



Minutes for the
State Rehabilitation Council Quarterly Meeting
Springhill Suites, 424 E. Park Center Blvd., Boise

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*April 11, 2019*

**Present:** Mel Leviton, Suzette Whiting, Kendrick Lester, Lucas Rose, Janice Carson, Jane Donnellan, Ramona Medicine Horse, Dina Flores-Brewer, Molly Pollastrini, Kenna Buckner, Darin Lindig, Mike Hauser and Jacque Truax

**Guests:** Nanna Hanchett, Kean Miller, Teresa Pitt and Darrell Quist

**Absent:** Rob Atkins, Dwight Johnson, Ron Oberleitner and Sarah Tueller

**Welcome & Introduction of Council Members**

Molly welcomed members and each council member provided an introduction.

**Approval of Minutes - January 9, 2019**

Members were given time to review the minutes from the January 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. No changes or revisions were requested. Motion: Dina motioned to approve the minutes as they read, and Kendrick seconded the motion. The motion passed by a verbal vote.

**SRC Committee Revisions**

Dina presented a draft of the proposed SRC Committee Revisions for members to review. She stated the proposed committees and subcategories are:

- The Executive Committee
  - Annual Report
  - Membership Activities
- Planning & Public Policy Committee
  - Finance
  - VR Portion of the Combined State Plan
  - VR Policy Development
- Survey Committee
  - Survey Design
  - CSNA
- Program Effectiveness Committee
  - Qualitative Data
  - Quantitative Data

Members for these committees has not been determined. It was suggested the council may wish to designate specific individuals or leave it open to all members.

### Executive Committee

Dina read through these sections stating that these sections did not change.

- The Executive Committee
  - Annual Report
  - Membership Activities

### Planning & Public Policy Committee

Dina then read through the Planning & Public Policy Committee.

- Planning & Public Policy Committee
  - Finance
  - VR Portion of the Combined State Plan
  - VR Policy Development

After discussion it was decided that the VR Portion of the Combined State Plan and Finance seemed to be a lot for one committee. It was suggested to move the VR Portion of the Combined State Plan to the Program Effectiveness Committee. It was also decided to remove the last sentence of the Public Policy Advocacy section.

There was discussion about SRC members advocating for the VR agency and lobbying and what those activities are and what they look like. Jane stated that she and Dina would be working on training for new members and/or current members that would include lobbying vs advocacy.

Kean suggested splitting the Finance Committee description into two paragraphs. The first part is about monitoring the agency itself and the second part is about SRC budget. Dina noted this change.

### Survey Committee

Dina read the descriptions for the Survey Committee.

- Survey Committee
  - Survey Design
  - CSNA

### Program Effectiveness Committee

Dina read the descriptions of the Program Effectiveness Committee.

- Program Effectiveness Committee
  - Qualitative Data
  - Quantitative Data

She stated we would be moving the VR Portion of the Combined State Plan under this section.

There was discussion about the structure of the Program Effectiveness Committee and why it was broken down the way it was. After more discussion was suggested that the Survey Committee and Program Effectiveness Committees could be blended together. Dina stated

she would work on incorporating these sections and then send it out to the subcommittee before sending it to the council in full. Action Item: Dina

## **Agency Reports**

Jane Donnellan, Administrator; Kean Miller, Fiscal Manager; Darrell Quist, Field Services Chief; and Nanna Hanchett, Deputy Administrator

### Administrator Report

Jane reported that the VR budget was signed by the Governor on March 20<sup>th</sup>. The legislative session was consumed by the EES program and therefore the VR program got less visibility from legislators. In the future Jane wants the VR program to have more visibility. The Senate Education Committee requested information regarding the VR program. Nanna created a report for them that also highlighted Pre-ETS and Business Engagement. This report will be a great tool to use beyond that committee to aid in highlighting the VR program. Jane met with multiple legislators during session and will continue to do outreach with them to educate them about the VR program and the benefits of the program to the state of Idaho.

Jane talked about changes coming for the VR Staff with the Governor's initiative on IT Modernization which deals with consolidation of IT services throughout the state. IDVR was chosen as one of the first agencies to be included in that program. Our staff will be reduced by 5 FTEs. As of June 16<sup>th</sup>, we will no longer have our agency specific IT staff support. We have been in communication with Information Technology Services (ITS)) as this is a complex process and it will be a difficult transition. We are hopeful that some or all our IT staff will be transitioned to the ITS program.

