

Montana State Rehabilitation Council

DDS Conference Room

May 11, 2018

Attendees: Tiffany Costa, Nick Domitrovich, Coreen Faulkner, Lisa Gault, Kathy Hampton, Brook Hodge, Andy Kemp, Michele Letendre, Denise May, Kathy Meier, Susan Nielson, Diana Tavary, Arlene Templer, and Scott Trent

Absent: Wayne Dagele, Barbara Davis, Barbara Kriskovich, and Frank Podobnik

Staff and others: Chanda Hermanson-Dudley, Beverly Berg, Mike Hermanson, and Shawn Tulloch. Beth Breneman of Disability Rights Montana

Introduction of members and staff. Travel vouchers passed out. Updated pages for the SRC binders were passed out.

February Minutes: Arlene Templer moved to approve; Scott Trent seconded. Motion was approved.

Consumer Satisfaction Survey; Mike Hermanson:

Mike reviewed the survey process. It was noted that the part time clerical position, which handled the survey, was eliminated and the survey is a little more difficult to get out. Survey Monkey is a new program being utilized. Response is about 40%. Positive response levels tend to stay the same year to year.

Discussions: Who received surveys; Validity of questions; Other state surveys to expand types of surveys; Historical survey data; Possibly having a volunteer organization do phone surveys; Youth and Native American survey numbers seem to be low, why?; Number of surveys sent out; Information from surveys shared with supervisors and who they pass the info onto.

Employee Engagement Survey; Chanda Hermanson-Dudley:

Chanda reviewed the survey process.

Discussions: Improvements from 2017 to 2018; Budget cuts affected survey; Exit interviews are offered by Nick, three have been done this year; Better response rate over last year; Purpose of survey and what happens afterwards; Surveys go out in April.

Field Service Report; Chanda Hermanson-Dudley

Chanda reviewed staffing levels. A new supervisor position is being hired in Kalispell. Helena will also be hiring a new supervisor in late summer/fall.

Discussions: Montana pays low for supervisors and counselors; Data base problems.

Appeals – Review of four appeals since the last meeting. Three were upheld and one was overturned.

Discussions: Can schooling be adjusted for student abilities i.e. reduced school load. College counselors need to be trained to advise that fewer credits can be taken; College classes and how VR students can be helped.

Blind & Low Vision Services; Beverly Berg

Beverly reviewed staffing and internships. They are under a hiring freeze so no new staff will be hired. Review of computer programs and vision assistance with those programs. Vending machine vendors are losing profits as machines are being removed by request.

Older Blind Program is handing out items bought in bulk which saves 30-40% of costs. OBP best practices data will soon be available from Mississippi University. Magnification devices are being donated, often by VA, and passed onto OBP recipients.

BLVS vs. VR – Separate by state mandate. Not always the same in other states. BLVS teaches different things than VR. Cases are typically opened longer than VR cases; Fewer offices with less staff.

Review of BLVS programs for new members such as blend vendor program, I Can Connect program, or Older Blind Program.

Discussions: Vending machine program at refineries in Billings; I Can program has about 60 participants.

Business Services Updates; Chanda Hermanson-Dudley

Chanda reviews WIOA mandates some of which are new. Review goals met that were set two years ago at initial meeting of Business Services.

Discussions: Apprenticeship programs; Attendance is about 10 people per meeting; Encourage members to attend various team meetings.

Wrap-up:

Agenda items for next meeting – Life Scholars program; Input into the Governor report; Youth services update; Windmills training; Combining meetings with other Councils would be beneficial (Job Services would be good); Ask one tribe per meeting; Service animals; Strategic plan.

Scott Trent moved to adjourn, Brooke Hodge seconded. So moved 11:30 a.m.