

Governor's State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

Full Council Meeting Minutes

November 7, 2019

Members Present

Dan Martinez, Chair
Scott Lindbloom
Dave Cheesman
Danita Applewhite
Kathy McDonald
John Gutierrez
Melissa Wojtak
Paula Seanez
Judith Castro

Members Absent

Jill Pleasant
Ana Nunez
Carol Carr
Sheri Carparelli

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Brian Dulude
Brandi Coffland
Mathew Nevarez
Brian Mickelson

Call to Order and Introductions

Dan Martinez, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm in the RSA Videoconference Room, 515 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix, and in the RSA Video Conference Rooms located in Tucson, Flagstaff, and Yuma, AZ.

Approval of August 22, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Danita Applewhite moved to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2019 SRC Full Council meeting. Scott Lindbloom seconded the motion. The council approved the meeting minutes by unanimous voice vote.

SRC Chairperson's Report

Dan Martinez stated that he would be attending the Disability Awareness Recognition Event (DARE), sponsored by the Phoenix Mayor's Commission on Disability Issues, which recognized individuals for their contributions and advocacy on greater access for individuals with disabilities. Dan Martinez encouraged the community to nominate

individuals for those awards and to recognize the individuals that contributed to individuals with disabilities. He noted that all council members were welcome to attend the event.

Dan Martinez welcomed Dr. Brian Dulude as the new Region 3 Program Manager. Brian Dulude stated he started with RSA on Monday and had attended various meetings and trainings during his first week. Brian Dulude stated he was the Program Manager for Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) and would oversee the Older Individuals Who Are Blind (OIB), and the Business Enterprise Program (BEP). He noted that he had a Doctorate in Rehabilitation Education and was recently the Assistant Director with Blind Inc, which was a vendor of RSA. Dr. Dulude stated he also had experience as cane travel instructor and as the Rehabilitation Coordinator for VR Services in Utah.

Council Officer Elections

Dan Martinez stated the Nomination Committee met and recommended that the current officers be elected to continue to serve. Dan Martinez stated the current officers were himself as the Chair, Danita Applewhite was the Vice Chair and Jill Pleasant was the Sergeant at Arms. Mr. Martinez stated that because he was part of the nominated individuals, he would give the council the option to allow someone else to hold the elections. The council did not express any objections.

Dan Martinez called for nominations from the floor for the Chair position. Dave Cheesman suggested that Dan Martinez continue as the Chair of the council. Melissa Wojtak motioned that nominations cease, and that Dan Martinez be elected by acclamation. Dave Cheesman seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Dan Martinez stated the Nominating Committee nominated Danita Applewhite as the Vice Chair and requested nominations from the floor. Melissa Wojtak suggested that Danita Applewhite continue as the Vice Chair of the council. Danita Applewhite nominated Scott Lindbloom as the Vice Chair of the council. Scott Lindbloom stated he would accept the nomination. John Gutierrez inquired whether Danita Applewhite did not want to continue as the Vice Chair of the council. Danita Applewhite stated that she would be happy to serve as the Vice Chair of the council, although Scott Lindbloom would be great in the position. Danita Applewhite motioned that nominations cease. Melissa Wojtak seconded the motion. The council approved the motion by unanimous voice vote. Dan Martinez asked for the vote for Danita Applewhite as Vice Chair of the council. All council members voted for for Danita Applewhite to be the Vice Chair of the council, except for Scott Lindbloom. Dan asked for the vote for Scott Lindbloom to be the Vice Chair of the council. Scott Lindbloom voted for him to be the Vice Chair. Dan Martinez stated that Danita Applewhite had been elected as the Vice Chair of the council.

Dan Martinez stated that he would accept nominations for the Sergeant at Arms position. Danita Applewhite nominated Scott Lindbloom as the Sergeant at Arms. Scott Lindbloom stated that he accepted the nomination. Dave Cheesman motioned that nominations cease. Danita Applewhite seconded the motion. The council approved the motion by unanimous voice vote. Dan Martinez stated the Sergeant at Arms position

provided the expertise and advice on parliamentary rules and would develop future leadership. Dan Martinez asked for the vote for Jill Pleasant to remain as the Sergeant at Arms. No council members voted. Dan Martinez asked for the vote for Scott Lindbloom to be elected as the Sergeant at Arms. The council voted unanimously for Scott Lindbloom to be elected as the Sergeant at Arms. Dan Martinez stated that Scott Lindbloom was elected as the Sergeant at Arms and would take the office for the next meeting. Scott Lindbloom stated that he would work hard to continue development of the council as the Sergeant at Arms.