Jane stated she really appreciates Kean's participation as a VR staff member as she is continually looking at process improvement. Kean looked at current vacancies and with the IT Modernization process taking place helped us identify capacity issues and staff needs.

Kean put together a great package compensation package for our staff. Every permanent employee of the state is to get a \$550 increase, regardless of performance. Then there will be a performance-based increase as well. The direction came out on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March from DFM (Department of Financial Management) and DHR (Department of Human Resources) and Kean got to work on it immediately. If we can get our compensation plan approved sooner, we can implement it sooner and those dollars go back to our staff. It's a strong compensation plan and it will help us retain staff. We will rollout it out within the next couple of weeks.

We are currently recruiting for an AWARE Specialist to help support our field staff with the case management system. We recently hired a Regional Manager in Region 1. We are also looking for a part-time position to support our Transition Coordinator. We recently expanded our Storekeeper position to full time from a part-time position and we hired Shannon Purvis as a high-level trainer to help onboard new counselors and train them on the elements of WIOA.

The Executive Leadership team met for a full day in mid-March to look at goals and objectives for the agency. This segways into the work plan that Teresa will cover this afternoon as many of the projects they identified came into sync with the discussion of the SRC and managers a

few months back at our facilitated meeting, as well as the meeting we had with our leadership management staff back in February. We now have a clearer understanding of where to focus our attention for the agency in next 6 to 12 months.

Jane informed the council that MVRS (Magic Valley Rehabilitation Services) in Twin Falls is closing tomorrow. They have been a CRP for VR services. There was a newspaper article indicating that IDVR did not pay them in a timely manner, and insinuated that VR was the reason for their closure. VR sent an editorial response to the paper stating that MVRS's statement was not accurate.

A question arose from the council as to where the funding for the EES program comes from. Jane stated that the EES program is funded 100% by general state funds. It was suggested that Nanna put something together for a future meeting to explain the relationship of the EES Program and the VR program. (Future Agenda Item)

## **Break**

### Deputy Administrator Report

Nanna stated she has prevue over the EES Program, Business Engagement and Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS), and Human Resources.

She reported that Pre-ETS is heading into the active season where they perform most of their Pre-Employment Transition Services. Over the next year she and Alison Lowenthal will be focusing on strategic planning for the program. They have identified some areas that need assessment such as filling summer programs. Currently they have vacancies in all the summer programs. It seems communication about these programs is lacking. She encouraged SRC members that might have family or friends that could benefit from these programs to get in touch with their VR counselors immediately. The programs are the Summer Work Programs in Lewiston and Moscow and throughout the state as well as the McCall Outdoor Science School (MOSS). Alison was able to work with the Idaho Falls school district and their teachers will staff the MOSS program this year.

Nanna stated that developing closer relationships with schools is essential to getting referrals to these programs. She encouraged council members to send her any ideas they may have to help VR connect with schools/students. There is a link to these programs on the VR website under the Students tab: the BSU Prep Program, Academy Next at ISU, SOLE Program, MOSS, etc. They are beginning a pilot this summer with the Boise School District. It is a summer school class that students will get credit for and it includes a Pre-ETS portion as well.

As far as business engagement Nanna reported they did finish working with HP and their first cohort there. The name of the program at HP is Spectrum Success which is an autism hiring accommodation program. Darin provided information on the program stating it is designed as an alternative path to the traditional interview process. HP worked alongside VR with the goal of putting people in positions to apply for jobs within HP. HP established some internships that could convert to full-time professional positions. They brought in 5 students with autism and two were offered internships. They received a lot of good feedback from participants in the

program as well as HP staff who participated. VR hopes to use this model to expand to other businesses.

### Field Services Chief Report

Darrell reported that since the implementation of WIOA with its emphasis on students and youth, we have seen a shift in where the demands are for our staff. We are taking a first dive into the data to analyze and make adjustments with field staff. We want to look at how we can strengthen our field staff and recognize the needs of our customers.

Darrell stated we will have a representation at National Council of Rehabilitation Education (NCRE) next week. Nanna and Kamila will be attending and are hoping to recruit some individuals from that conference. Recruitment and retention continue to be a significant issue within VR. We have added a trainer position with Shannon joining the VR team in that capacity. This will help address some of the needs of individuals that don't have the education we usually require and to get them up to speed to help provide high level VR services. We also recognize the need for a focus on consistency and common practices around the state. We are currently in the process of putting on a training for Quality Counseling and Case Documentation training.

We filled the Region 1 Regional Manager position in Coeur d'Alene and are still looking for a qualified person for the RM position in the Twin Falls region.

