

MINUTES
DBVI REHABILITATION COUNCIL
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Headquarters Building
397 Azalea Avenue, Richmond, VA
March 2, 2018

SRC Attendees

Christine Appert, Charlottesville, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; 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; Justin Graves, Fredericksburg, represents Business, Industry and Labor; Ray Hopkins, Richmond, Commissioner, DBVI, Ex-Officio Member; Ken Jessup, Virginia Beach, represents Disability Advocacy Group Jenny McKenzie, Roanoke, Business, Industry, and Labor; Jill Nerby, Charlottesville, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Megan O'Toole, Montpelier, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; Mark Roane, Richmond, Former or Current Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Shelesha Taylor, Richmond, represents the federally mandated Client Assistance Program (CAP);

Members Absent

Wanda Council, Newport News, VA, represents the Virginia Department of Education; ; Larysa Kautz, Alexandria, Representative of Community Rehabilitation Services Program Provider; Chris Martin, Ashland, Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor; Karen Walker, Ashland, Business, Industry, and Labor.

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. Mark Roane moved to adopt agenda; Ms. Jill Nerby seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Approval of December 2017 Meeting Minutes *(Action Item)*

Ms. Shelesha Taylor moved to approve the December 2017 meeting minutes; Ms. Nichole Drummond seconded and motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Commissioner's & Deputy Commissioner's Report – *Commissioner Ray Hopkins*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

DBVI has been following two pieces of legislation through the General Assembly. HB1061 provides updated language in the Code of Virginia. This language speaks about sheltered workshops and allows the Agency to operate such, however, DBVI does not operate any sheltered workshops. This bill will update this obsolete language. SB905 and a sister HB, address the safety rest areas throughout the Commonwealth. These bills were prompted due to the possibility of federal change of commercializing rest areas. The bills state that the Commonwealth of Virginia will not commercialize rest areas without the approval of the General Assembly. They also include information about the role of VDOT and DBVI for safety rest areas. The two bills have passed both Houses and are awaiting the Governor's action.

Federal programs are being funded by a Continuing Resolution until March 23rd. There is work being done to fund the government through the end of this FFY, but both chambers are to adjourn for an Easter recess on March 24th. The agency is currently operating on CR #5.

RSA continues to operate without a Commissioner. DBVI is engaged with them in regards to tech assistant for Pre-ETS and the agency's portion of the Combined State Plan under WIOA. DBVI did receive an update that there has been a two-week extension to submit this Combined State Plan.

Commissioner Hopkins was reappointed as Commissioner of DBVI by Governor Northam this past Friday. Also, as of today, Ms. Jessica Collette has accepted the position as Staff Assistant in the Commissioner's Office.

DBVI continues to operate under an Order of Selection and currently has 70 consumers on a waitlist. Once funding is available for the rest of the year, DBVI will be able to make a decision to bring in some or all of these consumers. There are twelve individuals that came to DBVI for job retention.

Due to the windy weather today, the Fairfax Regional Office, all locations of VIB in NOVA, and the VIB Charlottesville plant are all closed due to power outages.

VRCBVI was highlighted in Discover Richmond about the services that they offer. They are available online as well as the DBVI Facebook page. Also, VIB was highlighted in the Richmond Times Dispatch in regards to a new packaging line for Nutriati Inc. This article is also posted on the DBVI Facebook page.

VR Program Update – *Pam Hinterlong*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

DBVI will be hosting the Robotics Academy the last week in June here on campus at VRCBVI. Ms. Hinterlong encouraged council members to attend the Robot Rally and the graduation ceremonies for LIFE and LEAP. All of these events show how DBVI is using Pre-ETS monies.

Ms. Hinterlong noted that the Standards and Indicators report was not included in the Agency report. This is the first year that DBVI has to report numbers differently to RSA for WIOA. The Common Performance Measures will be different and details explained how. The new measures include, employment rate at second quarter after exit, employment rate at 4th quarter after exit, median earnings at 2nd quarter after exit, credential attainment, measurable skill gains (VR training programs, college years, grad years, completing high school, etc.) and effectiveness serving employers. There is more information that Ms. Hinterlong can make available to Council members. Ms. Conlin questioned if there was a way to see the numbers split by regional office, as well as

statewide. Ms. Appert questioned how DBVI is to maintain communications with clients, specifically for the measures after their case is closed. Ms. Hinterlong spoke about the agreement with the Virginia Employment Commission to collect wage information. Communication and planning continues to take place regarding additional strategies to collect information.