SRC Annual Report Vote

Dan Martinez inquired whether council members had the opportunity to read the draft SRC Annual Report. Dr. Applewhite stated that she was unable to review the whole report, although she did like Dan Martinez's Chair report. Danita Applewhite motioned to accept the SRC Annual Report. Paula Seanez suggested the report include quotes from the council members that identified the value of membership and reflected the diversity of the members on the council. Ms. Seanez stated that Danita Applewhite could include a quote regarding her work with veterans for example. Paula Seanez motioned to accept the SRC Annual Report with the inclusion of quotes from council members. Dan Martinez seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

RSA Administrator's Report

Brandi Coffland stated that Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) continued to work on the State Rules, and the proposed rule making had been sent to the Director for approval. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA continued to add approximately 30-35 individuals to the Order of Selection (OOS) Wait List each month, and were placed in Priority 2 and 3. She noted that individuals were pulled off the wait list within the first week of the month and would be on the wait list for less than 35 days. Ms. Coffland stated that RSA recently successfully closed the first client in Priority 3. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA hoped to be able to serve all individuals without a delay, in December or January. She stated that RSA welcomed Dr. Brian Dulude as the Region 3 Program Manager, Charmayne Duerson as the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Statewide Coordinator, and Katherine Mayer as a Behavioral Health Specialist. Dan Martinez inquired whether Ms. Mayer would work with clients. Brandi Coffland stated that Katherine Mayer would work with counselors statewide and would not work directly with clients. Brandi Coffland stated the Department of Employment and Rehabilitation Services (DERS) held their first Leadership Conference, in which about 230 leaders attended and learned about program updates and learned new skills. Brandi Coffland stated that she and Kristen Mackey attended the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Conference. She noted that Kristen Mackey provided a presentation regarding how RSA used data to influence program performance and shared how the agency used scorecards and huddles to get the information out to the field.

Ms. Coffland stated that one of RSA's main projects was on Customer Service training and how information was shared with clients, vendors, and staff. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA would potentially proposed changes to the Client Satisfaction Survey and would

share any proposed changes with the SRC. She stated RSA was also exploring the use of software, where clients could leave feedback when visiting an office. Brandi Coffland stated the Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) team had identified a single VR office that would serve as the point of contact for each local school district, with the hope that it would increase relationships with schools and increase referrals. Brandi Coffland stated the Pre-ETS team was also training internal staff to provide Pre-ETS and increase the direct service hours from 1400 to 2000 hours a month. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA continued to collaborate with DDD and would build a dedicated VR team to serve DDD clients. She noted that RSA would also hire a Specialist, whom would work under the DDD Statewide Coordinator. Brandi Coffland stated that 13 individuals in the DDD program had been placed in employment. Dan Martinez inquired regarding the types of employment of those individuals. Brandi Coffland stated she did not have that information but could request it.

Brandi Coffland stated there had been 41 mediations for the last fiscal year, in which 2 were regarding applicant's eligibility, 26 were regarding Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), 11 were regarding termination of services or closure, and 2 were other. She stated that of those mediations, 24 were resolved prior to or during the mediation process; 7 were resolved prior to mediation; 17 resulted in an agreement; and 15 were not resolved. Brandi Coffland stated there were 74 Fair Hearings, in which 19 were related to an applicant's eligibility; 22 were related to IPE; 1 was about the cost of a service; 15 were regarding termination of service or closure; and 17 were other. She stated that of those Fair Hearings, 39 were resolved prior to or as an outcome of the Fair Hearing; 31 were not resolved or still pending; and 14 went through a Director's Review. Paula Seanez inquired regarding the total of Fair Hearings. Brandi Coffland stated there were 74 Fair Hearings. Brandi Coffland stated that Cara Christ had been appointed as the Interim Department of Economic Security (DES) Director, whom was also the current Director of the Department of Health Services. She noted that Mark Schultz, RSA Commissioner, was also the acting Assistant Secretary of the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services.