Darrell reported on the Conference of State Administrators for Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) trip that he and Ron attended in Washington DC. He stated Ron was a great asset for the visits with the Congressmen for the Day on the Hill as he spoke directly as a parent of a son with a disability about the impact of VR on his son's life and the lives of others with disabilities. Darrell stated they talked about proposed legislation, a draft that would replace the 15% that was set aside for Pre-ETS. It would be additional funds for Pre-ETS. This is somewhat related to the fact that so many agencies are currently in Order of Selection (OOS) or headed into OOS.

### Fiscal Report

Kean reported on Order of Selection projections. She provided several scenarios. For most scenarios she stated we wouldn't end up in OOS until 2023. She suggested we are three years away from OOS if things continue the way they have. Fiscal will continue to do projections each year and if need be they will do it more frequently.

## **Lunch**

### WORK PLAN PRIORITIES

#### 2019 IDVR Performance Update (Handout)

Teresa reviewed the SRC quarterly report with members. She stated that the first section of the report is about the six new common performance indicators. Most of the measures are lagging indicators, meaning that we can never get the data once we are past that point in time. Performance Indicators A and B are now fully able to be populated with data for PY2017. The

program year is always a year before the state year of the same number. We are still baselining and are supposed to negotiate all our new performance measures with RSA.

The only thing we can capture right now is measurable skill gains, because those are a current performance measure and an interim measure to credential attainment. As you look through the rest of the report you will see “no data” in many places. She believes the original plan was to negotiate targets for RSA in June of this year but because we haven’t heard from them she is under the impression they will use their authority to delay that one more year. She can’t confirm that yet.

She stated we don’t have a lot of data at this point and all we have is rough estimates. Our data systems became compliant July 1, 2018, and now RSA is changing the data requirements again as of July 1, 2019. We really need to be compliant by July 1, but we don’t even know what the final data elements are. It is all a state of change. We are still in a period of baseline and are still trying to capture the data that we are supposed to be reporting. She really doesn’t think there is a way they will be able to negotiate targets in June for July. She wants to give the SRC information, but she doesn’t have much data at this point and what she has isn’t really that reliable.

The last indicator is Effectiveness in Serving Employers. This is a pilot and only includes our data. The two measures that we have picked is retention with the same employer and the employer penetration rate. She stated we are currently at 31.81 % currently, but she is not certain of the accuracy of that number.

On section 2, page 5, Teresa feels more confident in these numbers as these are from our old Standards and Indicators reports. She pointed out for PY2018 compared to PY2017 you will see that quarter over quarter the number of individuals that we are helping go to work (closed successfully) is dropping. This has been the trend over the last couple years. PY2018 isn’t complete yet. We believe one of the biggest contributors to this decline is the strong economy in Idaho.

On page 6 of the report she highlighted that our response rate for the Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS) is at 14.13%. Over a year ago we were at 5% or less. She stated they will be turning on the gift card drawing for April closures to see if it bumps us up over this 14%. If it only takes us up a slight amount we may not continue using it or if it works well we may have to figure out how to pay for it without using federal funds. On page 7 are the responses for the individual questions (bar graph).

Teresa reported that this is the second quarter that we have given this data to our Regional Managers. They have all of the answers so they can see if there are trends in their regions or if there is some action they need to take.

She reported on the Strategic Planning Session that was held in February with the Executive Leadership Team, the Regional Managers, their permanent Assistant Regional Managers, and the three SRC representatives. Matt and Teresa facilitated the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to help arrive at priorities for the division and to have a plan for prioritizing. The

plan for the session was to take the VR services portion of the Combined State Plan, our state requirement of doing a Strategic Plan, and then our work plan and bringing them together as much as we could into one plan.

The morning of the meeting was used to show everyone what was in the Work Plan. In the afternoon session we used the large sticky note pads (placed on the walls of the room) and we had listed the objectives or strategies for the agency. Everyone was given a pack of dots (4 each), and each person was asked to place their four dots where they believed the priorities of the agency should be.

Dina commented that the priorities discussed at that meeting were very similar to the ones the SRC reviewed in January. She said that the priorities of the SRC (benefits counseling, customized employment and understanding the needs of business) were somewhat in alignment with VR except for customized employment.

Teresa handed out the Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) 4-Year Work Plan 2020-2024. She highlighted the priorities from the strategic planning session with VR staff as well as the SRC priorities on this document. Each highlighted section has a number representing the number of staff who voted it as a priority. The SRC priorities are labeled as "SRC #1 and #2. She reviewed the highlighted sections of the document with the council. She welcomed SRC members to join in the strategy development with agency staff on areas they may be interested in. Teresa suggested they would likely start with a brainstorming session and that the SRC would be invited to participate.

