

Virginia State Rehabilitation Council
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
March 19, 2012

A meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was held on March 19, 2012 at the DRS Headquarters Building in Henrico, Virginia.

Members Present: Sandra Cook, Matthew Deans, Charles Downs, Cheryl Johnson, Sarah Liddle, Toney Lineberry, Ellen McIlhenny, James Rothrock, Karen Gregory-Williams

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Elizabeth Smith, Policy and Planning Director; Vanessa Rakestraw, Policy Analyst; Barbara Tyson, Staff Support; Jim Taylor, Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired SRC Representative; John Thaniel, Chief Financial Officer; Rick Sizemore, Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center Director; Rob Froehlich, George Washington University TACE Center, Julie Triplett, Virginia Office for Protection and Advocacy, Mable Fleming, Senior Research Analyst; Barbara Burkett, Research and Evaluation Lead Analyst; Dale Batten, Central Regional Director.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 11:30 a.m.

Approval of Minutes: A motion was made, seconded, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2012 meeting and noted that the addendum to the minutes included the Roundtable Reports of the SRC members.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no comments from the public.

Chairperson's Report:

- Ms. Cook emailed the 2011 SRC Annual Report, along with a personal note, to all the members of the General Assembly. She and other SRC members received approximately nine responses from the General Assembly members.
- Ms. Cook received a thank you note from former Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner, Lynnae Rutledge, for the letter the SRC sent her. Ms. Cook previously forwarded the note to the SRC members.
- Ms. Cook thanked Rick Sizemore for his assistance in having the 2011 SRC Annual Report printed by the Georgia Rehabilitation Center at cost.
- On April 20-21, 2012 Ms. Cook will attend the State Rehabilitation Council training and the meeting of the National Consortium of State Rehabilitation Councils in Bethesda, Maryland.

SRC Educational Program: The ARC of Northern Virginia

Ms. Johnson provided information on the history of the ARC and the services provided by the ARC of Northern Virginia.

Commissioner's Report

- The General Assembly adjourned its regular session without agreement on the budget bill. They will return next week in Special Session to try to come to agreement. Until their final action, DRS will not know if the additional funding for VR and the restored funding for some of the community based programs will be included in the final budget. Catherine Harrison briefed the External Affairs Committee on legislation that was passed. Of particular note, is legislation that will allow youth to retain their assistive technology purchased by the schools after leaving school. Also, there were two bills regarding our Employment Services Organizations; one to remove the term “sheltered workshop” from the Procurement section of the *Code* and another to bring ESOs into the “SWAM” provisions of the *Code*. This was a Governor’s bill.
- Effective July 1, 2012, the Departments for the Aging and Rehabilitative Services will become part of a new agency, likely named the Virginia Department for the Aging and Rehabilitative Services. Effective July 1, 2013, the Adult Services and Adult Protective Services units of the Department of Social Services will join the newly created agency. The change was made to provide better coordinated services for people with disabilities and the aging population. Particular collaboration is occurring between Centers for Independent Living and the Area Agencies on Aging on means to help people stay in the community.
- The Commissioner is serving on a workgroup regarding the settlement agreement with the Department of Justice on Virginian’s compliance with the Olmstead case. With the proposed closing of the 4-5 training centers in Virginia to move towards community based services, there is an employment aspect for those affected.
- Danny DeBoer, former SRC member, continues to serve on the Return on Investment (ROI) committee to look at the economic impact of the vocational rehabilitation program. The ROI research demonstrates the value of the VR program.
- The Secretary of the Commonwealth’s Office has notified the Commissioner that SRC new member appointments are pending and should be announced soon.
- The Transition Forum held in Roanoke on March 12-14, 2012 was again a huge success with DRS and WWRC staff participating in the conference and transition-age youth telling their stories of the positive impact of transition services on their lives.

Unfinished Business – Working Lunch

Ms. Liddle reported that the Independent Living Conference will be held on May 1-3, 2012 at the Hilton Richmond Hotel & Spa in Short Pump. This is the first statewide Independent Living Conference since 2006. SRC members are invited to attend. At the conference, there will be a table to display SILC and SRC materials. Ms. Cook, Ms. McIlhenny, Ms. Johnson, and Mr. Downs volunteered to provide coverage at the table. Ms. Smith will send out additional information.

