



State Rehabilitation Council
to the
Bureau of Rehabilitation Services



Minutes of the July 20, 2011 Meeting

Connecticut Hospital Association
Wallingford, CT

Attendance

Present

SRC Members: Michele Fontaine, Sarah Harvey, Jan Hasenjager, Mary Pierson Keating, Barbara Konow, George Narvaez, Jim Quick **and** Janette Williams

BRS Staff: Evelyn Oliver Knight and Amy Porter

Volunteers: Gladys Brooks, Laura Micklus, and Larry Robinson (pending appointment)

Excused

SRC Members: Roberta Hurley, Sandra Inzinga, John F. Sims, and Victor Xavier

Volunteers: Jennifer Held (formerly Hannah)

Absent

Sharon Denson and 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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Chairperson Mary Pierson Keating called the meeting to order shortly after 1:00 PM.

All attendees introduced themselves. The minutes of the May SRC meeting were approved. The possibility of utilizing video conference for participants who cannot attend meetings in person was discussed.

SRC Program Update – Evelyn Oliver Knight:

1. In response to the SRC training suggestions included in Section 4.2a of the State Plan, Evelyn explained the training requirements and high standards that counselors already meet and how it is documented in Sections 4.10 of the State Plan.
2. Evelyn explained the quarterly reports that track the electronic inquiries from consumers, their families, and others involved in the vocational rehabilitation (VR) process. The SRC will start receiving these reports.
3. Evelyn explained the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) to be completed in March 2013. SRC members will be involved with the CSNA.

SRC Chairperson's Update – Mary Pierson Keating

1. Mary shared update about the White House virtual town hall meeting.
2. Mary suggested publicizing about BRS to Estate Trust Attorneys, the State Bar, and to Financial Planners. Amy cautioned that outreach needs to be met by appropriate staffing and there are currently some limitations (see BRS update below).

Treasurer's Report – Michele Fontaine

1. The budget is sufficient to cover any final expenses to the end of the year, September 20, 2011.
2. The SRC agreed to buy 40 copies of 36th Institute on Rehabilitation Issues: The State Rehabilitation Council-Vocation Rehabilitation Partnership (at \$20.00 each) for \$800.00. Each member will receive a copy and we'll have some available for future members.
3. Plans for spending next year need to be agreed upon and related to the SRC & BRS mission.

BRS Update –Amy Porter

1. Amy spoke about BRS consolidating with the Board of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB) and the Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (CDHI) to form the new **Bureau of Rehabilitative Services**. No director has yet been designated. The SRC agreed to send a letter to the Governor requesting to be a part

- of the process to select the new director. The Driver Training Program for People with disabilities will also be a part of this new agency. A new director needs to be named so that the merger can begin. Currently, we are operating under rules and guidelines in place prior to the merger. It may take a while to complete the merger.
2. BRS may consider a name change to avoid confusion with the new Bureau of Rehabilitative Services agency.
 3. Amy explained staffing issues in the regional offices. The Danielson office is down to one staff person. Only one counselor serves the office on a flex time basis. The Enfield office is temporarily closed and staff is working out of the Hartford office. Ansonia is close to getting a new office.
 4. No BRS counselors are being hired at this time due to state union issues and budget concerns.
 5. Training opportunities should not be affected.
 6. Amy explained the formula grant that enables some states to obtain more funding when other states cannot provide the state match that is required to receive it. CT is able to apply for additional funding to provide more services because CT provides the appropriate match.
 7. BRS is developing a grant for distance learning training via Blackboard using Connect-Ability funding.
 8. The State Plan was due 7/1/11, but BRS requested one moth extension due to the merger. The State Plan will identify consumers and the business community as our consumers.
 9. Amy also encouraged more SRC involvement and learning about the BRS program so that the SRC may utilize the opportunity to make innovative suggestions in the State Plan.

Committee Reports

Business Partnership Committee – Roberta Hurley:

Roberta was absent.

Consumer Satisfaction – Barbara Konow:

Work on the survey of what happens when a consumer goes into the BRS office to apply for service continues. There are a couple of offices which still need to be surveyed. Larry volunteered to survey one of the offices.

Nominations – John F. Sims:

Evelyn reported that appointments are still pending from the Governor's office.

Legislative, Policy, and Planning – George Narvaez:

George continues to monitor policy issues.

There were no consumer issues. Meeting adjourned near 3:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted: George Narvaez