**Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission**

2 Peachtree St NW Suite 26-416 Atlanta, GA

Commission Meeting

February 23, 2023

Teleconference

Minutes

**Commissioners attending in person:**

None.

**Commissioners attending via teleconference:**

Jane Warnock (JW), Michael Burns (MB), Ruth Engelberg (RE), Gwen McKee (GM), Matt Krull (MK), Lisa Dawson (LD), Susannah Kidwell (SK), Jane Warnock (JW), Andrew Dennison (AD), Tim Wall (TW), Rebecca Dugger (RD), Stephanie Freeman (SF), Randy Owens (RO).

**Commissioners - Absent:**

Bob Bauer, Bethany Whetzel.

**Staff:**

Craig Young (CY), Dionne Braxton (DB), Kenisha Tait (KT), Diana Ballard (Dbd).

**Guests:**

Cassandra Palmer (CP), Morgan Barnett (MB), Imane Bassit (IB).

**Chairman’s Report**

JW – I call the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m.

CY – A quorum of 9 Commissioners is currently present.

CY – I would like to thank and congratulate Jane Warnock for accepting the Governor’s appointment as Chairwoman of the Commission.

JW – I appreciate the support and will work with all of you to further the Commission’s mission.

JW – Next order of business is to approve the January 2023 Commission draft minutes.

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| **1. Motion:** to approve the draft January 2023 Commission minutes.  **Motion by:** RE  **Second by:** TW  **Vote:** Approved unanimously. |

JW – the Executive committee discussed many interesting items including the new database software procurement. Craig will review with his updates.

**Updates\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Craig Young**

**Operations**

**1. Applications/Grants**

a. Applications - There were 86 applications on staff desks on 2-9-23.

There is a full grid for February = ~$85K, 3 on wait list? DB – yes.

b. Twin Towers Move – DPH moving meeting is now weekly on Tuesday afternoons. Met with DPH Facilities manager and obtained 90 secure totes for our applicant files. We obtained five more shred bins and had seven filled for shredding. Thanks to staff for diligently working to get us close to our pre-move goal for this date.

**2. Accounting/Budget updates**

The new requisition for Accounting/Finance manager FIP101, has been drafted. HR to uploaded new Job Classification Codes in NeoGov and the new requisition is in “budget approval” phase. Tyimeka Brown has provided her letter of resignation effective February 28, 2023. Tyimeka worked for the Commission for 10 years as an application associate and also assisting with vendor management, accounts payable and receivable and other accounting and administrative duties. She will be missed. I have informed DPH HR about the upcoming vacancy. We may look at a temp position for the short term.

**3. Website and Applicant database**

Met with Michael From (DPH IT director), his staff and Namit Bhatia from Engagifii. We discussed several issues regarding the database procurement including a BSITF produced inventory of processes that need to be enhanced or otherwise obtained in a new software system. The BSITF application team met Monday to review processes and what we feel are the weak links in the system. We have 40-50 items and counting with more meetings to cover other areas of the current database plus needs/wants from a modern CRM and Data management system. There will be no scanning or document storage prior to the move to Twin Towers.

**4. Annual Report**

Our contractor (Paige Havens) has set up our report template in Google Docs and we have begun plugging in content. We still have not yet identified an applicant for a cover story for the report and so I will have to use the Needs Assessment as our focal point for this issue which is way behind schedule. Hope to have a draft to Paige on Monday. We will not print this issue, it will be an electronic (PDF) version only.

**5. Commission**

Thanks again to Jane for taking on the Chair responsibilities. We have no other appointments by the Governor’s office or from the Dept. of Education (DOE) for their new representative. We have reached out to all. Bethany Whetzel has been confirmed and is the new representative from Georgia Vocational Services (GVS).

**6. DAR committee meetings**

The DAR committee discussions will be upcoming in the meeting.

**7. Public Policy**

I am reviewing legislation which is starting to build volume quickly. Governor’s proposed cost of living increases for state employees would begin on July 1, 2023 if approved by the legislature in the AFY2023 budget. HB242 has requested an increase in surcharges (3%) for the Driver’s Education fund; this legislation attaches to the Joshua’s Law statute OCGA 15-21-170.

If you see any legislative initiatives that may affect the Commission or our stakeholders please let us know.

LD – several bills that DPH is watching are SR209, SB107, SB50, SB420 and HB189. Watching some measures on aquatic safety – CDC has published recommendations from their Model Aquatic Committee.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

JW – we will hear from Tim Wall with the Distribution committee recommendations to the Commission.

**Distribution committee**

TW – As always, thanks to staff for doing an excellent job with the grid. There was only a little discussion regarding the application for “dry-needling” therapy which I explained to the committee. Are there any questions regarding this or any other grant requests? None.

A quorum is present

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| **2. Motion:** To approve the February 2023 Distribution grid as submitted.  **Motion by:** Distribution committee  **Second by:** GM/LD  **Vote:** Motion is approved unanimously. |

JW – the Applicant Grid Characteristics for the first six months are in your meeting materials and Craig will review those for us. A line-by-line review was held. SK – concerned that we are not seeing many children being served. Can we do an educational training outreach to CHOA’s social workers about Commission grants.? This would benefit families who are only able to access funding from nonprofits such as Andee’s Army. CY – yes, let’s discuss offline.

LD – other resources for families could be “Find Help Georgia” which is an effort of DFACS.

**DAR committee:**

GM – The DAR committee met to review policy, looking particularly at Commission caps, the rising costs of goods and services and the home modifications program. We had good discussion and it was decided that the Committee would meet one more time in March to discuss final recommendations to the Commission.

CY – the committee seems to support continuing the Home Access Program (HAP) but at a lower level of budget. Will continue that discussion in March. Bob Bauer suggested that the committee look at an across-the-board percentage increase in caps - 20 percent. Craig will calculate several percentage increases and provide a review of how they impact across policy, grants budget and some recent monthly grids to see what that looks like and how it would impact our budget and number of applicants served.

**Collections and Finance:**

CY – the Commission had a big month and collected surcharges totaling $176,896 in January 2023. Current collections for February are $107,624 with 3 business days left in the month for collections. February is typically the weakest month for collections.

**TBI grant and activities:**

KT

* ACL will hold a virtual TBI Partner Day on February 28, 2023 from 12-4 PM
* BSITFC staff and RF program staff continue to attend the monthly meetings for the Underserved Populations and Workforce Development workgroups. The workforce development and training workgroup met on January 10 where we worked on identifying overlaps in competencies. The underserved populations workgroup met on January 19th. The workgroup discussed the meeting schedule for the year and Oregon discussed the state’s TBI systems and resources.
* Our bi-monthly TARC call was held on January 10, 2023. We discussed the progress of the RF program and TARC state workplan for Georgia.
* Commission staff continues to meet with BIAG on a bi-weekly basis.

**New Business:**

JW – I want to thank Bob Bauer for his service as interim chairman and willingness to assist the Commission in whatever capacity is asked.

There being no further business the meeting is adjourned by JW at 11:18 a.m.

**The next Commission meeting will be held on Thursday March 23, 2023 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**