

Virginia State Rehabilitation Council
Meeting Minutes
March 14, 2011

A meeting of the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on March 14, 2011 at the Sheraton Waterside in Norfolk, Virginia.

Members Present: Charles Benagh (teleconference), Sandra Cook, Matthew Deans, Daniel DeBoer, Charles Downs, Toney Lineberry, Marianne Moore, James Rothrock, Karen Gregory-Williams

Members Absent: Gregory Coleman, Stephanie Colorado, Donna Kay Graff, Sarah Liddle, Shannon McManus Jones, Florence Watt

Others Present: Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Scott Fraley, Vocational Rehabilitation Quality Assurance Analyst; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Barbara Tyson, Staff Support; Doug Powell, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired SRC Chair; Rick Sizemore, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Director; Juanita Brown, Personal Assistant to Sandra Cook; Cathie Joseph, representing the SILC; Steve Wooderson, CEO CSAVR, Lynnae Ruttledge, RSA Commissioner, Rita Martin, Deputy Director of CSAVR; Kathy Hayfield, FRS Director; AJ Hostetler, Public Relations Director.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. Mr. Downs announced that Sarah Liddle had given her voting proxy to him. Ms. Moore provided Mr. DeBoer with her voting proxy in the event that she needed to leave the meeting early.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 24, 2011 meeting and noted that the addendum to the minutes includes the Roundtable Reports of the SRC members.

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

Ms. Smith reported that a State Plan Public Hearing would be held on that afternoon at 4:30 p.m. at the Marriott Waterside Norfolk, Hampton Roads Ballroom III, 3rd Floor.

Chairperson's Report:

- Mr. Downs reported that he emailed the 2010 SRC Annual Report and his personal note to all the members of the General Assembly House Appropriations and Senate Finance Committees and received three responses back.
- The Rehabilitative Services Administration will conduct its next Monitoring Review of DRS in 2016.
- The ADA National Network launched the Disability Rights Web Course which is a free, self-paced webcourse available 24/7 that provides an overview of disability

rights laws. Mr. Downs sent to members previously and encouraged members to take the approximately 2 hour course as time permits.

Commissioner's Report

- AJ Hostetler, DRS' new Public Relations Director, was introduced and members were asked to share with her any noteworthy stories about people with disabilities.
- He briefed members on the closing of all Priority Categories under the Order of Selection policy effective March 1, 2011. This was necessitated by the large number of consumers in the program and insufficient funds to serve new clients. The ability of DRS to continue to match our VR grant funds continues to be a concern and the Commissioner will be working with Secretary Hazel on pursuing additional State funding for the VR program.
- The Rehabilitative Services Administration (RSA) has issued a draft of its FY 2010 Monitoring Report of DRS' VR and Independent Living Programs. DRS will be working to address the recommendations and findings in the draft Report, which included needing to improve our hourly wages for VR consumers and ensuring that VR consumers are placed in integrated employment settings. In addition, we will be continuing to ensure that the services at the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) are closely aligned with the needs of the Field Rehabilitative Services Program.
- He attended a meeting with RSA Commissioner Ruttledge and Kareem Dale, President Obama's Special Advisor on Disability Policy, and other policy makers to discuss how VR agencies can assist with the President's new federal hiring initiative for people with disabilities. Under the President's directive, by March all federal agencies must present a plan to increase the hiring of individuals with disabilities. Elena Boyer, DRS Business Development Manager, will be working on this initiative for DRS and we will be looking at WWRC's training curriculum as it compares to the types of jobs offered by federal agencies.
- He provided an overview on legislation passed during the 2011 General Assembly that affected DRS and Virginians with disabilities. Many of DRS' State-funded programs received funding to restore previous budget reductions; this included Brain Injury services, Centers for Independent Living, and Long Term Employment Support Services, Extended Employment Services, and Long Term Case Management. In addition, funding was moved from the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities to DRS for DRS to begin providing staff support to the Community Integration Advisory Commission, which has responsibility for Virginia's compliance with the Supreme Court's decision in the Olmstead case.
- The Disability Commission, which Sandra Cook is a member, will be considering future legislation to ensure that youth who receive prescriptive assistive technology from their secondary school are allowed to keep the technology after graduation.
- The Commissioner will be presenting an Award for Excellence to Thomas Nelson Community College during the opening session of the Transition Forum.

