

State Rehabilitation Council
Meeting Minutes
June 11, 2012

A meeting of the Department of Rehabilitative Services' State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on June 11, 2012 at the Richmond Marriott West in Glen Allen, Virginia.

Members Present: Sandra Cook, Matthew Deans, Charles Downs, Karen Gregory-Williams, Cheryl Johnson, Sarah Liddle, Toney Lineberry, Ellen McIlhenny, James Rothrock, and Julie Triplett

Others Present: Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Scott Fraley, Vocational Rehabilitation Quality Assurance Analyst; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Barbara Tyson, Staff Support; Rick Sizemore, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Director; Kathy Hayfield, FRS Director; Jim Taylor, DBVI SRC Representative; J. Bryant Neville, guest.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2012.

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

Chairperson's Report:

- Ms. Cook welcomed Julie Triplett as a newly appointed member to the SRC. Ms. Triplett is from the Client Assistance Program at the Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy.
- Sarah Liddle and Charles Downs will serve on the Nominating Committee for the election of the 2013 SRC Chair and Vice-Chair. This election will occur at the August meeting.
- The SRC will hold a planning retreat on November 13, 2012, followed by the SRC meeting on November 14. Rob Froehlich, George Washington University TACE Center, will help the SRC plan and implement the retreat. Toney Lineberry and Julie Triplett will serve on the Retreat Planning Committee.
- Sandra Cook attended the April 20-21 National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) leadership training and meeting. At the leadership training, the participants utilized the book How to Work with People-Understanding Team Dynamics to evaluate their leadership skills. Ms. Cook thinks that this book might be useful for the November SRC retreat. During the NCSRC meeting, the participants received updates from the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

Commissioner's Report

- With the State's next biennial budget, State employees will receive a 3% bonus in December and a 2% salary increase next July.
- The new member appointments to the SRC will be released soon by the Governor's Office. An orientation program for the new members will be held in July.
- The newly created Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) will become effective July 1, 2012. The SRC will continue to perform its federally-defined duties. Workgroups are developing a new shared agency logo and bringing the Aging staff and operations within our administrative functions (human resources, fiscal, logistics, etc.). The Field Rehabilitative Services division will be known as the Division for Rehabilitative Services. The new agency will offer enhanced opportunities to create more of a "no wrong door" system for individuals with disabilities and the aging population.
- Over the summer, the Division for Rehabilitative Services and the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center are embarking on a pilot program to reach out to vocational rehabilitation consumers. Known as ICE (Intense Consumer Involvement), the pilot program will use non-counselor staff to better engage our consumers who are job ready with actions that will foster employment success.
- Financially, the vocational rehabilitation program is in good shape having received approximately \$6 million in new funds for the next biennium. The Long-Term Employment Support Services also has received about \$150,000 in additional funding.

SRC Employee Leadership Recognition Award and Commissioner's Excellence in Transition Award

The following DRS employees were recognized with the 2012 SRC Roy J. Ward Employee Leadership Award: Jack Ballurio, Karen Kahn and Robin Sexauer. The Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Life Skills Program was recognized with the Commissioner's Excellent in Transition Award. Ms. Tina Carter, a graduate of the WWRC Life Skills program, accepted the award on behalf of the program.

DRS Program Reports

Field Rehabilitative Services: Kathy Hayfield reviewed some of the performance indicators for the FRS program. The program is only at the 65% mark to reach 4,000 successful employment outcomes by September 30, 2012. However, average hourly earnings have increased to \$10.05 and the competitive employment rate remains strong at 95%. The rehabilitation rate continues to be very low and will remain so for the rest of the year as counselors close cases of consumers who have ceased participating in their program.

Two new initiatives have been instituted to enhance consumer engagement in their vocational rehabilitation program. The ICE pilot program will focus on approximately 1,800 consumers who are in an employment or job ready status. The "Cold Case" project will utilize a counselor in each region to help locate consumers who have ceased

communication with their counselor to determine their status and interest in continuing in the program. In some instances, we may find that the consumers have jobs and that the VR services that they received contributed to their employment.

