

**MINUTES**  
**DBVI REHABILITATION COUNCIL**  
**Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired**  
**Administration & Activities Building**  
**401 Azalea Avenue, Richmond, VA**  
**December 14, 2018**

**SRC Attendees**

Christine Appert, Charlottesville, Vice-Chair, 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; Wanda Council, Newport News, VA, represents the Virginia Department of Education; 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; Larysa Kautz, Alexandria, Representative of Community Rehabilitation Services Program Provider; Jenny McKenzie (via phone), Roanoke, Business, Industry, and Labor; Chris Martin, Ashland, Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor; Shelesha Taylor, Richmond, represents the federally mandated Client Assistance Program (CAP);.

**Members Absent**

Megan O'Toole Hall, Montpelier, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; Jill Nerby, Charlottesville, Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services; Mark Roane, Richmond, Former or Current Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

**Members of the Public**

Dawn Phifer Snow.

**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. Nicole Drummond seconded and motion passed unanimously.

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

Ms. Christine Appert moved to approve the September 2018 meeting minutes; Ms. Larysa Kautz seconded and motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

No comment.

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

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

Commissioner Hopkins spoke to the Council about the new meeting location in the Administration and Activities Building on the Azalea Campus. He offered a tour to any members interested.

Mark Shultz, Director of the general disability agency in Nebraska, has been nominated to serve as RSA Commissioner, but is still awaiting confirmation. There is not information as to why there hasn't been any action on his confirmation. One issue that would be beneficial to have a Commissioner's opinion, is in regards to competitive, integrated employment. The Department of Education has agreed to open up regulation to review this definition.

An appropriations bill did pass and the DBVI programs which use federal dollars have been funded. If there is a federal shutdown, DBVI will have to work with federal contacts to see the impact for us. On a state level, DBVI is waiting for the Governor's budget to be released. DBVI asked for funding with the VR program, DB services, Low Vision services and driver services as reasonable accommodations for employees. Previously the driver services have been supported by the Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired, but it is the opinion of the Board that these services should be supported through state dollars.

DBVI recently held public meetings and there were a number of participants. There were a number of items of note, and one that came up several times included the specific need for Virginia to have a program to support individuals who are Deafblind for support providers, SSPs. DBVI had tried to provide this service on a pilot basis, but were unable to fund the program. Not all states have SSP programs, but several do. Another item that was predominate in conversation was the draft policy regarding college sponsorship. The comments supported DBVI to provide college sponsorship services as we have in the past. DBVI did receive a resolution from the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia (NFBV) asking DBVI to look for other options to this issue. At this time DBVI has not made any changes and continue to assess the public comments.

**VR Program Update** – *Pam Hinterlong*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

Career Pathways for Individuals with Disabilities (CPID) organized the first ever IT credentials fair in NOVA. CPID focuses on manufacturing and IT. There were 111 individuals registered with 115 attending the event. Attendees were targeted high school students to ensure they have the right information for planning for their future. This event was a joint effort between DBVI and DARS and both agencies are looking to recreate this type of event in other locations throughout the Commonwealth. Ms. Larysa Kautz mentioned her non-profit, Melwood, is holding a technical training pilot program, beginning in mid-January. She will send the information to Ms. Pam Hinterlong for her to disperse to DBVI staff. Ms. Irene Conlin asked how information on this event was dispersed to clients. Ms. Pam Hinterlong replied that the information was sent to the Vocational Rehabilitation counselors to disseminate. The goal is find an email program to send out notifications of events, as well as, posting on social media. Ms. Pam Hinterlong will also send out the presentation from the speaker at this event. The Council expressed interest in hosting Ms. Tish Harris, CPID Coordinator, at an upcoming meeting.

**Deputy Commissioner's Report** – *Dr. Rick Mitchell*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

As of now, five of the six regional offices are fully staffed. The Education Services Coordinator position in the Norfolk Regional Office is vacant as the staff member who held this position was promoted to the Regional

Manager position. Applicants have been interviewed and an offer will be made today or first thing next week. The Director of Instruction will retire come March 1, 2019. Interviews are currently being completed now.

At the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI), there was a two-week program, called JumpStart, to give individuals a chance to see what the Center has to offer. This program had three participants earlier this month. These three participants are served out of the Regional Offices and the current students attending VRCBVI were also involved. VRCBVI is looking at offering this program three different times during 2019.

Chairman Justin Graves asked for the Deputy Commissioner to review the events that the Department held during October, Disability Awareness month. The Fairfax Regional Office participated in a community event; in Richmond, the event was hosted on the Azalea campus where businesses and state agencies were highlighted and awarded several individuals and organizations; there were also events in the Bristol, Staunton and Roanoke areas.

**Working Lunch: Old and/or New Business** – *Chairman Justin Graves*

Recap from CSAVR/ NCSAB – *Shelesha Taylor*

Ms. Shelesha Taylor shared her experience attending CSAVR and NCSAB. NCSRC started the week and was focused strictly on SRC ideas. One topic that was discussed was in regards to New Member Orientation. Ms. Taylor communicated how the conference provided the opportunity to network with people across the country and, also, the connections from the partners that were in attendance. Notes that were taken specific to the SRC will be shared to the Council.

Review SRC Resource Plan -

The next CSAVR/ NCSAB will be held in Bethesda, MD from April 6-12<sup>th</sup>. Emails will be sent around closer time for members to express their interest to attend.

Chair and Vice-Chair Elections -

Mr. Ken Jessup nominated Ms. Christine Appert for Vice-Chairman. No additional nominations. Nominations passed unanimously. Ms. Appert will serve as Vice-Chair for 2019.

Ms. Irene Conlin nominated Mr. Justin Graves for Chairman. No additional nominations. Nominations passed unanimously. Mr. Graves will serve as Chairman for 2019.

Announcement of reappointments and new appointments to the SRC – *Pam Hinterlong*

Chairman Graves announced that Ms. Nicole Drummond and Ms. Larysa Kautz were reappointed to their seats. Also, it was announced that there are three new appointments that will be announced later today.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Seat</b>
Gina Koke	Richmond, VA	Representative of Disability Advocacy Group
Julie Akers	Radford, VA	Representative of Business, Industry, and Labor
Raymond Kenney	Richmond, VA	Representative of the Statewide Independent Living Council

Meeting Dates for 2019 – *Justin Graves*

March 8<sup>th</sup>

June 14<sup>th</sup>

September 13<sup>th</sup>

December 13<sup>th</sup>

Looking at the March 8<sup>th</sup> date, Chairman Justin Graves asked for conversation to take place about a New Member Orientation. The Council discussed meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am – noonish and then the quarterly meeting beginning at 12:30 – 3pm. Ms. Shelesha Taylor and Ms. Pam Hinterlong will speak more about an outline for the Orientation. The Commissioner mentioned the [National Clearing House of Rehabilitation Materials](#) as a resource for Council members to explore.

Date of next meeting – March 8, 2019

**Adjournment**

Ms. Irene Conlin moved to adjourn the meeting.