



***State Rehabilitation Council***  
to the  
**Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**



**March 19, 2014**

Protection and Advocacy, 60B Weston Street, Hartford

**Attendance**

***Present:***

*SRC Officers:* Jim Quick – Chair, Ellen Econs – Vice Chair, Jan Hasenjager – Treasurer, & Tom Boudreau – Secretary.

*SRC Members:* Sharon Denson, Michele Fontaine, Roberta Hurley, Gary Prushko, Warren Stamp, & Bruce Stovall.

*BRS Staff:* Kathy Blewett & Evelyn Oliver Knight

***Excused:***

*SRC Members:* Marisel DeCordova

*BRS Staff:* Ex-officio - Amy Porter.

***Absent:***

*SRC Members:* Mary Pierson Keating, Larry Robinson, & Miriam Torres-Thorburn, & Victor Xavier.

***Invited Guest:***

Johnathan Slifka

*^Volunteers – Persons interested in the SRC, but not appointed as Members are considered Volunteers. Volunteers may attend meetings and work on committees, but may not vote on any action. When new members are sought for the SRC, Volunteers can be considered for membership.*

**Bureau of Rehabilitation Services**

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### **Brief Introductions –**

- Jim opened the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. Jim then introduced Johnathan Slifka - Liaison to the Disability Community for Governor Dannel Malloy.
- Johnathan shared some of his ideas as the liaison to the Governor's office with state agencies and the disability community and considers the role to be an active voice at the state level. The position is on the Governor's cabinet and he is currently educating himself on current issues in order to work on caucusing with the legislature, and offering possible solutions.  
SRC members asked some questions and he shared that he has visited multiple agencies without many surprises. Although disheartened with some of the chronic concerns, most people are working from a positive place. He is looking from a macro-level and recognized that there are challenges but is looking to get input and feedback. He has regular contact with Amy and is listed within the DORS organization, but he maintains an office in the Capitol.

### **Minutes:**

A review of the minutes took place. Michele moved to accept and Roberta seconded with unanimous approval without changes; Sharon abstained.

### **Budget Review:**

Jan reviewed the budget and explained the only expense was toward transportation services. Evelyn explained the annual payments to the Youth Leadership Project (YLP) are given to support the annual Youth Leadership Forum (summer self-advocacy training for teens and the scholarship donation). The SRC payment is folded in with the BRS payment. To save time, effort and money, Amy will write a three-year contract. She wanted confirmation that the SRC intended to continue this support for the next three years so the contract could reflect the annual payment from the SRC. Sharon moved and Jan seconded, it passed unanimously with Bruce abstaining. Jan also pointed out that the NEAT contract for two years needs to be paid.

### **SRC Chairperson Update:**

Jim shared his report with thanks for all the hard work and support from the SRC.

- Wheelchair Regulation – The DSS Regulations proposed changes to Wheelchairs policy were delayed and are currently postponed indefinitely. The public hearing is expected on March 31<sup>st</sup> with an informal nature noted in order to have dialogue with those in attendance. Jonathan shared some of his involvement and issues related to the concerns about the language of “independence”. A working group is scheduled to address this matter. There is a concept of consumer choice being in every state needing to be placed into the law and allowing for refurbishing of elements. Sharon shared her strong feelings that “one size does not fit all” and that there is a significant misunderstanding related to the wheelchair as a medical necessity. It will cost more in the long run for a person not being in the proper chair (wheelchairs are not just a “chair with wheels”). It is hoped that the information will be shared more often and that there is better communication between DSS and the disability community. Jim will continue to keep the SRC aware of the information. Bruce offered that if anyone needed more information - he would also be available to answer questions.
- Recommendations: related to goals/recommendations that the SRC can place into the state plan. The SRC has had multiple opportunities to receive information. SRC recommendations are submitted in the State Plan; BRS responds to each one. The deadline to get information is needed by 5/1 and this is the opportunity for the SRC to share information with BRS.

A discussion ensued on how to best do get the goals/recommendations together (be it through subcommittee or otherwise) – with a suggestion of developing a workgroup to accomplish this activity. NCSRC- is identifying certain elements that they would like to review. A discussion as to “Transition services” was discussed and corrective action plans. There has been increased communication between agencies with hopes that as new MOUs are developed that greater supportive connections will move forward.

- There is a new website with data available. The MTAG (monitoring technical assistance guide) is there to compare state data. Evelyn is attending a spring conference (NVSR) and if a representative from the SRC to attend that would be great. A discussion about what the MTAG is and elements for monitoring was described.

**Kathy Blewett, BRS Bureau Chief**

Amy was not available due to out-of-state travel.

- Responses to Monitoring Report/Corrective Action Plan -  
The Monitoring Team for Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) reviewed several aspects of the BRS program in the spring with a focus on transition (school to work) and also fiscal matters. BRS is now located in a recently developed agency (DORS) and changes have been dramatic while keeping the federal program in place. The report was reviewed with the process explained (report is given, state gives a response, and then RSA responds). Kathy reviewed the corrective action plan (the information received gave suggestions of how to better change elements and shows what the corrective actions). A long discussion on the IPE (Individual Plan for Employment) occurred and the challenges with the schools and SWD ??? and will develop short term IPE and trying to address these as they move forward was explained. There was a discussion related to transition and changes in philosophy with BRS doing training related to the short term IPE and ensure a review of this with a collaborative effort between the schools and agencies. Kathy discussed number Representation of the VR on the State Workforce Investment Board) which has been completed; number 3 (Under reporting of MOE), number 4 (Program Income) and number 5 (Monitoring Grant activities) – these are related to some of the changes through to the new Department and are being addressed.
- BRS Updates  
Interviews have been held for the Director position but no announcement has been made. Kathy has been great and she is retiring and will be missed.

### **BRS/SRC Update – Evelyn Oliver Knight:**

BRS State Plan – Goals; Standards and Indicators; Comments Due 5/1\*

- Evelyn reviewed the State Plan attachment listing the four goals and priority areas covered (attachment 4.11).
- Standards and indicators – Evelyn reviewed these:  
Standard one (to achieve includes six performance indicators (meet 4 of the 6) with three being significant indicators. We passed 5 of the 6 goals.  
Standard two (Minority Background Service Rate) was passed and the agency is looking at this.

- She reviewed attachment 4.2 about the SRC and “our part” of the state plan and look at carry over from old and any new recommendations - a workgroup will be convened to address this.
- Evelyn reviewed the BRS Public meeting dates April 22, 24, & 29, Staff Meeting date that SRC members could attend, and the SRC Calendar of events.
- She shared a letter from DRC of Fairfield.

**Other** – A workgroup will meet 4/23 at CVH at 10am to work on Attachment 4.2c.

### **Committee Reports**

- **Business Partnership** – Roberta Hurley, Chair  
Discussed several presentations that occurred with different Chambers of Commerce ...transition fairs have been completed. Talking about Business incentives with collaborations for people with disabilities and continue to educate.
- **Consumer Satisfaction** – Jim Quick, Chair  
Discussed the staff meetings and reviewed surveys being out there for a “consumer satisfaction”... have available to get feedback at the counter or in their packet.
- **Intercouncil/Nominations** – Mary Pierson Keating, Chair  
New SRC members need to pass in their certificates of completion for the training that was scheduled in January. Always looking for new members; Sharon will end her time with the SILC.
- **Legislation, Policy & Planning** – Larry Robinson, Chair  
We are going to meet with a review of the state plan.

**Consumer Issues:** None noted.

**NEXT MEETING: May 21, 2014; 1:00-3:30 PM at ACES in Hamden.**

Meeting was closed at 3:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Boudreau – SRC Secretary