Last week, a two day meeting was held with the FRS Regional Directors, Field Managers and Program Managers. Items covered at the meeting included the ICE and “Cold Case” initiatives. In addition, with the assistance of Barbara Burkett, work continued on learning how to better utilize data as information for improved program management. In addition, offices will begin receiving local labor market information to assist consumers in the selection of their employment goal. Kathy will have one Regional Director attend future SRC meetings to provide the SRC with the unique perspective of the Region.

WWRC: Rick Sizemore reviewed some of the performance indicators for WWRC. The daily average census is at 290-295; WWRC will end the state fiscal year with an average daily census close to the 300 target. Overall, utilization of the Center is at 85% and the rehabilitation rate for training graduates remains strong at 74%. The Life Skills Program is operating at 100%.

WWRC is supporting the ICE pilot program and training instructors will be scheduling reviews with students on job opportunities in their local communities. WWRC continues to adjust its training programs to address the current and future workforce needs. The WWRC Foundation has purchased a forklift for training of students in the construction trades area. The Psychological Services Department is being restructured to a Behavioral Support Services Department.

The next WWRC graduation will be held on June 29. This will be followed by a meeting for all Center employees. SRC members are invited to attend. The next WWRC Blueprint is being developed and will be shared with the SRC for comment and endorsement.

Barnett Hall will open again in January, 2013 and a grand opening ceremony will be scheduled for the Spring, 2013.

Council Roundtable Reports

Written reports were provided to the SRC and will be included with the meeting minutes. Sarah Liddle handed out copies of the Statewide Independent Living Council 2011 Annual Report. Sarah will send to the SRC the list of Centers for Independent Living and the planning districts they cover.

Jim Taylor stated that the SRC for the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired still has member vacancies and the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind held an open house on April 16.

Committee Reports

Internal Affairs: Committee Chair Matthew Deans reported that the Committee reviewed the drafts of the 2013 State Plan Attachments, Attachment 4.2(c) Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.11(c) Goals and Priorities, and Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies. A motion to approve the Attachments as amended by the Committee was made by Matthew Deans, seconded by Toney Lineberry, and unanimously passed.

Charlie Downs and Matthew Deans will work with Scott Fraley and FRS staff to develop the format for a fiscal report on the vocational rehabilitation program for consideration by the Internal Affairs Committee during its meeting. This new report will replace the agency report previously presented by Ernie Steidle.

Toney Lineberry and Matthew Deans will work with Mary Lutkenhaus, Appeals Coordinator, on the selection of one or more new Hearing Officers. The recommendations for the new Hearing Officer and the renewal of the contracts for the existing Hearing Officers will occur at the August meeting.

External Affairs: Committee Chair Karen Gregory-Williams, reported that Julie Triplett has been appointed to the SRC. The appointment of J. Bryant Neville, who was present at the meeting, and other new members will be officially announced soon. The Committee reviewed the comments from this year's State Plan public hearings. Attendance at most of the public hearings was extremely low. Cheryl Johnson suggested that attendance could be improved by better selection of location and she will assist in planning a hearing in Northern Virginia for next year. Also, the Committee suggests using the assistance of DRS's public relations staff in publicizing the hearings. Divette Brisco briefed the Committee on the plans for the newly formed DRS Cultural Diversity Team.

Mr. Downs asked about the status of the VR-Return on Investment project. Dr. Ashley will be invited to attend the next SRC meeting to report on the status as a New Business item.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: None

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Department for Blind and Vision Impaired
State Rehabilitation Council

June 2, 2012

Commissioner's Report

RSA Updates –

- RSA has announced changes for how it communicates with the public. The U.S. Department of Education has introduced a new system called GovDelivery that allows individuals to choose topic of interest for which they would like information from RSA. The individual will receive announcements and notices immediately pertaining to the specific topics they select; information related to other topics will be excluded from the e-mails. If SRC members are interested in signing up to participate in the new system, please let Susan Davis Payne know.
- RSA expects to revisit it's priorities on training and will be asking stakeholders on how training funds should be allocated in the near future. It appears that decisions have been made that current training activities cannot continue to be supported at the same levels and input from stakeholders will help determine which programs and activities receive funding in the future. RSA has committed to sponsoring training next year for representatives of the Vending Facility Program. This is considered to be a smaller scale version of RSA sponsored training from 2010.
- RSA will be publishing all the FY 2011 Annual Performance Reports on VR Agencies (not to be confused with the SRC Annual Reports).