Ms. Liddle distributed copies of the Virginia Association of Centers for Independent Living Annual Report.

Report on Comprehensive Needs Assessment

Dr. Burkett provided a report on the results to date of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The next steps will be to finalize some of the data and then develop the final written report.

Council Roundtable and Working Lunch

The Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired and the Statewide Independent Living Council reports were submitted in writing and are attached. Matthew Deans noted that since he moved to a Transition Counselor, he does not feel he has the time needed to continue to serve on the Virginia Assistive Technology Council representing the SRC and asked for anyone who has interest in serving to contact Ms. Cook.

DRS Program Reports

Budget

John Thaniel reported on the status of the budget for State Fiscal Year 2012 and provided members with a detailed budget breakdown.

Field Rehabilitation Services

Dale Batten reviewed the FRS performance scorecard which was distributed prior to the meeting. Currently, there are 19,262 open cases with 3,724 people on the waiting list. Seventy-five percent of the consumers are most significantly disabled. About 1,200 consumers have become successfully employed with hourly wages at \$9.91 and a competitive employment rate of 95%. FRS continues to move most significantly disabled consumers off of the waiting list. The next cohort will occur the first of April. Ms. Batten also discussed the employment status of offices in her region and new businesses that are opening which may assist in hiring our consumers. She noted that a Regional Director will be coming to each meeting to give a report on their respective regions.

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center

Mr. Sizemore handed out a report on the activities at WWRC. Referrals are increasing for life skills training and the number of consumers who can participate in this program has been increased to 135 per day. WWRC continues to sustain its census of 300 cases per month, but will not be able to meet its expected performance of 3,000 cases for the year. The vocational training graduates' rehabilitation rate is 74%, which is very good. WWRC provided tote bags for attendees at the Transition Conference with the WWRC logo and a barcode that can be used by phones to access the WWRC website. The

renovation of Barrett Hall is continuing and may be ready for a grand opening in January, 2013. Auto mechanic and building trades programs have been very successful with employers. He also shared an incentive plan that provides buttons to staff that provide employment information for clients – the buttons are designed and made by clients. It has proven to be very exciting for staff and clients.

Committee Reports

Internal Affairs

Internal Affairs: Mr. Deans reported that Donna Bonessi, Employment Support Specialist, provided an update on the Employment Services Organization (ESO) Report Card. The Report Card will collect performance data on the ESOs across the Commonwealth to be utilized by VR counselors and consumers to assist them in making decisions about their choice of vendor to provide supported employment and job coach training skills services.

Liz Smith announced that there will be four public hearings to receive input for the development of the 2013 State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation and Supported Employment. The hearing in Richmond will be in conjunction with the Independent Living Conference. The other hearings will be held in Virginia Beach, Roanoke, and Leesburg. SRC members will be sent the final public hearing schedule shortly. Ms. Smith briefed the Committee on the timeframe and components for the 2013 State Plan. A first draft of the State Plan should be available by April 15th. The SRC Recommendation Attachment is complete except for the agency's response to the SRC recommendations. Members received a copy of the current Goals and Priorities Attachment and will receive changes to this Attachment. The SRC will approve the final version at their June, 2012 meeting.

External Affairs

Karen Gregory-Williams indicated that Sandra Cook has been informed that new SRC members will be appointed by the Governor shortly.

Catherine Harrison, Director of the Office of Community Integration, provided an update on legislation that passed the General Assembly this year affecting people with disabilities. The budget has not been approved. The Governor's budget has increased funding for vocational rehabilitation and some reduced funding for community based services.

The Committee reviewed the five nominations for the annual Roy J. Ward State Rehabilitation Council Leadership Award. The Committee recommended that the following three nominees receive the award: John Ballurio, Karen Kahn, and Robin Sexauer. A motion was made, seconded and approved unanimously by the full Council to present the award to these three individuals. The awards will be presented at the June 11th meeting.