**Goal 1** – Provide quality, relevant, individualized vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities to maximize their career potential.

*Objective 1.1.1 Expand, monitor and improve pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS) to students with disabilities and similar services to youth.*

1.1.1 – Continue to expand services to potentially eligible students (504/IEP) through increased cross-training of VR & educators.

This strategy had 6 votes for priority.

1.2.1 – Expand the provision of Supported Employment services to promote long-term success/retention.

This strategy had 4 votes for priority. This continues to be a priority to VR. We have already begun training and have re-written our policy. We are monitoring our service delivery and talked to our CPRs about this. There will be more training for the field as there seems to still be confusion.

1.2.2 – Implementation and Expansion of Customized Employment.

This strategy had 1 vote for priority. Nationally there have been a lot of challenges with the customized employment pilot as well as within our own agency.

1.2.3 – Evaluate the delivery of benefits planning on a statewide basis.

This strategy had 7 votes of priority from staff and was the number 1 priority for the SRC.

This objective had the most votes of any objective. This is something we will be working on this next year and we are in the process of evaluation.

*Objective 3 – Hire and retain qualified staff to deliver quality vocational rehabilitation services.*

1.3.1 – Evaluate counselor compensation

This strategy had 11 votes for priority and includes the total objective and all strategies. Teresa said we have already been working on this. We are currently involved in evaluating our employee compensation.

1.3.2 – Hire a VRC Trainer to provide consistent statewide training, and 1.3.3: Develop a new employee on-boarding process.

We have hired a VRC trainer to provide consistent training statewide and we want to develop a new employee onboarding process.

1.3.4 - Consider counselor position paid internships, and 1.3.5: Develop new recruitment marketing materials and expand recruitment efforts. We have had some success with the HP internships and are evaluating ways to pay counselors who are in master's programs so we can hire them. Nanna and her staff have developed some new marketing tools to use when marketing for new positions. We are focusing more on expanding our recruitment efforts and communicating with University advisory boards.

**Goal 2 – Improve VR program efficiency through continuous quality improvement activities.**

*Objective 4 – Increase IDVR integration with the workforce development system*

2.4.1. – Better understand integration within the workforce development system through data sharing, co-enrollment and business engagement activities.

This objective had 7 votes for priority. We are required to do all of this under WIOA. We are making efforts on a couple of these currently. Nanna is working with our other workforce partners on business engagement activities. We don't have data to work on the co-enrollment part of this right now.

2.4.1 – VR actively involved in leadership roles in the Workforce Development Council (WFDC) membership, one-stop subcommittee, Combined State Plan work group (WAG) and Business Engagement.

Jane is a voting member of the Workforce Development Council and the One-Stop subcommittee chair for this council. She is very involved and is an important voice for that council. VR was selected for this council by the Governor.

*Objective 6 – Revise internal case review process to align with AIOA requirements and inform the continuous quality improvement cycle.*

2.6.1 – Evaluate and revise case review instrument for WIOA compliance and ease of use

This strategy had 7 votes for priority. Teresa stated that all these strategies go together 2.6.1 through 2.6.3. as they are all priorities. We are meeting tomorrow to work on this.

*Objective 7 - Collaborate with Community Rehabilitation Program partners to improve the quality of services.*

### 2.7.1 – Evaluate CRP service delivery structure and fee structure.

This strategy had 5 votes for priority. This is something we definitely will be working on.

### 2.7.2 – Engage with CRPs to define expectations to improve the quality of CRP services.

This strategy had 2 votes for priority. We have been engaging with CRPs at a greater level. Matt and Teresa worked on a CPR manual to provide expectations for the CRPs as well as our staff.

Goal 3: Meet the needs of Idaho businesses

*Objective 1 – IDVR to be recognized by the business community as the disability experts in the workforce system.*

### 3.1.1 – Understand and meet the needs of business (ADA, disability awareness/etiquette, work-incentives).

This strategy had 4 votes for priority for VR staff and was the #2 SRC goal.

Teresa said that if anyone has ideas for strategies or for develop more strategies, or wants to work on strategies, they should let her know. The Business Engagement team and the Pre-ETS teams will be working developing the strategic plans as well. If those are areas of interest for you, please contact Nanna.

