

**State Rehabilitation Council**  
**Draft Meeting Minutes**  
**January 14, 2013**

A meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on January 14, 2013 at the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services Headquarters in Henrico, Virginia.

**Members Present:** Suzanne Bowers, Thalia Simpson-Clement, John Eisenberg, Cheryl Johnson, Toney Lineberry, Ellen McIlhenny, Romy Mohta, Lauren Snyder-Roche, James Rothrock

**Members Absent:** Charles Downs, Bryant Neville, Sally J. Thompson, Julie Triplett

**Others Present:** Richard Keene, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; Barbara Burkett, Lead Analyst-Research and Evaluation; Jim Taylor, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) SRC Representative; Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Scott Fraley, Vocational Rehabilitation Quality Assurance Analyst; Barbara Tyson, Staff Support; Rick Sizemore, WWRC Director; Kathy Hayfield, Division of Rehabilitative Services Director; Donna Bonessi, Employment Support Specialist

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 11:00 am.

**Approval of Minutes:** With no changes made, the minutes of the November 14, 2012 meeting were approved as written; the addendum to the minutes includes the submitted SRC Roundtable Reports.

**Matters of Public comment:** There were no comments for the public.

### **Chairperson's Report**

- Mr. Lineberry introduced Richard Keene, a vocational rehabilitation counselor from Southwest Virginia, who has been nominated to succeed Matthew Deans on the SRC.
- Mr. Lineberry was reappointed to the SRC in November. He requested that SRC members notify Liz Smith or Barbara Tyson when they receive notice of their reappointment.
- The Transition Forum will be held on March 11-12, 2013 at the Holiday Inn Conference Center in Midlothian, Virginia. The SRC will meet prior to the Forum on March 11. Mr. Mohta will check on possible space at the Johnston Willis Hospital for the meeting. Toney Lineberry, Suzanne Bowers, Thalia Simpson-Clement, and Ellen McIlhenny indicated interest in attending the Forum.
- Cheryl Johnson will serve as the Chair for the External Affairs Committee for Fiscal Year 2013.

### **Commissioner's Report**

- The Commissioner encouraged SRC members to visit DARS on Facebook.

- The vocational rehabilitation (VR) continues to work on increasing the number of successful employment outcomes. Initiatives like pilot project ICE (Intense Consumer Engagement) and Project SEARCH are showing results. Last week, the VR managers and lead counselors participated in a two-day meeting to reacquaint them with the training that new counselors receive on the vocational rehabilitation process and policies.
- Governor McDonnell has issued an Executive Order regarding the hiring of individuals with disabilities in the Commonwealth's workforce. The Executive Order will provide assistance in identifying possible sites for situational assessments and mentoring opportunities for our consumers in State government jobs, possibly leading to employment. The Executive Order may be announced at the January 30 vaACCSES Legislative Reception.
- So far, there is no legislation before the General Assembly with any significant impact on our VR program. There are two bills to extend the "sunset" provision of the Department's Community Integration Advisory Commission and there may be more legislation on Employment Services Organizations as SWAM (small, women, and minority) vendors. Budget amendments will be released soon and advocates are stating that there will be some amendments for the VR and long term employment support programs. There will be much focus this General Assembly on Virginia's implementation of the Affordable Care Act.
- Under Joe Ashley's leadership, DARS is seeing an increase in the amount of reimbursement from the Social Security Administration for VR funds expended on consumers who become successfully employed and reach Substantial Gainful Activity.

**SRC Educational Program:** Donna Bonessi, Employment Support Specialist, gave a presentation on the Long Term Employment Support Services and Extended Employment Support programs.

**Working Lunch and Council Roundtable Reports:** Jim Taylor provided an overview of the last DBVI SRC meeting and Lauren Snyder-Roche provided an overview of the last SILC meeting. Written reports for the DBVI SRC and SILC meetings are included with the SRC meeting minutes.

### **DRS Program Reports:**

**Division for Rehabilitative Services (DRS):** Kathy Hayfield reviewed some of the current performance indicators for DRS. Currently, DRS is serving about 19,000 individuals, which is comparable to this time last year. The percentage of consumers who are most significantly disabled is very high as compared to previous years. There are 2,191 individuals on the waiting list, which is about one-half the number as this time last year. The rehabilitation rate is slightly higher and the number of Individualized Plans for Employments has increased. Effective November 15, the Most Significantly Disabled Priority Category under Order of Selection was closed due to the fiscal situation; people will be brought off the waiting list as funding allows. Financially, case service expenditures are \$1.8 million higher than this time last year.

