



**Minutes for the State
Rehabilitation Council Quarterly Meeting**

Holiday Inn Express and Suites Boise Airport

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January 9, 2019

**Present:** Rob Atkins, Kenna Buckner, Janice Carson, Jane Donnellan, Dina Flores-Brewer, Mike Hauser, Dwight Johnson, Kendrick Lester, Darin Lindig, Ron Oberleitner, Luke Rose, Molly Pollastrini, Sarah Tueller, Nanna Hanchett, Teresa Pitt, Stephen DeBoard, Darrell Quist and Jacque Truax

**Absent:** Mel Leviton, Suzette Whiting and Ramona Medicine Horse

Molly welcomed members to the meeting. Members then provided introductions and information on recent activities they have been involved in.

**Approval of Minutes from October 25, 2018 and Agenda for today's Meeting**

*Motion:* Lucas motioned to approve the minutes as written and Ron Oberleitner seconded the motion, a verbal vote was taken; all in favor, none opposed.

Council members were asked to review the agenda for additions or changes. None were requested.

**Committee Structure Discussion**

Dina led the discussion stating that at the end of the October meeting people voiced opinions regarding areas they had interest in. The options presented at that time were planning, policy, advocacy, planning for advocacy, needs assessment, survey, state plan, membership and budget. Currently there are three committees (not including the Executive Committee): The Membership Committee, the Survey Committee, and the VR Portion of the Combined State Plan and Finance Committee. She stated we need to discuss how these pieces fit; what you were contemplating when you signed up, what your time commitment is, who needs to be included in the different activities, whether we need to re-structure our existing committees and do any of the activities fall into alignment with the current committees or do we need to create more committees or ad hoc committees.

Jane stated that in preparation for today's meeting that she, Teresa, Molly, Dina and Jacque discussed what came from the October Strategic Planning Meeting and where people saw themselves in terms of their interests. Advocacy was one

area that all the members were interested in. She explained that being on the SRC is advocacy and that a committee for advocacy was probably not necessary. She said they also talked about policy. Policy goes through waves, depending on laws. Our Field Services Policy Manual is incorporated in rule which means we can't change policy without going through the rule making policy, therefore an ad hoc committee for policy might be warranted. This would not be a standing committee, but as needed. We suggest keeping the other standing committees as they are but seeing where people's interests/strengths lie within those committees. Teresa agreed with Jane regarding the need for a policy committee, stating that a lot of work and time are involved in the VR Services Portion of the State Plan and policies that are a part of that. Due to WIOA there is a lot of policy yet to be written.

- Dwight, Janice and Dina volunteered to be on the Policy committee.
- Dina reminded members what they signed up for in October:
- Dina - for Planning and Policy (State Plan separate from planning)
  - Mike – for State Plan and Advocacy
  - Sarah – Survey, Advocacy, and Membership
  - Kenna – Advocacy, Planning Advocacy and planning (?) depending on what we decided what fit within the planning category
  - Ramona – Native people in planning
  - Molly – planning and advocacy
  - Janice – planning and state plan
  - Luke – advocacy in telling stories
  - Darin – advocacy and planning advocacy
  - Rob – budget and survey
  - Ron – survey, needs assessment, policy on customized employment, and advocacy
  - Dwight, Kendrick, Suzette and Mel were not at last meeting.

After a lengthy discussion about the makeup of committees and the possibilities of adding additional committees to the council, Dwight made a motion to establish four committees and to change the bylaws to reflect those committees:

- Survey/Communication,
- Planning and Public Policy,
- Finance and Operations,
- Membership.

The motion did not go to vote. There was more discussion about having subcommittees under the main committees. It was suggested that before a motion was made regarding committee names that we first lay out the committee structures with a general description of each. Dwight agreed to take notes about

committee structures to be projected on a screen at the front of the room.

