



STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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State Rehabilitation Council Meeting
Nebraska VR Office
3901 N 27th St. Lincoln, NE
May 10, 2016

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: Brenda Chappell, Rita Hammitt, John Hogue, April Isaacs, Jonathan Moeller, Vicki Newman, Tobias Orr, Kipp Ransom, Vicki Rasmussen, Mark Schultz, JD Simmons

MEMBERS ABSENT: Gina Geiger, Gayle Hahn, John McNally, Sandy Peterson, David Scott, and Joni Thomas

VR STAFF PRESENT: Lindy Foley, Angela Fujan, Brigid Griffin, Ashley Hernandez, Sarah Chapin, and Paige Rose

VISITORS: Kelly Brakenhoff, Lorelei Waldron, Shari Bahensky, Toya McIntosh

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:03 a.m. public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Brenda Chappell brought copies of the newsletter for the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for council members. No other public comment or announcements were given.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

JD Simmons moved and Jon Moeller seconded the motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 9, 2016 MINUTES

John Hogue moved and Rita Hammitt seconded a motion to approve the February 9, 2016 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS

Paige Rose introduced herself as a new technical advisor for the council, and explained her role as VR Program Director of Vocational Evaluation. Vicki Rasmussen announced she will be taking a new position with Nebraska VR and leaving her current CAP position. Vicki introduced Shari Bahensky who will be serving as the interim CAP representative. Vicki Newman introduced herself to the council as a previous council member and stated she was excited to return. Toya McIntosh introduced herself to the council as replacing Brad Meurrens as the SILC representative. Council members introduced themselves to the new members.

MARKETING UPDATE

Sarah Chapin shared with council members they are currently developing videos to highlight Nebraska VR. Sarah stated the purpose of the videos is to shed light on what VR services are and to show the diverse population of those served. Sarah showed members a draft version of two videos. Sarah shared that the video vendor really enjoyed making the videos and getting to know the clients featured. Sarah also shared those involved in this video project have been very impressed with the technology clients are utilizing. Sarah stated that both employers featured in the videos are great partners. Sarah shared at this point she is not sure if the footage they have emphasizes the customized employment services but she is hoping they will be able to find some footage to showcase it more. Sarah asked council members for any feedback regarding the videos for improvement. Council members did not have any feedback but shared they enjoyed the videos and their high quality.

Jon Moeller motioned to show council support of the videos, John Hogue seconded the motion. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

Sarah reported she is also working to redesign the VR website to better accommodate mobile devices as well as working on the internal website to improve mobile device usage.

CUSTOMIZED EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE & VR FOCUS

Paige Rose reported she is the team lead for the technical assistance grant for customized employment. Paige shared their goal is to train staff to better serve clients with customized employment. Paige stated there were 95 attendees to the training in Lincoln and then 66 attendees at the training in Kearney. Paige reported herself and Pat Bracken delivered a pre and post survey for those attending the training. Paige stated highlights from the training were: discussing discovery, strategies & examples, and employment proposals. Paige shared customized employment is going to take time and require practice. Paige discussed with the council, "Where do they go from here?" Paige noted moving forward they will be focusing on: task analysis training, business account managers' role, funding discovery, and joining a learning collaborative with other states. Paige stated there is a lot to learn and a lot of unknown. Angela added customized employment involves visiting with employers, learning what their business needs involve and partnering to problem solve possible solutions and job opportunities. Lindy Foley added that building relationships with employers is being actively pursued by the new Business Account Managers. Vicki Newman shared in her past experiences job shadowing was very beneficial for clients to see and understand what jobs entail.

CAP REPORT

A written CAP report was provided to members. Vicki Rasmussen summarized some of the key topics of the report. Vicki shared that it is very rare that police are involved with any cases, but wanted to include for members a copy of the VR policy. Vicki summarized number 3 from the written report explaining the client's aunt was concerned about her nephew and shared it can be a very fine line when clients are 18 or 19 when working with parental advocating, but concluded if the client wants someone with them VR is to work with that.

