

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 2, 2020

MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY VIA PHONE AND ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

ATTENDEES: Kim Drew, Richard Phelan, Scott Turczynski, Kyle Roed, Amy Dutton, Mari Reynolds, Daryn Richardson, Alex Watters, Sarah Martinez, Pam Fitzsimmons, Lisa Schneider, Brian Warner

David Mitchell, Jeff Haight, Brandy McOmber, Kelley Rice

Other: Jenna Rider (Intern w/ Access to Independence)

IVRS Support Staff: Vienna Hoang, Victoria Carrington, Steve Faulkner, Lori Buske,

ABSENT: Randy Davis, Nicole Cleveland

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Alex Watters called the June 2nd, 2020, State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) meeting to order at 10:32a, with welcome and introductions.

QUORUM

A quorum was established with 11 of 14 voting members present.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Scott motioned to approve the agenda, Sarah seconded. **Approved unanimously by voice vote.**

MARCH 3, 2020 MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Amy motioned to approve the meeting minutes. Rich seconded the motion. **Minutes approved unanimously by voice vote.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

VOTE TO SELECT SFY19 SRC CHAIR/VICE-CHAIR

The Nominating Committee (Turczynski, Drew, Fitzsimmons) presented their candidates to the council for the 2020-2021 officers. They nominated Scott Turczynski as Chair and Amy Dutton as Vice-Chair, both agreed to accept the nomination. Vice-Chair Turczynski asked if there were any other nominations from the floor, there were none. The Committee made the motion to approve, Rich seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously for Turczynski to serve as Chair and Dutton as Vice-Chair for SFY21

RECOGNITION OF RETIRING MEMBERS

David thanked all Committee Members for their time on the Committee.

David Mitchell thanked those committee members who will no longer serve on the committee a certificate to Advocacy Representative Randy Davis, Department of Education Representative Kim Drew, Former/Current VR Recipient Alex Watters, Disability Advocacy Group Representative Monalisa McGee recognizing their time on the council.

Alex thanked everyone for the time he has spent with them on the committee and also thanked those whose terms are ending.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach – Kim Drew, Committee Chair –

Kim Drew shared that the committee talked about the positives that have happened as well as the challenges.

Steve talked about how Virtual intakes have resulted in fewer distractions, Counselors feel like they are able to focus on the client more. Virtual meetings has resulted in better job candidate attendance. Pre-ETS have continued with High School students, Job Clubs have formed via Zoom and other virtual formats. These have also expanded to Adult job clubs. Staff have become very creative.

Virtual Job Tours – more effective and efficient, less windshield time has resulted in more client time.

Many virtual platforms are cost efficient compared to previous office operations.

A challenge that was mentioned was digital access is still a huge issue across the state. Kim shared that the Governor approved \$26.2 million to help with digital access across the state.

The committee also discussed the proposed changes to committee assignments the only question was whether or not the State Plan will be handled completing by the Service Delivery Committee.

David said the changes are to help align the committees better, the State Plan is Council wide and the VR Service Delivery Committee will have a large role in this, but it is also a full council approach.

VR Service Delivery – Sarah Martinez, Committee Chair –

Sarah Martinez shared that they opened up the conversation with how things are going in our daily lives, and discussed proposed changes to the committees.

Alex reported that for the most part people were in support of the changes to the committees. The committee discussed how can we be better employers, how can we support those we serve, how can work to listen to Counselors and VR Staff to help them do their jobs better, using needs assessments how can we reach out to others in the community and help them strive for their goals. Alex emphasized the importance of the committees role to really dive into the data in the needs assessment. The committee also discussed Social Media and how to use it to reach people and employers to be sure they are filling the assessment out.

Alex posed the question, How can we work better with our staff and clients to implement change and be a better SRC?

David discussed Area Office Action plans for Strategic Planning which included asking each offices to define their actions on the following goals:

How do you maintain and improve Employment Outcomes/Business Service?

How do you maintain and improve Pre-ETS hours?

How are you improving quality of service and engagement?

How are you improving your relationships with CRP's and Partners?

PROPOSED NEW COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

David proposed to change priority work in our two committees, Outreach and VR Service Delivery.