The pilot projects, ICE and Cold Case, are having a positive effect on performance. There have been 641 participants in Project ICE and 61 of these have become successfully employed. ICE

will continue through the summer. There have been 133 referrals to the Cold Case staff and 23 of these have been closed as successfully employed. The Cold Case pilot will continue through June.

DRS has established some goals for the year: (1) limit the amount of time consumers are on the waiting list by looking at cost reduction strategies; (2) evaluate our vocational evaluation and situational assessment services to ascertain their impact on successful employment outcomes; (3) evaluate assistive technology and rehabilitation engineering services to ascertain their impact on successful employment outcomes; and (4) assess the wages of consumers in the LTESS and EES programs; the Employment Service Organizations will be involved in this effort.

**WWRC** – Rick Sizemore reviewed some of the information contained in the written WWRC Update provided to Council members prior to the meeting. WWRC continues to have performance targets of 3,000 cases per year, 300 monthly, and a 74% rehabilitation rate for training graduates. WWRC is looking to establish a “fast track” training program in Health Occupations, shifting construction trade training to home and building improvement, and adding cash registers and call center modules with a fast track customer service program in retail. In addition, Dominion Power donated two forklifts to the WWRC Foundation for training of students on their operation. The next draft of the WWRC Blueprint will be shared with the Internal Affairs Committee to be considered at the March SRC meeting. SRC members will be invited to attend the Barnett Hall opening celebration to be held in the spring 2013.

## **Committee Reports**

**Internal Affairs:** Mr. Fraley provided the report on behalf of Mr. Lineberry

Matthew Deans provided an overview of Project Search, the history, the purpose, agencies involved and desired outcomes. Currently, there are eleven sites, with two to be added next year. Ninety students are enrolled at various sites with 8-12 students per site. Overall, 60% of Project Search graduates have obtained jobs after graduation with 33% having obtained jobs at host sites.

Mable Fleming gave an update of the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. She has been working with Charles Downs and Sally Thompson regarding possible changes to the survey, to create new learning from consumer input. This effort will continue through the year.

**External Affairs:** Committee Chair Cheryl Johnson reported that A.J. Hostetler, Betsy Mcelfresh, and Carol Kyber presented the 2012 SRC Annual Report. The SRC thanks Vanessa Rakestraw, A.J., Betsy, Carol, and others for their help in developing this report. The Report will be sent to the Governor and SRC members will forward the Report to members of the General Assembly.

The Committee reviewed the nomination criteria for the annual SRC Employee Leadership Roy Ward Award. Nominations are due March 1 and will be reviewed at the March SRC meeting.

Suzanne Bowers and Ellen McIlhenny will represent the SRC on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Steering Committee. The first year activities will focus on a literature review and data analysis. John Eisenberg will assist in obtaining Department of Education data on trends regarding secondary students with disabilities.

Cheryl Johnson is helping to host a State Plan public hearing in Northern Virginia in March or April. In addition, a public hearing is being planned for Richmond in conjunction with the Transition Forum. Additional hearings will be planned for Southwest Virginia and the Tidewater area.

Rumy Mohta, Toney Lineberry, and Cheryl Johnson expressed interest in attending the January 30 Legislative Reception at Old City Hall in Richmond.

A motion was made by Cheryl Johnson, seconded by Rumy Mohta, and unanimously passed to send a letter to the members of the Health and Human Resources Subcommittees of House Appropriations and Senate Finance requesting their support for efforts to eliminate the waiting list for VR services and the ability of DARS to once again be able to provide VR services to all Virginians with disabilities needing these services to become employed.

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:** None

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:45 pm. The next meeting will be held on March 11, 2013. Location will be determined at a later date.

### **ATTACHMENT: ROUNDTABLE REPORTS**

#### **Department for Blind and Vision Impaired State Rehabilitation Council**

December 15, 2012

#### Commissioner's Report

- SRC Appointments – DBVI still has three vacant positions.
- Deputy Commissioner Position – Bob Burton's last unofficial day was December 7<sup>th</sup>. The position has closed and DBVI hope to have interviews very soon.

