

Brain and Spinal Injury Trust Fund Commission
2 Peachtree St NW Suite 26-426 Atlanta, GA
Commission Meeting
April 26, 2018

Minutes

Commissioners attending in person:

Chase Jones (CJ), Barbara Means-Cheeley (BMC), Raj Gandy (RG), Susannah Kidwell (SK), Tim Wall (TW), Andrew Dennison (AD).

Commissioners attending via teleconference:

Jane Warnock (JW), Randy Owens (RO), Gwen McKee (GM), Hank Fielding (HF), Cheryl Harris (CH).

Commissioners - Absent:

Lisa Dawson, Bob Bauer.

Staff:

Craig Young (CY), Dionne Braxton (DB), Keisha Zachary (KZ), Leslie Berry (LB), Tyimeka Brown (TB).

Guests:

Claire Creech (CC), Jane Jackson (JJ), Michelle LaPlaca (ML)

Chairman's Reports

CY – A quorum of 9 Commissioners are present.

CJ – Welcome! I call the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m. Any edits to the minutes from the previous meeting? None

A quorum of 10 Commissioners are present.

1. Motion: to approve the March 2018 draft Commission minutes.

Motion by: RO **Second by:** AD

Vote: Approved unanimously.

BMC joins the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

Executive committee:

CJ – The Executive committee voted to affirm the recommendation of the DAR committee to increase the category cap for Durable Medical Equipment from \$5,000 to \$10,000. The Commission will take this recommendation up later in the DAR committee report. Craig will report the other updates.

- CY – 1. The TBI grant was successfully submitted on our behalf by DPH and receipt was confirmed by ACL. We will likely receive application yes/no notifications in May. Thanks to all who provided Letters of Support and to Kathy Robinson in the DPH Grants office for her excellent assistance.
2. A draft MOU for procurement has been written and sent to DPH. No response as to any needed edits to the draft MOU from DPH contracts office. The AG’s office felt that our draft was “pretty reasonable”.
3. HB673 Distracted driving – the bill passed and will be signed by the Governor. SB407 passed and may have an impact on surcharge collections in the future.
4. We have submitted our request to DPH to drop some of our office space, 7 cubes and the large conference room; this should result in the savings of approximately \$16,000.00.
5. We will discuss the 20th Anniversary and Finance committee updates later as indicated on the agenda.

Distribution committee:

TW – The applicant grid for April has 11 applicants with requests amounting to \$98,818.00, staff again did a great job getting applicants completed. Any questions concerning the grid? AD – question concerning Sumn9063; what is the frequency of treatment? Syntonic phototherapy administered as neuro-optical rehabilitation borders on experimental; you would not find much on this treatment in the professional published journal literature. Thirty-six sessions is a lot. Is there a doctor’s recommendation? DB – yes, we have it on file in the physical application. DB – we rarely get vision therapy requests and there is nothing to disqualify this request based on current policy. CY – we can easily monitor to see if we get more of this type of request.

TW – any other questions about the grid? None.

A quorum of 11 Commissioners is present.

2. Motion: To approve the April 2018 distribution grid as submitted.
Motion by: Distribution committee **Second by:** AD
Vote: Approved unanimously.

CY – we are on-budget for the Distribution/Benefits budget for the fiscal year. There is no waiting list currently. Staff continues to check our monthly un-submitted applications to see if we can help applicants get their applications submitted, answer questions, etc. Anecdotally, applicants with new injuries report that they are unsure as to what they need at this time. SK – takes a year or more for people to figure out what they really need. CY – Our CR letter goes out to those who have been injured in the 3-6 month range. We have seen better response rates from this hospital-admitted group even though we are mailing to 20,000 fewer (ER only patients eliminated from 2014 CR mailing).

Ad Hoc 20th Anniversary committee:

CJ – we have reserved the Auditorium at the Shepherd Center for Thursday November 1, 2018 – thanks to Shepherd Center for making this possible.