Chairman Graves raised a question regarding the Collaboration Experience at VRCBVI. Ms. Hinterlong explained that field staff spend three days at VRCBVI observing classes and learning more about the services offered at the Center. Commissioner Hopkins spoke about how Secretary Carey and Deputy Secretary Figueroa both visited DBVI earlier this year and the Deputy Secretary is interested in participating in a Collaboration Experience. Ms. O'Toole gave information from her experience of participation and how it informed her of the opportunities at VRCBVI. The other part of this program includes VRCBVI staff visiting field staff and by doing so it allows for both sides to learn more about the other and understand how they are both working for the same mission and goal.

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

Update to the Combined State Plan – *Pam Hinterlong (Action Item)*

Under WIOA, DBVI is required to submit a State Plan every four years. All workforce partners in Virginia submit a Combined State Plan and an update is required after two years. DBVI has completed a draft updated plan. Updates include, a change to the name of the Business Workforce Unit, information regarding Order of Selection, and several minor updates including SRC meetings changed to Fridays. In regards to the Order of Selection, language was changed in the State Plan reflecting DBVI's current Order of Selection policy.

Ms. Jill Nerby moved to approve the updates as outlined to the State Plan. Ms. Nichole Drummond seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and update on the 2018 Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) – *Pam Hinterlong*

Ms. Hinterlong shared that every three years DBVI is required to submit a CSNA. DBVI has contracted with San Diego State University to conduct the Needs Assessment for 2018. Thus far, a plan has been created, staff are looking at the survey tools and electronic distribution, as well as, scheduling in-person interviews and focus groups.

A team from SDSU will be hosted in the Staunton Office for a week in May where they will interview staff, community partners, business partners, and clients either individually or in a focus group. Other focus groups will include DBVI Regional Managers and Staunton Office staff. Individual interviews will be held for an hour, with focus groups being held for an hour and a half. SDSU will be onsite in Virginia for two additional weeks per the contract. These dates will be finalized next week and hopefully one will be during the week of the next SRC meeting. More information will be forthcoming. Alongside these in-person meetings, an electronic survey will be sent to a host of different groups.

Updating New Member Orientation Materials – *Justin Graves*

Discussion took place regarding formal orientation for SRC members. Ms. Hinterlong shared with the Council that the SRC will hold an Orientation and explained that she is willing to do a VR 101 type presentation and then 30 minute +/- Orientation. RSA developed orientation materials for State Rehabilitation Councils and DBVI can inquire about those materials and make those available.

It was discussed that the SRC Manual was last revised in 2015 and needs a revision. Chairman Graves mentioned that the June meeting might need to be extended for an Orientation and meeting with SDSU.

New Member Spotlight –Chairman Justin Graves

Chairman Graves reminded the Council about the Member Spotlight and the usefulness of being able to share individually for Council members to know more about each other.

Ms. Megan O’Toole spoke about her background and how she came to serve on the Council.

Working Lunch: Feedback on Annual Report – Pam Hinterlong

Ms. Appert spoke about the schedule of the Annual Report (October – September) and that it is required to be submitted by the end of December. She requested feedback from members from this past report and asked to identify contributors within the process. Feedback that was received included that good success stories were included and items within the report were well explained. Chairman Graves spoke in regards to the Consumer Satisfactory Survey section and how, if a reader was not actively involved, it could be confusing and hard to understand. Ms. Hinterlong explained this is one portion that is required to be included. DBVI can look at “jazzing” it up, but this component is required. Ms. Appert asked for feedback on the format of the report. Conversation took place about how other states format and produce annual reports. Mr. Jessup suggested adding additional information about Council members, including, individual pictures, seat held, and why they serve on the Council.

If members are interested in helping with the Annual Report, reach out to Ms. Appert. Chairman Graves, Ms. McKenzie and Ms. Armentrout all mentioned they are willing to help.

Date of next meeting – June 8, 2018 beginning at 10am.

Adjournment

Mr. Roane moved to adjourn the meeting.