



STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
301 CENTENNIAL MALL SOUTH • PO BOX 94987 • LINCOLN, NE 68509

**State Rehabilitation Council Meeting
State Office Building - VR Conference Room
October 13, 2015**

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: Pam Baltzer, Brenda Chappell, Gina Geiger, John Hogue, John McNally, Brad Meurrens, Jonathan Moeller, Tobias Orr, Sandy Peterson, Kipp Ransom, Vicki Rasmussen, Mark Schultz, David Scott, JD Simmons, Joni Thomas

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nancy Drevo, Gayle Hahn, Rita Hammitt, April Isaacs

VR STAFF PRESENT: Lindy Foley, Angela Fujan, Brigid Griffin, Ashley Hernandez

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 11:15 a.m. public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education web site.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council members discussed the Entrepreneur of Distinction Awards that was held at the State Capitol prior to the council meeting. Members stated they were pleased that Governor Ricketts attended, and also noted that the award winners’ personal stories shared during the awards were great to hear.

No other public comment or announcements were given.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

APPROVAL OF AUGUST 11, 2015 MINUTES

John Hogue moved and David Scott seconded a motion to approve the August 11, 2015 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

New member introduction were made. Gina Geiger was introduced as a new SRC member and current representative of the NYLC. John Hogue, from Falls City shared he received VR services from the Omaha office. Brenda Chappel reported she works at the NE Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing. Tobias Orr introduced himself as the new ATP representative. Brigid Griffin introduced herself as the Program Director of Transition Services for Nebraska VR.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS & EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Nominations for chair and vice-chair for the council were collected via anonymous ballot. Kipp Ransom was re-elected as committee chair and David Scott was elected as vice-chair by unanimous consent. Kipp explained the role of the executive committee. Gina Geiger and Jon Moeller were elected to the executive committee by unanimous consent. There were no objections to the elected officers.

FOLLOW UP OF LAST MEETINGS ACTION ITEMS

National Association of State Rehab Councils

Angela Fujan reviewed the National Association of State Rehab Councils. Joni Thomas shared she felt attending a national conference for SRCs was very beneficial. Joni reported she felt the conference was very educational and a good opportunity to make new contacts. Mark Schultz stated the Association of State Rehab Councils meets twice a year and includes a review of the SRC's role and discussion of what other states are doing with their councils. Vicki Rasmussen shared that all but seven states are currently members of the association. Mark Schultz shared that discussing legislative outreach with other states could be beneficial. Marlene Malloy a representative of the National Association of State Rehab Councils joined the meeting via teleconference to discuss the National Association of State Rehab Councils. Marlene shared that 51 SRCs are members, stating that some states have two councils as there are representatives from both the general VR and Blind agencies for some individual states. Marlene reported the association was created due to the need of supports and resources for SRC councils, which are comprised of volunteers. There are currently ten members on the board of directors of the association. Training conferences occur twice a year for two days and are designed to give SRC members hands on workshop activities and provide councils resources. Marlene shared non-members can still attend conferences and participate in conference but cannot participate in the coalition member listserv or monthly teleconference meetings. Marlene stated current fees for the national conference registration is \$225 for member versus \$300 for non-members. Marlene stated if the council chooses to join the association the resolution that needs to be signed is available on their website. Sandy Peterson shared that she feels there are only positives in joining the association whether members are available to attend conferences or not. Members discussed the positive contacts and resources joining the association would bring. Mark shared the next national conference will be held in April and suggested adding to the February agenda discussion of council representation for that conference. Angela Fujan will complete the association registration.

JD Simmons moved and Sandy Peterson seconded the motion to join the National Association of Rehab Councils. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

Establishment of Nebraska VR Code of Conduct

Angela Fujan shared a copy of the updated VR Code of Conduct with council members. Angela reviewed its highlights and requested council feedback. Council members discussed the code and members stated they liked the code of conduct and that the code of conduct can be added to or amended over time if needed.

