

Partners in Policymaking (PIP) Ad-Hoc Committee

Meeting Three
Thursday, January 7, 2021

[YouTube Broadcast](#)

SUMMARY

Members Present: Mike Billings, Jill Hano, Bambi Polotzola, Corhonda Corley, Nicole Flores, Selina Gilliland, Liz Gary

Members Absent: RaShad Bristo

Attendees: Jim Sprinkle, Adrienne Thomas, Ashley McReynolds, Georgia Hall, Kristie Curtis, Kim Basile

Staff: Marilee Andrews, Brenton Andrus, Hannah Jenkins

Transcriptionist: Lynsey Hebert

Ms. Andrews' calls roll and establishes a quorum.

Chairperson Mike Billings calls the meeting to order at 9:04 AM. Mr. Billings reads the [Virtual Meeting Protocols](#).

MOTION PASSED: To approve [November 19, 2020 Meeting Summary](#) made by Ms. Polotzola, seconded by Ms. Flores. No objections. No abstentions. Motion carries.

Updates on Contracts

Ms. Andrews' updates the committee that the Executive Committee met December 2, 2020 considering the motions from the PIP Ad-Hoc Committee's meeting on November 19, 2020. A contract was signed later in December 2020 between the Council and Families Helping Families at the Crossroads for Partners in Policymaking with a backdate of October 1, 2020.

Mr. Sprinkle updates the committee that a contract between Families Helping Families at the Crossroads and the PIP Coordinator Adrienne Thomas has been signed by him as the Executive Director and is on the way to Ms. Thomas to be signed.

Ms. Corley recommends that the Committee looks at labor laws, equal employment opportunities, and other Federal laws and recommend to the Executive Committee that they

pay Ms. Thomas back to the first day of the COVID-19 pandemic. Backdating the contract to October 1 is not enough. Ms. Andrews' explains that the contract runs on the Federal Fiscal Year, and Ms. Thomas was paid up to September 30, 2020 via last year's contract. October 1, 2020 began the next Federal Fiscal Year and what was addressed in this committee. Mr. Sprinkle confirms Ms. Thomas had been paid.

Ms. Corley questions if the Council has a blanket policy in place to prevent a lapse in contract from occurring again and, if not, can this Committee do a motion to have one put in place. Ms. Andrews' shares that the Council does not have a procedure in place that she's aware of that forces the Council to sign a contract with a contractor, or a contractor to sign a contract with a subcontractor. Mr. Sprinkle shares that historically this contract is adjusted and renewed every year at the same time. The contract starts fresh every year and has since its existence. Mr. Billings shares the Council cannot issue contracts in advance and every year is a new proposal for a contract.

Public comment: Ms. McReynolds shares she was under the impression that the delay in the contract was due to delays from the Department of Administration (DOA) and that all contracts were delayed coming out of DOA. Ms. Andrews' shares that DOA was not the delay; the delay was the Interim Executive Director was not comfortable signing a contract until this committee decided what to do with the 2020 PIP class and possibly the 2021 class. This was the goal of this committee.

Virtual Accommodations

Ms. Gilliland questions if this meeting will cover the virtual format and scheduling for the 2020 PIP class and what accommodations will be made.

Ms. Thomas shares three areas that accommodations usually fall within:

- 1) Accommodations that change the way information is presented
- 2) Accommodations that change the way assignments are completed
- 3) Accommodations that can help with scheduling, timing, and organization.

Whatever strategy we use to meet the needs of our participants will usually fall in one of those three areas.

Ms. Gilliland questions how these accommodations will be identified as a need and met.

Ms. Thomas shares that she reviews each PIP application to determine what accommodations a participant may need. She also reviews feedback given at each session. If accommodations are needed beyond Ms. Thomas' resources, she plans to seek guidance from Mr. Sprinkle and Council staff. Ms. Gilliland questions if there will be a reassessment of technology needs since

needs may have changed from the time a participant filled out their application to today. Ms. Thomas will look at these things with the participants.

Ms. Corley questions if there will be any standard practice that will be done besides addressing the individual needs, such as closed captioning as a standard accommodation. Another possible accommodation is sending things in large print as a standard accommodation.

Ms. Thomas shared that if the PIP session is in person or in virtual, she will go through the same process as looking at what is requested. Even if a person does not disclose how their disability specifically affects them, she has the knowledge and ability to look at their disability and see what accommodations that they may need that they did not disclose. It's her responsibility as a coordinator to ensure a participant is comfortable in disclosing their needs.

[ITACC Disparities and Data from PIP Alumni](#)

Ms. Corley requested at a previous meeting that we discuss targeted disparities according to the Information and Technical Assistance Center (ITACC) in the PIP classes. Ms. Andrews' shared that ITACC at the National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities (NACDD) does not have an adopted list of disparities for Councils to address. There is a targeted disparity element in each Councils' five-year plan. Louisiana's five-year plan for 2017 – 2021 had the following targeted disparity: individuals with developmental disabilities who live in North Louisiana which tends to have a higher number of underserved and unserved people, is more rural, has more poverty, has lower employment than the general population, and has less access to quality employment support providers. Louisiana has a new [five-year plan for FFY 2022 – 2026](#) which went out for comment with a due date of December 10, 2020.

