
MINUTES
DBVI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Held Via Zoom Teleconference
September 30, 2020

SRC Attendees

Christine Appert, Chair, Charlottesville, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Tammy Burns, Midlothian, Representative of Virginia's Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center; Wanda Council, Newport News, VA, Representative of the Virginia Department of Education; Ken Jessup, Virginia Beach, Representative of Disability Advocacy Group; Larysa Kautz, Alexandria, Representative of Community Rehabilitation Services Program Provider; Mark Roane, Vice-Chair, Richmond, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Shelesha Taylor, Richmond, Representative of the federally mandated Client Assistance Program

Members Absent

Julie Akers, Representative of Business, Industry and Labor; Irene Conlin, Virginia Beach, Representative of an Individual who is blind, has multiple disabilities, and has difficulty representing him or herself or is unable due to disabilities to represent him or herself; Justin Graves, Fairfax, Representative of Business, Industry and Labor; Ray Hopkins, Richmond, Commissioner, DBVI, Ex-Officio Member; Jenny McKenzie, Roanoke, Representative of Business, Industry and Labor

DBVI Staff to the SRC

Pam Cato, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation and Workforce Services; Maggie Mills, Executive Assistant for Services; Richard Mitchell, Deputy Commissioner for Services

Public Attending

None

Call to Order / Welcome and Introductions

Chair Appert called the meeting to order. Ms. Cato welcomed and identified those on the call. Quorum was met.

Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Kautz moved to adopt the proposed agenda; Ms. Burns seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Hearing Officer Contracts – Action Item

Ms. Cato read a brief report reviewing the impartial hearing officer bidding process and the actions that needed to be taken. The Invitation for Bid or IFB committee, consisting of the DARS VR Appeals Coordinator, the DVBI Appeals Coordinator and one member voted from each council, reviewed three bids for impartial hearing officers. One bid was

deemed unacceptable because the writing sample was not completed as requested. The other two writing samples were reviewed and evaluated.

Per the selection process as outlined in the IFB, the lowest bidders that are determined to have an "Acceptable" Writing Sample and an acceptable Resume and Current or Recent Accounts to meet the agency's needs will be awarded. The two bidders are Carl Schmidt and Sarah Freeman.

As the IFB stated, we were seeking up to four qualified bidders and contracting with these two bidders would bring us to four hearing officers through March 31, 2021 and three hearing officers thereafter.

Federal regulations require that the respective State Rehabilitation Councils jointly identify hearing officers with the state rehabilitation agency. The Commissioner of the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired and the Commissioner for the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services will have final approval.

Mr. Jessup motioned to accept the decision of the IFB committee to contract with Carl Schmidt and Sarah Freeman. Ms. Council seconded the motion. All were in favor of accepting the recommendation from the IFB.

Mr. Roane motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Burns seconded the motion. All were in favor of adjourning the meeting.