

Oklahoma Rehabilitation Council Policy and Legislative (P&L) Committee Meeting Minutes

The Committee met on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at 10:45 am, via Zoom.

Participants: Tim Yeahquo, Vicky Golightly, Kevin Nelson, William Ginn, Tonya Garman, Linda Jaco, and Carolina Colclasure.

Discussion Items

Legislative Report – Kevin Nelson

The Committees have reported out of the bills of origin. Out of the roughly 3,000 bills that were initially filed, it is now down effectively to about 330 bills.

All of the DRS bills have passed both deadlines without difficulty, and no future issues are expected.

There a couple of additional bills that have been added to the DRS watchlist. House Bill 1146 is the new version of the Merit Bill. It restructures what it is to be a classified employee and gives all agencies new allowances about those positions.

The second bill is House Bill 1711, which allows blind or visually impaired individuals to effectively vote and use the same system for remote voting that the military uses. DRS met with the State Election Board representatives, and it was a very productive meeting. The expectation is that this bill will pass, and it may be expanded in the future to other groups who may have difficulty voting.

In terms of the budget, the state equalization board met about three weeks ago and certified an additional \$1.2 billion and have revenues to be spent this fiscal year. In addition to that, the American Recovery Act has passed and is sending approximately \$4 to \$4.5 billion to the state. It can be used for various purposes, like education or filling revenue holes.

Coordination with other Councils

The ORC Program Manager (PM) reached out to the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) to inquire about the State Mental Health Planning Council.

The Oklahoma Behavioral Health Advisory Council is active, and the contact is Melissa Miller. In her email, she mentioned that they meet in March, June, September, and December. They provide the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) and ODMHSAS policy, operational, and legislative updates and provide a forum for feedback, and their next meeting is on June 9.

The ORC PM will attend and will report back to the Committee. If a permanent ORC representative is needed, it will be discussed during the next Committee Meeting.

People with Disabilities Awareness Day (PWDAD)

PWDAD was a social media event this year, and it took place on March 9th. Director Fruendt shared during the Executive Committee Meeting that the event was a success, with many DRS clients posting their stories on Facebook.

DRS also had the award ceremony during the Commission Meeting on March 8th, and all the certificates were mailed to the winners.

The tentative date for PWDAD 2022 is March 8th.

2021 DRS Policy changes

The 2021 Rules Revisions have been submitted, including Chapters 1, 3, 10, 15, and 20. Chapter 25 was removed and will be resubmitted next year.

2020 ORC Legislative Primer

The ORC PM emailed the legislative primer and the DRS Services and Program flyers created by ORC on February 22 to all Oklahoma Legislators.

Transit Plan information/update

The Transit Plan's website link has been added to [ORC's website](#) under the Advocacy and Resources tab.

State Legislator Visits

The ORC PM shared the 2020 Legislative Primer and previous Success Story flyers with State Legislators via email on February 22.

Advocacy Training

The Committee will start planning the Advocacy Training Director Fruendt suggested back in January.

Fatos Floyd recommended Sahnó Steele-Lauchart to be a part of the planning committee. The ORC PM will set up a meeting with Mr. Steele-Lauchart and will invite the P&L Members.

The training format will be an interview setting with questions for Mr. Steele-Lauchart and a host that will ask the questions. The Committee members will help choose the questions and can participate during the recording.

Strategic Plan (SP) Review

The Committee reviewed the SP, and objectives 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and activities 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, and 4.7 are ongoing.

Time and location for the next meeting

ORC Quarterly Meeting – Thursday, May 20 – 9:30 am via Zoom

P&L Committee Meeting – Thursday, June 17 – 10:45 am via Zoom