council.

**Next Meeting Date**

The Council agreed to continue to meet on Saturdays. The Council decided to meet on the following dates:

Saturday, April 16, 2011

Saturday, July 16, 2011

**PAIMI-Related Grievances**

There were no grievances between October and December 2010.

**Travel Vouchers Reminder**

Ms. Confer reminded the Council members to submit their forms.

Ms. Lane made a MOTION to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Caudill SECONDED the MOTION to adjourn the meeting. The MOTION carried unanimously.

*FINAL MINUTES*

April 16, 2011

Date

**Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy  
Mission Statement**

Through zealous and effective advocacy and legal representation, to: protect and advance legal, human, and civil rights of persons with disabilities; combat and prevent abuse, neglect, and discrimination; and promote independence, choice, and self determination by persons with disabilities.