### **IRI Documentation – Teresa Pitt**

While Dwight was preparing to take notes, Teresa spoke to the IRI document that was provided to the council members at last meeting. She read the headers from the IRI book on page IV: Chapter 4: Implementation of Responsibilities:

- Performance Evaluation: “Review, Analyze and Advise”
- Standards and Indicators (we no longer have these – we have Common Performance Measures
- Budget and Expenditure Information
- Policy Information
- Management Information
- Order of Selection
- Goals and Priorities and Effectiveness Evaluation
- State Plan
- Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
- Partnerships
- The Role of SRC in the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment
- The SRC Role in RSA monitoring
- Consumer satisfaction survey
- Public Participation
- Selection and Evaluation of Impartial Hearing Officers and Mediators
- Advocacy
- Summary

She suggested this chapter could help members to clarify committees and structures.

### **Committee Structure Discussion (continued)**

Dwight listed committees, noting that we can add or subtract under committees. He suggested we add detail to each one.

- 1) Executive
  - a. Membership
- 2) Planning & Public Policy
  - a. State planning/WIOA
- 3) Communication & Customer Advocacy
- 4) Program Effectiveness
  - a. Qualitative (Survey)
  - b. Quantitative Data
  - c. Finance/Budget
  - d. Annual Report

There was discussion about how to move forward with the committee list for

implementation.

Suggestions:

- Have a description of each committee and how to operationalize them prior to approving them so members can make informed decisions.
- If council members agreed with this initial proposal for committees, that VR staff go back and add the operational/functional detail and come back with a draft that says here is where these operational items would fit under committees and how the different committees would interact effectively with each other. Then we would have a proposal we could vote on.
- Some activities are seasonal, so including that type of information in the description might help people balance out the council members professional time with where they fit within the committee structures to do the best job.

Molly asked for volunteers to review the committee structure once it has been refined.

- Volunteers are: Dwight, Dina, Kenna and Janice.

The process to refine the committee structure was discussed for clarification for VR staff as well as the council members.

- The process outlined was to take the committee list we made today, have the VR staff provide operational detail and send that information to the volunteer review committee prior to having the full council reviewing it at the April meeting.

Dina volunteered to work with the VR Staff that will be working on the first draft for the volunteer review committee.

*Motion:* Dina made a motion to take the list of committees that was compiled today, have the VR staff review it, and then send it to the review committee to bring back to full council in April. The motion was seconded by Luke; all in favor, none opposed. (Review Committee: Dwight, Dina, Kenna and Janice).

## **Agency Report**

### **Administrator Report - Jane Donnellan**

Jane reported:

- We have a new Governor in the state
- The legislative session began Monday.
- VR was presented with their budget for SFY 2020
- VR Budget Hearing is scheduled for January 25th at 9 AM before the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee (JFAC)
  - Jane encouraged council members to attend to support the agency
  - Jane, Nanna and Kean will meet with Senator Bair on Monday for further communication and to educate him on the VR program

- VR has a New Governor Liaison. We are working on scheduling a meeting with him.
- ITS (Information Technology Services) is an agency created by Governor Otter to deliver IT services and cybersecurity within the state
  - modernization of delivery of IT services within the state
  - consolidation of IT departments in the state
  - IT positions within VR will be transferred under ITS if the Governor's recommendation is approved by legislature. Transfer date is July 1. This could impact VR in the way we do business and some of our services.
- RSA has a new team as of October 1<sup>st</sup>
  - Currently we don't have a permanent RSA Commissioner. Carol Dobak is serving as the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner currently.
  - The Federal Monitoring guide is not out yet. We are not certain if we will be monitored or not. That information will come out the end of January.
- The Council for State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) Fall Conference was attended by Jane and Darrell last October in Long Beach, CA.
  - They were provided information regarding the governmental accounting office's evaluation of our Pre-employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) as well as business engagement and how we can strengthen our work there.
  - They attended a breakout session about Collaboration with our One-Stop Partners and Competitive Integrated Employment.
- VR had four statewide In-Services this year. The executive team traveled to regional offices. The focus was on training.
  - We had representation from tribal VR programs - Ramona and Gina. They provided insight to our staff around cultural differences as well as other differences and discussed how our programs can work together.
- Update on SFY 2017 Audits
  - VR had four audit findings:
    - RSA staff hours regarding a calculation on a report. This has been remedied.
    - Spending of pre-employment transition funds for SFY2015. This was the first year that WIOA had implemented that requirement and we didn't have programs in place to do that. We have addressed this and have measures in place to remedy the finding.

