



**Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council**

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"A consumer-controlled council committed to ensuring quality rehabilitation services."

**SRC Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

The meeting minutes of the State Rehabilitation Council commenced at 10:01 a.m. by Jana Egan.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ashley Altman, Jodi Bodnar, Michael Bursaw, Gloria Eddins, Jana Egan, Chris Gaspari, Jason Gieschen, Matthew Kaslon, Paulette Monthei, Scott Parrill, Lindy Foley, Tobias Orr, Janel Sweley

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Todd Ludwig

**NEBRASKA VR STAFF PRESENT:** Holly Enriquez, Angela Fujan, Michael Enriquez, Lupe Stevens, Alexa Krueger

**NEBRASKA VR STAFF ABSENT:** None

**VISITORS:** Jennier Jones, Mark Garcia, Jennifer Miller, Sarah Chapin, Carmen, Margie Propp

I. Pledge of Allegiance (Jason)

Jason lead the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Approval of agenda (Chair-Jana)

Jana called for a motion to approve the agenda. Ashley moved to approve the agenda. Christine seconded the motion. There were no objections, motion carried by unanimous consent.

III. Approval of prior meeting minutes (Chair)

Jana called for a motion to approve the October 7, 2025, meeting minutes. Gloria made a motion to approve. Paulette seconded the motion. There were no objections, motion carried by unanimous consent.

IV. Robert's Rules, meeting etiquette, and short break hourly (Chair)

Jana mentioned the Council follows Robert's Rules and uses meeting etiquette.

V. Introductions (Chair)

All Council members introduced themselves.

VI. Council membership

A. Potential members: Mark Garcia (Tribal VR)

B. New Members: None

C. 2026 Terms ending:

- Membership ended since last meeting: Alvin Parker (Tribal VR), Terri Ridder (NWFDB), Jordan Brummund (NDE), Lisa Kent-Sheer (former client), Sharon Elliott (PTI)
- First term ending: Jana Egan (7/26)
- Second term ending: None
- Recruitment reminder: Individuals with a disability to maintain the 51% council majority

VII. Action

A. Follow-up to action items from last meeting

- State Plan - Improve Communication. Assigning goals to SRC Committees for breakout discussions. (Lindy)

Lindy told the Council she will discuss the State Plan more in-depth later in her Director's Report. She stated she is looking forward to assigning goals to each committee at upcoming meetings. These goals will align with the State Plan, and will tie directly into the Business, Client, and Transition Committees' work.

Lindy stated she will be handing over more specific information to Council members during the next SRC meeting.

- Update on Nebraska Youth Leadership Council (NYLC) Facilitator position (Lupe)

Lupe introduced Jennifer Jones as VR's new NYLC Specialist. Jennifer introduced herself to the Council. She informed members she has a background in social work and education. She said the NYLC Council is active, and up and running. She gave a brief overview of the NYLC Council. She said it is for individuals aged 14-24. Its mission is to help students build confidence, leadership, and self-advocacy skills. It's also an important mission to give Council members confidence to promote disability awareness. She stated the Council

meets monthly. Jennifer explained the Council is broken up into 4 regions across the state of Nebraska. They are currently working on getting back to in-person meetings. She invited Council members to reach out to her if they know of any youth that would be a good member.

#### B. Senator Outreach (Sarah)

Sarah informed the Council members they will be receiving the following attachments via email:

- Senator Roster, Example Communication to State Senators, and Talking Points for SRC Members.

She also stated she will be emailing each member the SRC Annual Report, Nebraska VR Fact Sheet, and Job Seeker Brochure via Constant Contact.

She encouraged members to pick one of these VR documents to forward to their Senators. Should anyone have additional questions after emailing to their Senators, they can contact her directly or email the Marketing Team. She stated she will join at the end of the meeting to circle back with members if they have any questions after they have an opportunity to view the Constant Contact emails.

### VIII. Discussion

#### A. Rethinking the SRC Disability Employment and Inclusion Awards (Sarah & Michael)

Michael informed the Council he had two proposals regarding revamping the SRC Disability Employment and Inclusion Awards. He explained in years prior; this Award Ceremony has always been held in Lincoln. He told the Council he would like to propose a new idea of meeting businesses where they are at instead of having them travel to Lincoln. He would also like to think of ways to invite community members to be present during the award presentations. In turn, he is hoping this would allow for more media attention throughout the state.

