

Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI)
State Rehabilitation Council
FINAL- Meeting Minutes
December 15, 2012

10:00 a.m.-Welcome and Call to Order – Michael Davis

Introductions & Designations

Members Present: Michael G. Davis, Chesapeake, VA-(Chair/former recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services); Melanie Brunson, Vienna, VA-(Past Chair/Disability Advocacy Groups); Valerie Walker, New Port News, VA-(Business, Labor, and Industries); Marguerite Bardone, King George, VA-(Business, Labor, and Industries); John Bailey-Fairfax, VA-(Business, Labor, and Industries); Rebecca Bridges- Arlington, VA-(Business, Labor, and Industries), James Taylor-Richmond, VA-(Disability Advocacy Groups); Celia Yette, Petersburg, VA-(Client Assistance Program); Claudie Grant, Jr., Prince George, VA-(former recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services); Debbie Pfeiffer, Yorktown, VA-(Virginia Department of Education); Ken Jessup, Virginia Beach, VA-(Statewide Independent Living Council/SILC); and Rick Gonzalez, Springfield, VA-(Virginia Workforce Council).

Members Absent: Raymond Hopkins, Richmond, VA-(Director of the designated State Unit **DBVI**, ex-officio, non-voting member); Nicole Jeffords, Norfolk, VA-(Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Ex-Officio); Angie Matney, Fredericksburg, VA-(former recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services).

Guests Present: Toney Lineberry, Richmond, VA- (State Rehabilitation Council-Chair/Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services); Faye Adams, Virginia Beach, VA; Kingston Walker, New Port News, VA.

DBVI Staff Present: Susan Davis Payne-(Vocational Rehabilitation Director); and Marcus L. Byrd II-(Administrative Support Staff).

Adoption of 15 December 2012 Agenda-Action Item

With one added agenda item, the election of a vice-president, Michael Davis entertained a motion to approve the December 15, 2012 agenda. Marguerite Bardone moved for approval and was seconded by Rebecca Bridges. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Approval of 6 October 2012 Meeting Minutes-Action Item

Michael Davis called for a motion to approve the October 6, 2012 draft meeting minutes. Melanie Brunson moved that the meeting minutes be accepted as distributed and was seconded by Rick Gonzalez. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Comments from the Public

None to report.

Election of Vice Chair of the SRC

Michael Davis called for the election of a vice chair to the DBVI- State Rehabilitation Council. Rebecca Bridges nominated John Bailey and he accepted. Melanie Brunson moved to close the nominations and that Mr. Bailey be appointed as vice chair, seconded by Marguerite Bardone. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

Commissioner's Report-Susan Davis Payne

Debbie Pfeiffer elaborated on the subsidized grant by the Virginia Department of Education that will support the purchase of Brailled text books for DBVI. Reimbursements will be available for kindergarten-12th grade to purchase Brailled textbooks via Accessible Instructional Materials Virginia (AIM-VA). Commissioner Hopkins has been assured that he can proceed with the aforementioned purchases and receive reimbursement through George Washington University.

Susan Payne explained that Glen Slonneger (Director of Education, Orientation and Mobility) will serve as the DBVI's legislative liaison until the Deputy Commissioner's position is filled.

Deputy Commissioner's Report-Susan Davis Payne

The Standard's and Indicator's report from FFY 2012 October and FFY 2013 December meetings are duplicative as a result of the start of the 2012 federal fiscal year on 1 October which reflects the 2012 fourth quarter numbers. Typically, the council meets in September which in essence would have excluded those numbers being reported in October.

Debbie Pfeiffer explained that she was excited to see that the Education Services Coordinator position in Fairfax, VA had been filled by Mrs. Denise Walker.

Michael Davis inserted information regarding his participation in the CSAVR/NCSAB, specifically related to a new talent pool portal and Delaware Governor Markell's initiative regarding hiring of individuals with disabilities. Michael explained new virtual vending machines that will be used in select Randolph-Sheppard vending stands.

