



**Personal Care Attendant Quality
Home Care Workforce Council
One Ashburton Place, Room 1109
Boston, MA 02108**

DEVAL L. PATRICK
Governor

TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
Lieutenant Governor

JUDYANN BIGBY, M.D.
Secretary

Tel.: 617-573-1600
Fax: 617-573-1890
www.mass.gov/eohhs

Minutes **September 11, 2007** **2:00-4:30 P.M.**

*Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel,
Marlborough, MA @ Statewide
Independent Living Conference*

COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE	Joe Bellil, Larry Braman, Eileen Brewster, Liz Casey, Jean McGuire, Paul Spooner, Joe Tringali
COMMITTEE MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE TELEPHONICALLY	
COMMITTEE CHAIR	Assistant Secretary Jean McGuire
NOTE TAKER	Rachel Richards
AGENDA SETTING	No issues were added to previously issued agenda

Agenda Topics

Introductions:

The members of the Council introduced themselves. Mr. Spooner provided an overview of the Council and of the presentation to be made by Council members.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bellil made a motion to table the review of the August 14, 2007 minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Brewster. Without further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously.

Overview Presentation

Members of the PCA Workforce Council presented an overview of the PCA Workforce Council, including its duties, accomplishments, and planned future endeavors.

- Mr. Tringali reviewed the law that created the Council and detailed the duties of the Council.
- Mr. Bellil reviewed the accomplishments of the Council to date.
- Mr. Spooner reviewed the process and steps in preparing for the PCA union election. He explained that, if the union is elected, it will be the largest employee union in the state. Mr. Spooner noted that the duties of the Council are broader than the union election.
- Ms. Casey explained the obligation of the Council to create a PCA Referral Directory.
- Ms. Brewster spoke about other Council responsibilities and PCA Council meetings.
- Mr. Braman explained how to contact the Council through the Council website, e-mail address, and mailing address.

The Chair explained to audience members that Council members are state officials. The Chair also provided an update regarding the status of the Council budget. She explained the \$850,000 budget is in a Supplemental Budget request awaiting approval by the Legislature. Additionally, the Chair indicated that a position for Director of the PCA Quality Workforce Council had been posted on the Commonwealth Employment Web site and would also be added to the PCA Workforce Council Web site. There was discussion about moving the deadline for resume submission. Copies of the job description were available to the attendees.

Public questions and comment period

The remainder of the meeting involved members of the audience providing comments or asking questions of Council members.

Question: *Why was there no pay raise for PCAs?*

Response: Mr. Tringali stated that a PCA pay raise did not occur because it could have been considered a “union busting” technique. The Chair stated that a rate increase is currently on hold, and that there will be further discussions about the rate increase in the event that a PCA union is not formed.

The meeting recessed at 3:05 P.M. and resumed at 3:35 P.M.

From the audience, Ms. Moore thanked Council members for their hard work. She explained that she is hearing at NCIL Task Force meetings about SEIU’s presence in different states, and asked Council members to provide feedback about the Massachusetts relationship that she could bring to national meetings.

Question: *Whether there is or isn’t a union, do we need to think of broader workforce issues for PCAs?*

Response: Ms. Casey indicated that the Workforce Council will exist whether there is a union or not. She said that there needs to be further discussions about better wages and benefits for workers. Mr. Spooner added that the law that established the Workforce Council passed unanimously in the Legislature, and that PCAs deserve more than \$10.84 per hour.

Question: *The following questions were asked about the Referral Directory:*

- *Will obtaining a CORI on a potential PCA remain a consumer decision?*
- *How will the Council ensure that the privacy of Consumers is protected? (“I don’t want my address out there.”)*

Response: Ms. Casey stated these were important considerations regarding the development of the Referral Directory, and asked for continued feedback from those who would be inclined to use the Registry. Mr. Spooner said that the Council will seek input from the community through a Request for Information process. He stated his concerns re: the CORI process and system. The Chair encouraged the audience to participate in future Council meetings.

Question: *Does the Council have a plan to secure a wage increase if the union is not voted as representing PCAs?*

Response: Mr. Spooner indicated that the Council had written a letter to the Governor on the issue, and that he personally would begin advocating for increases as soon as possible after the results of the union election are known.

Question: *What has the Council done to ensure that PCAs will not strike?*

Response: Ms. Casey responded that she has seen situations handled creatively in other states so that strikes have been avoided. Mr. Spooner said he doesn’t believe there will ever be a strike, and that people with disabilities have the right to live independently which means encountering risks.

Question: *How many PCAs will be sent a ballot in October and are eligible to vote?*

Response: Every PCA that worked and received a check in April - June 2007 will be sent a ballot, resulting in approximately 10-12,000 ballots.

Comment: A consumer commented that her PCAs are compassionate and very good to her.

Question: *Will the Council hold public forums around the state?*

Response: Mr. Spooner said the Council would like to hold statewide forums but does not have a budget to organize those activities yet. Mr. Tringali reminded the audience that people can comment through the Council Web site.

Question: *Will the names of people who have been arrested appear on the Referral Directory?*

Response: Ms. Casey stated this is something to be determined.

Question: *What kind of qualifications will a person have if he/she is put on the PCA Referral Directory?*

Response: Ms. Casey responded that the question cannot be answered at this time, but that the Council is seeking input regarding these matters through the Request for Information process.

Question: *Will there be a required drug screening for people on the Referral Directory? Will the use of the Referral Directory be voluntary?*

Response: Mr. Spooner stated that the use of the Referral Directory will be voluntary, and that consumer will still control hiring, firing, and scheduling of PCAs.

Mr. Spooner closed the meeting by advising audience members that the union election is not the end of the process. He said that, even if a union is formed, and the Council negotiates with the union for a wage/benefit package, the package must then be presented to the Executive Office of Administration and Finance, and then to the state Legislature for funding. He stated that, in these tight budget times, there will be more steps to winning wage increases for PCAs.

-up and next steps

Ms. Brewster made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Tringali seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

The next Council meeting will convene on October 16, 2007 from 2:00-4:00 P.M. on the 21st Floor of One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108.