Budget Updates –

- DBVI has not received the published version of the budget but the General Assembly did pass the Appropriations Act for SFY 2013. We apparently had no substantial changes to our appropriations other than an increase of approximately 8,000,000 for VIB. This essentially is authority for the Industries to use its available funds; it does not represent additional revenue.

SRC Appointments – Nothing to report.

Return on Investment Grant

- DBVI is involved in a federally funded grant through the National Institute of Disability Rehabilitation and Research (NIDRR) along with the Virginia Combined, Maryland Combined, and Oklahoma General Agencies. This Return on Investment (ROI) project is designed to examine and analyze the return on the investment of services provided to individuals receiving vocational rehabilitation. Research includes an analysis of state employment data in comparison with cost of services provided by the agencies. DBVI is the only agency for the blind participating in the project and provides unique challenges to researchers in

comparison to general agencies because of the unique scope of services provided to blind, visually impaired, and deafblind consumers.

Deputy Commissioner's Report

- At their May 22nd meeting the Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired agreed to continue to fund for an additional year the part time Job Development and Placement positions that we have been piloting around the state since last year. It was determined that we did not have sufficient time to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the positions, so this extra support for the upcoming state fiscal year was welcomed. The agency has been working with the TACE center at George Washington to provide specialized training to the Job Developers and this has been well received by all.

VRCBVI Updates

- VRCBVI celebrated its grand reopening of the AA building on May 16 with approximately 120 participants including students, DBVI staff and former staff, consumers, SRC and DBVI Board members. Dignitaries included Delegate Joe Morrissey and Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services Keith Hare. The Scotchtown Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution presented VRCBVI Directory, Melody Roane, with a bronze Braille flag. A former VRCBVI student and current Henrico County high school sang the National Anthem.
- The Mechanicsville Lions Club has donated patio furniture for the back patio of the AA building which includes seven picnic tables each covered with a large umbrella.
- Also beautifying the grounds are six raised plant beds constructed as part of an Eagle Scout Project. To complete the beds, the Canterbury Garden Club planted a sensory garden.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program Report

VR Outcomes

- During the first two quarters of FFY 2012 the DBVI VR program assisted 57 individuals in accomplishing their vocational goals in integrated and competitive settings. The average hourly wage was \$16.59 with average weekly earnings of \$567.85; the average age of workers was 46 years with average number of hours worked equaling 29.
- Individuals cases were closed in the following RSA categories: 46 competitively employed with an average hourly wage of \$17.75; 4 self-employed with average hourly wage of \$ 10.58; 4 employed via Randolph-Sheppard Food Manager's Program with average hourly wage of \$11.59; 2 became Homemakers; 0 were unpaid family workers; 1 used Supported Employment Services with an average hourly wage of \$12.00. Average cost of services was \$11,063.30.

VR Manual Policies and Procedures

- DBVI made minor revisions to VR Chapters II, 14, and IX-J subsequent to 2010 Final Monitoring report and completed Corrective Action Report.

Satisfaction Surveys – no change in status. No surveys conducted during the last quarter due to vacant position.

State Plan Update for FY 2012 – the State Plan is due by June 29, 2012 and is in draft with the SRC workgroup having reviewed and provided edits to the sections that pertain to Attachment 4.2 (c) Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council, Response of the Designated State Unit, and Explanations for Rejection of Input or Recommendations; Attachment 4.11(d) State’s Strategies to Achieve Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities; Attachment 4.11(c)(1)Goals and Priorities, Attachment; 4.11(e) (2) Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities; and Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection. Primary recommendations from the SRC had to do removing the 2007 CSNA recommendations from 4.2 (c) and having DBVI add information regarding public meetings and public comments and agency responses to Newsline and the agency website.