His second proposal to the Council would be to allow VR staff members the opportunity to nominate businesses for these awards throughout the year.

Sarah explained it has been a challenge to get media coverage for this event in the past. Especially when the Governor cannot be in attendance. In addition, she mentioned award winners can sometimes not be even able to make it to the awards ceremony if there is travel time involved.

Both Sarah and Micheal expressed they believe VR could have the opportunity for more media coverage if these awards are presented on a local level.

Members were receptive to the proposed changes.

Sarah explained they would still intend on awarding a Champion of Disability. This would entail a social media campaign and writeup. In addition, she would plan to prepare content for a national campaign with CSAVR. She told the Council she submitted 5 stories last year. Of the 5 submitted, 2 stories got selected. Last year Nebraska VR ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in the nation. This year, Sarah's goal is to aim to be #1.

Christine asked if there would be an opportunity for SRC members to be present when VR staff members present the awards to businesses. Sarah confirmed there would.

Michael said there would also be a Business Account Manager present when the award is given to the recipient. He stated the overall goal is there to be much less work for the recipients.

Members also discussed possibly adding a question to the nomination form to inquire if the recipient is a veteran. This could possibly provide the opportunity for the American Legion to become involved in award presentations.

Sarah asked the Council if they would be ok with her and Michael opening the nomination form to all VR staff members now. Micheal opened this to the Council for a vote.

Paulette made a motion to adjust the timeframe for nominations. Christine seconded. Jana asked if there were any objections. There were no objections, motion carried by unanimous consent.

Paulette made a motion to go ahead and move forward with allowing the Employment Committee to begin to start thinking of ways to reformat the SRC Awards and move forward with discussions. Christine seconded. Jana asked if there were any objections. There were no objections, motion carried by unanimous consent.

## B. Member Feedback on Written Reports (5-10 minutes each):

### 1. ATP (Tobias Orr)

Tobias shared a few highlights from his report with the Council.

- ATP was awarded the Enrichment Foundation Grant funding for 2026.
- The DHHS Program recently hosted an event in Omaha.
- The iCanConnect Program currently has 12 cases going on this year.
- ATP has hired Blaine Sexton and Brandon Fokken. Blaine works out of the Scottsbluff office, and Brandon works in the Omaha office.
- Nancy Noha retired and noted her position will soon be open.
- ATP is continuing with working on automating their referral process. Hopefully by this summer, ATTIE can accept referrals directly from QE2.

### 2. CAP (Jodi Bodnar)

Jodi told members CAP has been working on improving outreach and

interagency coordination. CAP recently re-did their outreach letter and added a QR code. In addition, they also updated their brochure. This change included removing the 1 from their 800 number. They have also revised their website. In doing so, they hope this helps people understand more about how CAP and The Hotline for Disabilities Services are one and the same. In addition, they are working to make sure their website is more accessible. Jodi stated she is having a lot of conversations about how CAP can be sustained with just one person. They are also continuing to look at their database. Jodi reports the number of calls CAP has received is similar to last year. Jodi mentioned how they are continuing to use reflective listening with clients. She mentions there have been an increase in questions about services, as well as the need for more short-term technical assistance. She reports of all the complaints CAP has received, all were able to be resolved.

Jodi stated she added an additional portion to her report and will be sending the amended report to Alexa to send out to all Council members.

Jodi mentioned there have been service delays and confusion among clients. She thinks more transparency could help remedy this. In addition, establishing a timeline would be beneficial too.

When asked how many clients she is working with, Jodi stated 4 her current workload is 4 clients.

Jodi submitted the following addendum after the February 3, 2026, meeting:

**Addendum: CAP Observations & Themes (FY25)**  
*(Supplemental to CAP Director's Report – February SRC Meeting)*

During the February SRC meeting, I shared additional context about CAP's work during FY25 that is not fully reflected in the written report. This addendum summarizes the main themes discussed and is intended to align the written record with CAP's verbal report.

Overall, CAP's work during FY25 focused primarily on informal problem-solving, system navigation, and communication support for adults involved in VR services, rather than formal dispute resolution. Common themes included:

- **Communication challenges**  
Clients struggled with inconsistent or delayed communication, especially during periods of service delay or change. CAP's role involved helping clients and VR staff reconnect, clarify expectations, and resolve concerns using existing VR policies and procedures.
- **Delays after services were approved**  
Even when decisions were made, delays in authorizations or follow-through (such as technology, training, or employment supports) slowed progress and caused frustration.
- **Difficulty navigating the system**  
Many clients needed help understanding VR processes, timelines, and who was responsible for next steps.

