



Nebraska State Rehabilitation Council

500 S. 84th St., 2nd Floor PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987

"A consumer-controlled council committed to ensuring quality rehabilitation services."

SRC Meeting (virtual)

Tuesday, August 9, 2022

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Draft Meeting Minutes

MEMBERS PRESENT (virtually): Lonnie Berger, Crystal Booker, Jerry Bryan, Michael Bursaw, Jeremy Daffern, Gloria Eddins, Jason Gieschen (joined meeting after **II. Approval of prior meeting minutes**), Gayle Hahn, Theresa, Hayes, Matt Kaslon, Lisa Kent-Scheer (joined meeting @ 11 a.m., after **II. Approval of prior meeting minutes**)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Michael Tufte

VR STAFF PRESENT: Lindy Foley, Tobias Orr, Diane Owen-Downs, Mary Matusiak, Victoria Rasmussen, Angela Fujan, Cinda Wacker

INTERPRETERS PRESENT: Margie Propp, Ben Sparks

VISITOR: Jennifer Papproth, Director of Accessibility Services, UNO

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:00 a.m.

I. Approval of Agenda

Michael Bursaw moved to approve the 8/9/22 agenda with a modification to move the Director's Report to a different time. Gloria seconded the motion.

Vote: 9

Aye: 9

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 3

The motion carried.

Director's Report (Lindy Foley)

Nebraska VR Director Lindy Foley will need to attend the Commissioner's Cabinet so the Director's Report was moved on the agenda. It is always great to be part of the SRC meetings and great to provide the SRC with updates from Nebraska VR. Director Foley reported feeling very proud of the work happening at Nebraska VR:

1. Client and Student Services: There are some ties to the May Director's Report. Very excited to share Nebraska VR no longer has a wait list for services. Nebraska VR has been under an Order of Selection (OOS) since 12/2017. Effective October, 2021, VR officially opened PG2 with PG 1 being opened earlier than that. This summer, VR removed PG3 individuals. In all, VR has removed 5,600 people from the wait list since OOS which started 12/2017. There has been a lot of work and pieces to fit together to get to this point. State agencies can move into an OOS if funding and staffing aren't available. Nebraska VR had additional funding from federal funds and the State Legislature so VR is busy removing individuals from the wait list. PG3 isn't officially open; however, every week VR is removing

individuals from the wait list.

LB 527 was passed which changed the age from 16 to 14 years of age for students with a developmental disability to receive transition services. VR worked with NDE Office of Special Education for awareness of the potential number of referrals for VR. VR has not seen a spike in 14-15 year olds. Rule 51 was updated. VR is being proactive in having sufficient staff to serve transition students.

2. Retention and Recruitment of Staff: This item is a carryover from the May meeting on retention and recruitment of staff. Nebraska VR wants to keep the talent VR has in their staff. How can we retain/recruit staff? The VR Leadership Council helped collect ideas to help with this retention/recruitment. The Retention & Recruitment Workgroup was created. 3 members of the VR LC volunteered for this important workgroup. Ideas were collected into 3 categories: comparative wages, hybrid work schedule, and overall benefits with team building opportunities. There are creative ways offices are finding to help with team building. Discussion for the next meeting will be staffing considerations and career pathways in VR. Nebraska VR wants to grow leaders in the agency. There should be flexibility of scheduling for life/work balance. There should be staff recognition to celebrate VR and one another. What can VR do immediately? What is the long term plan (pay is a bigger conversation with NDE)?

Penn State completed a study with VR agencies across the nation regarding hiring and retaining workers. The report should be available by the October SRC meeting. Hopefully can compare Nebraska VR to the nation.

3. Training with staff. Trainings are always changing with staff. There was a statewide training on Bridges Out of Poverty. Various VR staff attended Windmills training. There was training on overall progressive employment (national model) when people come to us, meet them where we are, e.g., Bridges work, economic diversity challenges. Nebraska VR wants to stay out front and be a leader in the field. Nebraska VR was chosen as 1 of 8 state agencies to receive the CPAP 2.0 grant. 20 summer programs were offered this summer to students with disabilities. There was lots of energy with keeping students engaged over the summer. Hybrid schedule for staff to attend IEP meetings, whether in-person or virtually, has been effective. The RSA Monitoring Corrective Action Plan (CAP), first quarterly update, was submitted July 30th. Nebraska VR has a full year to address the CAP.

II. Approval of prior meeting minutes

Gloria Eddins made the motion to approve the 5/10/22 meeting minutes w/ a modification to page 3, 2nd paragraph, "space between 'submitted' and 'ATP'". Matt seconded the motion.

Vote: 9

Aye: 9

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 3

The motion carried.

III. ACTION Follow up to action items from last meeting:

- Council Membership:

- New Members: NA — No new members
- Terms Ending: NA for 2022
- Recruitment Reminder: Employer member needed. No update from Mary Matusiak but is following up during the meeting.
- Election of Officers/Chair and Vice Chair: Michael and Crystal are at the end of their 2nd year so they cannot reapply. Only voting members can vote for the Chair and Vice Chair of the SRC. Nominations were made by the following SRC members. A Zoom poll was used for voting on the officers.