RSA Commissioner Lynnae Rutledge

Lynnae Rutledge, RSA Commissioner, shared with the SRC her goals for RSA which include 1) increasing the visibility of the public VR program and RSA; 2) developing a more effective and respectful relationship between RSA and the State VR agencies; 3) and establishing better collaboration between the many Federal agencies that serve individuals with disabilities. Commissioner Rutledge also discussed the future priorities for RSA Monitoring of State VR agencies that will include 1) organizational placement; 2) fiscal issues; and 3) transition services. She commented on the role of the State Rehabilitation Councils as “policy partners” with the VR agency and advocates to promote the employment of individuals with disabilities. RSA is committed to ensuring that VR consumers are employed in competitive jobs in integrated settings.

Council Roundtable and Working Lunch

Danny DeBoer reported he attended the DBVI SRC retreat on March 11. The SILC report was submitted in writing and is attached.

Committee Reports

Internal Affairs: Mr. Deans reported that the Committee will be working on the 2012 State Plan, in particular the SRC Recommendations Attachment and the Goals and Priorities Attachment. The SRC will need to take action on these attachments at the May meeting.

External Affairs: Mr. DeBoer reported that the Committee reviewed seven nominations for the 2011 Roy J. Ward SRC Employee Recognition Award. The Committee recommended that the following employees receive this year’s award: Mary Breister, Jane Bennett, Dale Batten, and Emily West. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to recognize these four employees with the award. The awards will be presented at the May, 2011 SRC meeting.

The Governor’s Office is accepting nominations for 2011 appointments to boards and councils. For the SRC, the following members, whose terms end September 30, 2011, are not eligible for reappointment: Danny DeBoer (advocate), Marianne Moore (Department of Education) and Florence Watt (Employment Services Organizations). The following members, whose terms expire September 30, 2011, are eligible for reappointment: Greg Coleman, Donna Kay Graff, and Stephanie Colorado. These individuals need to inform Mr. DeBoer of their interest in reappointment. In addition, there is a vacancy caused by the resignation of Kathy Maybee (advocate). Members are encouraged to nominate persons for membership. Nominations will be discussed at the May, 2011 meeting. DRS has not received notice from the Governor’ Office on the appointments for terms that ended September 30, 2010 and the Workforce Investment Board appointee.

Mr. DeBoer has compiled a list of changes for the SRC website and will be contacting Daniel Ross, DRS Webmaster, about these. .

Council of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Executive Director Steve Wooderson and Working Lunch

Mr. Wooderson and Rita Martin, CSAVR Deputy Director, provided information on the activities of CSAVR and issues affecting the public VR program at the national level. It is unclear whether Reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act will occur this year and briefed the members on proposed amendments to the Act made by Representative Harper from Mississippi. Representative Harper has a family member with a disability and also has proposed amendments to IDEA and the Developmental Disabilities Act. In general, H.R. 604 proposes amendments to Section 7 of the Act which include amending the assessment for determining eligibility, supported employment, and transition; and also adds a new definition and service of Asset Development. The bill also provides new authority and funding for grants and contracts for transition to be awarded by RSA and OSERS. The bill does not provide any new funding for VR in order to meet the new demands it proposes. Mr. Wooderson briefed the members on the CSAVR National Employment Team and the benefit of providing VR consumers with internships and on-the-job training with potential employers.