David Scott moved and Joni Thomas seconded the motion for the SRC to formally support the VR Code of Conduct. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

Senators' Outreach

Kipp Ransom summarized past Senator outreach methods used by the council for new council members. Brad Meurrens, chair of the new council advocacy group, reported the group is currently in transition and is working to determine what the best plan for outreach is going forward. Brad stated he will be calling a meeting of the group soon to set a date for Senator outreach and discuss a meeting space and details. Brad shared that bringing senators to the council is looking to the best option. Brad also stated holding the meeting in the early part of the year will be the best time to reach senators. Kipp reminded the group that the next council meeting is in February and this outreach will need to be organized as soon as possible. David Scott suggested as a backup in case senator meeting is not feasible, members of the council that are comfortable can go to meet at senators offices individually as was done last year. Kipp shared that a VR information table is currently setup in the State Capitol rotunda and some council members will be manning the table throughout the week.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Employer Services

David Scott reported the committee is providing ongoing feedback in working with businesses. David reported they met with Cabelas in regards to becoming a Project SEARCH site. who were Cabela's La Vista will be hosting an open house on November 6th from 10-1. David reported a job fair will be held on April 11th from approximately 9-11 by the BAC for all kids with IEPs ages 16-21. The job fair will have skills tests, training as well as the job fair itself. Employers are being invited to the job fair to observe how energetic and capable these students are. The next Lincoln BAC will be held on November 17th at the Embassy Suites Lincoln. New member, Tobias Orr, joined the committee.

Client Services

Joni Thomas shared the committee reviewed and updated the client satisfaction survey. The committee provided a committee member to serve on the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Committee which will provide feedback to the council. Vicki Rasmussen is currently a representative on that committee and Brenda Chappell stated she would love to participate in the committee as well. New member, John Hogue, joined the client services committee.

Transition Services

Pam Baltzer shared the committee is considering broadening its focus to include disability and sheltered workshop areas to further address WIOA. The committee provides feedback and suggestions on VR transition pamphlets. Brigid Griffin was introduced as the new committee VR advisor. New members, Gina Geiger and Brenda Chappell joined the committee.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Kipp Ransom asked council members if any feedback was brought to council members. Brenda Chappell shared she has heard several complaints from Omaha VR consumers in the deaf and hard of hearing community. Brenda stated she did not hear specifics but just dissatisfaction in general. Mark Schultz shared that in several instances consumers may have complaints when an individual's wants do not meet possible outcomes or the goals of VR. Mark shared when client career goals and personal wants do not match up to the client's skills and abilities there is sometimes dissatisfaction. Mark shared they are working to improve engagement with clients. Vicki Rasmussen of the Client

Assistance Program (CAP), suggested to send any complaints to her and she would be happy to address them.

No other member feedback was shared.

CAP REPORT

A written CAP report was provided to members. Vicki Rasmussen summarized some of the more recent complaints and how they were resolved. Vicki discussed her investigation into a denial of room and board financing. Vicki shared there is a budget form provided by VR and signed by consumers to ensure that all consumers are aware and understanding of services and payment options. Vicki stated VR has a policy that a client must be contacted a minimum of every thirty days. Vicki shared that since motivational interviewing began the CAP cases have dropped.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

Members were provided with written reports from ATP, NYLC and NSILC. Members did not share any feedback.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mark Schultz shared updates on WIOA, stating rules and regulations have been published and comments have been received, which are currently being reviewed. Revised WIOA regulations will be released April 2016. Mark reported that at a recent conference his presentation centered on the need to move ahead with the information that is available instead of being in a stall mode. Mark stated he feels currently this is a tremendous opportunity to do some innovative things within rapid engagement and meeting the clients where they are. Mark explained, the approach needs to be getting the person into the work force and providing supports when they get there. Mark shared in a state like Nebraska with a low unemployment rate getting a job is not usually the problem the challenge. It is more often maintaining employment and VR needs to work to provide that employment support. Mark reported Nebraska was one of four states to receive the Career Pathways Grant, which focuses on increasing employment into more career fields. Mark shared this program will utilize clients in entry level positions in the related fields and provide training and education to increase their skill level and advance them within their career fields. VR will be hiring career pathway recruiters to work the CPAP. Mark explained they will review closed VR cases to recruit potential participants for the career pathways program. The areas of focus for the pathways program include: information & technology, manufacturing, distribution, logistics & transportation. Mark stated he feels the true spirit of WIOA is to foster these collaborations. Mark shared they are trying to build a continuum of services for staff to utilize these changes and stated it is not a new system. Mark reported he will be visiting VR offices across the state to share this information and receive their feedback.

NEXT MEETING

February 9th, 2016 at 10:00am

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 1:50pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Complete membership for National Association of State Rehab Councils (Angela Fujan)
- National Association of State Rehab Councils April Conference attendance discussion (SRC Feb. agenda)

- Senator outreach setup for February (Brad Meurrens/advocacy group)