New Business

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on June 11, 2012 at the Richmond Marriott West, 4240 Dominion Boulevard, Glen Allen, Virginia 23060.

Virginia Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Report To the Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) March 19, 2012

The SILC held its quarterly business meeting on February 9, 2012 at the Resources for Independent Living, Inc, located at 4009 Fitzhugh Avenue, Richmond, VA.

Educational Presentation: Shawn Kirk, Chairperson of Virginia Advocates United Leading Together (VAULT), provided an overview of this recently-created non-profit that obtained a grant from the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities. VAULT endeavors to establish statewide, cross-disability advocacy and identify common ground on policy.

DSU Update - DRS

Commissioner Rothrock of DRS updated the Council about recent issues impacting the agency including:

- Bills proposing the consolidation of agencies (DRS, Department of Aging, Department for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing, and Adult Services and Adult Protective Services functions of the Department of Social Services)
- Proposed cuts in the Governor's budget reductions
- IL Conference in May

SILC Chair, Shaun Utt asked Commissioner Rothrock what could be done to improve obtaining SILC appointments in a timely manner, because there are existing vacancies as well as a few upcoming vacancies which will result in a disproportion of vacant seats on a small council. The two ex officios are serving past their term dates. Rothrock indicated that there is a need to increase the pool of applicants because each vacancy should have three applicants each. Also, it is preferred that one person not serve on more than one Council or Board.

Transition Forum: The SILC will be sending a representative to the Transition Forum in Roanoke. This attendee will distribute SILC information and participate in the conference fulfilling several stated objectives in the current State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL).

IL Conference: The SILC will sponsor a speaker at the IL Conference. A letter, under the Chairperson's signature, will be sent to the Chair of SRC – DBVI and invite the Council to share a table with the SILC and SRC – DRS at the IL Conference for the purpose of new member recruitment. The SILC membership will be attending this conference in conjunction with the March the quarterly meeting.

Annual SILC Transmittal Letter: The Council will develop a transmittal letter to highlight the SILC objectives and accomplishments for 2011. This letter will be sent annually, to the Governor, Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the agencies under the CIAC and Team, the SRCs of DRS and DBVI, RSA, other SILCs, and congressional offices.

SPIL Development Team: The steps for developing the next SPIL are being taken by the SILC. A development team has been appointed and will meet March 14 to set up a work plan and a budget. Mable Fleming, Policy Planning Specialist with DRS, will be available to answer questions and give direction for the development of the needs assessment.

2012 SILC Congress: Two members of the SILC, Lauren Roche and Shaun Utt attended the SILC Congress in Houston. The Region III (Mid-Atlantic) meeting was also held in Houston and the group indicated interested in having a regional meeting in Winchester in October. A planning committee will be needed. The Congress plans to make use of webinars and convene the in-person Congress every two years, beginning in 2014.

Community Integration Advisory Commission and Implementation Team

(Olmstead) Update: SILC staff, Rhonda Jeter, reported on the December 6 meeting of the Team; Preda and Ward-Solomon also attended the meeting. The meeting was held with the new Director, Catherine Harrison, at the helm. Preda reported that with a new director and with Virginia's settlement with the Department of Justice, the Olmstead initiative is moving into a new era with positive leadership.

State Rehabilitation Council – DBVI: Ken Jessup received notification from the Secretary of the Commonwealth about the status of his official appointment to the SRC. The SRC is having the same problems with membership vacancies as the SILC. Again, the SRC wants more applications for the vacancies

Assistive Technology Advisory Council (ATAC): Mary Mathena replaced Utt as the SILC representative to ATAC. She attended the meeting on January 12 and provided the electronic reports to Jeter. The meeting provided a good overview and orientation of the various assistive technology programs. They are tracking an important bill, "Technology Follows the Student."

Virginia Association Centers for Independent Living: Karen Michalski-Karney reported and covered these key items:

- The 2011 Annual Report is available and distributed copies to the SILC

- February 9 was IL Day at the General Assembly and approximately 185 people attended from across the state.
- The CILs will be represented at the IL Conference.
- VACIL will have a booth at the March Transition Forum in Roanoke.
- Options Counseling collaboration has begun with Area Agencies on Aging. There are 7 CILs are participating. This effort will assist nursing home residents in receiving information about community living options.
- Piedmont satellite CIL has obtained space in Martinsville.