VR Program Update- Susan Davis Payne

CSNA Update: Susan Payne recently received the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey conducted by Mississippi State University. Vocational Rehabilitation agencies nationwide are required to conduct a statewide comprehensive needs assessment survey every three years. Through the recommendation of the DBIV-State Rehabilitation Council, a decision was made to conduct the required assessment over a three year period as opposed to one. In year one, Dr. Kristen Rowe spearheaded the project with assistance from DBVI Agency Policy Analysts Ann Lynn Banton and Madur Gupta. Collectively they conducted the initial assessment by gathering information from internal and external sources related to population, demographics, and literature review. The focus in year two centered around 4 surveys being distributed to consumers of services, stakeholders, businesses whom had hired consumers of DBIV services, and community service providers. Unfortunately information gathered from year two was compromised and the information ultimately lost. As a result of the aforementioned, Mississippi State University was contracted by DBVI to conduct key informant interviews and satisfaction surveys of consumers, business, community rehabilitation providers (called ESOs in Virginia, and DBVI staff and was able to compile all pertinent information for the final report in year three. The report is particularly important in that it provides information for the upcoming 2014 State Plan development year. The next State Plan report will focus on information from 2012, providing services in 2013, and preparations for writing the State Plan in 2014. The comprehensive statewide needs assessment plays a vital role in that process by providing information about populations of individuals who are un-served or underserved, steps that DBVI can take to improve services in the future, qualifications of staff and improvements that need to be made. Susan Payne has requested 10 hard copies and electronic versions of the report will be emailed to all council members.

Susan Payne entertained a motion to assemble a workgroup to analyze the results, recommendations, and contents of the CSNA in preparation of the 2014 State Plan. The following members have volunteered to assist with the process: Michael Davis, James Taylor, and Melanie Brunson.

SRC Annual Report

Michael Davis entertained a motion to approve the current Annual Report. Marguerite Bardone moved for approval and was seconded by Ken Jessup. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote. The Annual Report will be submitted to the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the Governor's office by DBVI on behalf of the SRC.

State Plan Development and SRC Responsibilities

Susan Payne called for volunteers from the DBVI-State Rehabilitation Council to assist with the development of the upcoming State Plan. The following council members have agreed to help in the process: Marguerite Bardone, Ken Jessup, Michael Davis, James Taylor, Debbie Pfeiffer and Celia Yette. Mr. John Bailey, appointed as vice chair of the council at this meeting will receive all information pertaining to its development.

Susan Payne explained that if council members are eligible and interested in being reappointed in 2013 to please submit resumes to her as soon as possible. The names of those individuals have been submitted and will be contacted via email.

DBVI/DRS Liaison Report-Jim Taylor

Jim Taylor referenced the fact that on 2 November 2012 a review was conducted to select new hearing officers that will support DBVI and DARS. Jim Taylor, Toney Lineberry, and Matthew Deans participated in the application review process. Three hearing officers applied, but only two were selected bringing the current total hearing officer pool to four.

Toney Lineberry, Chair of the DARS SCR, reported that he attended the Region III Virginia State Rehabilitation Council meeting and explained that the relationship between DARS and its SRC is healthy based on his observation of other agencies and their councils within the region.

Jim Taylor attended the DARS-State Rehabilitation Council meeting on 14 November 2012 and elaborated their project initiative called "Cold Case". This projects main focus is to make contact with clients in which counselors have been unable to keep in touch with for a variety of reasons. Subsequently, 122 cases have been referred over the last 6 months as a result of intense follow-up. Of those 122 cases, 21 individuals were located and currently working. Those consumers of services have been placed back in the DARS VR system as active.

Mr. Taylor also elaborated on the statistical impact on the Order of Selection at DARS due to the closing of the Most Severely Disabled (MSD) category on November 15, 2012. In 2011, DARS had over 4,600 individuals on the Order of Selection list; however due to the closing of categories that number has decreased to 1,000.

Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center (WWRC) is projected to serve 3,000 individuals during the current federal fiscal year. Their initiative is to have a 74 percent successful closure status in employment.

The next DARS meeting will take place on January 14, 2013 in which Jim Taylor has been asked to attend on the DBVI-council's behalf.