CJ – the Commission meeting schedule for October and November will remain as normally scheduled but with reduced agendas for quorum vote items only if possible. The committee will be meeting again early in May to get the ball rolling on solicitations, Keynote speaker, invitations, etc. CY – please send us your recommendations for keynote speaker. JJ – Dr. Adeyamo at Atlanta Medical is an excellent speaker. CY – we have also noted possibly Saul Raisin and Julie Krupa.

Advisory committee:

CC – the Advisory committee was scheduled to meet on Monday 23rd but a quorum was not reached and the meeting call was terminated. The Advisory committee will be gearing up to solicit nominations from the brain-injury community to fill new TBI grant required members for Advisory Committee appointments.

Collections report and Finance committee:

LB – collections for March were lower than same month for 2017. Bill Lee on the Finance committee suggested it could be due to Atlanta Municipal court not conducting business due to the hacking of city of Atlanta computers. Hope to see their remittances catch up in April and May.

CY - our budgeted administrative costs continue below budget except for an increase in Workers Compensation that was not communicated to us.

Communications committee:

CY – Dionne Braxton has received certification from the Georgia Technology Authority as a Certified Web Content Strategist. DB – created a workspace for applicants to fill out a survey that asks questions about the Central Registry letter they may have received in the mail. CY – we have the same response rate as unsolicited personal mail <4 percent. I have asked Paige Havens to review the letter and get feedback on ways to improve this documents’ “legitimacy”. The Communications committee did not meet due to lack of quorum.

Public Policy committee:

CY – the Public Policy committee did not meet due to lack of quorum. Beth English is retiring and stepping down from this committee. We are taking nominations for new members if any Commissioners have an interest.

New Business:

None.

The meeting was adjourned at 11: 51 a.m. by motion (AD). Lunch will be followed by a meeting for the Commission’s Strategic Planning FY2019 at 12:45 p.m.

The next Commission meeting will be on Thursday, May 24, 2018 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Commission offices at 2 Peachtree St NW Suite 26-426.

STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING
Commenced at 12:50 p.m.

In attendance: Chase Jones, Raj Gandy, Susannah Kidwell, Andrew Dennison, Tim Wall, Barbara Means-Cheeley, Jane Warnock, Cheryl Harris, Gwen McKey, Jane Jackson and Michelle LaPlaca and BSITF staff = Craig Young, Leslie Berry, Dionne Braxton, Keisha Zachary, Tyimeka Brown and Diana Ballard.

CY – I have provided you with our current strategic plan that covers the fiscal years 2016-2019. We will dispense with the usual powerpoints as everyone here has been on board for a while and we are all aware of the issues and environment. One note, a new Governor will be elected in November and this will obviously be of great importance to the Commission and our stakeholders.

Our two state strategic goals are 1). Procurement of a new application database and 2). Increase the percentage of submitted applications. We will not know the answer to #2 until the end of the fiscal year. We failed to get goal #1 underway as DPH insisted on an MOU for the procurement process and then subsequently a DPH budget deadline emerged that precluded any BSITF funds to be spent for procurement. Our draft MOU for procurement for FY2019 is in the DPH contracts office but there has been no further communication from DPH at this time.

A discussion around applicant feedback emerged and several ideas for surveys to determine end-user satisfaction were reviewed. BMC discussed an annual survey of applicants to determine demand for categories of goods and services and other identified data for capture.

Legislation was discussed to increase funding for applicant needs (as these are chronic injuries), possible pilot programs with agencies that have TBI heavy populations (justice and mental health). Other agencies may have funding to prevent reinstitutionalization if the Commission can show a better return on investment by use of distribution grants than other programs currently in use by those agencies provides. CJ – want funding to not be associated with a negative (law-breaking) but with a positive (driver's license fee or renewals on tags, etc.)

Further discussion engendered by the following question:
“What would we do differently if we were starting over?”

1. Shared resources with other agencies including dually paid staff – skin in the game. Shared pilot projects with other agencies that also serve our target populations.
2. Fees on youth recreation programs, any traffic violations.
3. Reach more people via PR campaigns, PSA’s, schools and school nurses, hospitals.
4. Ease of use of Commission resources/grants; post-discharge case management.
5. Tracking/notification status of application early in the process.
6. Supply and demand usually drives funding.
6. Use our vendors to help market the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. by acclamation.