Unfinished Business

Chet and Sabre Avery Dedication: Mr. Benagh stated that Chet and Sabre Avery will be honored on April 11th by the City of Alexandria for their years of disability advocacy. Chet is the former Chair of the SRC.

City of Alexandria Disabled Parking Rights: Chuck Benagh stated that the City of Alexandria has agreed to maintain the current rule allowing persons with disabilities displaying a valid accessible parking placard or plate to park in any legal parking space for up to four hours without cost or other restriction within the City. They also are allowing those persons to park up to 12 hours if employed.

SRC By-Laws Change – A motion was made, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to approve the proposed change to the SRC By-Laws changing “quorum” to a “simple majority”. The SRC will take no action on the proposed By-Law change on SRC membership service.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Report
To the
Virginia State Rehabilitation Council
March 14, 2011

The quarterly meeting of the SILC was held on February 3, 2011 in Richmond, Virginia at the Resources for Independent Living, Inc.

The SILC Chair, Jack Brandt, welcomed, Sandra Cooke, SRC Vice-chair to the meeting.

Bylaws are being revised by the Bylaws committee. The draft document will be distributed to the SILC prior to the April meeting where action will be required.

The **RSA report** was distributed prior to the meeting for review by the SILC. The Chair noted that RSA had made recommendations and requests for corrective action as part of the monitoring report.

2011-2013 SPIL

Each member of the SILC is monitoring the progress of a specific Goal, objective and activity of the current SPIL through an assigned committee.

To further the work of the SILC, operational definitions of the terms constituency groups, unserved/underserved and minority populations are needed. To insure compliance within the IL network, the SILC is requesting these operational definitions as they are currently applied within our designated state units, DBVI and DRS and within the Virginia Association of Independent Living (VACIL).

In an effort to support IL practices outlined in the SPIL, the SILC approved the inclusion of agencies housed under the Virginia Department of Health and Human Services and the Virginia Commonwealth University program, Virginia Health Promotion for People with Disabilities (HPPD). Additional state agencies, whose responsibilities affect various areas of independent living, will be identified within the first year of the SPIL.

Olmstead Commission Update

As a large portion of the SPIL is dedicated to Olmstead efforts, the SILC closely follows the activities of this commission. The Community Integration Advisory Commission (CIAC) is appointed by the Governor, the House and the Senate. The Olmstead Implementation Team consists of agency staff from 22 agencies and five councils. The goal of both bodies is to ensure that Virginia is complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Olmstead Decision which provide individuals with disabilities the right to live in the community. Theresa Preda has been appointed as the interim director of the Office of Community Integration.

SRC Report

Cathie Joseph will attend the March SRC meeting and represent the SILC at the Transition Conference in place of Sarah Liddle.

State Rehabilitation Council, DBVI and Older Blind Grant (OBG)

A representation from the SILC is needed to serve on the DBVI SRC. Interested individuals from the SILC need to contact the Chair by February 15, 2011. Jane Ward - Solomon indicated that there were few referrals from the centers for independent living to the OBG program. Action was taken to include Ward-Solomon in the VACIL March monthly conference call where this issue can be addressed.

Virginia Assistive Technology Advisory Council (VATS)

The council is currently working to resolve an issue whereby assistive technology that is purchased by a local school system for a particular student does not follow that student to college.

Virginia Association for Independent Living (VACIL)

Approximately 170 individuals from around the state attended IL day at the General Assembly. Twelve of the sixteen CILs were participated.

Blueprint for Livable Community Citizen Advisory Council

This report is being produced as a result of legislation passed by the General Assembly. DRS, at the request of the Secretary, are required to assemble a council and to develop resources for a report on the Blueprint for Livable Community to go to legislators by July 2011. The draft will be ready in February 2011.

SILC 2011 meeting dates:

April 27-28 Grundy, VA

July 27-28 Winchester, VA

October 26-27, Richmond, VA

Submitted by:

Sarah Liddle, SILC liaison to SRC

March 2, 2011