

Virginia State Rehabilitation Council
Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2008

A meeting of the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on May 12, 2008 at the Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services (DRS), Richmond, Virginia.

Members Present: Karen Baugh, Charles Benagh, Sandra Cook, Daniel DeBoer, Donna Kay Graff, Sarah Liddle, Kathleen Maybee, Marianne Moore, Hiawatha Nicely, James Rothrock, Samuel Simon, Cherie Takemoto, Florence Watt

Members Absent: Matthew Deans, Kenneth Holloway, Michael Organ, Roy Ward

Others Present: John Phelps, Field Rehabilitative Services Director; Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Mary Lutkenhaus, Policy Analyst; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Rick Sizemore, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) Director; Bernadette Mayhall & Cat Clough, Interpreters; Barbara Tyson, Staff Support; Ernie Steidle, Ph.D., Chief Operating Officer; Gary Viall, Visitor

Call to Order: Council Chairperson Danny DeBoer called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made by Hiawatha Nicely, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the March 17, 2008 meeting as distributed.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Chairperson's Report: Mr. DeBoer stated that the next SRC meeting will be held at the DRS Headquarters in Richmond on Monday, August 11, 2008.

Mr. DeBoer will attend a SRC Chair training program given by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and George Washington University in Orlando, Florida on May 14-16, 2008. The program will include information on a new SRC On-Line Training Series and Mr. DeBoer will report on the outstanding relationship between DRS and the SRC and other the initiatives of the SRC, to include the Roy J. Ward Employee Leadership Recognition Award, advocacy in serving individuals with Limited English Proficiency, the SRC meeting in conjunction with the Transition Forum, the shared liaisons between the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired's SRC and the DRS SRC, and the zealous advocacy by the SRC to protect the integrity of the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program.

Mr. DeBoer asked Hiawatha Nicely, Marianne Moore, and Florence Watt to serve as the Nominating Committee for the election of the SRC Chair and Vice-Chair for 2009. Nominations will be considered at the August SRC meeting.

Commissioner's Report:

Staff participating in the Skills for Leadership training program presented their team project reports to the DRS Management Team on May 7, 2008. The teams did an excellent job with their projects which addressed training and outreach to individuals with Limited English Proficiency, video teleconferencing training and reference materials, Roadmap to Success for VR consumers, and alternative work arrangements. The SRC will receive copies of the team reports and a DVD prepared on alternate work arrangements. Mr. Simon suggested that Commissioner Rothrock contact staff with the Broadband Taskforce about DRS' alternate work arrangements plans and telecommuting for people with disabilities.

Disability Determination Services has been honored with the Social Security Administration's 2008 Commissioner Citation for its leadership in efficiently processing claims while controlling DDS administrative costs throughout the state. The SRC will receive a copy of the Governor's Press Release on this award.

Due to order of selection and a reduction in the size of the VR caseload, the VR program is experiencing a slight decrease in some of its performance measures this fiscal year. However, the counselors are doing an excellent job conserving case service funds and expenditures should not exceed the budget this year. The agency continues to work with the Governor's Office on office co-locations with our Workforce Investment Act partners. The One-Stop in Charlottesville, where DRS is now located, is open and the Governor wants eight more One-Stop co-locations across the State.

DRS is collaborating with the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services to develop a case management system for returning veterans and their family members with Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome or brain injury.

DRS has prepared a 1.5% budget reduction plan for State funds that, if accepted, would be effective July 1, 2008. The reduction plan does not pose any grievous harm to DRS' programs.

Council Roundtable Reports

Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Report (DBVI): Mr. Ward sent a written report. At Mr. Ward's suggestion, Mr. DeBoer will write a letter of behalf of the SRC to Joseph Bowman, DBVI Commissioner, congratulating him on his retirement. The Governor has appointed Raymond Hopkins as the new DBVI Commissioner effective July 1, 2008.

Department of Education (DOE): Marianne Moore reported that there will be three focus groups (parents, youth, and other/general) and a parent summit included in next year's Transition Forum. The Transition Practioner Council will begin having meetings on the east side of the State.

Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC): Cherie Takemoto provided information on the 25 year contract with the Illinois human services agency to provide “Next Step Training”. Erica Lovelace, DRS Education Services Manager, has been participating in the PEATC web casts on transition issues. PEATC is looking for topics for the six web casts planned for next year.

Virginia Assistive Technology Systems (VATS): Mr. Simon reported that the next meeting is scheduled for May 21, 2008.

