



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



**Minutes – May 8, 2013**

**SRC Meeting**  
**Office of Protection and Advocacy (P&A), 60 B Weston Street, Hartford, CT**

**Attendance**

**Present-**

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

**Volunteers:** Marisel Mandry, Gary Prushko, & Miriam Torres-Thorburn.

**BRS:** Evelyn Oliver Knight

**Excused-**

**SRC Member:** Mary Pierson Keating

**BRS:** Amy Porter, Ex Officio

**Absent- SRC Members:** Tanisha Minnis & George Narvaez

*(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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## **Welcome/Introductions:**

Jim opened the meeting and everyone introduced themselves. Two new potential members attended: Miriam Torres-Thorburn and Gary Prushko.

- 1. Minutes – Tom Boudreau:** There were four sets of minutes reviewed to include: minutes from the Strategic Planning Meeting 3/13/13, the regular scheduled SRC Meeting 3/13/13, a Special Meeting on State Plan Discussion 3/13/13, and Special Meeting /Work Group of 3/28/13.
  - Motion to approve without modifications from Michele and seconded by Roberta – unanimous approval with no changes noted.
- 2. Treasurer Report – Jan Hasenjager:** A review of expenses was completed. All questions were answered with a motion to accept the treasurer’s report as written – approved.
- 3. SRC Chairperson Update – Jim Quick:** Jim shared that the earlier strategic planning meeting was positive. We need to review the DVD – perhaps during the next meeting during lunch.
  - New members are always being recruited – there are three potential new members (two at the current meeting).
  - CSAVR & NCSRC (The Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation & The National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils) – There was a discussion of the importance of these groups and who may be able to attend the national conference at the end of June.
  - CNSA (Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment) will be discussed later.
  - Discussion about the Strategic Plan meeting on 3/28/13. The minutes were the basis for the discussion – which were in an outline format. A review as to scope and role of SRC was addressed. Below are highlights of each goal and “discussion”. Attached is the revised outline (pending SRC review) with modifications and specifics that were added to the outline which were based on the discussion below.

Goal #1 - To assess the effectiveness and delivery of vocational services provided by BRS to individuals with disabilities.

- a. Objective – ensuring that consumer’s voices are heard through public hearings.*

Discussion:

- the area of “Public Meetings” was reviewed as to when and why public meetings should be held, along with how the SRC is involved. A historical review of the “Public Meetings” with examples of past events and trying to understand/learn from the past and some of the complexities related to these events was reviewed.

Currently: BRS invites all those current and recently closed cases with the bureau, to come and review the current State Plan (this is what drives the services). At the meeting there is a discussion related to the goals of the agency and then an opportunity for consumers to ask or write their questions. The current format and events were discussed with the explanation that it is much more productive and gives structure to the event. Several people shared very positive experiences from the public meetings and in particular very positive outcomes were noted by members who attended the recent sessions.

- Review of the list under “Activity” - ideas were discussed around the table as to what is “accomplishable” for the SRC to do in their role. Specific topics of motivation, logistics and food were discussed - more research is needed in these area such as have a company donate food.

Examples of “other successful public hearings” were brought up: one element noted was that when the hearings were connected with a “grass roots” outreach or are known groups in the area – they had more success. It was agreed that the SRC may be able to be more involved with the promotional piece and collaborate more in this area.

- Modify on the strategic plan around the language of the “Objective” (from “ensure” to “monitor”) and under “Activity” change the action steps to indicate more “grass roots promotion”. The Business Partnership subcommittee will look into elements above and report back as needed.

b. *Objective – having adequate time to review information and surveys to assess components of BRS.*

Discussion:

- Several discussions on how to try to be more of an active and productive SRC. Perhaps making more “work meetings” and try to look at information with the group rather than in isolation. A motion was moved and unanimously approved to meet on “off months” as needed to develop work groups and working meetings.
- Modify on the strategic plan the action steps under “Activity” of stronger commitment to committees working on their parts of the plan and convene more meetings in order to develop “work group” meetings.

*GOAL 2 - To improve the coordination of vocational services among BRS, state agencies and public and private entities for the benefit of BRS consumers.*

*Objective – provide the council with the needed information to assess levels of coordination of services.*

Discussion:

- There was suggestion for SRC members to attend some staff meetings in order to bring back information to the main meeting. The Subcommittee of Consumer Satisfaction thought this would be an area that they could use as an action step.
- Modify under “Activity” on the strategic plan the action steps that the Consumer Satisfaction subcommittee will attempt to attend staff meeting and communicate elements from trainings. The Legislative, Policy and Planning subcommittee would investigate actions of other SRCs (see what they are doing) and examine the BRS web site to determine if there are elements that we could address.