Teresa asked how she could best keep the SRC informed on the above activities. She suggested taking the priorities for the next year and incorporating them into a report. She is not sure a quarterly report is the best option as some quarters don't have a lot of activity. Janice stated she like the report that was given today with only the topics that have activity with a description of what it is and why it is important and the progress that we are making, and to have reports twice a year. It was suggested that if there is a barrier and the agency is stuck on something that it be discuss with the council at that time. Teresa said she would pilot something with Janice. She will modify the report and include the elements by the bullets and if Janice likes it that they will adopt a new format to share with the council.

## **Break**

Teresa said she would have Jacque e-mail the Policy to the council, as she didn't make copies for everyone today. She wants everyone to have the opportunity to read it and give feedback. She did receive feedback on the Closure Policy in addition to the changes with the service payment policy. There are other changes as well.

There is a new Executive Order from the Governor's office; the Red Tape Reduction Act. The message that Governor Little conveyed is that we are overburdening citizens of Idaho and business by creating so many rules. They are moving the rules department from the Department of Administration to the Division of Financial Management for rulemaking and fact checking. They will do fact checking before you can do negotiated rule making. Pending any fact checking, we are hoping our rule will be posted in the Administrative Rules Bulletin and that we can proceed with public comment.

She read the Executive Order (EO) to the council members. The EO states that if we add one new word to rule we need to try to eliminate two or three words out of rule. VR only has one rule. Three quarters of our policy manual is procedures and it shouldn't be in rule. We want to beef up our rule to include the important things that are currently in rule, and to separate out the policy. We have to provide a clear statement as to why our rule is expanding because we are removing our incorporated document by reference. We want to do this in 2021.

She provided Molly and Dina with copies of the Field Service Policy Manual; one redline version and one with straight text. She stated that where they would see the most redline was section 9, Payment Policy and Purchasing Policy. We took a huge section of what was in section 12 and moved it to section 9. Then we had to delete that from section 12. That was done because they tried to remove the maximum agency contribution (soft caps). They removed the thresholds for all professional medical services and streamlining our service categories to be more aligned with the RSA service categories. We started that with the CRP manual. The closure policy is the biggest change. At the last meeting she handed out the Trial Work Policy. She stated there are minor changes with that. She is looking forward to working with a policy team.

She then provided the council with the dates for the public meetings. Action Item: Jacque will send the policy manual to all SRC members next week as well as the dates and venues for the public meetings.

### **New Business**

There was discussion about council members having time on future agendas; maybe 10 to 15 minutes, to ask questions or get clarification.

Other suggestions:

- an orientation or overview of what VR does
- a flow chart showing VR, SBOE, EES, Pre-ETS, or more visual information.
- how council members fit into what VR is doing
- better communication about committees (meetings and reports)
- go back to day and a half meetings to allow enough time to cover material

Molly stated we would include time on the July agenda for Darin and Lucas to ask questions (20 minutes). Action Item: Jacque

### **Membership Committee Report**

Dina reported that there are three applicants for membership to the council. We have a youth applicant, Daniel Reff, who the committee recommended for membership as a representative a former applicant or recipient of VR services. Other applicants were Nathan Ogden and David Maxwell. David is an individual with a disability and a former veteran. The membership committee recommended David as a representative for veterans and Disability Advocacy Groups. Dina stated we can have up to 18 members and if we fill these two positions we will then have 16 members. Dina said she would like to discuss Mr. Ogden's nomination further.

Jane announced that Suzette Whiting will be resigning her position on the council as a representative of a VR Counselor as of today. Jane will discuss with Darrell a replacement for this position on the council.

Motion: A motion was made by Kenna to accept the recommendations Daniell Reff and David Maxwell for council membership. The motion was seconded by Mike and a verbal vote was taken; all in favor, none opposed.

#### October Meeting Date

We discussed having the October SRC meeting in conjunction with In-Service for the agency staff. In-Service for the agency is the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> of October at the Red Lion Downtowner. It was decided to move the SRC meeting from the originally scheduled date of October 10<sup>th</sup> to October 3<sup>rd</sup> so members could attend In-Service. In July we will have a better idea of the agenda for In-Service and can have further discussions about attendance. Motion: Mel made a motion to change the meeting date to October 3<sup>rd</sup>, Molly seconded the motion; the motion passed by verbal vote.

#### Next SRC Meeting

Next meeting is July 10<sup>th</sup> at the Holiday Inn, Boise, ID (near airport).

#### Meeting Adjourned

Motion: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mike and seconded by Luke; all in favor, none opposed.