Chair: Crystal nominated Lonnie Berger for the Chair. Lonnie accepted the nomination. Matt nominated himself.

Vote for Lonnie: 78% (received 7 votes from voting members)

Vote for Matt: 22% (received 2 votes from voting members)

Lonnie will be the new Chair.

Vice Chair: Lonnie nominated Gayle Hahn for the Vice Chair. Gayle accepted the nomination. Matt nominated himself. Crystal nominated Gloria Eddins. Gloria accepted the nomination.

Votes for Gayle: 44% (received 4 votes from voting members)

Votes for Matt: 33% (received 3 votes from voting members)

Votes for Gloria: 22% (received 2 votes from voting members)

Gayle Hahn will be the new Vice Chair.

New committee chairs will be members of the Executive Committee which meets before the regular SRC meetings. These meetings are held virtually.

IV. DISCUSSION

- Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Committee (Jerry Bryan)

The Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity Committee meets biweekly focusing on providing resources, guidance, and support to recognizing the individual identities of staff, students, clients, and stakeholders to improve inclusive and accessible practices in alignment with Nebraska VR's mission and values. The committee formed in March 2021 and since that time the committee has accomplished the following:

- Development and delivery of a Nebraska VR all-staff cultural climate survey, including discussion of results to staff and the SRC
- Increased awareness of NDE supports, such as the EAP and Ombudsman roles
- Statewide access to a foreign language translation service
- Guide for creating Peer Resource Groups and Safe Talking Spaces amongst teams
- A safe space for staff to share thoughts and opinions
- Broader trainings recognizing diverse client perspectives
- Newsletter topics supporting the intersection of diversity and employment
- Representation in a national DEI network formed by CSAVR

- October Employment Awards (Employer Services Committee) Mary Matusiak reported gearing up for the awards ceremony at Firespring, Lincoln, on Tuesday, 10/11/22, 1-2 pm CT

with the SRC meeting being held the morning of 10/11/22. The event will be hybrid. Tobias toured Firespring. Firespring offered their space which holds 90 people in a large room and a small room for the SRC meeting. Firespring offered coffee/water. Food and snack will be provided. The meeting will be hybrid which will work great with NDE IT's help. Tobias Orr, Mary Matusiak, and Sarah Chapin are working on the logistics.

The 5 award winners attending in-person are:

Large Business: Mutual of Omaha (Omaha)

Small Business: KLM Products Group (The Candy Barn) (Scottsbluff); nominated by the Scottsbluff VR office

New Business Partnership: Best Western Plus (North Platte); nominated by Carole Baldwin & Colleen Dubry, North Platte VR office

Entrepreneur: Donato Medina- Medina's Carriers (Grand Island); nominated by Julie Shively, State Office & Felipe Cruz, Grand Island VR Office

Champion: Jon Lierman- Pizza Hut (Wayne, Norfolk Office); nominated by Kara Michaelson & Misti Halsey, Norfolk VR office; may not be able to attend in-person due to staffing at the business

The keynote speaker will be David Scott. There will be a panel of speakers.

How many nominations/packages were submitted? VR received 20 great nominations this year. There were more than 1 nomination in every category. Mary will provide feedback to all staff on all nominations. There is one change this year which is providing certificates to all submitted nominations.

• **Member Feedback on Written Reports (NESILC, ATP, Nebraska Youth Leadership Council, Ombudsman, CAP, Deaf & Hard of Hearing)**

NESILC: Sponsored Disability Pride Event in Lincoln. Great turnout. Always looking for new members. Go to SILC website to apply. Disability webinar series are available on the NESILC website.

ATP: ATP is recruiting new members. During the 4/1/22-6/30/22 quarter, 145 projects were authorized, utilizing \$990,129.83 in AD waiver funding and 7 DD projects were authorized, utilizing \$8,071.74. ATP is starting the 3rd cohort for the AT Cadre. ATP continues their partnership with ATIA for the ATIA Learning Center providing every Nebraskan with over 180 free high-quality webinars and courses on a wide variety of ATP topics. ATP continues w/ ergo assessment for Nebraska VR – 67 search requests, 18 new staff, consumers Two new staff were hired. The education pool was moved from Cozad to Lincoln N 27th ATP until the new storage facility is ready for the move of equipment. Matt Kaslon is interested in serving on the ATP Council.

Nebraska Youth Leadership Council: Matt Kaslon reported Kathy Lloyd reached out to Matt to report: The summer conference at UNK went very well. There were lots of speakers with a very good turnout. If anyone wants to be on the YLC, contact Matt or Kathy Lloyd.

Ombudsman Report: none

CAP: Jerry Bryan reported he had 2 cases this quarter. The first case was an individual who

contacted CAP stating she wasn't eligible for services. After the informal investigation, the individual had initially gone to VR for services, but was accommodated by her work. The individual moved back to take care of her parents. The individual wanted VR to set up a work space in the parents' home. Spoke to employer. This move was her choice but was not mandated by the employer. Was not eligible for VR because work accommodated her in the beginning.