With new individuals coming on board after the June meeting, it appears like the timing would be right to make a change. What is driving the change, is to better link the work of the committees to our IVRS internal staff responsibilities. With Lee Ann Russo's retirement, Brandy McOmber is now responsible for taking the lead on our state plan, which includes the work of our needs assessment. This work should be closely linked to our policies and procedures, so Brandy was a perfect choice. The problem that arises, is this work is actually split among our new committees, and I see it as essential that Brandy is included in both conversations, therefore, my idea of restructuring the committees.

Proposal:

Outreach Committee primary duties will become:

1. Legislative Reception
2. Job Candidate Satisfaction Survey
3. Annual Report to the Governor

(Change is addition of the satisfaction survey and Annual Report and loss of State Plan Needs Assessment)

The VR Service Delivery Committee primary duties will become:

1. Comprehensive needs assessment as required by state plan
2. Review Proposals and make recommendations regarding agency policy issues.
3. Continue to track and monitor progress of committee recommendations for Section 511 (Career Counseling efforts); TTW outreach for SSA beneficiaries; referral process (related to referral and application) and better definition of job candidate/counselor process to educate on what to expect.

Both committees will continue in efforts to involve and recruit new members.

Again the purpose is to try to make life a little easier on Brandy as she can't be in both committee meetings at the same time and her focus would be with the VR Service Delivery. Staff representation for the two committees would be for Outreach: Steve Faulkner, Vienna Hoang and Vicki Carrington and for VR Service Delivery Brandy McOmber, Richard Clark and Jeff Haight.

These changes would be in effect after July 1, 2020 for our next state year of operation.

David provided an update on applications for SRC Members, Linda Fandel Department of ED and IVRS liaison link to the Governor's Office. Linda is the Policy Advisor to the Governor, Linda called all the candidates that applied to discuss with them their reason for applying and to confirm they met the needs of the council. IVRS is still waiting announcement of the newly appointed Council members.

Mari asked for updates on goals with State Plan and who will receive this information? David said both Committees will receive this information.

VOTE TO AMMEND COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Scott motioned to approve the committee restructuring, Daryn seconded. **Approved unanimously by voice vote.**

COVID-19 UPDATE

David shared the IVRS would be holding a Statewide meeting on June 11th for All Staff, during this meeting he would be providing guidance to staff on our plans to continue virtual service delivery and telework until the end of August – after this a transition will take place slowly and incrementally.

A survey was sent out to all field staff to obtain feedback regarding staff thoughts and opinions to make decisions regarding how we move forward with service delivery. 80% said they were effective in their work environment and comfortable with resources. Suggestions made were related to internet connectivity. Less than 1% of staff do not have internet access. 60% of staff were a little cautious about moving too quickly about on-site service delivery. PPE was purchased for all staff and a supply of masks was purchased for Job Candidates. We have a number staff who are going out onsite to businesses; some businesses are more open to this than others.

Highlights were shared related to some of the things we are doing with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population:

Over the last 6 weeks Suzie Paulson our Benefits Planner Resource Manager has started a Family Engagement night, 2 nights (W,Th) a week e/o week. The first night is designated for parents of individuals with children who are Deaf and is held at 7pm. Attendance for each session were as follows 7 families (SSI), 5 families (Transition), 6 families (Applying for Benefits). The other night was designated for families who have a child receiving SSI/SSDI. Attendance for each session were as follows 61 Families (Applying for Benefits), 47 families (Transition), 53 families (Guardianship, Ticket to Work, BPQY)

Our plan is to create a Facebook page to engage with these families.

David asked Kyle to discuss “Connectivity” with employees

Kyle shared what his business is doing to stay connected to employees during this time. They are continuing to learn what works and what doesn't. From the beginning their first and number one priority has been – clear and consistent communication. Kyle described his business as being very tribal as they have 27 different locations across the World including Wuhan, China and each one of these location is different due to culture differences but they all have one commonality – Employee health and safety and they all share the same challenge which is this pandemic and this has allowed them to come together.

He discussed Top – Down communication emphasizing also the importance of Bottom-Up communication. They are sending surveys about every other week, how are you doing, what measures will make you feel safer. They have worked through phasing employees back into the office by taking their feedback. It is critical to ask the question and then take action from that feedback. It has forced them to come together onto the same page as an organization.

Also allowed their leaders to lead and be decisive, demonstrate our employees are the number one priority.

