

## TRS Advisory Council Meeting Minutes 9.13.2021

### 1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order 10:02am

### 2. Proposed changes to agenda

Rene: would like to add RCC Captioning to the Agenda

### 3. Introductions

#### **Attendees:**

Rene Pellerin (Chair)

Clay Purvis (PSD- Vice Chair)

Michelle Vicino (T-Mobile)

Jorika Stockwell (T-Mobile)

Andrew Brenneman (T-Mobile)

Michael DeHart (PSD staff)

Kate Parrish (Dept of Aging and Independent Living)

***no quorum at this meeting***

### 4. Old Business

#### a) Minutes Approval

June 7, 2021 Minutes (no quorum, no vote)

Feb 22, 2021 Minutes (no quorum, no vote)

### 5. New Business

#### a) EDP Contract Changes:

DeHart: original contract between PSD and VCIL required 48% of EDP costs to be dedicated to equipment purchases. That element was revised to require that 48% of the program's BUDGET, rather than EXPENSES, be dedicated to equipment. The reasoning for this is that equipment expenses are dependent on demand from consumers, which is out of VCIL's control. The new agreement has been executed and is good through the end of the fiscal year.

#### b) Staff Changes:

Michael DeHart will be leaving the State of Vermont, taking a new job with the State of Oregon

#### c) Board Vacancy:

- Two open seats on committee

Pellerin: Difficult to find someone available during daytime hours, who also uses the TRS service

Purvis: we could move to evening meetings if daytime is prohibitive

Pellerin: I think that's fine. Second vacancy is a person from the telecommunications industry. Erika has left her job with Consolidated.

Purvis: I think we should stick with Consolidated. They'll be replacing Erika and they need to have someone capable of filling this vacancy as a condition of their Certificate of Public Good

Duties for TRS Advisory Board, TRS contract management, and EDP contract management will be handed off to another PSD staff member.

## 6. T-Mobile report

Michelle Vicino:

- Social media outreach has continued to be primary outreach due to ongoing pandemic
- Paid ad campaigns were briefly suspended during T-Mobile merger due to administrative hangup
- Jorika continuing progress on visiting each Vermont town to post flyers
- One in-person event- Vergennes Day. First since start of pandemic. Bristol Harvest coming up
- Steady decline in CapTel minutes; people are migrating to IP-based CapTel
- RCC billable minutes down to ~300/mo from winter peak of ~1,700/mo

## 7. Relay Conference Captioning

Pellerin: How did RCC get included in the TRS contract in the first place?

Pellerin: Is RCC appropriately housed under Telecommunications Relay Service.

Vicino: Clarified use case for RCC (not just in-person, also over the phone/internet)

Purvis: Does our contract for TRS include other services that aren't part of the traditional TRS suite?

Brenneman: The previous contract manager received several consumer requests/complaints to add RCC to the service. Many other states had already purchased RCC as part of their contracts. It's become very popular and consumers find a lot of use in it. It's not purchased by the FCC, it's paid for by States.

Pellerin: FCC prohibits users of Video relay from being used by two people in the same room. How is this different?

Brenneman: People aren't using RCC from within the same room.

Purvis: Does the FCC prohibit States from using their own money to purchase this service?

Brenneman: This is only between the State and T-Mobile. It's a value-added element of the Relay contract.

Pellerin: Should we be concerned if RCC users are in the same room? Should Vermont taxpayers be paying for that? If the FCC prohibits it?

Vicino: We don't know if people are in the same room. However, suppose a meeting like this one- a hybrid in-person/remote meeting. If there's a single RCC link, it's possible that people in the same room are using the same meeting link. We don't see whether users are in the same room, though.

Purvis: Does the ADA require an employer to make this kind of service available? The billable minutes under our contract shot up during the pandemic. I can't imagine not having the service available. Should employers be providing this though?

Vicino: RCC minutes dipped around the time Zoom launched their Live Transcription service, but RCC is a real person live transcribing as opposed to the automatically-generated captions from Zoom.

Parrish: Both RCC and Zoom transcription services have been very helpful during the pandemic.

Pellerin: I appreciate this conversation, I think it's worthwhile to take a critical look at the boundaries on how it's used, who pays for it, and why it's different for Video Relay Service vs RCC. There is a federal network of State Relay Service administrators- that would be a good resource to see what other states are doing.

Purvis: I think that's a good point. Telecommunications is a dynamic, rapidly changing space. New services are available all the time and our statutes (federally and state) are not keeping pace.

Stockwell: ADA says that employers need to provide "reasonable accommodation for equal access." Reasonable is a very vague term.

#### **8. Equipment Distribution Program Report**

VCIL not in attendance, presentation was submitted via email.

#### **9. Set up next meeting date**

Next Meeting:

10am Monday, December 13

Need one extra interpreter for Rene (Tactile, in-person)

Need one extra interpreter for room

#### **10. Adjournment**

Meeting concluded 11:10am