

State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Employment and Community Partnerships Committee Meeting Minutes

February 2, 2022

Attendance

Members Present

Scott Lindbloom
Adam Robson
Judith Castro
Dave Cheesman
Ceci Hartke

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Michael Leyva

Minutes

Call to Order and Introductions

Scott Lindbloom called the meeting to order at 1:08 pm. Introductions were made, and a quorum was present.

Approval of January 12, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Adam Robson moved to approve the minutes of the January 12, 2022 SRC Employment and Community Partnerships Committee meeting. Scott Lindbloom seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Scott Lindbloom stated that he would announce that he would be moving back to Colorado at the upcoming SRC Full Council meeting. Mr. Lindbloom noted the committee would need to elect a new Chair for the Committee.

Self-Employment Training Discussion

Judith Castro stated the committee had been discussing potential areas or activities to work on. Ms. Castro noted the committee had worked on the Self-Employment Plan with Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and had developed an Employer Toolkit previously. Judith Castro stated the committee agreed that counselors would benefit from knowing more about self-employment plans and that they would be more likely to assist clients in developing self-employment plans if they had more knowledge. She noted the Yuma Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office worked with Michael Leyva on providing resources to VR counselors and suggested those resources be shared statewide.

Michael Leyva stated that he worked with Judith Castro and the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), and the Arizona Western College to develop an entrepreneur training workshop. Mr. Leyva stated the goal was to create a program that could be shared with other VR offices. Michael Leyva stated that he contacted the Lake Havasu office, which was interested, although the contact individual was leaving the office. Adam Robson stated the Employment and Community Partnerships Committee could bring any recommendations for training to the Full Council and RSA leadership as well. Michael Leyva stated the SBDC provided the infrastructure for an individual interested in starting a business such as guidance on marketing plans, the business requirements, taxes, and how to promote a business. Mr. Leyva stated that a counselor could contact the SBDC for more information for a client if the client was interested in starting a business. Judith Castro stated that counselors liked having the SBDC as a resource and it gave them more confidence in asking questions about self-employment plans for their clients. Ms. Castro noted the SBDC services were free also, which was a great comparable benefit. Scott Lindbloom stated the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) in Colorado worked with VR and the SBDCs and inquired whether that would be possible in Arizona. Adam Robson stated that unfortunately, the agencies were separate in Arizona. Mike Leyva stated the SBDCs were not all aware of VR, and it was beneficial to expand that network. Dave Cheesman agreed the SBDC would be a great resource to counselors, who were not business professionals and were not familiar with developing a business plan. Adam Robson stated that other resources such as SCORE, could help with writing a business plan. Mr. Robson inquired whether there was a department that oversaw all SBDCs. Michael Leyva stated there likely was a department that oversaw all SBDCs, although he did not have that contact information.

Michael Leyva stated the Arizona Developmental Planning Council would be providing webinars on employment and Transition services, which would discuss topics such as supporting inclusive practices in college, alternate career paths, and apprenticeships. Michael Leyva stated the council would also apply for a grant to provide technical assistance to help providers transition to competitive integrated employment. Ceci Hartke inquired regarding the intended audience for the webinars. Michael Leyva stated Employment First stakeholders, families, educators, employment supports, Transition Specialists, and anyone that works with individuals with disabilities could attend the webinars.

Adam Robson stated the committee had previously discussed potentially creating a training for counselors or developing supplemental training materials and inquired whether the committee would prefer to work on developing a pilot program for self-employment. Dave Cheesman stated the committee could develop a resource guide for counselors, which would include contact information for support on self-employment plans. Adam Robson stated that the contact staff would change, although the committee could include office phone number contact information. Judith Castro agreed and noted the committee could develop a resource guide similar to the Employer Toolkit and include information for counselors to find the SBDC nearest them. Ceci Hartke inquired whether the self-employment trainings offered through the SBDCs would be similar to the trainings offered through other organizations. Dave Cheesman stated the trainings through the SBDCs, SCORE, or vendors would likely be similar, as all would need to be up to date with labor market information. Adam Robson suggested that a webpage be added to the Department of Economic Security (DES) website with information regarding self-employment plans, which would be administered by DES webmasters. Dave Cheesman agreed that a webpage would be a great resource that could be accessed by anyone. Adam Robson stated there could be a central website already with the SBDCs listed, or a way for individuals to locate the nearest office. Mr. Robson suggested the committee discuss a general template for a webpage at the next meeting. He noted the committee members could then delegate who would contact each SBDC office. Ceci Hartke inquired whether the community colleges would be a good resource for individuals interested in developing self-employment plans. Judith Castro stated that guardians could assist in the development of a self-employment plan and could supplement the training from the community college.

Adam Robson stated that he would be unable to attend the upcoming SRC Full Council and inquired whether the committee could mention it would need a new Chair. Dave Cheesman stated that he or Judith Castro could announce that at the upcoming meeting.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the SRC Employment and Community Partnerships Committee TBD.
Agenda items are as follows:

- Self-Employment Training Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.