FOLLOW UP OF LAST MEETINGS ACTION ITEMS

New Members Needed

Angela Fujan shared she has reached out to the tribal representative and is waiting to hear back. Angela stated she also is awaiting an application from a potential business representative. Angela shared she attended the customized training with DD service providers where she distributed SRC applications, and an application was received from a DD representative following that meeting. Angela stated the executive committee will be scheduling an interview. Angela noted two members will be terming out in October so additional members will still be needed to fill those positions. Angela shared Brad Meurrens position with SILC will be ending and he has found a replacement from SILC. Angela reported additional employers representing different industries are always needed. Any potential new members can be referred to Angela and she will follow up with contacting the applicant. SRC does need to maintain the majority of members have a disability.

Disability Awareness Month Breakfast

Angela Fujan discussed previous SRC outreach to senators and explained information that is shared with senators. Angela shared that this year, on March 8th David Scott spoke at the Disability Awareness Month Breakfast and shared his Embassy Suite Project Search video. Angela shared the breakfast had very good attendance, but was short on time. Members discussed the possibility of having our own similar event in the future, but discussed the difficulty of not being able to provide food. Tobias Orr suggested partnering with HyVee in the future. Member discussed having an individual event by the SRC for VR or to try to piggy back with another group in the future. Members shared it would be more beneficial to have our own event for clarity and time constraints in order to share a clearer message with senators. Brad Muerrens and David Scott were very instrumental in organizing the SRC being included in this event, but were unable to attend this meeting, so we will discuss this further at our next SRC meeting. Another SRC sponsored event, the Entrepreneurs of Distinction Awards was moved to the Capitol last fall and the Governor was able to attend.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Kipp Ransom asked council members if any feedback was brought to council members. Members shared no new feedback.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

Members were provided with written reports from VR Statistics, ATP, NYLC and NSILC. Tobias Orr shared he was impressed with the VR statistics showing substantial growth. Members did not share any additional feedback.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mark Schultz shared that he was attending a meeting earlier today discussing how to improve VR's employment competitiveness. Mark shared that Senator Mello is a member of the self-employment national work group and Senator McCoy is the co-chair of the group. Mark reported that Senator Mello is working for Nebraska to become an employment first state. Mark explained being an employment first state means employment would be a priority and looked at initially for people to gain independence. Mark reported that other states that have implemented this policy have had a lot of success. Mark shared he is scheduled to meet with Senator McCoy next week to share how Nebraska VR could be involved. Mark reported the consumer satisfaction surveys have shown some very positive confirming results. Mark stated the last two quarters satisfaction on working with VR has been at 96% satisfied. Also, the number one service reported has been VR providing encouragement and support, which has been a wonderful change. Mark shared these results are affirming the changes and improvements VR has been making. Mark reported RSA has stated the

rules and regulations for WIOA will come out in June. RSA has stated they will be scheduling three trainings following the regulations release. Mark shared after rules and regulations are released he believes work with transition, customized employment and business account managers will all be refined. Mark shared it is likely that some state rules may need to be revised following the rules and regulations. Mark reported that Bobby Silverstein, a national expert at the Disability Policy Center, was present at a session he attended in Washington DC and was asked how VR can improve their agency over the next few years. Bobby's answer was marketing. Sharing that lawmakers and community members do not know what VR is doing today and how different VR is than thirty years ago.

COMBINED STATE PLAN

Mark Schultz discussed the combined state plan with council members. Mark shared they included some HHS programs like TANF, Unemployment Insurance and Veteran Assistance in the Combined State Plan. Mark shared feedback that came from the public comment session of the Combined State Plan. Mark reported many people stated there needs to be better alignment of services and stronger communication and coordination is needed between HHS and service providers. Several people emphasized career pathways are needed so individuals can not only get a job, but keep that job and advance. Additional feedback from the sessions included; the need for more focus on competitive integrative employment, increased marketing to students in school, more transparency, and increased engagement with businesses. Mark reported one individual stated that Nebraska should take an employment first position. Mark shared the core partners have been getting together to create a vision and guiding principles, which is currently in draft form. Mark shared the vision's key points are to be coordinated, proactive and responsive. Vicki Rasmussen shared she feels this plan sounds wonderful. JD Simmons asked how the agencies plan to bring their staff along in the collaborative process. Mark answered with communication and collaboration along with increasing capabilities to share confidentiality agreements to improve employees' ability to do their jobs. John Hogue asked if VR has looked into an app for additional marketing. Mark shared they had not looked at an app for public advertising stating it was a good idea.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transition Services