Brandi Coffland stated there would be some flexibility in the requirement of obtaining prior approvals for purchases, although any facility changes would still require prior approval. Brandi Coffland stated that she and Kristen Mackey provided testimony to the Arizona Advisory Council to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights regarding 14C and subminimum wage employment. She noted most of the discussion centered around how RSA did not place individuals in subminimum wage employment but did facility referrals for individuals and provided career counseling to individuals interested in subminimum wage employment. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA was monitored by Federal RSA in March of 2018 and had not received the monitoring report. Scott Lindbloom inquired whether the SRC could collaborate with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) to increase employment outcomes and noted that other states had that partnership. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA did refer individuals to SILC, although the agency could investigate the practices of other states.

Dan Martinez inquired whether RSA had identified whether the agency would have adequate funding to serve clients without placing them on a wait list. Brandi Coffland stated the Finance Team had indicated that RSA would be able to serve clients in Priority 1,2, and 3. Paula Seanez expressed her concern regarding the number of Fair Hearings

and inquired whether RSA was reviewing the trends and would address those in policy. John Gutierrez noted that number of Fair Hearings was quite high. Brandi Coffland noted that 15 of the Fair Hearings were carryover from the previous year, and number of Fair Hearings from the current year were 59. Brandi Coffland stated that RSA was reviewing trends and the Ombudsman was discussing the cases with the counselors and how the determinations were made. She noted that RSA would develop Standard Work for eligibility, and OOS determinations to ensure consistency across the state. Mathew Nevarez, RSA Ombudsman, stated that one client made frequent appeals, and had 26 appeals currently, and the number would be lower. Paula Seanez thanked Brandi Coffland for providing that information and noted the council appreciated receiving the Fair Hearing statistics and could aid in lowering the number of appeals.

Committee Report

Program Review Committee

Dave Cheesman stated the Program Review Committee planned to review the Post-Secondary Education/Training Policy, although that policy was currently under review. Mr. Cheesman stated the committee was currently reviewing the IPE Policy and would discuss their findings at the upcoming meeting. Dave Cheesman noted that Ana Nunez had indicated that her term with the council would end in October 2020 and that Lisa Adamu would take her place as the Chair of the committee.

Employment and Community Partnerships Committee

Judith Castro stated the Employment and Community Partnerships Committee was working on the development of the Arizona Employer Toolkit. Ms. Castro stated the committee had developed a Table of Contents and had discussed the items that should be included in that document.

Membership Committee

Danita Applewhite stated the Membership Committee met to discuss the nominations of the officers. Dr. Applewhite stated that she would be contacting the council members to request potential members of the SRC, and she would contact those individuals. Danita Applewhite stated that she spoke to Carol Carr regarding a partnership between the Membership Committee and the Employment and Community Partnerships Committee.

Membership Organization Updates

SILC

Scott Lindbloom stated that he and Danita Applewhite attended a conference and participated in several workshops. Scott Lindbloom stated he would hold an Emergency Preparedness Workshop on December 13th for anyone interested in attending. Danita Applewhite stated that she had resigned as the SILC Chair and was now the Vice Chair. Danita Applewhite stated that she would share a survey that SILC created in order to develop the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) with the council to obtain guidance on the assistance needed. Dan Martinez inquired whether that survey could be shared

with others. Danita Applewhite stated the survey could be shared and she would especially appreciate feedback from Dan Martinez. Danita Applewhite stated that Scott Lindblom had been appointed the Chair of the Emergency Preparedness Committee and she would like the community to share that information. Dan Martinez suggested that Danita Applewhite contact Pete Fisher, who had experience in emergency preparedness training. Dr. Applewhite stated that she also had a talk show and she would like to invite the SRC members to participate and encourage individuals to join the SRC.

American Indian VR Projects

Paula Seanez stated the 47 AIVRS Programs competed for grant funding from RSA, in which 44 were funded. Paula Seanez stated that 3 AIVRS programs did not receive grant funding and would have to find other resources for their consumers. She noted that unfortunately, those 3 programs were in states who are on an Order of Selection so most of the consumers would not be able to be served by VR. Ms. Seanez stated the 3 tribes that were not funded were Oneida, Omaha and Warms Springs and would be able to reapply next year.

Paula Seanez stated that Hopi VR and Tohono O'odham Nation VR were on their fifth year of funding and would be applying this year. She stated the Navajo Nation and Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian community were on their fourth year of funding and the Navajo Nation would conduct its needs assessment this year and use the data to write their grant next year. Paula Seanez stated the Navajo Nation VR and other tribal VR programs received their Grant Award Notification for 2019-20 funding year on September 30, 2019. She noted the Navajo Nation was fully staffed except for a Rehabilitation Technician in Kayenta, Arizona. Paula Seanez stated the Annual Reports are being prepared for submittal to federal RSA and are due January 10, 2020.

