



# State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education

301 Centennial Mall South • PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, NE 68509

## State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Center For People In Need May 8, 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:** Mitch Arnold, Barb Benes, Sharon Bloechle, Sue Gieschen, Gayle Hahn, Sherri Kelly, Seamus Kelly, Jason Kerkman, Tim Kolb, Leslie Novacek, Vicki Obrecht, Vicki Rasmussen, Mark Schultz, Joni Thomas

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** April Isaacs, Terry Wilson

**VR STAFF PRESENT:** Don Crouch, Pat Bracken, Jack Shepard, Mark Mason

**VISITORS PRESENT:** Lisa Alexa, VR Counselor from South Sioux City;

*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.

Vicki Rasmussen and Gayle Hahn did interviews for the open VR Counselor position. Lisa Alexa will be appointed as a new member and was introduced to the Council.

Don Crouch shared that the National Coalition of State Rehab Council's provide information to state rehab councils and share information between councils. A yearly conference is also held. There is a website for more information and Don shared the contact information.

Sue Gieschen announced that she attended a joint agency round table in western Nebraska. She reported that the VR staffs were very knowledgeable and that the agencies are very good at working together.

Mark Mason has been hired to fill Jack Shepard's position as he retires and was introduced to the Council.

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mitch Arnold moved and Vicki Obrecht seconded a motion to approve the agenda as corrected with appropriate presenter names. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

## **APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 14, 2012 MINUTES**

Mitch Arnold moved and Joni Thomas seconded a motion to approve the February 14, 2012 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

## **IPAD DEMONSTRATION**

Tibor Moldovan from the state VR office presented on the use of iPads by VR employees. 130 iPads were purchased and distributed to staff across the state. Staff are able to do their daily office functions such as time sheets, e-mail, instant messaging and video conference. When working with clients they can look up job openings, use the Internet and complete forms. They use wireless connections and are able to print in the local offices. In testing this technology it is being determined what types of equipment staff will need in the future to effectively do their jobs.

## **STATE PLAN GOALS**

Pat Bracken and Mark Schultz presented on the State Plan. The State Plan can now be created online and is due on July 1. In February, RSA sends out the information about what needs to be in the plan and any changes from the previous year. The components of the plan include pre-print, which are statements indicating intent to comply with the federal regulations. Attachments are narratives that describe the operational considerations that coordinate with the pre-print statements. Included in the attachments are, The Comprehensive System of Personnel Development section which lists staff, succession planning, personnel standards, staff to consumer ratio, etc. An estimate of individuals who will be served in the coming year is required. State Goals and priorities are also one of the attachments. In the State Plan they will report that Nebraska is not in Order of Selection and will be serving everyone who will come to the system.

State Goals and Priorities were covered by Mark. The same goals were kept from previous years with activities under each goal changing from year to year. Some of the activities include:

- Motivational interviewing will be a resource to help individuals make a decision about whether they are really ready to go to work. It is hoped that this system will help to increase the rehab rate.
- Team case reviews, continuing workgroups and committees, and video conferencing has allowed all staff to have access to training. A strategic training plan is being developed to enhance employee skills. These activities will help to improve the quality of services.
- The timeliness of services will be aided by the iPad usage, and the web-based case management system. The decision point checklist will help staff to move through the process effectively.
- Improving consumer satisfaction is aided by the SRC Consumer Input Committee and a new marketing employee with background in branding who will develop new materials.
- The development of effective community partnerships is being done with Project Search, the community college certificate program, and others.

## **FEDERAL PROGRAM REVIEW**

Mark Schultz and Jack Shepard reported on the federal monitoring onsite review that was done in March. The report to follow-up from the visit was received. A copy will be sent via e-mail to the Council members. RSA reviewed the areas of organizational structure, transition and fiscal integrity. In the area of transition there were three findings, and in fiscal integrity there were four findings.

In Transition the federal staff noted that Nebraska has a good foundation, great staff, and a good model to build on. They observed that the IPE workbooks are overwhelming. Immerging practices that were identified are the certificate program with community colleges and the Youth Rehabilitation Treatment Center liaison position. The findings that were recorded and will require a Corrective Action Plan (CAP) include:

- Regulations require that VR only provide services to people who apply for and are found eligible – Nebraska has been using a consent form but not an official application for services. This will require some major changes to reach compliance.
- Regulations state that a plan for employment must be complete before the student leaves high school – Nebraska currently has allowed until December of the year they leave high school to complete the plan.
- The State Education Agency Agreement is missing one component – correction is being made.

In Fiscal Integrity federal staff noted a need to operationalize monitoring of grants, and that the ATP program agreement has not been updated since 1997. The findings that were recorded include:

- Time certification for personnel is needed.
- Title I dollars need to be traced to the actual expenditure – the payment structure with providers needs to be changed.
- Training allowances that are given for schooling – must document exactly how it is spent.

#### **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR**

Vicki Obrecht shared that a mother called her and was thrilled with the certificate program for her child. It is a great option for some students.

#### **CAP REPORT**

Vicki Rasmussen shared a written CAP report in the packet. The Placement Committee discussed that some clients are losing positions after the background screening is conducted. They are working on doing this sooner so it can be handled up front.

#### **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS**

Don Crouch provided the report on federal standards and Nebraska is performing above the standards in all areas except in successful closures. It's typical that this area increases in the fourth quarter.

Tim Kolb provided an update on NESILC. RSA has been talking with them about how they account for funds that are received. They are writing the current State Plan with emphasis around addressing the needs of individuals with an acquired brain injury or with a mental illness. Without much information on a needs assessment statewide they are looking at a more focused area.

#### **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mark Schultz shared the Director's report.

- Many retirements are taking place and new staff is being hired.
- Grand Island and Columbus have moved to their new offices. Fremont is in process. Scottsbluff is still looking for space.

- Federal legislation is stuck in the works. Benefits Planning has the potential to be cut until legislation can be passed. Requiring a specified funding percentage for transition is being considered.
- Mark presented at a conference about the ATP program. It's being held up as a model program.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Client Services Committee

Joni Thomas reported.

- An Outreach Focus Group will be piloted in Lincoln and one other location. One will be around the Latino population and the other around the deaf and hard of hearing population.
- They would like to invite the new marketing person to meet with the group to share ideas.
- A Facebook forum was discussed.
- The Consumer Input Committee could be used for information gathering for the consumer satisfaction section of the State Plan.

### Employer Services Committee

Jason Kerkman reported.

- Project Search has expanded to ten businesses. WalMart received an award from a national business association.
- Certification Program now has seven employers involved.
- Jason Kerkman made a motion to present three Entrepreneur of Distinction Awards and one Entrepreneur of Distinction Alumni Award this year. Gayle Hahn seconded the motion. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

Three Entrepreneur of Distinction awards will go to Bryan Bell - Bell Photography from Omaha, Vicky Newman – Lincoln Family Funeral Care in Lincoln, and Jessica Goeden - Healthy Paws in Norfolk. The Alumni award will go to Open Door Computers in Lincoln. July 18, 2012 is the award ceremony date.

### Transition Services Committee

Vicki Obrecht reported.

- Project SEACH has three new sites. Omaha is looking into a bank site.
- The Certification Training program has been successful. Schools are doing a good job of focusing the curriculum. Seven sites are running. One big issue is identifying kids in time. Getting the word out is also a challenge. PTI will include information on their website.
- The YRTC transition position is being posted soon. Mark Mason is working on becoming familiar with his new position.
- Youth Leadership Council is trying to get a western regional council started. PTI will advertise on their site to try to gain interest.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m. The next meeting will be held on August 14, 2012.