The second case was a client who contacted VR because they wanted to work with a different counselor. Counselor was providing appropriate services. Client was having issues at the time so it was bad timing on asking to work with a different counselor. Client, CAP and VR met. Client closed the case because she couldn't participate in VR services. Client's decision to apply later was the best solution at that point.

NCDHH: Jeremy Daffern reported 2 things happening now. The Senate passed Pre-K language acquisition. In July, 2022, American Recovery Plan funding was made available to pay for interpreters. Interpreters aren't willing to drive to the rural areas, e.g., Broken Bow where there are no interpreters. Having funding available to pay for interpreters to drive to rural areas is a plus for people living in those parts of the state. NCDHH is working out the kinks of this funding. See NCDHH website for details. Events are coming up soon.

- **Member Feedback on VR (Chair):** None to report.

- **Committee Meeting & Reports** (if time allows): Committees are to vote on Committee Chair.

—**Client Services Committee** (Jerry Bryan)

Matt Kaslon will be the incoming Chair. There were 3 nominees (Gloria, Lisa, Matt). Jerry presented the 3rd quarter client satisfaction survey. A tremendous job has been done by serving clients. There are 3-4 Nebraska VR Associates who are collecting this data. Thank you to those individuals. There is still a wait list for PG3; however, it is cleared weekly. Very pleased with that.

Surveys Completed: 212 (FY20-21 Q3 YTD) 256 (FY21-22 Q3 YTD)

Percentage Still Employed: 98.11% (FY20-21 Q3 YTD) 94.53% (FY21-22 Q3 YTD)

Job Meets Current Needs: 95.67% (FY20-21 Q3 YTD) 94.21% (FY21-22 Q3 YTD)

Most Helpful Service Encouragement Support 72.17%, Employment Services 34.43%,

Supported Employment 25.47% (FY20-21 Q3 YTD) Encouragement Support 58.38%,

Supported Employment 46.09%, Employment Services 32.42% (FY21-22 Q3 YTD)

Likely recommend to Family/Friends: 96.23% (FY20-21 Q3 YTD) 94.93% (FY21-22 Q3 YTD)

—**Employer Services Committee** (Lonnie Berger)

Chair will continue to be Lonnie. Would like another individual on the committee to be the Chair next year. Lonnie welcomed Jennifer Papproth to this meeting. Hopefully Jennifer can participate in the future. Awards Ceremony: Employer Services Committee responsible for the final duties which are being worked on. The event will be hybrid. Will be a good awards ceremony to recognize those businesses who contribute to VR and serving people with disabilities.

—**Transition Services Committee** (Theresa Hayes) Lupe volunteered to chair this committee. Special Education Office has been busy this summer. A Post School Outcome Survey mandated by OSEP was sent out late May with interest in: are the students

employed, in school, in a training program. A reminder mailing was sent. Phone calls were made to students as well if there were no responses to the mailings. There has been a good response rate so far. The annual Transition Conference will be February 21-22, 2023. The keynote speaker will be Dan Habib, creator of many short films, who has a son w/ disabilities. There will also be breakout sessions with Mr. Habib. An RFP will be sent out end of August for this conference. Lupe Stevens shared there were 19 summer transition programs which were very successful. There was FEAT training for 40 people. 10 VR staff returned from the National Project SEARCH Conference. Two SEARCH sites in Nebraska received awards: Bellevue Hospital, CHI Kearney with 70% of the interns competitively employed. 909 youth have gone through SEARCH in Nebraska. Jeremy Daffern reported the American Recovery Act is funding 1) travel expenses for interpreters in rural areas of Nebraska and 2) interpreters in legal appointments or meetings outside of a courtroom setting anywhere in Nebraska. Jason Gieschen has had a busy summer. He participated in Special Olympics receiving 2 gold medals and a fourth place ribbon in bowling.

—**Executive Committee** (Michael Bursaw, Chair) Can we have a VR staff member be a committee chair? No. Are Jeremy or Jason interested in the chair position? Neither are interested. Crystal suggested the Transition Services Committee have a vacant committee chair until the next meeting which would give time to look at the bylaws to see if a VR staff member could be the chair. Gloria moved to leave the Transition Committee chair position open until next meeting to see if a VR or ATP staff member could be the chair. Michael looked at the bylaws so the Council is not sure we're coming to a decision today. Matt seconded the motion.

Vote: 11

Aye: 11

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 1

The motion carried.

The last Executive Meeting was spent planning for the 8/9/22 SRC meeting which included researching/interpretation of the bylaws for chairs of committees.

—**Public Comment/Announcements** If SRC members attended the Disability Pride Event in Lincoln, Gloria would like to hear your thoughts. SRC will reach out to Jen Papproth for possible SRC membership. Michael thanked the SRC membership for helping him this past year and thanked Crystal as the Vice Chair. Gloria made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Jerry seconded the motion.

Vote: 11

Aye: 11

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Absent: 1

The motion carried.