



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



**Notes**  
**May 21, 2014**

ACES 205 Skiff Street, Hamden Street, Hartford

**Attendance**

***Present:***

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

*SRC Members:* Marisel DeCordova, Sharon Denson, Roberta Hurley, Gary Prushko, Larry Robinson, & Miriam Torres-Thorburn

*Non-voting Member:* Amy Porter

*BRS Liaison:* Evelyn Oliver Knight

***Excused:***

*SRC Members:* Jim Quick – Chair, Bruce Stovall, Mary Pierson Keating, Michele Fontaine, Warren Stamp & Victor Xavier

***Absent:***

*SRC Members:*

*^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**  
25 SIGOURNEY STREET • 11<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, HARTFORD, CT 06106-5033  
Phone: (860) 424-4844 Information: 1-800-537-2549 TDD: (860) 424-4839 Fax: (860) 424-4850  
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**Brief Introductions –**

- Jim was ill and unable to attend the meeting. Jan ran the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

**Minutes:**

A review of the 3/19 meeting minutes took place. Larry moved to accept and Miriam seconded with unanimous approval without changes.

**Budget Review:**

Jan reviewed the budget and explained the only expense incurred was for transportation services.

**SRC Chairperson Update:**

- Evelyn spoke on behalf of Jim who apologized for not attending. He will follow-up on an update of the Wheelchair Regulation at the next meeting.

**Amy Porter –DORS Commissioner / BRS Director**

**BRS Updates**

- A Quality Assurance Program Specialist was recently hired in Central Office who will work on trends around quality (what works and what doesn't). Michele Jordan is retiring after 25 years of service on June 1. Retirements are taking place throughout the Department (and State overall) and positions will continue to be addressed as the needs arise.
- Amy met with the commissioner for the Department of Mental Health Services (DMHS) and spoke about the Mental Health Liaison position (formerly held by Ruth Howell at BRS). They agreed that DMHS will be the agency to hire this person and will pay 80% of the salary; BRS will pay 20%. This position will have a more clinical focus. A job posting will be forthcoming from DMHS.

**DORS Updates:**

- As DORS has become its own agency separate from DSS, they will restructure the Benefits Counselor positions. In general, funding for the benefits counselor positions were previously supported through multiple grants and agencies for six Benefit Counselors. DORS will take over these positions and the Benefits Counselors will be able to see any person referred (not just BRS consumers) and allow for some restructuring of the roles and duties overall.

- The current budget was completed without any major issues noted.
- BRS Central Office will be moving to 55 Farmington Avenue at the end of June. There was a discussion about parking and arrangements that have been made to make the circumstance work as best as possible.

Other -

- WIA (Workforce Investment Act) – there is hope this will be passed this summer. There are three key points to discuss: the move of RSA from Department of Education to the Department of Labor (the current thinking is that this element is most likely not going to happen); Minimum wage (there appears to be a compromise in the works to address this and sub-minimum wage); and credentialing related to counselors (a master’s level is the expectation).

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

#### NCSRC National Meeting

- Evelyn attended the NCSRC conference... there was a mixture of experienced and new SRC representatives in her group from multiple states. She reviewed the agenda for both conference days. Topics included: recruitment and membership development ( a “mentorship program” for current members to help new members get acclimated to the SRC); calendars for SRC; competencies; VR State Plan (PP presentation was passed out); elements of best practices; and State Plan monitoring (CT has already been through this). All the notes and suggestions from work groups throughout the conference will be posted on the NCSRC website (Evelyn checked recently and these were not posted as of SRC meeting). There was a certificate developed for each SRC that attended and it was accepted by Evelyn. She enjoyed the people she met, felt that the information was valuable and it was time well spent.  
The next phone call is in the summer and the next conference is in the fall (to take place in Miami, FLA) – the agenda for that meeting is listed on their website.

#### SRC State Plan

- Evelyn mentioned the special meeting of 4/23/14 – the notes from that meeting were reviewed and no changes noted.
- The **Attachment 4.2 - Input of State Rehabilitation Council – 2015 Draft** was reviewed. Some changes were noted by members with clarifications addressed by Evelyn; changes will be placed into the final draft. Evelyn reviewed the three public meetings. Discussion occurred about “why attendance at the meetings was low.” The only recurring theme presented at each public meeting was concern about how CRPs interact with consumers. Evelyn stated she had also received some positive letters; both positive and negative comments should be included in the discussion of the public meetings.

Roberta made a motion and seconded by Marisel to accept the changes to be placed into attachment 4.2.