Workgroups Report:

Transition Committee: None to Report

Legislative: Melanie Brunson requested that the council constitute this workgroup in anticipation of the upcoming General Assembly which is scheduled to begin in January 2013. She suggested that the SRC needs to be aware of what kinds of issues or subjects are of interest to consumers.

The council provided a plethora of ideas to disseminate information to the public about DBVI and services the agency provides. Mr. Davis entertained a motion to have a DBIV exhibit and some form of assistive technology on display at the General Assembly in which Ken Jessup moved, and Debbie Pfeiffer seconded. A friendly amendment was made for DBVI to include to include persons who are blind, vision impaired, and deafblind consumer. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote. The following council members volunteered assist in that effort during the General Assembly: Ken Jessup, Debbie Pfeiffer, Celia Yette, Melanie Brunson, Claudie Grant, and Michael Davis.

Susan Payne noted that while the SRC could indeed take this action, the ultimate decision for DBVI to have a table display at the General Assembly falls to DBVI administration, specifically Commissioner Hopkins.

Marketing & Public Relations: None to Report

Accessibility Workgroup – Marguerite Bardonne reported that an Accessibility Workgroup constituted by Commissioner Hopkins and including Ms. Bardonne and DBVI staff Dr. Margaret Fields (Chief Rehabilitation Engineer), Dr. Rick Mitchell (Bristol Regional Office Manager), Ann Lynn Banton (Agency Policy Analyst), and Daniel Martin (Staunton Office Rehabilitation Teacher) conducted a meeting in which they focused on making all DBVI documentation and correspondence more assessable in a variety of different formats and ensuring that DBVI consumer information is also kept secure. The workgroup will meet via teleconference in January 2013 to discuss some of the research that each member has conducted since the last meeting based on simplicity in language, format, and accessibility.

Michael Davis intends to create a workgroup that will focus on the upcoming DBVI-State Rehabilitation Council annual retreat which typically takes place in the month of March.

Working Lunch:

SRC Member and Member Organization Update:

Melanie Brunson: shared that the American Council of the Blind Legislative Seminar will take place on 22-26 February 2013 in Arlington, VA.

Debbie Pfeiffer: mentioned that on December 12, 2012 Governor Bob McDonnell's announced his biennial budget amendments that will include an additional \$4.9 million to support localities in covering the costs of teachers, teacher's aides and staff for blind or visually impaired students as recommended by the Virginia Board of Education. The proposal will have to be voted on during the next General Assembly; however this is a huge step in an effort to provide additional resources to aid individuals with disabilities.

Dr. Pfeiffer also said that the Virginia Department of Education has been funding training of paraprofessionals and teachers to become more skilled in working with students with deaf-blindness through a Utah State University program, through a grant they give to the Project for Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness at VCU Partnership for People with Disabilities. Dr. Julie Durando, Director of the Virginia Project for Children and Youth with Deaf-Blindness, went before the Disability Commission to advocate for recognition of "interveners" and hopefully it will be addressed at the next year's General Assembly.

Dr. Pfeiffer also explained that the Braille Authority of North America has accepted a new Braille for the United States called “Unified English Braille”. Melanie Brunson explained that it’s a push to make Braille more uniform in all English speaking countries. The next step is to spread information about the impact of the new changes and what they will actually be.

Michael Davis: None to report.

Valarie Walker: None to report.

John Bailey: None to report.

Rebecca Bridges: None to report.

Ken Jessup: None to report.

Marguerite Bardone: None to report.

Jim Taylor: None to report

Celia Yette: None to report.

Susan Payne: None to report.

Old Business and New Business

Melanie Brunson proposed extending council meeting time to 1:30 p.m. Michael Davis requested a motion to extend the meeting to 1:30pm. Discussion included starting at 9:30 a.m.; however only three members expressed interest in extending. No second to the motion.

Michael Davis asked Melanie Brunson to represent the DBVI-State Rehabilitation Council at the Virginia Assistive Technology Services meetings in the future and she accepted.-**Action Taken**

Date for Next Meeting/Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m., the next State Rehabilitation Council Meeting will convene on 9 March 2013, 401Azalea Avenue, Richmond VA 23227 @ 10:00 a.m.