Brigid Griffin reported the committee discussed the Nebraska Transition Guide. Council members were provided with a guide for review. Brigid explained the Transition Guide, sharing the 5 pre-employment services outlined in WIOA is what they used to develop the guide. The five base categories for the slide outs are: job exploration, work-based learning, counseling for transition & post secondary programs, workplace readiness training and self-determination training. Brigid reviewed and explained the slide out components of the guide. Rita Hammitt shared that trainings have begun for the guides across the state at Educational Service Units. Rita shared this guide is not just for students with disabilities, it is a guide that can be used for all youth. Rita shared feedback has been received on the resources tab and a few minor tweaks were made before the most recent printing. Rita shared herself and Brigid have access to guides if anyone needs some and shared various agencies that they are being distributed to. Brigid shared the committee discussed the transition services booklet that is being printed for teachers and other school staff. Brigid stated they discussed the idea of embedding VR counselors in larger schools for transition support. Brigid reported they discussed 504s and the possibility of distributing a survey to determine clients on IEPs and 504s and how students may be better served on different plans. Brigid also reported they have done a request for proposals for summer transition services and fifteen were approved across the state. Brigid reported she will visit all the programs this summer and report back to the council on their progress in August.

Client Services

Angela Fujan reported the committee reviewed the results of the client satisfaction survey. Angela shared that the survey showed individuals currently employed increased from 90% to 94% and all areas were showing improvement. Angela shared they reviewed some the comments and break down of responses. The plan is to continue to monitor these and explore the responses of leaving employment due to hours being cut. Angela stated the committee is considering adding an action item to follow up with some of these comment and gather more information at the end of the year.

Employer Services

Lindy Foley reported the committee discussed the customized employment presentation in regards to its affects with employers. Lindy shared the committee discussed information collection for the database in regards to meeting with employers related to customized employment. Lindy stated the committee also discussed how to develop a “think tank” of employers and business contacts to gain feedback, needs and ideas.

NCSRC CONFERENCE REPORT

April Isaacs attended the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils Conference in April, 2016. April shared the conference covered two very full days and she gained a lot of good information for the council. April shared a power point reviewing day one of the conference and stated she would cover day two of the conference at the next council meeting. April reported she counted 24 states represented at the conference. April shared the first session reviewed education for SRC members and discussion of membership. April stated she felt the Nebraska SRC is very well rounded and filled well. Next discussed was information regarding potential changes for some states due to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Rehabilitation Act (WIOA). April stated that as council members the SRC should be involved in creating goals and priorities as well as ensuring customers’ rights are upheld. April stated she was very proud of our SRC while there in regards to how well the council is fulfilling it duties and performing its responsibilities. April shared she learned one of the council’s responsibilities is to ensure that coordinating services and agencies are getting along. April discussed they had small group activity to determine how the councils can accomplish their responsibilities. April shared the biggest part of the day was discussion of WIOA updates. April reported key changes discussed were: alignment to meet needs of employers, performance, specific measures for adult and youth, overall emphasis on innovations & opportunities and a dual focus between employers and clients. Other key changes April discussed were STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) careers, transition services, PETs (pre-employment transition services), exploration, and self-advocacy. April shared that updated definitions were discussed as well as VR services, CSPD, supported employment services, subminimum wage changes, and program movement. April discussed RespectAbility USA, which works to raise awareness of abilities and are looking for partners who share their goals. April shared a copy of RespectAbility’s brochure for review. April shared they finished their day with a question and answer session. April thanked the council for her opportunity to attend the conference stating she made a lot of contacts while gaining a ton of information. April stated she encourages as many council members as possible to attend a conference.

INFORMATION

Jon Moeller shared that because of the council he decided to go back to work with Nebraska VR and had a much clearer understanding of the process from the council. Jon shared he was able to work with Easter Seals for benefit review and the person he worked with was wonderful and very helpful. Jon shared that with a better understanding of his benefits and completing his VR workbook he is doing well and very happy with the services. Jon stated he is happy to see how things discussed at meetings are put into action at the VR service offices.

NEXT MEETING

August 9, 2016 at 10:00am

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 2:03 pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Client Satisfaction Survey follow up with Easter Seals (Client Services Committee)