2012 Summer Program update

- **College Assessment Program** – The College Assessment Program is a two-week program offered by VRCBVI and designed for blind and vision impaired individuals who are considering college studies. The goals of the College Assessment Program are to assess the readiness of candidates for the academic and blindness-related demands of college, to enhance awareness of the demands of college life and the ability to cope with them, and to increase communication and independent travel skills. Participants reside on campus while their academic and adjustment to blindness skills are assessed. Although the main focus of the program is to assess readiness for college, instruction is also provided in skills related to success in college. Sessions include computer and assistive technology, use of readers, adaptive techniques for study and research, educational resources, orientation and mobility, and test and note taking alternatives. The College Assessment Program is scheduled for June 17-June 29, 2012.
- **L.I.F.E. (Learning Independence, Feeling Empowered)Transition from School to Work Program** L.I.F.E. (Learning Independence, Feeling Empowered) is a four-week residential transition program for high school students with visual impairments to prepare for life after high school. Students reside on the VRCBVI campus and participate in a variety of activities including vocational assessments and community job placements, training in life skills, communication, orientation and mobility, computer skills, and recreation outings and activities. The LIFE program is scheduled for July 8 – August 3, 2012.

2010 RSA Monitoring

- The Corrective Action Plan for DBVI put into place following the 2010 RSA Monitoring Report has been cleared. Actions related to the VR program have

included training DBVI staff regarding the acquisition of consumer signatures on all substantial amendments, cessation of stipends in any form for work experiences, VR Policy manual revisions to clarify use of Extended Eligibility, Trial Work Experiences, and Experience Evaluation.

Other Business

An orientation for new SRC members was conducted on 6/1 prior to the regular 6/2 SRC meeting; however, DBVI continues to have several vacant positions on the SRC.

The SRC has recommended that DBVI work with consumer groups in an effort to have the 2013 public meetings be conducted during the state conferences for those organizations. It is believed this would afford more opportunity for individuals to participate. During the past several years public meetings were held prior to the conferences.

The marketing committee continues to develop ideas for outreach, and it was reported that The SRC will soon have a link on the agency website.

Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 8.

Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Report To the State Rehabilitation Council June 11, 2012

The SILC met on April 30, 2012 at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa, 12042 West Broad Street, Richmond, VA 23223.

SILC Goal I & IV Committee: Progress made under this Committee, according to work plan reports, included Snyder Roche's attendance at the Youth Transition Forum in March, the fire safety and prevention workshop for the deaf/hard of hearing in April, printing and distribution of the VACIL annual report, and a budget amendment submitted by VACIL to restore funding to the CILs assisted in the inclusion of \$87,000 put back into the Governor's final budget.

As a follow-up to the October 2011 quarterly meeting, J.D. Jenkins, Public Education Coordinator with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs, was provided assistance in reaching disability populations about fire safety and prevention measures. The Committee provided strategies for outreach and pledged to assist in the effort. To that end, Mr. Jenkins arranged for Andrew Perlman, Acting Program Director of the Community Emergency Preparedness Information Network (CEPIN), to conduct a workshop about fire safety for the deaf and hard of hearing on April 3 at the Virginia Fire

Marshal Academy. CEPIN, based in Silver Spring, Maryland, received a grant from FEMA to provide this workshop on a national level. Mr. Jenkins recruited workshop participants from the fire and safety education sector, while Rhonda Jeter, SILC Administrator, recruited from the deaf and hard of hearing community. The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing also offered public relations assistance and placed the workshop flyer on the agency's Facebook page and distributed it to their various networks using email. The workshop was well-attended with approximately fifteen fire safety educators and eight advocates from the deaf and hard of hearing community. The workshop utilized a "train the trainer" approach and was not made widely available to the general public. Mr. Perlman encouraged Virginia to utilize a proactive, preventive approach rather than reactive, because he is often called upon to lead the workshop only after a fatality of a deaf or hard of hearing person. This collaborative effort also resulted in progress made towards achieving Objective 4.1 on the current State Plan for Independent Living: the state and/or federal mandates of state agencies are reviewed, as they pertain to identified disability services and independent living issues.