- Overrides of management approval of certain types of approved services, and time from application to eligibility and eligibility to plan in terms of exceptions. We strengthened our policy/procedure and internal controls around those. We have not received a formal report back from Legislative Services (LSO), but had a verbal confirmation that they were satisfied with our efforts and that those findings will be closed. We expect a written confirmation from them in March.

### *Workforce Development Council*

Jane stated that Dwight is on the Workforce Development Council (WFDC) and the SRC representative for that council. She is the One Stop Committee Chair for the WFDC. The focus of that committee is the delivery of a network of services to provide customers and business's employment opportunities throughout the state. The committee has been focused on physical and programmatic accessibility and has had staff trainings to access physical and programmatic accessibility. There are 25 One Stop Centers statewide.

### *Annual Report*

Jane recognized Jacque for her hard work on the Annual Report stating that she did a phenomenal job in ensuring that the report was published and distributed in a timely manner. The report has good content that can help educate and inform individuals about the VR program. Jane envisions us starting on the report earlier in the year and engaging SRC members in that process.

## **Planning & Evaluation Report – Teresa Pitt**

### *Policy Development*

Teresa stated that back in October we talked about SRCs involvement in policy development. At that time, we needed to change our Closure Policy and update our Trial Work Policy and some other minor changes. She met with the SRC Executive Committee and they were able to get the Closure Policy developed. Jacque sent out an e-mail to the SRC giving the rational for the changes. The changes were to extract procedures, to meet WIOA requirements and reduce redundancy.

Teresa said that once we started looking at policies a little closer, we realized that there was a possibility that we need to go out to temporary rulemaking due to changes regarding the delivery of employment services. The way VR has delivered post-employment services in the last two decades has been after closure. VR has assisted in non-significant, non-complex services after they have successfully rehabilitated an individual, for up to three years. The e-mail guidance we received, from two different previous RSA Liaisons, stated that because RSA is changing to quarterly reporting VR can no longer provide those

services after we close the case or submit our quarterly data. RSA has never had a mechanism for tracking post-employment services.

With assistance from Dina we wrote a draft to reduce post-employment services to be performed only while the case is open. Teresa recently reached out to RSA again to confirm that is what we are supposed to be doing and to ensure we are moving in the right direction. The rule making we do this year is going to take more than a year and the changes we are considering today won't go into effect until July 2020.

## **Deputy Administrators Report – Nanna Hanchett**

### *Pre-Employment Transition Services*

Nanna started with reporting on HR within Vocational Rehabilitation:

- Currently we have two openings in the Twin Falls office for two Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist's (VRS).
- We have a Regional Manager (RM) Position open in the Coeur d'Alene Office. This is the second time we have posted this position.
- We have a new application process through the Department of Human Resources. We are hoping the new system will help us with recruitment.

### *Transition Institute*

We had a huge success with our Transition Institute. Alison Lowenthal, our Transition Coordinator, believes that we need to coordinate within our schools as well as our State Departments to better understand how schools are looking at things with the students' needs so we can better prepare them. One of the requirements for Pre-ETS is to establish need and one of the best avenues for us to do that is through the people that work with students daily; such as school staff and the Department of Education. This is all about working together and to work from each other's strengths to be able to provide services that are appropriate, necessary and beneficial to assist our students in transition. Data collection is a huge responsibility. Helping parents and teachers understand this necessity has helped us in terms of accountability. We continue to provide summer work experience and will be implementing various programs with the universities.

