



State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

May 11, 2016

1:00 PM - 3:15PM

CHR-Enfield

Meeting Minutes

Attendance:

SRC Members: Tom Boudreau, Vice Chair; Marisel DeCordova, Chair; Jan Hasenjager; Patrick Melfi; David Morgana, Jr.; Gary Prushko, Treasurer; Kate Travis, Business Committee Chair; Joe Wendover; Kristen Winkle, Secretary

Non-Voting Members: David Doukas, BRS Director & Warren Stamp, VR Counselor

BRS Staff: Evelyn Oliver Knight, Liaison

Excused: Bruce Stovall

Guests/ Volunteers: Katie Guilmette, CAP Intern; Lisa Abbey James, SILC; Shannon McCann, Southeastern Employment Services; Andrea Richardson, PATH

Absent: N/A

Introductions: Marisel DeCardova welcomed everyone, each attendee introduced themselves.

Minutes: March 9, 2016 - Kristen Winkle, Approved

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

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Budget: Gary Prushko: Budget Sheet information in meeting folder: reviewed, noted recent travel expenses for the Chair have yet to be submitted. Gary said that there is plenty of money, enough money to cover projects. The budget was approved.

SRC Chairperson: Marisel DeCordova

- Marisel attended the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) with Evelyn Oliver Knight, and the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Conference with David Doukas, BRS Director and Kathleen Marchione, BRS Bureau Chief. The Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) SRC also attended the CSAVR conference. Marisel reviewed the notes from the training that were provided to meeting attendees today. Explained acronyms per attendee request.
- Customized Employment: CAP Program sees that challenging BRS job seekers have difficulty being placed. Customized employment enables negotiations with BRS to find out what they can do to assist individuals with getting employed. Customized employment is important at this time to get into our state. Mark Golden Associates are doing Customized Employment and putting on a training/conference for it. It is a discovery process with the individual. They work in-home with individuals and with their supports. DD Council has some funding to do these things; there are representatives from DDS on the council. We will continue to talk to about this. Jan Hasenjager mentioned that employers have moved over seas and that has made it harder for people to obtain employment. Andrea Richardson questioned if hospitals would hire individuals that need assistance, reviewed that this has been tried before. Kate Travis commented about the importance of customized employment and asked if anything can be done from the provider side.

SRC Update: Evelyn Oliver Knight:

- SRC Annual Report: She has a finished copy, it went to the printers, and a few will be printed. It will be at the State library and it will be on the web page. Thomas Boudreau asked for one to be sent to the SERC Library.
- State Plan: It has gone through the local level of the Department of Labor; they are waiting on feedback from on the national level. Also, the state Office of Policy and Management OPM is reviewing the state plan and should sign off on it shortly.
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA): We are required by the Rehabilitation Services (RSA) to do a CSNA every three years.

The last one was done in 2013. The SRC will look at programs and services, the results of consumer feedback, counselor feedback and specific people who know about BRS. The SRC is scheduled to take the lead for planning the CSNA. The new State Plan is on a four year cycle with an option of two-year updates. The summary of the CSNA will be a chapter in the next corresponding State Plan. RSA required that the previous CSNA include the following: what are the rehabilitation needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including the need for supported employment, unserved/underserved, minorities and the needs those served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system. It also assessed the need to improve the community rehabilitation programs. They have directed Evelyn to a technical assistance center which specializes in conducting needs assessment. SRC/BRS may want to investigate questions other than the ones required from RSA. We may want to think about groups we want to include. The CSNA will dig deep into BRS and what is going on. We have to set a schedule for when we want to have this done. Evelyn anticipates the CSNA being completed in the next six to nine months. Tom brought up how a specific CSNA group worked well together to determine the survey subjects and target questions. Our job is to review the information and make recommendations.

- SRC Requirements: RSA-TAC-12-01: in section 5 of the 105 ACT. Any agency doing voc rehab has to have a SRC established. SRC is the voice of the community, job seekers who are not at the table. Federal Requirements require certain members of the SRC, the Governor appoints members, we can recommend individuals for the Governor to appoint to the SRC. The governor can also refer individuals independently of the SRC. David Morgana & Katie Guilmette said that individuals connected with the Office of Protection & Advocacy and at SILC would be good candidates. SRC Director is also required to be appointed by the governor. We are a few shy of the required minimum number of 15 members. We are looking for different advocacy groups. We are open to other disability organizations. Katie Guilmette mentioned Parents Leadership Institute (PLTI). Andrea Richardson noted that she is graduating from PLTI this year. The person picked by organization doesn't have to be a member or an employee. Members can vote on motions proposed during SRC meetings, except for people employed by the VR agency. If there is a conflict of interest on specific topics then people shouldn't vote. Members can only represent one organization on the SRC even if they are a member of another required group. SRC members select the Chair Person, someone with a disability

and/or leadership skills is preferred. SRC Members are able to serve for three years and if they are actively participating they are able to serve for three more years, for a total of six years (maximum of two three-year terms). At the end of the second term, they should look for someone else to fill their seat. Then after a reasonable time away (1 year), former members could apply to be appointed again. Members aren't compensated for their service but, mileage is reimbursed as well as child care expenses (see SRC bylaws for details).