- **Informed choice needs support**  
Clients often needed help applying informed choice to real decisions about services, providers, accommodations, and employment goals.
- **Counselor and office transitions**  
Requests to change counselors or offices were discussed within the context of VR policy and were not treated as the first or automatic resolution. CAP supported problem-solving and communication efforts before considering whether a transfer was appropriate.
- **Benefits and financial concerns**  
Questions about earned income, SSI/SSDI, and how work would affect benefits frequently influenced employment decisions.
- **Barriers show up in process, not eligibility**  
Most challenges were related to navigating the system rather than qualifying for services. Clients with less experience advocating for themselves often needed more support to move forward.

This addendum supplements the written CAP Director's Report and reflects information shared during the SRC meeting.

### 3. Deaf & Hard of Hearing (Ashley Altman)

Ashley stated they have had a very quiet winter season, but things are beginning to pick up. She informed the Council Executive Kyle Miers resigned from NCDHH in December 2025. Their current Interim Executive Director is Kim Davis. They are continuing to engage with community members through presentations, outreach visits, and one-on-one supports. She told the Council NCDHH launched a new initiative called Coffee, Conversation, and Culture. This initiative provides an opportunity for members of the community come together to talk about deaf culture.

The NCDHH has also launched the Community Spotlight Series. Ashley noted this will be an on-going series to allow community members to learn about Deaf, Deafblind, and Hard of Hearing Nebraskans and their lived experiences. Ashley hopes this allows deaf youth and families of deaf youth to see deaf role models. She told the Council this series can be found on social media.

### 4. NSILC (Christine Gaspari)

Christine told Council members there has been a great deal of changes within the NSILC. They are actively looking for a new Executive Director. Their Chairperson, Jody Faltys has been working hard to get things back on track. Christine stated they have been working with DAS to get their finances back in order. Their Council members are continuing to put in a lot of work. She also stated they have revamped their application process to help speed up gain new members. Their upcoming meetings will be occurring on a quarterly basis. If anyone knows of someone who would like to become a member to let her know.

5. Ombudsman (report only)
6. Youth Leadership Council (report only)

C. Member Feedback on VR (Chair)

No feedback reported.

D. Director Report (Lindy Foley)

a. SRC Annual Report

Lindy started off by thanking all Council members who contributed to the creation and content of the SRC'S 2024-2025 Annual Report. Lindy informed the Council this report was submitted to Nebraska State Governor, Jim Pillan, in addition to Nebraska VR's federal partner, Jason Hunter. This report provides a high-level overview of what the State Rehabilitation and Nebraska VR are doing. The report this year also included success stories of VR clients.

The [Report of the Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council 2024-2025](#) can be referenced if any members have been questions.

b. WIOA State Plan Modification

Lindy shared WIOA State Plan Modifications with the Council. Lindy explained every state is required to have an WIOA. Nebraska VR is currently 2 years in our current 4-year plan. This halfway point provides the opportunity to examine goals and modify where needed. She told members the draft of the State Plan Modifications is currently in public comment now through March 2, 2026.

Lindy shared the following Required VR Services Portion Updates VR Section of the State Plan:

**State Rehabilitation Council-**

Lindy informed members we are sitting in good shape. The Council is currently in the process for filling vacancies for PTI Nebraska, State Educational Agency Special Education, and State Workforce Development Board.

**Goals, priorities, and strategies-**

Lindy shared there have been no substantive changes in this area. These have been created these based off a Comprehensive Needs Assessment. This will be completed prior to the next WIOA State Plan.

**Evaluation & Reports of Progress-**

Lindy told the Council she would like to see more alignment of these goals and the SRC.

Goal #1 Increase effective communication and engagement with clients, businesses, SRC, and staff members.

Priority 1: Improve processes for community and engaging with clients.

This includes reducing the number of days until a client becomes eligible and has an IPE created.

When looking at the attrition rate for VR, Lindy stated she is very pleased with the progress we have made within the state, as this number is now 33.11% for PY 2024. A few years ago, VR was at 50%, but there is still work to do to improve this number.

Priority 2: Improve processes for communicating and engaging with businesses to emphasize Nebraska VR's dual-customer approach.