### *Project with HP*

Nanna commended Hewlett Packard (HP) for reaching out and doing a pilot project with VR. Darin provided some comments on the program stating that the starting wages for the participants is around \$50,000 and some positions pay upwards of \$100,000. These are high level engineering jobs that are in demand. There are other technology companies trying to grab these employees as well. There is an accommodated interview process through collaboration with HP and VR. VR has contracted with staff from Idaho State University (ISU) to provide us

a structured training for HP managers. This will become a VR curriculum so we will have the resources for future trainings. The individuals hired by HP will be working actively with VR for support through this process and for a period after to ensure they will be successful in their employment.

### **Resource Report – Jacque Truax**

The afternoon session began with the Resource Report. Jacque provided the first quarter fiscal year 2019 report for members to review. It was determined that the council has some flexibility within their budget for trainings or facilitated meetings for the upcoming year, as they did not expend their entire budget for FFY2018.

### **Planning & Evaluation Report (continued) – Teresa Pitt**

#### *Strategic Planning Meeting*

Teresa explained that there will be a Strategic Planning Meeting with the field managers, SRC and the Executive Leadership Team on February 27<sup>th</sup>. The council will have a couple representatives at this meeting. Janice was on the old State Plan and Finance Committee and stated she would like to attend. The council needs to determine who else should represent the council. Teresa suggested at least one more person be elected, but that no more than three people. Dina stated we would be discussing this again later in the day.

#### *Planning & Evaluation Team Update*

Teresa stated that over the last 6 months the team has worked on many projects.

- One of the activities was to work on incentives for surveys to help get a better response rate. She stated that Ron had mentioned data on students such as pre-employment services that are being provided and she thought this might be something they want to add to the quarterly report. It is also in the workplan. This can be an option for committee discussion at another time.
- She reported on the overall response and satisfaction rates. Our goal target for changing to the new survey was going from around 5% to 15%. Our rate came out to a 13.95% response rate, which we are very pleased with. The overall satisfaction rating was 83.16%, with our goal being a 90% satisfaction rate. They discussed how to get a better response rate and thought that maybe providing a prior notice that a survey is coming would be helpful. They have now added a statement in the closure letter to let customers know that a survey would be coming and to see if it makes a difference in our response rate. The other thing we have talked about is the three gift cards we received from a focus group from CSAVR. We are going to use those as another method to see if an incentive will help our response rate. If we notice a significant increase, we can then look at other options to incentivize. We will likely launch this incentive in April or May.

How this process will be implemented has not yet been determined. They will likely be engaging with Ron for further discussions. They hope to begin work on this no later than February. They hope to use the data from the survey reports to provide region specific data to the regional managers.

### *Policy Development*

In addition to closure and trial work policies that are being worked on, she is looking for comments from council members. Molly was asked to collect the comments and forward them to Teresa. Teresa saves the comments and uses them for the next State Plan as part of the SRC input. Teresa will mail out copies of the Trial Work Policy changes to council members. They identified changes that need to be made in our payment policy regarding soft caps and medical services. We are also making changes regarding reasonable and customary charges as well as the services section of the policy manual. She hopes to have that policy out to council members by end of month or early February. They acknowledge that will need to provide more procedural guidance to staff. Even though the rule won't be effective until July 2020, we may be able to provide some procedures/guidance now or we may have to wait, depending on how significant the procedural changes are. We are trying to extract procedures from rule and are currently writing a closure business rule as the closure reasons are changing.

### *Internal Controls*

RSA is writing internal control language in their guidance. We engaged with WINTAC on internal control guidance and procedures for VR. We have started writing with an overall framework and we will put things into play for internal controls. In the past we had internal controls, but prior to now we have not articulated them or written them down. We have started this process and will consult with the SRC as an oversight body to ask you about the level of risk we are looking at and if agency is going in the right direction.