Kyle also discussed recent Protest/Riots – sharing diversity is one of our strengths, but they haven't celebrated it as a company. They are using it to reaffirm their commitment to diversity. Opening our employees in dialogue and looking at our inclusive and diversity strategies and take a look to see if changes need to be made. We all have differences, we are willing to make changes for the betterment of all. Common Goal; We have been Transparent.

David provided an update on plans for each Area Office to revisit their Cultural Diversity Plan. David provided information from a recent ICIE meeting where Dr. Derek Willis Director of Center for Disability and Development presented on Cultural Sensitivity and Diversity. David plans to ask all staff to watch the video and invite Dr. Willis in the fall to visit with staff.

Steve provided a follow up from the Legislative Reception. Many legislators were interested in how we are collaborating with the WIOA, we have a terrific opportunity to find new ways to strengthen overall service package to lowans seeking employment especially those with disabilities. We talked with legislators about how we are collaborating, employment/business service strategies. The Lt. Governor had a lot of interest in how we were working with the high schools. The legislators had interest in our efforts to strengthen services to the deaf population. Many of the legislators wanted to come to our Summer Programs, but due to Covid-19 they will get to attend virtually.

Steve discussed engagement with local staff, and efforts to improve retention of staff, 2 years the agency was struggling, we thought it would help to get out there to find out how they are doing. Steve shared that he has always been asking employees why they are leaving, he has implemented an onboarding call where he calls staff 2 weeks after they start and calls again when they come off probation – to discuss what how their experience has been? He is also periodically calling employees to check in. He is receiving positive feedback when he makes these calls.

RSB POLICY UPDATE

No Policies due to recently meeting with the Coordinating Council. The Coordinating Council met for the last time in May, the Coordinating Council will be replaced by the IMPACT Team. Members of the IMPACT Team will have an improved understanding of our agency, and how we fit into the larger picture of the labor exchange system. The skills gained will assist members with a better understanding of their current positions. Members have a voice in future policy changes as well as an opportunity to participate in discussion over the direction our agency is heading, and developing and implementing a team project focused on an issue, idea or revision of their interest. The team will also provide a platform with which to bring forth innovative ideas and discuss these ideas with management. Members will also gain the knowledge and skills that we seek for career advancement.

IMPACT stands for: Innovation, Mission Focused, Policy Driven, Action Oriented, Customer Centered, Transparent Leadership

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Members received charts in their meeting packet, agency data resource manager Jeff Haight explained.

Wait List (Order of Selection)

The waiting list on April 30, 2020 contained 314 SD and 175 OE for a total of 489; this is 18 more than March 31, 2020, and 351 more than a year ago, April 30, 2019.

Closures

The FFY2020 successful Closures (status 26-0) as of 04/30/2020 is 964; this is 83 less than April 30, 2019.

The FFY2020 unsuccessful closures (status 28-0) as of 01/31/2020 is 1,220; this is 27 less than April 30, 2019.

Alex asked whether there was an official Financial Impact Statement regarding COVID-19 and its impact to Financial. David stated there had not been an impact statement created but costs have been monitored, the overall cost of technology has been an increase of \$2000. We have seen a decrease in authorizations by \$1.2 million due to CRP's being closed. We were also able to work with Verizon after receiving a bill for services during the first month of COVID-19 that was substantially more than our normal bill, this increase was waived and we were able to lower our monthly bill.

OTHER BUSINESS

Sarah Martinez SILC Representative shared that the SILC 3 year State Plan passed and the CIL's received Federal Relief in the amount of \$941,000 to help with addressing food, technology, PPE and additional needs to keep the community safe.

Alex thanked everyone on the Council, sharing that VR was a big part of his transition, from the comfort of working with counselor who was solution oriented and inspiring to the opportunity to give back to an organization that has meant so much to him. It has been rewarding to lend his voice to a struggling people across the state and country who are experiencing similar experiences he has. He added "We need to do so much more." Referencing Tom Harkin's comment to him – "It isn't what we have done." "Thanks for the work you are doing, and thanks for allowing me to be a part of it." - Alex

ADJOURNMENT

A motion for adjournment was made by Scott and seconded by Alex; all were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 12:30pm.

The next SRC meeting is Tuesday, August 25, 2020 in Des Moines at the Jessie Parker Building, Knudsen Room, from 10:30 a.m. until 3 p.m., with committee meetings beginning at 9:30 a.m.

Meeting minutes approved by the Council on this date: _____

SRC Chair – Scott Turczynski _____