



State Rehabilitation Council
to the
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services



Minutes of the May 18, 2011 Meeting

Campbell Building, DDS
Norwich, CT

Attendance

Present

SRC Members: Michele Fontaine, Roberta Hurley, Sandra Inzinga, Mary Pierson Keating, Barbara Konow, George Narvaez, John Sims, and Jim Quick

BRS Staff: Evelyn Oliver Knight and Amy Porter

Volunteers: Jennifer Hannah

Excused

SRC Members: Sarah Harvey, Janette Williams

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.*

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services
Department of Social Services, 25 Sigourney Street, 11th Floor, Hartford, CT 06106-5033
Phone: 860-424-4871 Toll-free: 1-800-537-2549 TDD: 860-424-4839 FAX: 860-424-4850

Chairperson Mary Pierson Keating called the meeting to order after 1:00 PM.

All attendees introduced themselves.

SRC Chairperson's Update – Mary Pierson Keating

1. Mary and Amy went to DC for the CSAVR meeting in April. Mary reported about what a great experience it was and how nice it was to meet everyone on the councils and educate the Senators. Mary also attended the NCSRC meeting on Sunday.
2. The State Rehabilitation Council Vocational Rehabilitation Partnership was the subject of the 36th Institute of Rehabilitation Issues. It is a great review of the expectations of the SRC and its relationship to state VR programs. Evelyn will find out how to get copies for the rest of the SRC members. Mary stated that one of the important topics that came out at the meeting is the membership issue that all the positions need to be filled so we have representation from each area. We need one from the Section 121 (Mashantucket VR Program), two from Business, Labor and Industry and one from the State Workforces Investment Board (Laura Micklus lost her job due to the lack of funds) and the parent training and information center. Another important area is the budget issues.
3. The NCSRC Steering committee is looking for additional members and Mary is going to find out what is required to be on that committee.
4. There was discussion about a DVD or video that we could give to the legislators and Amy said BRS had one that was old called "Moving Mountains". Amy suggested we could lead people to the website and they could look at Connect-Ability and video clips but Amy suggested it should be a part of a presentation to generate more conversation. We discussed the need to publicize ourselves more.
5. Mary attended two prep rallies: she spoke at one and interviewed a consumer (who she will probably hire) at the second one. Amy explained that Prep Rallies were designed to prepare groups of people for Job Fairs (unlike the individual services offered to consumers as a part of their employment plans) through practicing mock interviews. Some consumers had the opportunity to interview for real jobs.
6. Mary asked everyone to look at SRC strategic plan goals. She recommended that we concentrate on Goal 1: E. Ensure that the VR service system gives consumers equitable opportunities to make informed choices that lead to quality employment outcomes. Sandy clarified where we were when the strategic plan came out. Barbara Konow commented that the Consumer Satisfaction committee was in the middle of surveying the offices now and could not add anything to their plate.

Treasurer's Report – Michele Fontaine

1. Of the \$24,350.00 available, we have only spent \$2,124.59.
2. John stated that we need to get involved in more projects and spend money and Evelyn reminded everyone that this needs to start in October when the budget year starts and not wait until now to make a proposal.
3. Amy explained that we should be looking at strategic plan and each committee should be implementing goals and there should be a budget tied to that. Amy then stated that she would need a proposal and how it ties to employment.

BRS Update –Amy Porter

1. Amy explained that in the original budget BRS stayed under DSS with BESB adult services and CDHI folded in under them.
2. When the appropriations came out they were no longer under DSS. New Bureau of Rehabilitative Services, under this Bureau is BRS as it exists today, all of BESB, Vocational Rehab portion of Workers Compensation Commission, Handicap Driver Program, CDHI everyone stays as is with same funding and staffing except Executive Director and Executive Secretary eliminated from CDHI.
3. BESB eliminates Executive Director, Exec Secretary, Legislative liaison, deputy director
4. Those entities are now part of the Bureau of Rehabilitative Services; DSS is for administrative purposes only. CDHI - Commission on Deaf and Hearing Impaired. Will not know many details until the actual bill comes out. Do not know if the two VR programs will be joined (BESBE and BRS) or if they will remain separate programs or not.
5. Amy once again talked about the committees having more focus as she can't be helpful if she does not know what we are doing. Mary suggested that the committees meet on the off months and that we would be more productive.
6. Sandy wanted to summarize strategic plan, when she was a chairperson there was focus. Most times when you have a plan it is to be implemented over a few years, this does not identify how many years. Strategic Plan has larger goals and then breaks down in to smaller goals or build strategic plan and then break it down. For the annual meetings have one or two goals and assigning to committees. Apologizing for handing it off to Mary without finishing it.

Committee Reports

Business Partnership Committee – Roberta Hurley:

Roberta reported about the upcoming Employment Summit and explained that due to Connect-ability grant ending she would not be involved in those meetings anymore. Discussion about a brochure explaining what we do and Michele is going to bring a copy of a draft to the next meeting.

Consumer Satisfaction – Barbara Konow:

Barbara reported that they are working on the survey and should be finished by the next meeting.

Nominations – John Sims:

John expressed his apologies for not being here for several months due to being laid off but is now back. John stated that he wants to look at spending money possibly putting posters to recruit people for the SRC.

Legislative, Policy, and Planning – George Narvaez:

George talked about possible goals:

- Outreach to policy makers to educate them about SRC and BRS
- Disseminating information about tax credits and laws
- George will get update on TEAM act and report at next meeting in July

SRC Program Update – Evelyn Oliver Knight:

1. Annual report sent electronically to other SRCs and posted on website.
2. The State Plan has been turned in to Amy for her review and comment. It will then be reviewed by Claudette and then the Commissioner for signature, and then to RSA by June 30, 2011. Thank you to all of you that helped with State Plan. Evelyn would like everyone to be well-versed on the State Plan so she will review different sections at each meeting. Evelyn went over the plan and what the different sections are. Amy noted that preprints are like a “cheat sheet” for the rehab act. Evelyn also spoke about opportunities to participate or attend BRS-related events or staff meetings as an opportunity to observe and evaluate and that it is important that SRC members attend these as they will not the full picture. If you do not have a full picture you are not able to assess the state plan and make appropriate recommendations.
3. Evelyn then pointed out the goals and priorities that Amy has outlined and that all SRC members need to be aware of those. Hard to make recommendations if you do not understand what is involved. As SRC members you need to be able to read

through the whole state plan. You all come from different perspectives but need to know VR program better than you do. Evelyn will send out what section she is going to concentrate on for each meeting and Barbara suggested we go over it at the beginning of the meeting and Evelyn agreed.

4. Amy mentioned that when she gets our goals and she sees that if the recommendations are already being done, it shows that we are not communicating and it is important that we have that relationship. Amy can't advocate but we can, used the video phones as an example. Spend more time as members of the SRC getting to know what VR does.
5. Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment is due for 2013 so we need to look at how that is going to be done. Consumer Satisfaction committee usually works on that but will need other members of the SRC support.
6. New Consumer Handbook has been finished and will be distributed to the offices. Copies were shared with those in attendance.

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

Respectfully Submitted: Roberta Hurley