Lindy stated she is excited to look at how they are providing a continuum of services for businesses. Nebraska VR is currently working on creating a dashboard.

Michael explained to the Council how this dashboard will really show the different levels of engagement. He also mentioned how VR will be working hard to make sure we are meeting businesses where they are at. They will also be looking to focus on the statewide Windmills Disability Awareness Training. This will provide businesses the skills and tools to foster an inclusive workplace for all employees.

Priority 3: Improve processes for communication and engaging with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC).

Lindy commented it is VR's goal to keep the roster filled and keep members engaged. It will also be important to maintain and improve attendance.

Priority 4: Improve processes for communicating and engaging with Nebraska VR staff.

Lindy informed the Council herself, Cathy, and Holly have been conducting Stay Interviews with staff since 2023. Lindy shared this has been a positive experience. So far, they have interviewed 100 staff members. In addition, she explained VR also completes new staff check-ins during the training and onboarding process.

Goal #2: Increase youth with disabilities' awareness of Nebraska VR services.

Priority 1: Increase the number of youth applying for Nebraska VR services and the number of Individualized Plans for Employment developed.

Lindy explained VR is looking to increase youth with disabilities awareness of VR

services. They are also looking at what transition looks like from one counselor to another when students move from youth to adult services. They are hoping to see this number continue to trend in the right direction.

Goal #3: Improve processes to ensure unserved and underserved populations have access to Nebraska VR.

Lindy told the Council each service office currently has an outreach plan in place to help them reach this goal.

Goal #4: Improve quality outcomes for clients receiving supported employment or customized employment.

Priority 1: Increase the percentage of individuals who exit Nebraska VR supported employment or customized employment with competitive or integrated employment-

Lindy explained this applies to clients with more significant disabilities. There are very few instances VR is unable to serve individuals. She states goal will be continuing to trend upward in the future.

Priority 2: Increase the average number of hours worked by successfully closed clients who received supports or customized employment.

Priority 3: Increase the average earnings of successfully closed clients receiving supported employment or customized employment.

### **Annual Estimates**

Lindy shared the annual estimates for the cost of services for the next fiscal year, using Title I funds is estimated to be a little over \$5 million. The cost of services for Supported Employment is around \$2 million. This makes the total estimate around \$7 million.

### **Order of Selection**

Lindy was happy to report Nebraska is not in an order of selection.

### **Comprehensive System of Personnel Development**

Lindy explained for each classification HR looks at retirement and turn over. VR is always hoping to retain staff and stay proactive. Lindy again reminded the Council the State Plan Modifications are currently under public comment period. There will be a public meeting on February 12, 2026, at 10:00 a.m.

Lindy noted VR is keeping a close eye on the Federal Government shutdown. VR does have enough funds reserved should we need to use them.

She told members VR is taking the lead and applying for the U.S. Department of Labor's National Expansion of Employment Opportunities (NEON). She

explained this a technical assistance program.

She also told the Council VR has been working with Senator Spivey. [LB1140](#) provides an overview of the pilot process being proposed.

IX. Working Lunch: Committee meetings and reports:

A. Client Services Committee (Jodi Bodnar)

Jodi reported the goals they focused on included attrition and engagement for eligibility. They noted because it's currently hard to tell why people are leaving, they would like to receive more information on demographics. They said Holly will plan to provide them with this in the future. They also mentioned the dashboard that is being created will help them gain more insight. They also discussed other possible tools staff can use in the future to keep clients engaged.

B. Employer Services Committee (Scott Parrill)

Scott reported they had good discussions on the Employment and Inclusion Awards presentations. They plan to have a follow-up meeting in April to get their feet on the ground.

C. Transition Services Committee (Ashley Altman)

Ashley reported they continued their discussion from last meeting. They discussed how parents can sometimes be unsure of what is going on. They also talked about ways to get parents involved in Project SEARCH. Finally, they discussed ways how VR can communicate better with parents to make sure they are aware they can be part of their child's journey while working with Nebraska VR.

D. Executive Committee (Jana, Gloria, Jodi, Scott, Ashley, and Angela)

No breakout group.

X. Public Comment/Announcements

Sarah shared Constant Contacts and example emails with the Council.

Jana called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Gloria made a motion to adjourn. Christine seconded. There were no objections made. Motion carried by unanimous consent. The SRC Council meeting adjourned at 1:53 p.m.