Discussion – it was brought up that some of these recommendations have occurred in the past. Several members shared recollections of the meeting on 4/23/14 - to include that some of these are chronic concerns were addressed at that meeting. The minutes of 4/23/14 were reviewed and clarified the language of the motion so that the recommendations would include the elements “Data” (as referenced in the 4/23/14 minutes).

The motion was amended so that “any current plan and data would be presented at forthcoming SRC bi-monthly meetings” with language to the recommendations added - the motion was approved unanimously.

- The Annual CRP Meeting with BRS is scheduled for June 5. Roberta offered to present the discussion consumers shared at the public meetings regarding concern for their interactions with consumers and to share SRC concern for improving this relationship. Roberta will seek for input from the CRPs. Evelyn will get in contact with Roberta about what topics to share and any items to bring.

RSA Technical Assistance Circular (TAC) 14-03

- This TAC was reviewed regarding transition services. The relationship with BRS and State Department of Education (SDE) is ever evolving and there was discussion about the TAC and State Transition Committee. Pat Anderson (consultant who is funded by both BRS and SDE agencies) will be contacted to perhaps share information with the SRC. There was a discussion as to what information the SRC would be looking for such as: the current State Transition Committee members (should we have a member on this?), how can the SRC be better informed about transition – perhaps have Pat come in and speak to us about future involvement and further information regarding transition elements.

Perhaps after WIA passes, transition services will be a “hot topic” and it would be a better time to have Pat come and represent (she will be contacted about future meetings in the fall).

## Committee Reports

- Business Partnership – Roberta Hurley, Chair  
Roberta discussed several presentations that occurred, however they want to do more state-wide trainings beyond local ones. It was agreed that SRC acting on behalf of and in collaboration with BRS, will develop brochures (developed by this sub-committee) to give out at trainings. The SRC does have funds and we could vote to provide these - a motion was posed by Tom and seconded by Roberta to modify the Input of SRC

recommendations (Attachment 4.2) and place this activity with a budgetary review of expenditures to occur at a later time. Discussion – this committee will make a draft and share the information – approved unanimously.

- Consumer Satisfaction – Jim Quick, Chair

Jan spoke on Jim’s behalf who discussed the staff meetings and encouraged SRC members to attend. The “consumer satisfaction survey” was discussed and specific information was brought up with review of the notes from 4/23 being added. The discussion included that perhaps UCONN would be able to do surveys for our “consumer satisfaction” – similar to BESB SRC. More information is needed; perhaps a “point in time” verses “ongoing survey” would be better; which department of UCONN would help us; and how much the cost would be. Information will be sought and returned to the SRC next meeting.

- Intercouncil/Nominations – Mary Pierson Keating, Chair

No one from this group was here. Evelyn shared research she had conducted to see if a SRC member “can live out of state.” A current SRC member wants to recommend someone who works in CT, but lives out of state. There is no residency requirement included in the federal regulations and Evelyn’s contact at RSA did not find a residency requirement. The Governor’s office was asked this question but has not answered as of yet. There was some discussion related to partnerships between other committees and information.

- Legislation, Policy & Planning – Larry Robinson, Chair

Larry shared some of his recent struggles and apologized for some of the lack of leadership in this arena/committee. He wanted to make it clear that he is not resigning from the council but does consider that this committee needs a more active Chair. He requested that someone else take on this role and level of responsibility to someone who can commit more time – in particular the role of the State Plan. At the meeting 4/23/14, it was discussed that the vice-chair of the SRC may take on the Sate Plan as a piece of their role. This discussion needs to be part of a greater discussion and be addressed at the next meeting when the SRC Chair is present. A discussion occurred about different roles that are on the SRC and how can members be more engaged and contribute through their roles.

**Consumer Issues:** None noted.

**Other Topic:** Next meeting date – **June 18<sup>th</sup>** - 1-3:30 at CVH will be a working meeting to review topics in detail. [PLEASE SEND DESIRED TOPICS TO JIM OR EVELYN.] Amy will not attend this meeting. No committee meetings will be scheduled. Committees are asked to meet prior to this date.

**September 17<sup>th</sup>** 12-1 (subcommittees); regular scheduled meeting 1-3:30 with location to be determined.

**NEXT MEETING: June 18<sup>th</sup> 1-3:30**  
**Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH), Page Hall, Room 212,**  
**351 Silver Street, Middletown.**

Meeting was closed at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted, Tom Boudreau – SRC Secretary