

MINUTES
DBVI REHABILITATION COUNCIL
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Headquarters Building
397 Azalea Avenue, Richmond, VA
September 21, 2018

SRC Attendees

Christine Appert, Charlottesville, Vice-Chair, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Wanda Council, Newport News, VA, represents the Virginia Department of Education; Justin Graves, Fredericksburg, represents Business, Industry and Labor; Ray Hopkins, Richmond, Commissioner, DBVI, Ex-Officio Member; Ken Jessup, Virginia Beach, represents Disability Advocacy Group; Larysa Kautz, Alexandria, Representative of Community Rehabilitation Services Program Provider; Jenny McKenzie, Roanoke, Business, Industry, and Labor; Jill Nerby, Charlottesville, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Mark Roane, Richmond, Former or Current Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

Members Absent

Jeanne Armentrout, Roanoke, represents the Virginia Workforce Board; Irene Conlin, Virginia Beach, Representative of an Individual who is blind, has multiple disabilities, and has difficulty representing him or herself or is unable due to disabilities to represent him or herself; Nichole Drummond, Falls Church, represents Virginia's Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center; Chris Martin, Ashland, Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor; Megan O'Toole Hall, Montpelier, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; Shelesha Taylor, Richmond, represents the federally mandated Client Assistance Program (CAP).

Members of the Public

None.

DBVI Staff to the SRC

Jessica Collette, Staff Assistant, DBVI; Pam Hinterlong, Director of Workforce Services, DBVI.

Call to Order

Chairman Justin Graves called the meeting to order.

Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Graves asked members to introduce themselves and welcomed everyone.

Adoption of Agenda *(Action Item)*

Mr. Ken Jessup moved to adopt agenda; Ms. Christine Appert seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Approval of June 2018 Meeting Minutes *(Action Item)*

Ms. Jill Nerby moved to approve the June 2018 meeting minutes; Ms. Jenny McKenzie seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

VR Program Update – *Pam Hinterlong*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

DBVI will hold a disability awareness event on October 17th in Richmond at the Azalea Campus. Pam invited members to attend if they are available.

Commissioner's Report – *Commissioner Ray Hopkins*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

Recently were surprised that funds from DOE redistributes within programs for re-allotment funds, last year, received less than half of what was requested. This year, the total requests exceeded what was available. DBVI was not expecting much from our request, however, DBVI did receive its full ask of \$1,000,000. This does not cure all financial issues, but it does help. DBVI will look at case services and see if we are able to move any cases off the waitlist. We are hopeful we will be able to do so.

This is the time of the year, agencies submit decision packages to the Governor to see if he will include request for funding in his budget proposal in December. DBVI will be seeking additional general funds for services, but specifics cannot be discussed at this time.

With Hurricane Florence, several DBVI employees were impacted. Also, there were several VIB operations that were impacted, as well. At this time, it appears 28 employees were displaced and all reports have come back that there was not any significant damage. However, as the hurricane moved through, there was an outbreak of tornadoes in the Richmond area. DBVI are revisiting emergency drills and how to better prepare staff.

The DBVI Headquarters building is currently being vacated. The appropriations act included funds to renovate this building, so staff are relocating now. By relocating now, this allows monies to be saved, both on utilities and also by not having to fix some issues with the mechanical systems. There is enough space on the Azalea campus for staff to fit in, so no additional space is needed to be leased. The relocation process is to be concluded by the end of October.

Commissioner Hopkins discussed the financial position of DBVI and the path of how the agency has proceeded. He spoke of the positions that were either not filled or laid off. The Commissioner welcomed any questions for more information.

Old and/or New Business – *Chairman Justin Graves*

Update regarding the Annual Report – *Christine Appert*

The report is coming along and a draft will be available soon. Christine is currently reviewing the quarterly reports and gathering the necessary information. A group photo will be taken at the December meeting.

Hearing Officer Contract Renewals – *Justin Graves*

Unfortunately, Nichole Drummond is not in attendance, but all contracts are being renewed.

Attendance at CSAVR/ NCSAB – *Justin Graves*

Shelesha Taylor will be the SRC representative for the Fall conference. The Spring 2019 Conference will be the first part of April. The Commissioner mentioned that it is very beneficial for attendees to be persons interested in leadership for the SRC.

Revisions and Updates to VR Policy – Pam Hinterlong

Shifts or changes in funding college students. DBVI has reviewed other states and how they fund post-secondary clients. After meeting, members will receive a draft policy for the suggested changes. Pam would like for members to review and offer any comment. Public meetings will take place this Fall for comments to be received to the Agency. The goal is to have any updated policy to be implemented at the end of 2018. Pam walked through these proposed changes.

Working Lunch: Review of Success Story Submissions – Justin Graves

Justin asked for feedback of the stories that were sent out prior to the meeting. Wanda thought there were very good stories and hard to narrow down. Christine mentioned that the report isn't the only format to share success stories. The website and Facebook were both mentioned as other platforms to share. Justin spoke about a couple of stories that jumped out at him. The Council described around four stories that jumped out the most. The Commissioner mentioned that he would like to see success stories on the website as well as Facebook.

Date of next meeting – December 14, 2018 beginning at 10am.

Adjournment

Ken Jessup moved to adjourn the meeting.