**Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission**

2 Peachtree St NW Suite 26-416 Atlanta, GA

Commission Meeting

February 24, 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), Tim Wall (TW) Gwen McKee (GM), Stephanie Stallings (SS), Paula Gumpman (PG), Ruth Engelberg (RE), Andrew Dennison (AD).

**Commissioners - Absent:**

Lisa Dawson, Jeni Coyne, Tim Wall.

**Staff:**

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

**Guests:**

Leona Rittenhouse, Jane Jackson, Cassandra Palmer, Dr Hamida Jinnah-UGA, Anuja Sarda-UGA.

**Chairman’s Report**

CY – A quorum of 9 Commissioners is currently present.

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

CJ – We will move first to our items requiring quorum vote as some members have scheduling conflicts. First up is the approval of last month’s minutes.

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| **1. Motion:** to approve the January 2022 draft Commission minutes.  **Motion by:** BB  **Second by:** JW  **Vote:** Approved unanimously. |

**Distribution committee:**

DB – The Distribution committee met and approved the February 2022 grid for $75,000. Are there any questions regarding the grid? None.

A quorum of 9 Commissioners are present.

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

**Welcome:**

CJ – I would like to welcome our newest Commissioner appointed by the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency – Yolanda Virden. YV – thank you for having me – I have worked for the state of Georgia for 17 years and am currently a district manager for GVS and previously worked for DFACS.

**Needs Assessment:**

CJ – we welcome Dr. Hamida Jinnah from the University of Georgia IHDD Research Evaluation who is conducting our statewide TBI Needs Assessment.

HJ – our research assistant Anuja Sarda has joined us as well. We are proceeding with the Needs Assessment and Craig has sent you links to the proposed questionnaire/survey for individuals/families, professionals, and state agencies. We are soliciting your review and suggestions to these questions and also to inform us of other questions of importance, in your opinion, that may need to be included in the survey. We will be conducting key informant interviews.

Numerous questions were asked by Commissioners including topics relating to TBI and rural populations - rural college campuses (GM) children and youth (SK), Middle GA State University (JW), support groups (JJ), etc.

**Executive committee report:**

CJ – the Executive committee discussed the Governor’s budget proposal for an increase of $5,000 for full-time state employees in AFY22. We are reviewing the proposal for how it may impact Commission budget for AFY22 and also the FY23 proposed increases by the Governor. The Commission will be moving out of 2 Peachtree by the end of 2023, new location as yet unknown as is the cost of moving.

We have received word from our database host/vendor that they will no longer be able to serve us past 2023. We are beginning the procurement process, the cost of this is unknown but will likely be costly.

**Executive Director’s updates:**

**Operations: -** Currently there are 78 submitted applications on staff desks. The Central Registry mailing to 17,700 individuals treated in hospital ER’s arrived on February 12th . New web traffic was up to 1,000 visits for the month as opposed to January’s total of 465. We have 126 new web applications and 50 of those have been submitted and are currently being processed. Receiving many calls and requests for paper applications.

**Committee reports:**

**Distribution and Application Review (DAR) committee:**

CJ – the DAR committee meet and discussed a number of topics related to category funding caps and lifetime caps for grants. Due to the number of new projects and budget hikes any further discussion regarding increasing budgets for grants is something we need to put a hold on for now while we find out what costs we are facing against our future budgets. The committee meetings are paused until next fiscal year.

Commissioner Randy Owens joins the meeting at 10:43 a.m.; a quorum is

present.

Commissioner Stephanie Stallings joins the meeting at 10:51 a.m.; a quorum is present.

**Collections and Finance committee report:**

CY – collections for January 2021 were very good at $164,320. February collections are at $117,825 currently with two days left in the month to collect.

Commission funding is provided by surcharges on DUI and Reckless driving convictions. The Commission does not receive any general revenue funding from the Georgia General Assembly. Funds are deposited in our Treasury accounts by the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority (funds remitted to them by Georgia courts statewide).

I would like to recognize Lt. Col Stallings and the great work of the Georgia State Patrol for their work apprehending DUI violators and reckless drivers. Keep up the great work!

**Communications committee:**

CY – the Communications committee met in February and have wrapped up the FY2022 Annual Report. There is a good cover story featuring Chantal Davis; a grantee of the Trust Fund and now, an employee of BIAG working as a new Resource Facilitation specialist.

Costs of annual report production have risen ($8/copy) and we should take a look at whether or not we want to have a physical copy printed in the future or move to an electronic version (PDF) only.

**TBI grant and activities:**

 ACL announced the TBPH Expanding the Public Health Workforce within Disability Networks Funding Opportunity. ACL announced the TBPH Expanding the Public Health Workforce within Disability Networks Funding Opportunity. This program aims to increase the number of public health professionals within the disability networks to address the unique needs of people with disabilities through the support of wages and benefits for these professionals. Professionals supported through this program may provide a wide range of public health services and supports, including provision of culturally affirmative and linguistically accessible information, access assistance for vaccines and boosters, transition, and diversion from high-risk congregate settings to community living, provision and connections to health and wellness programs, activities that address social isolation and social determinants of health, and other activities that support. Total grant funding is $90,000. ($77,142 if all SPP grantees are approved)

 In order to relieve current Resource Facilitation staff from additional duties for educating stakeholder organizations and providing training, GA TBI SPP proposes an additional part-time Resource Facilitation Outreach Specialist position will devote their time to organizing activities and outreach with local community programs that have a focus on underserved populations in the pilot program service area. The Outreach Specialist will be bilingual with the ability to reach Spanish speaking clients and stakeholders.

The outreach will focus on hospitals and other health care providers that deploy acute and/or urgent care traumatic brain injury services. The Outreach Specialist will collaborate with those local hospitals or care centers to facilitate our outreach of Resource Facilitation services. Hospital discharge planners will be the initial focus of outreach and training for the program in order to provide the wrap-around services needed by survivors of TBI and their families. The grant will run from April 1, 2022- September 30, 2024.

 TBI TARC Call held 0n February 8, 2022

 The RF Specialists attended a protection and advocacy training on February 15, 2022.

 We have met with both of our assigned workgroups during the month of February and are working with other states to determine products that will be produced for year 1 of the grant.

 Brain Injury Awareness Day is scheduled for March 16, 2022 and will be held virtually.

**New Business:**

CY – Many thanks to staff for handling the large volume of Central Registry calls and applications. Thanks to BIAG for rolling out the Resource Facilitation pilot program smoothly - we are glad to have you as a partner!

There being no further business the meeting is adjourned by motion (BB) at 11:37 a.m.

**The next Commission meeting will be on Thursday March 24, 2022 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**