**Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission**

2 Peachtree St NW Suite 26-416 Atlanta, GA

Commission Meeting

April 28, 2022

Teleconference

**Minutes**

**Commissioners attending in person:**

None.

**Commissioners attending via teleconference:**

Chase Jones (CJ), Jane Warnock (JW), Bob Bauer (BB), Randy Owens (RO), Susannah Kidwell (SK), Rebecca Dugger (RD), Gwen McKee (GM), Paula Gumpman (PG), Ruth Engelberg (RE), Andrew Dennison (AD), Yolanda Virden (YV), Tim Wall (TW), Stephanie Stallings (SS).

**Commissioners - Absent:**

Lisa Dawson.

**Staff:**

Craig Young (CY), Dionne Braxton (DB), Keisha Zachary (KZ), Kenisha Tait (KT), Diana Ballard (Dbd), Tyimeka Brown (TB), Leslie Collins (LC).

**Guests:**

Leona Rittenhouse (LR), Jane Jackson (JJ), Cassandra Palmer (CP), Alexandra Givens (AG).

**Chairman’s Report**

CY – A quorum of 14 Commissioners is currently present.

CJ – I call the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m.

CJ – First order of business is the approval of last month’s minutes.

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| **1. Motion:** to approve the March 2022 draft Commission minutes.  **Motion by:** BB  **Second by:** TW  **Vote:** Unanimously approved. |

**Welcome:**

CJ – welcome everyone. Today we have a new Commissioner from the Department of Health and Human Services, Mr. Matthew Krull an attorney for DHS. Matthew please tell us what you do and previous experience in state government.

MK – I am a former solicitor for Douglas county, past Executive Director of the state of Georgia’s Solicitor Association. I came to DHS after working for DCH for a few years. Currently I am the DHS Deputy Commissioner for Operations and also provide support for other legal/organizational issues as needed.

CJ – Glad to have you aboard!

**Executive committee report:**

CJ – the Executive committee met and had discussion on several topics that Craig can discuss in his updates.

**Executive Director’s updates:**

**Operations**

1. Applications/Grants

The April grid will be ~$80,000. Central Registry - There are 100 applications on staff desks currently. Submitted applications are back to normal levels ~25/mo.

I have a new Central Registry (CR) mailing ready to send to ~12,500 for Q3-Q4 of 2021. Standard Press reports that they have no #10 window envelopes to use as their wholesaler is out of stock with one million envelopes on back-order. This is a supply chain issue. The cost of paper and mailings will be increasing. Postage will also increase in July 2022 and I have asked for updated costs associated with our CR mailings. This will be another increase to already approved budgets for FY22 and FY23.

2. Budget updates

a. Governor’s budget AFY22 with COLA increases for all state full-time employees was passed. This increase will affect the BSITF FY22 and FY23 budgets. We will meet with DPH CFO on May 4th to review object-class budgets and rebalancing the FY23 base budget.

3. TBI grant

Received funding from ACL for Public Health Workforce grant. Total for the two-year grant is $86,400. Currently drafting contract with BIAG to provide a part-time bilingual Resource Facilitation Outreach Specialist. This will help the recently injured find the Resource Facilitation program and to share timely information about the Trust Fund and our grants for post-acute care.

4. Website and Applicant database

CY – database procurement – meeting with DPH procurement office staff this afternoon to discuss project. Need to identify a revenue source for the project; either prior-year or unappropriated funds.

**Committee reports:**

**Distribution committee:**

PG – the April 2022 grid for $80,470 was presented to the Distribution committee. The committee had some discussion around the first listed grant for a service dog. The applicant’s family has purchased a puppy specifically for this purpose and is now old enough to begin training. Are there any questions regarding this or any of the other grants? None.

A quorum of 14 Commissioners are present.

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| **2. Motion:** To approve the April 2022 Distribution grid as submitted.  **Motion by:** Distribution committee  **Second by:** SK  **Vote:** Motion is approved unanimously. |

**Collections and Finance:**

LC – Collections for March were $124,764. April collections are looking positive. Third quarter balance sheet shows income exceeding expenses. We will have a Finance committee meeting in May. AD – status of FY2023 budget – will there be increased funds for grants.? CY – we have to take into account increases for the staff COLA increases to salary and benefits as well as increased costs for other operational expenses due to inflation such as Central Registry and the IT project whose cost will certainly be in the six-figures. We will likely need to amend in to this budget prior-year funds to meet our needs. These items will be addressed in the May Finance committee meeting.

CY – so, speaking of collections, I have included in your meeting materials updated DUI and Reckless driving conviction data for your review. MK – surprised to see the number of convictions falling so far from 44,000 to 19,000 in 2019. It may be a good idea to get in front of various groups (state solicitors) to educate them about the Trust Fund and the impact that alternative sentencing has on our grants. One impact on the lower number is the increasing use of alternative transportation such as Uber, Lyft, etc.

A long discussion ensued regarding the priority list, pending judicial caseloads, judicial discretion in sentencing, Title 40 driving penalties including fleeing from law enforcement (SS), speeding, etc. potential impact of legislative initiatives, Constitutional Amendments, etc.

CJ – we will continue this conversation in future meetings.

Commissioner Randy Jones joins the meeting at 11:20 a.m. A quorum is present.

**Communications committee:**

CY – the Communications committee met in April. Discussed the draft one-pager infographic for the Resource Facilitation project. Web traffic is back to normal.

Dionne and Craig will attend the Digital Services Georgia (DSG) annual meeting in May.

**TBI grant and activities:**

KT – many activities going on…

* The application for ACL’s has Expanding Public Health Workforce Grant has been approved and the new grant began on April 1, 2022 and will end on September 30, 2024. Grant funding of $86,400 over two years will be used to hire an additional part-time Resource Facilitator and to complete Central Registry mailings.
* Focus groups and individual interviews have been held to gather data for the needs assessment. We have shared the survey link with all our committees and state partners.
* The first quarter of the Resource Facilitation program has fielded great results. The program has identified 20 individuals to track and assist them with their needs.
* We are continuing to meet with BIAG on a weekly basis to discuss the progress of the RF program and create materials to be disbursed to stakeholders. We are also studying for the CBIS Certification test to be taken this quarter.
* We are in full swing with our ACL Workgroups. Georgia facilitated the Underserved Populations April monthly meeting. The Trust Fund and Resource Facilitation program were highlighted during the meeting with a focus on the services and resources we offer to individuals who have suffered a TBI or SCI. We are also working with the Workforce Development workgroup to identify products for submission for year one of the grant.

KT – thanks for everyone’s support!

**New Business:**

There being no further business the meeting is adjourned by motion (GM) at 11:43 a.m.

**The next Commission meeting will be on Thursday May 26, 2022 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**