BRS Update- David Doukas, Director:

BRS just opened an office in New Haven at 370 James Street. DSS and other social service offices are located there. There is a large conference room. DSS may close some of their offices where BRS is co-located. BRS is working with them to make sure their locations are statewide. They are improving signage in places where they are going to stay.

- March VR Report (from D. Johnson): Report included in folders for SRC members to review.
- Level Up changes the landscape of Vocational Rehabilitation by Pre-Employment Transition Services of WIOA. With school coming to a close, BRS is trying to engage with consumers. There wasn't a set goal for BRS to reach a specific number of students. They are processing cases quickly, working hard to engage with students. It hasn't been enough to reach the monetary targets for the Fiscal Year. Dave talked to staff about going in with all the resources they have at this time to get individuals in programs for the summer to meet WIOA. BRS is fulfilling obligations for WIOA. BRS has had to spend some federal funding, by allocating staff, for Level Up activities. Another side of it is career assessment, ie. work shadowing, aptitude testing, and career prep work have been used so far. They received 10 proposals and plan to review them and see if they can move forward with the projects. Focus Groups were held previously, they built strategic plans; kids participated in the Focus Groups. Reviewed ways to engage the students, job clubs, summer programs, Prep Rally, and working with the schools. Also, reviewed agencies/groups that can assist with promoting Level Up to students. Reaching the expenditure is important; otherwise BRS will be penalized in the program budget next year. BRS has a brochure about Level Up and a 1-800 number that provides information about the program. **[Level Up/Connect Ability Toll-Free Number: 866-844-1903]**
- As of May 2016 the VR program continues to expend carried forward FFY 2015 funding. After examining the impact of WIAO and Pre-

Employment Transition Services on the fiscal climate within the VR program, a discussion took place related to the longer range budget forecast. Over the past five years several million dollars have been infused into the program via the federal reallocation process. This has allowed the program to move out from an Order of Selection and maintain service levels and approached despite escalation of costs. The escalations have resulted in an expenditure pattern of approximately \$34M per year. When compared with annual revenue expectations of \$27 to \$28M per year this results in an untenable financial situation that demands cost containment measures be developed and implemented. The problem is expected to be further exacerbated by anticipated cuts to the State VR appropriation in light of the state budget deficit. Cuts to state funding will not only impact the available dollars for client services, but could also result in a Maintenance of Effort penalty which would be assessed by the RSA in the year following the program not reaching its non-federal contribution expenditure target.

Committee Reports

- Business Partnership – Kate Travis, Chair: CTBLN job fair is 5/17/16, this goal has been met. They will be reaching out to Chambers to promote SRC. Also, they will be following up with Mark Henry to develop a post card.
- Consumer Satisfaction – Next meeting, 7/13/16 at 1:00 PM, Southeastern Employment Services, 7 Halls Road, Old Lyme, CT. Anyone interested in working on the CSNA should attend this meeting.
- Inter Council Nominations- Vacant, Chair: We need a new Chair Person. Anyone interested in joining the committee is welcome to join. The responsibility to interview new members and recommend people for appointment. The following names will be submitted to the Governor for appointment to the SRC: **Tom Boudreau** needs to be reappointed for a second term; **Dave Morgana** is no longer a SILC participant and then will be recommended to be on the SRC as a Consumer; **Lisa Abbey James**, the new SILC representative was interviewed today; **Andrea Richardson** (interviewed last fall) and **Shannon McCann** (to be interviewed tomorrow). Evelyn will follow up with Melita Arms, to see if she's still interested. If members know of anyone to recommend, individuals recommended/interested can attend an SRC meeting.

- Legislation Policy & Planning- Tom Boudreau, Chair: Tom gave an update on the State Bill 274, this brought Gary Prushko up to speed, and the website didn't show any movement. There is a study of streamlining wheelchair repairs. Talked about challenges to the relationship with the budget.

Viewed a Connect Ability Video: Employers were showed successfully using On-the-Job Training (OJT) to hire a consumer. The video can be used for other businesses or Chambers of Commerce to encourage employers to participate in hiring an OJT worker. Evelyn will email the other video to SRC Members that Joe Wendover is in. [<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYM-ILhSkfk>]

Comments/Questions: Kristen Winkle gave a brief report about the Achievement Through Technology Conference. The conference had great speakers and resources available. From the conference it is apparent that technology makes the world more universal and accessible for everyone. The information provided at the conference was relevant to consumers' needs. Thomas Boudreau and Patrick Melfi also attended the conference.

Consumer Issues: Kristen Winkle requested a phone number for BRS clients who had concerns about service. Marisel DeCordova is the Client Assistance Program (CAP) contact person. She gave her direct contact number/business card.

Next Meeting Wednesday, 6/29/16, 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM at ACES, Staff Development Building (in the back of the complex), 205 Skiff Street, Hamden

Meeting was closed at 3:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen L. Winkle – SRC Secretary