*GOAL 3 – To make recommendations to BRS, the Governor, the RSA, and other for developing and improving strategies for the employment of, and vocational services for individuals with disabilities.*

*Objective – regularly utilize committees to gather timely and accurate information in order to share results with the Council*

## Discussion:

- Develop a SRC time line/work plan along with handbook to sequence out the SRC year/events and responsibilities. Evelyn has sent out training/information in the past and will continue to keep the SRC aware of these. Item of note- Mark Henry (supervisor for employment counselors at BRS) will be invited to the next meeting.
- Modify under “Activity” on the strategic plan the action steps to have subcommittees address specific tasks and then return the information as part of their update so it can be analyzed and be shared with the SRC. These can be accomplished along with the “work groups” on the off months in order to remain focused so that goals can be accomplished and develop a formalized structure to review the state plan and other reports.

## “Other Issues” –

Topics discussed at the workgroup and the responses from entire SRC.

### • Questions:

- Is there a list of who are the “public and private entities” – for the benefit of BRS consumers? *A list may already be available and may be secured for future review.*
- Can we ask training if they have these lists and resource guides? *Evelyn has sent out these in the past and will continue to keep the SRC aware of the information.*
- Are the trainings easily accessible? *Yes.*
- As a council - should we have more meetings more often (“working meetings” that allows time to review/share information)? *Yes – and voted on.*
- It takes a significant amount of time to complete the process through application, assessment, evaluation and then getting a job. Is there some way to address this? *It is often case by case... and unfortunately after the initial appointment is completed, the concern can be related to specific regions. It was shared that now there is no longer an “order of selection” – the process should be faster.*
- Can we develop/is there a flow sheet with “SRC time line” that is along-side/compares with the services? *Yes – often depends on the case but there is one in the consumer handbook.*

○ *Best practices:*

- Training is being done with new counselors - trying to have accountability with mentoring and following the consumer through the process. *Answer is that it depends on the case and difficult task for SRC to do accomplish.*
- Establishing links with those specific needs of the consumer to engage/connect with the people who deliver the service. *Answer - no one recollected the reference – so there was no response from the SRC.*

**4. NCSRC & CSAVR National Conferences** - Ellen and Larry attended the conferences in April. Ellen presented a summary with some specific elements she will bring to Evelyn and Jim's attention. Discussed some of the presentations, with a focus on leadership training. She also went to the Capital and met with officials. She discussed the surveys that BRS are using and is trying to find information on what other SRCs are using. She discussed some unique elements of other SRCs. One highlighted element was the suggestion that other SRCs are tracking the "SRC Activities" such as what has been accomplished over time – tracking outcomes and accomplishments (we may want to do this).

**5. SRC Program Update – Evelyn Oliver Knight**

- The updated phone list in the SCR packet remains as a resource (corrections in italics): Gary *Prushko* and *Miriam* Torres-Thornburn at 9 Chelsea *Parade* South.
- The 4/2013 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment Summary was reviewed – the culmination of work over three years. The UCONN Health Center was used for the first time to conduct the surveys, interviews and research and they were very helpful in completing the assessment. The SRC helped to develop the surveys and interview questions. The Summary becomes a section in the State Plan.
- The public meetings were held – about 25 people attended the one in Hartford and 14 attended in Bridgeport; there were 5000 invitations sent out. The events were considered positive and the results of the meetings were reviewed to include notes and comments/questions. Amy will incorporate outcomes of the public meetings to finalize the goals for the next year in the State Plan.
- There is an administrative hearing to be reviewed. Evelyn is attempting to place on the BRS website (password for SRC members) – awaiting Amy's approval of this process. She will inform us of this when it occurs.
- Representative for the National State Rehabilitation Council Forum – We need someone to volunteer to attend this Forum. It is to be held in Washington, DC

6/24 & 6/25. Several members were unavailable; others had an interest and if they can attend should contact Evelyn and Jim.

## 6. Committee Reports:

The differing subcommittees gave their reports:

- Intercouncil /Nominations - Victor will be interviewing the new volunteers so their names can be submitted to the Governor to be considered for appointment to the SRC.
- Legislation, Policy & Planning - Larry shared he will be contacting the newly formed group in order to begin the challenges ahead to include contacting other SRCs and reviewing the website.
- Consumer Satisfaction – Jim shared and discussed the thoughts on attending staff meetings and that Sharon will share information SILC (the State Independent Living Council) of SRC activities.
- Business Partnership – Roberta shared that “Connect- Ability” is continuing even though the grant is no longer funded. The Business Partnership Committee is doing trainings (“How to Work with BRS”) for different business and the SRC at a later date. Mark Henry (supervisor for employment counselors at BRS) will be invited to the next meeting as well to share information on “what the employment consultants/counselors do”.

## 7. Consumer Issues

Evelyn solicited feedback from the group and visitors regarding the meeting; positive responses were shared.

Meeting adjourned with the drafts of posters for the regional offices to help consumers understand what to expect from BRS/understand how they can be effective partners with BRS in the VR process. Members will review these and share impressions.

### **Next Meeting:**

The next regular scheduled SRC meeting is July 10, 12:00 – 3:30 PM, Goodwill Industries, 165 Ocean Terrace, Bridgeport.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Thomas Boudreau**  
SRC Secretary