Paula Seanez stated the Navajo Nation Advisory Council on Disability hosted an Awareness Walk to the Navajo Nation Council Chambers Fall session. She stated the walk was on Monday, October 21, 2019 at 8:00 am to the Navajo Nation Council (NNC) Chambers. She added that the Navajo Nation radio station (KTNN-660) would be available for a live-remote broadcast for advisory council members, consumers and the general public to comment on needs and services. Paula Seanez stated the Navajo Nation VR program directors continued to serve on the University of Montana, Research and Training Center on Disability in Rural Communities (RTC: Rural) Self-employment Advisory Board to advise on the development of a tool kit specific for American Indian VR program staff. She stated the staff would provide a presentation on the tool kit at the CANAR conference. She stated that representatives from 2 Alaska tribal VR programs were on the advisory board to provide input on employment outcomes based on subsistence.

Paula Seanez stated The American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Training and Technical Assistance Center (AIVRTTAC) at the Northern Arizona University, Institute for Human Development announced that they were in the fifth year of their five-year grant from the U.S Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services. She stated the purpose was to develop the AIVRTTAC is to provide three types of training and technical assistance (TA) to the American Indian Vocational Rehabilitation Services (AIVRS) programs. Ms. Seanez stated there were currently 86 AIVRS programs

located on tribal lands in 25 states serving tribal members with disabilities to prepare for gainful employment. She added that Dr. Lee Gaseoma was the Project Director for AIVRTTAC and more information could be found at: aivrttac.org. She noted the Annual CANAR (Consortia of Administrators in Native American Rehabilitation) Conference would be held December 2-5, 2019 in New Orleans, Louisiana and the AIVRTTAC program would provide presentations on Data Mining for AIVRS Annual Performance Reports and on IPE Development. Dan Martinez inquired regarding the reason that some of the tribes did not receive grant funding. Paula Seanez stated that tribes were funded on a population basis and noted there were 550 federally recognized tribes, and 86 were funded. She noted that tribes were ranked according to being an existing tribe, as well as the quality of the grant proposal. Danita Applewhite inquired whether the toolkit was ready for dissemination. Paula Seanez stated the toolkit was under review and would be presented at the CANAR conference for further feedback prior to dissemination. Dave Cheesman inquired regarding the ranking of tribes and whether Ms. Seanez noted an increase in self-employment among clients. Paula Seanez stated the Navajo Nation and Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian communities did not have to compete, although they typically ranked about 98/100. She noted that she did self-employment and competitive employment with clients.

Client Assistance Program

John Gutierrez stated that he continued to hear that clients expressed difficulties in hearing back from their counselors. Brandi Coffland inquired whether there was a specific office that did not contact their clients. John Gutierrez stated he heard the issue was statewide. Brandi Coffland stated that was one reason why RSA was requiring staff to attend Customer Service training, although she would forward the information to Ms. Mackey.

AzTAP

This item was tabled.

Developmental Disabilities

This item was tabled.

Community Rehabilitation Providers

This item was tabled.

Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SRC Full Council will be on February 6, 2020 from 1:00 to 4:00 pm in the Video Conference Room, at 515 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix, AZ.

Announcements

Dan Martinez stated the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) would be held on November 15 and 16 at the Glendale Civic Center and all council

members were welcome to attend or share the information with individuals that would be interested in attending.

Danita Applewhite stated that November 11th was Veteran's Day, and she encouraged council members to research her website, Ask Dr. Applewhite for resources on mental health.

Public Comment

A call to the public was made with no response's forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Scott Lindbloom motioned to adjourn the meeting. Paula Seanez seconded the motion. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Vocational Rehabilitation Scorecard – October 28, 2019 – November 3, 2019

The total number of individuals in VR program was 13,567

The average number of days from eligibility was 29 days

The eligibility determination compliance within 60 days was 96.7%

The average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 71 days

The IPE implementation compliance within 90 days was 90.3%

The total number of individuals in OOS Priority 2 and 3 was 1267

The total number of individuals in Priority 2 was 846

The total number of individuals in Priority 3 was 421

The average hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$13.61

The number of job placements was 44

The number of clients closed with employment was 44

The average days to obtain employment was 591

The average days from referral to application was 34

The average days from job-ready to placement was 53

The average cost of closure with placement was \$15,205.78

The average cost of closure without placement was \$10,340.95