



State Rehabilitation Council
to the
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services



Minutes – March 13, 2013
SRC Meeting
ACES Staff Development Building, 205 Skiff Street, Hamden, CT

Attendance:

Present

SRC Members: Jim Quick, Chair; Ellen Econs, Vice-Chair; Tom Boudreau, Secretary; Jan Hasenjager, Treasurer; Michele Fontaine, Roberta Hurley & Larry Robinson.

Volunteers: Marisel Mandry, Warren Stamp

Ex-Officio: Amy Porter

BRS Staff: Kathy Blewett & Evelyn Oliver Knight

Excused

SRC Member: Mary Pierson Keating

Absent

SRC Members: Tanisha Minnis & George Narvaez

***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.*

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Minutes: Minutes reviewed with Michele asking for a change to the January minutes to reflect a corrected spelling from *Michelle*. Amy asked for clarification regarding a survey being forwarded – it was agreed that the information was inadvertently not sent and would be coming. Motion to approve from Ellen and seconded by Jan – unanimous approval with changes noted.

Treasurer Report: A review of DVD expenditure. It was purchased with hopes to review it at the morning meeting. Unfortunately, the group did not have time to review the DVD and we may be able to see the DVD another time. There was a discussion as to the expenditure for facilitator who presented during the morning. Motion to accept the treasurer's report as written – approved unanimously.

SRC Chairperson Update: Jim welcomed everyone and shared about this morning session. The group gave some feedback as to the morning: in general agreed that some elements went well while others could have been more focused. Jim will put together an agenda for the follow up meeting on 3/28/13.

NCSRC & CSAVR National Conference: two members will be attending.

New members are needed with several members recently resigning.

May need to look at a webinar in July due to Jim not being able to attend the session.

Jim also reviewed two articles with the group.

Amy Porter Report: Looking at sequestration for the VR program – the cuts are immediate, but the impact on client services will likely not be felt until next year. There is a 5.1% cut nationally... it is a complicated formula but in CT there is a 4.5% reduction to include blind services. It is better than original expectations... it remains unclear of future impact.

There was a question about the position of the "DMHS/BRS Liaison". There has been a hiring freeze and questions have been asked regarding positions and job description/classification. DAS is requiring reviews due to DORS being a "new agency" – it should be noted that both DMHS and BRS are in support of the liaison position, however the process is slow.

DORS/BRS/Enfield office – there have been some changes with the Enfield office closing last year. We are nearing finalization of a new lease, but the counselors remain

in Hartford until the lease is completed. Challenges remain with some stumbling blocks, however the counselors have remained positive; unfortunately the consumers of Enfield are frustrated.

A question regarding Willimantic area was brought up - there is not an office there. Manchester is covering the area since 2003 when the DSS office was closed; DSS opened a different office but there was no space for BRS. There is an active “request for space” with DAS but movement with this is slow. Other options are addressing the staff needs in the area (air cards with lap tops) but the circumstance with Manchester covering the area remains.

Other: Middletown office and questions about space... there is an active “request for space” for this area as well with hopes for an accessible space when approved.

SRC Program Update: Evelyn Oliver Knight

SRC 2012 Annual Report – Evelyn distributed printed copies to those in attendance. Copies will be made available to absent members and who recently ended their tenure with the SRC. The annual report is available electronically to all others.

CSNA – Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment: The UCONN staff sent a survey to 900 BRS consumers who were eligible for services or had recently closed their cases. Michele had comments and the Legislation Policy and Review committee will be reviewing documents in the future.

Amy had some questions of the researchers in regards to “themes”; she shared that she was informed that UCONN did consider this a DRAFT and was hopeful to have feedback. There are thoughts of another DRAFT coming with the understanding that the next report would be another early release with hopes to forward the information as a final document.

The State Plan: there was some discussion about the DRAFT and it is to be reviewed along with a posting at the end of the month. The State Plan is the foundation for the “Public Meetings”. The “Public Meeting” dates are 4/8 & 4/9 with SRC members choosing dates to attend. There was a discussion about other public meetings with perhaps doing multiple forums and different ways.

Next Meeting

The follow-up meeting for the SRC Strategic Plan is March 28. The next SRC meeting is May 8; the meeting location TBD.

Respectfully submitted,
Thomas Boudreau
SRC Secretary