We are working on getting wage and education data and have started to populate that information in our quarterly report. It may take some time to get the information for past quarters as employment information on closed customers can take up to 6 quarters before it becomes available.

### *Customized Employment*

Matt Markve is the lead on Customized Employment. We are engaged in a pilot and did some training in August 2017. We had hoped we would have information to help with policy development a year after the pilot. We are moving forward but with slow progression. Matt is currently working with other VR programs in the same pilot program. Our challenges are not specific to Idaho. Other states are also experiencing those same challenges. The goal is to deliver services

statewide for the individuals that need customized employment.

### **Chief of Field Services Report – Darrell Quist**

#### *Disability Priority:*

Darrell reported that in October, VR did a statewide training. One area of focus was disability priority. Disability priority is how VR identifies which individuals would be served first if the agency was ever in an Order of Selection (OOS) and which would be put on the waiting list. Those with the most significant disabilities (MSD) would be served first. Our concern is that historically we have not had good consistency in rating customers, no matter where in the state they applied for services. We have published policy about what the priorities are, but the functional loss statements which we have used historically were subjective. We had a group of staff who spent time going through and developing functional loss statements so we could provide quality training for staff for greater consistency. We also emphasized to staff the ethical principles behind this.

#### *Consistency in VR Services and How They are Provided*

Darrell stated that after the passage of WIOA the agency realized we needed higher levels of consistency in terms of how VR services are provided. We have begun to hire permanent Assistant Regional Managers (ARMs) whose primary roles will be the regional trainer. We will bring them in to central office to train them so they can take information back to regional staff to increase the level of performance around the state. The ARMs will also assist the RMs with personnel issues so those issues can be dealt with on a local basis. The ARMs will also carry a half caseload. We continue to work on rolling these positions out.

#### *Quality Counseling and Case Documentation Training*

We are also focusing on providing training for good quality counseling case documentation. We pulled together a group to include three RMs, Darrell, Teresa and her P&E team. They have developed modules for training. The trainings are scheduled for March and April in four locations around the state.

#### *Pre-ETS Services Impact*

Darrell stated that historically VR has not been engaged in providing work experience opportunities for young people who haven't exited the school system yet. He stated that in speaking with counselors who have provided guidance and counseling to the school work students they say these experiences are making a big difference. The students are coming back from these work experiences and are able engage with their VR counselors on a much deeper level. This is a positive experience for these students.

### **Strategic Planning Meeting – Dina Flores-Brewer**

Dina stated there will be a Strategic Planning Meeting in February. There was

discussion about who would be attending. Janice and Dina would both like to attend. Dina asked for volunteers. Ron stated he would tentatively commit to participate, depending on his work schedule. Jane stated the purpose of this meeting is to engage the VR management staff along with the SRC to better understand the goals and objectives of the SRC.

Dina asked the council for feedback on priorities they want the representatives to bring to the Strategic Planning Meeting. She suggested they look at the 4-Year Work Plan (handout) of goals, objectives and strategies. There was a lengthy discussion. After discussion it was decided each member should provide Jacque with their top three (3) priorities from the strategies listed under the goals and objectives. Jacque would then tally the priorities and forward that information to Dina. Each member was provided a slip of paper so they could write down their top three priorities and Jacque collected them. **Action Item:** Jacque to tally priorities and send results to Dina.

**Old Business** - None reported.

### **New Business**

- Molly stated if anyone has an agenda items for future meetings, they should e-mail that information to Jacque at least a month prior to the next meeting date.
- There was a discussion about membership and term dates. Dina stated we have several members terming out in 2020. Molly asked about options for tribal representatives on the council, stating that ever since she has been on the council, we have had the same representative. Jane explained that we are only required to have one representative from a tribe and that we would consider other applicants if there was an interest.

### **Meeting Adjourned**

Molly asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. *Motion:* Luke motioned to adjourn, and Rob seconded the motion; all voted in favor, none opposed.