Announcements

Utt announced that a SILC member and former Chair, Jack Brandt, had received a federal appointment to the President's Committee on Intellectual Disabilities.

Note: 2012 Meeting Dates

April 30, Richmond, to coincide with IL Conference

July 25, 26, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center in Roanoke

October 24, 25, to coincide with Peninsula Center for Independent Living's Disability Awareness Conference

Prepared by: Sarah Liddle, SILC Liaison to the SRC

Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired Report To the Statewide Rehabilitation Council March 19, 2012

DBIV Meeting Date: March 3, 2011 – Chairperson Melanie Brunson conducted the meeting

New Member orientation will take place on June 1; the day before the next DVBI SRC meeting.

The Retreat which was held on March 2, 2012 and was a big success!

Commissioner's Report by Ray Hopkins: RSA Commissioner Lynnae Rutledge resigned in January 2012; Ed Anthony is serving as acting commissioner.

Guidance on submission of the 2013 State Plan is in the form of a Technical Assistance Circular (TAC). Melanie Brunson has a copy of the TAC.

Bills for consolidating agencies are at a stand-off between Senate and House. House version had DBVI included in new agency. Senate does not.

Federal Surface Transportation Bill: Commercialize rest areas – could affect DBVI vending operations under Randolph-Shepherd Act. DBVI gets funds from state vending operations regardless of who runs it. Federal legislation could change that.

Dissolution of the Michigan Commission of the Blind is against the law. It was moved to the Department of Human Services.

Development of Comprehensive Needs Assessment with the help of Mississippi State.

2012 Standards and Indicators

- 36 successful outcomes
- 31.9% of closed cases had an employment outcome
- Of employment outcomes 100% were at or greater than minimum wage
- Self-support closures were 52.2%

2012 DVBI Transition Forum will be conducted March 12-14 at the Hotel Roanoke

Jim Taylor gave a report on the last DRS SRC meeting. His main focus was on the FOIA presentation which seemed to be quite informative to the SRC members. Jim will continue as the representative to the DRS SRC.

April 2 – New facility VDB open house.

May 16 – Open house re-opening rehab facility

A “Day in the Life” presentation by VR Counselor Sara Mateyka

Business Enterprise Program (the Randolph –Sheppard vending facility) Update:

BEP manager, David Kennedy, retired on September 1, 2011. Rich Sorey competed for the position; however, he decided to take a position with the Mississippi DRS.

Commissioner Hopkins has been managing the program in the interim. Two contracts at the Army installations will soon be up for bid. This could prove to be difficult as there have been recent challenges to the *Code of Virginia* which grants priority to the blind to operate vending facilities in public buildings. The Governor’s Task Force on Mandates on Localities has recommended striking this provision from the *Code*. Written comments have been submitted by the DBVI.

Construction on the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired is expected to be completed by February 2012. Grand reopening/open house is planned for April 18, 2012.

SRC Appointments: Appointment and reappointments have not been made thus far. Resumes for seven representatives have been submitted.

Regional Office: Bob Burton gave an update on current hiring and recruiting efforts. Successful closures in the program have increased by 23% year to date.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment: An update given by Susan Payne; its entering third year of use.

Outcomes for FY2011: Assisted 176 in accomplishing goals. Average hourly wage was \$15.37; average age was 46; and average hours worked 29. Five public meetings were held.

Discussion of Action Items:

Annual Report was presented and approved.

Michael Davis was elected as Vice-Chair for 2012

SRC will have a Retreat/Meeting on March 2-3.

2012 Annual Report and State Plan workgroups were formed.

Marguerite Bardone recommended that the SRC become more educated about VR Counselors. Melanie Brunson suggested that a counselor be invited to the next meeting to elaborate on their day-to-day experiences.

Jim Taylor volunteered to attend the January DRS SRC meeting.

Prepared by: Ellen McIlhenny, DRS SRC Representative to the DBVI SRC