



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



Minutes of the March 16, 2011 Meeting

**Goodwill Industries**  
**165 Ocean Terrace**  
**Bridgeport, CT**

*Attendance*

Present

**SRC Members:** Sarah Harvey, Jan Hasenjager, Sandy Inzinga, Mary Pierson Keating, Barbara Konow, Laura Micklus, George Narvaez Jim Quick, Victor Xavier

**BRS Staff:** Kathy Blewett, Mark Henry, Evelyn Oliver Knight, and Mick Posner

Excused

**SRC Members:** Michele Fontaine, Roberta Hurley, John F. Sims, and Janette Williams

**BRS Staff:** Amy Porter

**Volunteers:** Jennifer Hannah

Absent

Sharon Denson, Simone Mason

*\*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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Mary Pierson Keating, the incoming chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

All attendees introduced themselves.

January's meeting had been canceled due to weather conditions. November's meeting minutes were moved for council approval. Kathy Blewett requested a correction in Amy Porter's section of the minutes for the last meeting regarding the goal for the number of consumers to be placed in competitive employment. Motion approved by council.

*(November minutes were corrected.)*

### **SRC Chairperson's Update – Mary Pierson Keating**

1. Mary and Sandy met with Amy and Evelyn to review the SRC Strategic plan, to discuss transition from Sandy to Mary as Chair of the SRC and to discuss SRC activities for the coming year. Mary asked members to review the strategic plan for next meeting.
2. The National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) will meet in April prior to the Council of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) conference. As Chair, Mary will have the opportunity to meet with the CT congressional delegation along with A. Porter and Brian Sigman of the Board of Education Services for the Blind (BESB). It will be a great opportunity to educate the congressional delegation about BRS. Mary would like to share info on the return on the investment (cost to provide services versus the cost employed consumer pay in taxes) as a win-win situation. Kathy shared about her experience working with the congressional delegation. She emphasized the importance of providing feedback to congress on how the funds provided were invested.
3. Order of selection.
4. Committees Chairs and Membership: Mary advised new SRC members to select their committees. The Legislation, Policy, and Planning Committee is searching for a new chair and additional members. The chair and some members have completed their second term of service to the SRC.
5. Committees were also advised to meet between scheduled SRC meetings and present their reports.
6. Mary presented Sandy with a Certificate of Appreciation for her hard work.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Evelyn reviewed the Treasurer's Report in Michele's absence.

### **BRS Update – Kathy Blewett for Amy Porter**

Kathy shared good news about having three new counselors in the agency. In addition, five new counselor positions were approved.

The Handicap Driver Unit will be eliminated from the DMV budget. It is unclear if this unit will be relocated under another agency or eliminated altogether. This unit provides invaluable training to drivers with disabilities. Mary posed the question if there was anything the council can do to help (i.e. write a petition letter). Jim asked for a motion to proceed on obtaining further information or research on the possible elimination of the HDU. This information will be forwarded to SRC members via E-mail.

BESB Proposal: to become a sub-unit of the VR program. Many states have BESB and VR as two different entities, while others have BESB as a sub-unit of the VR program. Everything is speculative as of now.

### **BRS Employment Division – Mark Henry**

Mark provided an update on the Employment Division and the status of progress at Walgreens and Loews.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Consumer Satisfaction: Barbara Konow**

Barbara updated the status of the consumer satisfaction surveys. The committee was working on visiting all 14 BRS offices to assess the intake process. Additional volunteers were requested to cover the office visits.

### **Nominations: Victor Xavier**

Victor indicated that there are still nominations pending. Evelyn offered a detailed breakdown on the demographics of the SRC.

### **Legislative, Policy, and Planning:**

Sandy indicated that the state legislative session is about to end. It is unclear how this committee can work on the items like the DMV, BESB restructuring (if the two SRCs might merge or continue separated). Also, the possibility of attending the BESB SRC meeting (and vice versa) was explored. George Narvaez and Mick Posner agreed to co-chair this committee. *(Mick needs to be formally appointed first.)*

### **Business Partnership Committee:**

Mary offered the report. The committee is working on how to disseminate information about the VR program to the business community. Also, the possibility of compiling a list of agencies that offer services to people with disabilities has been discussed.

### **SRC Program Update: Evelyn Oliver Knight**

The 2010 SRC report was presented to the council and approved. Evelyn spotted an error on the report. She will update and resend the report via E-mail.

Evelyn also asked members to verify their contact information in the member list.

The Statewide Needs Assessment is due in 2013. Members were asked to join the Consumer Satisfaction Committee to work on the needs assessment during the next two years.

The SRC can receive information on the hearing decisions as long as the identity of the client is protected following privacy laws. Kathy offered a detailed synopsis on the administrative hearing process in BRS. There are presently three hearing officers employed at this time. SRC members asked about talking to consumers who are involved in the hearing process. They are not required to talk to SRC members and BRS is not allowed to tell them who the consumers are, but the consumers may attend SRC meetings to address concerns, if they desire. Evelyn added that the consumer handbook explains about the SRC and its role (Page 24).

The NCSRC and CSAVR:

1. The Institute on Rehabilitation Issues (IRI) will publish its findings on SRCs. It will have a new topic in 2011. Individuals may volunteer to participate.
2. CSAVR will not be able to fund Sunday sessions when the NCSRC meets in the future.
3. NCSRC currently has 11 members, but would like at least 17 members from all regions to be represented on the steering committee.

The RSA will begin a new round of state monitoring visits. CT is not in the first round of states to be visited. Exit interviews will take place two weeks after the visit rather than at the immediate end of the visit.

There were no consumer issues. Meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: George Narvaez & Evelyn Oliver Knight