



# State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education  
301 Centennial Mall South • PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, NE 68509

## State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Nebraska State Office Building February 14, 2012

### Meeting Minutes

*Public notice of upcoming meetings will be available on the Department of Education website under "Master Calendar" at least 5 days prior to each meeting.*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Barb Benes, Sue Gieschen, Gayle Hahn, April Isaacs, Sherri Kelley, Jason Kerkman, Leslie Novacek, Vicki Obrecht, Vicki Rasmussen, Mark Schultz, Joni Thomas

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mitch Arnold, Sharon Bloechle, Seamus Kelly, Tim Kolb, Larry Niemeyer, Terry Wilson

**VR STAFF PRESENT:** Don Crouch,

**VISITORS PRESENT:**

*The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:00 a.m. Public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.*

### **PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The meeting was an Open Meeting and the Open Meetings Law was posted on the back table.

Larry Niemeyer will be resigning from the Council. The SRC will need to fill the Counselor position as it is a required position. Members felt it would be helpful to continue to have the Counselor from within the agency.

A motion was made by April Isaacs that the Counselor position be filled by another internal VR Counselor. The motion was seconded by Gayle Hahn. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.** The Executive Committee will proceed with a membership search.

Joni Thomas, new member, introduced herself. She is the Director of Independent Living in Grand Island.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Jason Kerkman moved and Vicki Obrecht seconded a motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

## **APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 11, 2011 MINUTES**

Barb Benes moved and Vicki Obrecht seconded a motion to approve the October 11, 2011 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

## **RSA CONFERENCE CALL**

A phone conference was held with RSA staff and SRC members. VR staff left the room for the call. RSA staffs on the call were: David Jones, Kristi, Craig McManness, Julia Doyle, and Charles Adler. At the end of the call David Jones asked SRC members to submit challenges faced by VR, the SRC roster and the Council composition. His contact information is: [david.jones@ed.gov](mailto:david.jones@ed.gov), 202-245-7356. He is open to any feedback or information.

SRC discussed challenges to submit to RSA. One of the biggest challenges is the image of VR. This is being addressed by the new logo and the marketing plan. Many staffs are nearing retirement and will present a challenge to the Department in the future. A change in the Director position two years ago could have been a challenge but the transition has been very smooth and VR has been thriving.

## **SENATOR LUNCHEON**

Council members discussed the agenda for the Senator Luncheon. Points to share with Senators include: funding has been level to a slight decrease but VR continues to serve more people; the role of the Council; for every dollar that the state contributes, it gains \$4 in federal funds; if a citizen of Nebraska gains employment they contribute with income taxes; thank you for continued support; one-third of people served are transition aged students.

## **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR**

No feedback was given.

## **CAP REPORT**

Vicki Rasmussen shared a written CAP report in the packet. The Placement Committee discussed how the process should work if a position is vacated. It needs to be insured that services do not stop. The request form to fill a position that is submitted to Mark will also need to include a description of how the services will continue while the position is vacant.

## **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS**

Don Crouch provided the report on federal standards and Nebraska is performing above all the standards.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mark Schultz shared the Director's report.

- Still trying to move four offices. There have been many challenges however; staffs have been excellent and continuing to provide services throughout.
- A new logo is in place and being used. Kelli Funk from the marketing team has resigned. The position will be filled with a marketing coordinator who has experience in this area.

- The federal standards were met last year and are on target during the first quarter this year. Based on all the staff and office changes as well as the economy it speaks highly of the staff who were still able to grow the program by 7%.
- RSA started collecting information in January and hold a conference call each week with Nebraska staff. It takes a lot of time and effort on the part of staff to fulfill all their requests. RSA will visit the week of March 19. Some changes have already been made based on findings in other states around the area of finance and the area of employee time certification.
- The Case Management system is still being developed online. VR hopes to have it running in about two months. The system will be accessible from anywhere and by use with an iPad. A demonstration will be done at the next Council meeting.
- A three year IT plan is being done with consideration of the new system and iPads.
- Motivational Interviewing will begin in April.
- A statewide staff conference has been held in the past. Mark intends to hold the conference again this year on October 23 & 24 in Kearney. Council staff is welcome to attend.
- The President's budget has been published. There is a slight increase for VR from 2012 to 2013.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Client Services Committee

Vicki Rasmussen reported.

- The Committee discussed consumer forums. The original person they thought might assist is not able to. More discussion is needed about how to establish the forum, who may be able to manage the process, how many to invite, etc. They asked Mark what types of information would be most valuable to collect.

### Employer Services Committee

Jason Kerkman reported.

- VR is looking at hiring a full-time outreach coordinator.
- 503-Compliance was discussed with employers at a regional meeting. There were many questions and good discussion. More meetings are upcoming.
- The Committee would like to survey businesses that don't work with VR right now.

### Transition Services Committee

Vicki Obrecht reported.

- The Internal Transition Committee will meet this spring to discuss how the refocus on work has been going.
- The federal visit will focus partially on transition. Having the transition program as a separate service has been beneficial to the state.

- HHS is signing a contract to contribute part of the salary for Mark to continue his position working with youth at YRTC.
- Project SEARCH is expanding with Embassy Suites in Papillion. First National Bank in Omaha is engaging in discussion. The DD Council provided a grant to bring all SEARCH projects together for a joint meeting.
- Certification courses are available at several community colleges. Businesses in these communities have agreed to hire people out of these certification programs.

## **ADJOURN**

The next meeting will be held on May 8, 2012.