#### Legislative Updates

Governor McDonnell's proposed amendments to the 2013 and 2014 state budget includes \$4.9 million to fully fund Standards of Quality (SOQ) for blind and vision impaired students. This model reflects provision of enhanced support for blind and vision impaired students that will now be included in the SOQ model. The funding currently provided by DBVI to support a portion of teacher salaries will no longer be necessary.

#### Vocational Rehabilitation Program Report VR Outcomes

- During FFY 2012 the DBVI VR program assisted 158 individuals in accomplishing their vocational goals in integrated and competitive settings. The average hourly wage was \$15.31 with average weekly earnings of \$489.55; the average age of workers was 45 years with average number of hours worked equaling 28.

#### Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA)

The CNA was received from Mississippi State University and will be distributed to SRC members for review.

#### State Plan for FY 2014

In January, DBVI will begin preparing the State Plan attachments that report on FFY 2012 activities. The CNA results will be considered when developing the 2014 State Plan.

#### SRC Annual Report

The 2012 annual report has been completed by the work group.

#### Other Business

New Member Orientation was held on December 14, 2012.

DBVI has established an accessibility workgroup comprised of SRC representatives and agency staff. The group will work to make forms and other information more accessible for blind staff and the public.

Next meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2013.

### **Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Report to the Virginia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)**

Written for the SRC meeting taking place on January 14, 2013

\* Shawn Utt recognized Joseph and Wimbish as outgoing members due to their first terms expiring on September 30. Both agreed to serve until replacements are found. The SILC extends its appreciation for their service.

\* Proposed State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) Goals – The proposed goals, as recommended by the SPIL Development Team and based on the needs assessment results, were presented, voted on, and approved by the Council as follows:

Goal I – Individuals with disabilities who live in currently unserved areas of the Commonwealth will be provided with independent living (IL) services by expanding the network of Centers for Independent Living (CILs).

Goal II – People with disabilities have increased options for community-based living and are integrated into their communities.

Goal III – The Commonwealth ensures accessibility to all its programs and facilities by complying with disability-related laws and regulations.

Goal IV – Commonwealth agencies expend disability-related funding more efficiently and effectively, enhancing opportunities for individuals with disabilities to receive a wide array of services in the community.

Members discussed issues such as the “weights” of the goals, assigning priority areas, communication access, and the emphasis on unserved geographical areas. The goals proposed are deliberately broad and overarching. The objectives and activities will be more specific and measurable. The next step is to post these goals for public comment.

\* The full Council voted on and adopted the following definitions in regard to “underserved” and “youth”:

Proposed definition of “underserved”:

With respect to underserved groups or populations of individuals with significant disabilities in Virginia, these include, but are not limited to:

Identified groups or populations of individuals with significant disabilities in need of a unique array of services, are members of racial and ethnic minority groups, and/or have been identified by a CIL as “underserved” within the Center’s catchment area.

Proposed definition of “youth”:

Individuals with disabilities who are ages 26 and under.

*(Note: This parallels the NCIL definition of “youth.”)*

\* Youth memberships to the National Council on Independent Living continue to be processed and will be offered to 2012 graduates of Virginia’s Youth Leadership Forum.

\* A CIL Satisfaction Survey is in the works. The survey is conducted about every five years. The goal is to evaluate the statewide system of the CILs and not the individual CILs. Theresa Preda will time the survey with the SPIL public commenting period so that they do not overlap.

\* Jane Ward-Solomon continues to work with Karen Michalski-Karney to obtain CIL referrals to the OBG (Older Blind Grant) program. Ward-Solomon is in the process of gathering statistics for the 70B Report and will share those as soon as they are official

\* During the November SILC meeting, Michael Wagner-Diggs, Registered Professional Parliamentarian, presented about effective meeting procedures, basic parliamentary procedure, and reviewed a hand-out entitled, “Meetings: Myths and Mysteries.”

\* The new VASILC website is in the final stages of production; please look for that to be up and running soon.

\* 2013 VASILC Meeting Schedule - The Council developed the 2013 meeting schedule, as follows:

- January 30 and 31,-Richmond (Coincides with IL Day at the General Assembly)
- April 24, 25- Charlottesville
- July 24, 25- Tidewater \*\*\*\*\* WILL MOST LIKELY REQUIRE DATE CHANGE
- October 23, 24-Richmond

Respectfully Submitted,  
Lauren Snyder Roche, SILC member