Goal II & III Committee: The SILC administrator, at the direction of the committee, has been contacting other states regarding their experiences with certification of their building codes as being equal to or exceeding the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A more detailed report of the Department of Justice certification process attempted by other states will be forthcoming at the July meeting.

The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) Development Team, with the assistance of Mable Fleming of the DRS Policy and Planning Division, created a draft survey to be used to plan the next SPIL. The survey/needs assessment has been distributed to the full Council for comments. The survey will be made available on-line with a target date of June.

A Policy and Procedures Manual draft is being developed by the Executive Committee and will forward it to the full Council in time for a decision at the July meeting.

National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) 2012 Conference

There are four SILC members attending the 2012 NCIL Conference in D.C. Jeter will attend as the administrator, and Preda and Ward-Solomon will attend under their own budgets as DSU representatives.

Community Integration Advisory Commission and Implementation Team (Olmstead)

Update: At the last meeting, the Commissioner of the Department for Behavioral Health and Development Services provided a report on Virginia's settlement agreement with the Department of Justice. The Commission provided a letter of recommendations to the Governor, and hopefully, the budget amendments will be approved soon. The Strategic Plan will be reworked and rewritten. The Team wants to move forward but funding is an issue. Brandt added that the recommendations included increased waiver slots and funding more than the minimum for the Trust Fund. Preda reported that at the last Team

meeting, there were concerns about the level of involvement among the various agencies and how to best review/revise the Strategic Plan. The next Team meeting will be in May.

State Rehabilitation Council – DRS: The SRC shared a table with the SILC during the IL Conference. A schedule of members who volunteered to help at the table was developed and disseminated developed between the SILC and the SRC. In March, Liddle represented the SRC at the public comment forum held in Roanoke where comments were received on the Department of Rehabilitation’s 2013 Annual State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment draft. The SRC also held a public comments forum on the State Plan at the IL Conference.

Older Blind Grant: Funding for next year will hopefully remain level. Issues include adaptive equipment, e-learning, and finding qualified rehabilitation teachers. A conference is being planned for teachers in September. It will span 2 ½ days with a full agenda.

State Rehabilitation Council – DBVI: . At the March meeting, the potential merger of DBVI with DRS was the major issue and concern of the Council. Orientation for new members was postponed as a result.

Assistive Technology Advisory Council: Mathena reported and has been officially appointed by the Commissioner of DRS to the Council. At the last meeting in March, the Council discussed reorganizing itself in order to play a more influential part in the legislative and decision-making process at the state government level. It would like to expand its advisory influence and act as an advocate in issues relating to assistive technology. The Council is also attempting to make its rules and guidelines current with RSA standards which includes the composition of the Council

Blueprint for Livable Communities Advisory Group:

SILC member, Jack Brandt is a member of this advisory group. Last meeting was April 20 at DRS. Documents have been developed as resources for the community. The group is now considering the next steps. The Department of Housing and Community Development is involved. The group has discussed regulations, affordable housing and Section 8 vouchers.

SILC Annual Report: The report was printed in late March. As decided by the Council at the February meeting, hard copies were mailed out to key leaders and agencies on a national level including NCIL, Region III (Mid- Atlantic) SILCs, Virginia Senators and Delegates, CIL Directors, and the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Copies will also be distributed to state legislators at IL Day in January and to members of the US Congress during Hill visits at the NCIL Conference. Copies will be made available to the SRC at the June meeting. Due to a shortage of staff at DRS, the report has not yet been posted on-line by the Webmaster.

2012 Meeting dates

July 25, 26 - Blue Ridge Independent Living Center in Roanoke

**October 24, 25 - to coincide with Peninsula Center for Independent Living's
Disability Awareness Conference in Hampton Roads**

2013 Meeting dates

**January 30 - First meeting of the year will coincide with IL Day at the General
Assembly in Richmond**

Submitted by:

Sarah A. Liddle
SILC Liaison to the SRC
May 16, 2012