Ms. Thomas shared she has a lot of data from all PIP participants and also that it is difficult to ask people their disparities to track. Disparities have been a part of the selection process using the words of PIP rather than ITACC. [Ms. Thomas shared that anyone is able to see the participant criteria and selection process that our Council follows on MN PIP website.](#)

Ms. Gary reiterates that targeting disparities is a recruiting and marketing issue. Making sure we are tapping into every area and every part of the state is the most critical thing of all so that you can get the applications in. During the selection process, Ms. Gary would start with applications from less popular regions and accept applications from any disparity category first, so long as they qualified. Mr. Billings reiterates that you cannot select someone that you don't have an application from.

Ms. Corley thanks Ms. Andrews' for the information shared on disparities in the Council's 5-year plan and questions if the current five-year plan has anything adopted related to inequities

and disparities for people that are diverse and inclusive for PIP. Ms. Andrews' shared the current five-year plan for 2022 – 2026 has “disadvantaged population” as the targeted disparity.

Ms. Corley is disheartened that we are not addressing disparities. Ms. Corley questions if the Council has looked at targeted disparities as a group to help us reach out to unserved and underserved populations as it relates to disability and inclusion. Are we utilizing the Governor's Office of Disability Affairs (GODA) and others in reaching those who are developmentally disabled? Many members of disability groups are not members of Partners in Policymaking. She also takes to heart Ms. Dejean's presentation on our need for more self-advocates. Do we have some of these populations represented on PIP selection committee?

Ms. Andrews' shared that some of these comments are broader than this committee, which was created to determine what to do with the 2020 PIP class that was unable to complete due to COVID-19. She shares the Council seems to be on a good track as it recently created a disparity-type ad-hoc committee which would be a good place for this work to be done and this input to be shared. Ms. Andrews' shared the Council works closely with GODA. Ms. Andrews' reiterated what Ms. Gary and Mr. Billings shared re: selecting PIP applicants and it sounds like based on their comments the issue is recruiting. Ms. Andrews' shared that she sat in on the selection process and the committee can only pick from the applications they have, and the committee also accepted first those who were underrepresented in applications. It's a requirement to be a PIP graduate and Council member to be on the PIP selection committee.

Mr. Billings agrees and shares that these topics are at the Council's forefront and outside the scope of what this committee was formed for.

Ms. Corley questions if the Disparities Ad Hoc been chosen as well as a scheduled meeting date? If they have not made selections, I would love to be on that task force? How can one apply to be on the selection committee for PIP?

Ms. Andrews' shares she is unsure of the traction of the disparities ad-hoc committee. The Council Chair suspended all ad-hoc committee's that were deemed unessential. Ms. Andrews' recommends an email to Interim Executive Director Courtney Ryland. If you are interested in being on the PIP selection committee, Ms. Andrews' recommends emailing the Council Chair who historically has selected this committee based on Council members who were PIP graduates.

Dissolution of Committee or Future Agenda Items

Mr. Billings shared this committee has reached its goal and asks for a motion to formally dissolve the committee. Any future items could be addressed by Self-Determination/Community Inclusion Committee (SD/CI) or the Council itself.

Ms. Gary questions if motions this committee sent to the Executive Committee was approved by the Executive Committee or not. Ms. Andrews' shared she has not been updated of any actions of the Executive Committee and could not find meeting minutes, a meeting summary, or meeting transcript. It was shared with staff that a contract was signed between the Council and Families Helping Families at the Crossroads for PIP, which is what the third motion spoke to. Ms. Andrews' hopes to be updated soon.

Ms. Gary shares her concern re: language in the second motion about using "Partners in Policymaking sessions" terminology for virtual sessions when it is not actually Partners in Policymaking. You cannot use trademarked name when you are not actually doing the trademarked PIP format.

Ms. Corley shares that if the Executive Committee has not made a decision on these selections, then this Ad-Hoc Committee should not be dissolved.

Ms. Polotzola shares it's up to SD/CI Committee to dissolve the committee.

Ms. Andrews' shares that the SD/CI Committee created the committee with a task to make a recommendation to the Council with what to do with Partners due to COVID. That was the only task, and it has been met. To continue a committee to make sure the Council accepts a recommendation would not be appropriate. To dissolve this committee, the committee would recommend such to SD/CI, who would then recommend to the full Council.

MOTION PASSED. To recommend dissolving the Partners in Policymaking Ad-Hoc Committee made by Ms. Gilliland, seconded by Ms. Polotzola. No objections. No abstentions. Motion carries.

Closing Comments/ Adjournment

Ms. Gilliland thanks the committee and asks to be considered for future PIP committees. Mr. Billings thanks everyone for their participation on the committee.

MOTION CARRIES. To adjourn made by Ms. Gary, seconded by Ms. Flores. No objections. No abstentions. Motion carries.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 AM.