



State of Connecticut

Department of Rehabilitation Services

State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

May 10, 2017

SRC Meeting Notes

Ability Beyond

Bethel, CT

Attendance:

SRC Members: Thomas Boudreau; Marisel DeCordova Chair; Patrick Melfi via phone; Gary Prushko; Bruce Stovall via phone; Kate Travis; Joe Wendover via phone; and Kristen Winkle, Secretary

Non-Voting Members: David Doukas, BRS Director

BRS Staff: Evelyn Oliver Knight;

Excused: Kerri Fradette; Warren Stamp

Volunteers: Kim Beckett; Shannon McCann; Andrea Richardson; all via phone.

Absent: David Morgana, Jr.

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

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Brief Introductions – Everyone

Minutes (March 15, 2017) – Kristen Winkle: reviewed, Approved

Budget – Gary Prushko: No activity since the past meeting. There was a donation of \$5,000.: Youth Leadership Project.

SRC Leadership – Marisel DeCordova, Chairperson: This will be her last SRC meeting. June 8, 2017 is her last day at Protection and Advocacy. It is now DRCT (Disability Rights Connecticut, INC.). She handed out flyers for the new agency. Marisel is still working on her cases at this time. She wants to take part in the SRC in the future. She was presented with a certificate for being on the SRC.

BRS Update – David Doukas, BRS Director

- **Level Up Update:** Continuing towards full implementation of Pre-Employment Transition Services Pre-ETS. Process has been completed for the balanced services to implement, job training, work readiness skills. They are in the process of finalizing contracts for the vendors providing those services. This morning, changes were announced at the Attorney General's Office that will require amendments to some of the contracts. They are working with the Attorney General's Office to expedite this. The contracts were for July 15, 2017 services, to be available for the kids in the summer and it would complement the Summer Youth Experience. If contracts aren't available then they will be available during the school year. Summer Youth Experience will be for over 600 kids, for 30 hours each. Last year, there was more money available for the Summer Youth Experience. There is about a million dollars in funding towards this summer for the program. BRS lost a Level Up Counselor recently and now there is a hiring freeze. Bruce asked about Oak Hill for a summer camp for Level Up, Dave said that it may be something separate, Bruce will check with his BRS Liaison.
- **Agency Update (Staffing, Offices, Other):** BRS has a hiring freeze currently. In regards to federal funding, Dave and a TANF Counselor are employed by the state and the counselors are paid with federal funds. They are following up about the freeze and noted that some positions will be absorbed. He announced that CT is in the top three states in the country to determine eligibility in a timely manner for Social Security Disability Determination. Dave noted that

Patti Clay from BRS will be retiring in the fall: she oversees the Community Living Programs.

BRS Ansonia office is closed.

They are working with partners for WIOA implementation. Dave toured American Job Centers across the state to find out what are the needs for service design and delivery and will this work for the needs. The Business Service Committee reviews how to serve the businesses, make it available, share contacts, consumers. An event will be in June 2017 for what this program has to offer. Performance Planning and Accountability Committee reviews case management systems and agreements that have to be in place. There are issues with DOL, also noted, Adult Education doesn't track with Social Security number and there is an inability to have or create files. BRS is re-writing its policy manual to match WIOA requirements. Kathy Marchione, BRS Bureau Chief, is working on this revision with a committee.

Dave reviewed the Monthly VR Report for March 2017. Federal RAC (Referrals, Acceptances, Closures) Report compares these statistics from last Fiscal year to the current activity. Dave also explained how cases are tracked using the BRS Status Flow Chart information sheet that was provided to members.

SRC Update – Evelyn Oliver Knight, Liaison

- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA): Reviewed it, information in the summary was repeated in the body of the report. Reviewed the recommendations that were distributed to members. Dave said due to WIOA changes, BRS is waiting for clarification about what equals success and what factors will count toward successful outcomes. In regards to resources for services spent on job readiness, providers need to stay current and providers need to be aware that consumers may present differently to employers without supports. Dave said that they are looking at the process of shifting their models. There are training modules to see if consumers are work-ready before they are on-the-job. Evelyn will see if the SRC is able to review these modules. He said that BRS needs to be able to access labor market information and it is critical for career counseling, BRS Education

Consultant will implement this tool. A career index will be a helpful tool. They have bought licenses to use online testing for pre-vocational readiness. Evelyn will follow up to see if BRS may insert responses to CSNA recommendations in the document. Shannon asked if task forces can be formed to utilize other resources and work together; Kate agreed with this. Dave acknowledged that there may be opportunities to implement some of the recommendations from the CSNA.

- Evelyn shared the West Virginia Annual Report for members to review.
- A copy of the CT SRC 2016 Annual Report was provided to members.
- Shannon asked about an employer from the Workforce Investment Board (WIB) for the SRC. Evelyn explained that there was one recently but, he resigned from the WIB, so he is no longer eligible for the SRC. Shannon may have an employer to recommend for the SRC.
- Level UP Camp 2017 flyer provided to members, it will take place at Harkness.
- EOK Retirement/New SRC Liaison: Evelyn is retiring; last day in the office is June 22, 2017. She talked about how she has enjoyed working with the SRC and she appreciates all the work done and thanked the SRC. Also, how the SRC is more visible. She said that the SRC is the voice of the consumer. Evelyn talked about how SRC will be learning the new way in regards to BRS/WIOA. Kerri Fredette will take over as the Liaison for SRC. Luncheon to celebrate SRC members. Former members are invited to attend.

Committee Reports

- **Business Partnership** – Kate Travis
Kate reviewed the draft of the post card that the committee has been working on and Kerri Fredette assisted with it. “Live, Learn, Work” (tag line for BRS) is in the center of the post card and after reviewing today there will be four images on the post card, instead of one. There is a QR code for employers to use for a quick link to the BRS Website to see what services are available to employers.

Committee will work on pricing and review funding. They have estimates that 200 will be needed. Committee would like them for October 2017 – Disability Employment Awareness Month. Joe Wendover talked about having the post cards at Walgreens for visiting employers would be beneficial. Joe has facilitated an employer development activity.

- **Consumer Satisfaction** – Vacant, Chair, CSNA reported by Evelyn, previously during meeting. A Chair is needed.
- **Intercouncil/Nominations** – Vacant, Chair: A Chair is still needed. Evelyn has reached out to the Governor’s office about pending appointments. More individuals for this committee.
- **Legislation, Policy & Planning** – Tom Boudreau, Chair: Reviewed CSNA report.

Questions/Comments: Kristen inquired about small business funding recommendations for a consumer: Dave gave Department of Economic Community Development and Mark Henry as resources. Also, he said that BRS will possibly work with individuals for Small Business funding/education.

3:15 P – Adjourn

**Next Meeting - June 21, 2017 – ACES,
205 Skiff Street, Staff Development Building, Hamden**

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristen L. Winkle, SRC Secretary