Workforce Investment Council (WIC): Hiawatha Nicely reported that Governor Kaine has charged Danny LeBlanc with the responsibility of changing Virginia’s workforce system. However, the training model and staff support to the WIC will be moved to the Virginia Community College System. The Council continues to examine workforce training funds versus outcomes of the various agencies that provide workforce services. Possible locations for additional One-Stop Centers are Wytheville, Danville, Roanoke, and Lynchburg.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC): Sarah Liddle reported that the RSA has determined that representatives from designated state units serving in an ex officio capacity on the SILC require a three-year gubernatorial appointment. Virginia has not had these members appointed by the Governor. The SILC is working with RSA for further clarification on this issue. The SILC is developing a document outlining its history and accomplishments. Ms. Liddle also briefly discussed the goals outlined in the 2008-2010 State Plan for Independent Living. SRC members discussed some concerns about the services provided by some of the Centers for Independent Living (CILs). Commissioner Rothrock reminded the Council members that CILs are private non-profit organizations governed by a Board. In addition, the recent Independent Living consumer survey, which was performed by DRS, showed that CIL consumers were about 80% satisfied or very satisfied with their services. Sarah Liddle agreed to inform the SILC of SRC members concerns.

Committee Reports

Internal Affairs Committee

John Phelps reviewed the Field Rehabilitation Services Division Performance Measure Report for State and Federal Fiscal Year 2008, as of March, 2008. While Employment Plan Development is down 14.4% and the rehabilitation rate is down 7.2% as compared to same period in Federal Fiscal Year 2007, successful employment closures and average hourly earnings are up .7% and 12.1% respectively.

The Committee reviewed three draft Attachments for the 2009 State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment. A motion was made by Hiawatha Nicely, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State’s Goals and Priorities with the addition of the following strategy for Goal 6: Utilize information from other sources to identify unserved or underserved populations. A motion was made

by Charles Benagh, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve Attachment 4.2(c) Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council; Response of the Designated State Unit; and Explanation for Rejection of Input or Recommendations with the addition of “foster care” to the second recommendation.

External Affairs Committee

Barbara Burkett, Ph.D., Lead Analyst in DRS Policy and Planning, provided an update on the development of the next triennial needs assessment of Virginians with disabilities. The web survey to the Transition Forum participants has been sent and the response rate has been very good. Dr. Burkett will provide monthly updates to the Committee.

The Committee reviewed State Plan Attachment 4.11(a) Results of Comprehensive Statewide Assessment of the Rehabilitation Needs of Individuals with Disabilities and Need to Establish, Develop or Improve Community Rehabilitation Programs and had no changes.

The Committee reviewed the status of SRC member appointments. Roy Ward, disability advocate, and Hiawatha Nicely, Virginia Workforce Council representative, will conclude their terms on September 30, 2008 and are not eligible for reappointment. There are still vacancies for a representative from business, labor and industry and a representative from the Client Assistance Program. Danny DeBoer, Donna Kay Graff, Marianne Moore, Michael Organ, and Florence Watt also will conclude their terms on September 30, 2008, but they are eligible for reappointment. They need to notify Commissioner Rothrock if they wish to be considered for reappointment. Any other recommendations for SRC member’s appointments also should be sent to Commissioner Rothrock or the SRC should notify interested persons to submit their application to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Unfinished Business

Dr. Steidle reported on the status of the budget for State Fiscal Year 2008. As of April 30, 2008, the agency had expended 84% of the budget, which is on target for the year. Mr. Steidle commented about the increasing cost of information technology. Mr. Simon asked about phone accessibility and it was suggested that this item be placed on the next SRC meeting agenda.

Rick Sizemore distributed the 2007 WWRC Annual Report and reported on the status of WWRC’s performance measures for State Fiscal Year 2007. WWRC will be looking to place some videos on the Governor’s UTube site to showcase the Center’s services. A film of WWRC’s 60th Anniversary celebration will be shown on WHSV in Harrisonburg on May 24, 2008 at 2:00 p.m. A copy of the CD will be provided to each member at the August meeting. Recently, WWRC was audited by several different accrediting organizations and received positive results on each audit. The RSA is supporting a study to collect information about characteristics and outcomes of State-operated comprehensive rehabilitation centers, which will include WWRC. Finally, WWRC was

delighted to learn that the State's capital improvement budget includes funding for the renovation of the kitchen, dining hall, and Barnett Hall.

Mr. Nicely reported that the WWRC Foundation is working on some long-term funding initiatives, which will include a fund raising campaign and possible grant applications.

New Business

Ms. Smith reported that RSA is seeking input on proposed performance measures for its Strategic Plan. Cherie Takemoto, Kathy Maybee, and Hiawatha Nicely agreed to work with DRS staff on developing a written response to RSA on the proposed measures.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:30 p.m.