

Montana State Rehabilitation Council

Wilderness conference room

September 12 & 13, 2019

Meeting Minutes

Members present: Monique Casbeer, Tiffany Costa, Barbara Davis, Chanda Hermanson-Dudley, Coreen Faulkner, Kathy Hampton, Brook Hodge, Michele Letendre, Kathy Meier, and Susan Nielson

Members absent: Wayne Dagele, Andy Kemp, Barbara Kriskovich, Denise May, and Frank Podobnik

Staff and guests: Anna Gibbs (over Skype), Shawn Tulloch, Beth Brenneman, Beverly Berg (Friday), Jeanne Stone (Friday)

Welcome and Introductions: Council Chair Tiffany Costa called the meeting to order. Introductions were made around the tables.

May Meeting Minutes: Motion made to approve the minutes unanimously.

Public Comments: Kathy Hampton talked about PRTS which are the psychiatric youth facilities in Montana and other youth programs (like Show Dare, Boys & Girls Clubs, etc.) and how the youth programs are not getting Pre-ETS services and the VR counselors are not going out there. She talked with Tammy Hogan the new Pre-ETS Bureau Chief about this. Anna reminded the Council that each VR counselor is assigned to a high school in Montana – you can look it up on the link: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/detd/youthtransitions/contacts>. Monique Casbeer talked about Recovery International and handed out brochures.

Program Support & Operations, Anna Gibbs: Anna began her report by stating her job title, Bureau Chief of Program Support and Operations. She listed her duties such as supervising 6 positions (3 of them is still vacant). Program Manager (Mike Hermanson's old job) and 2 of the budget analysts are vacant. One of the budget analysts (the Lead Budget Analyst) was advertised and had interviews. But no one was selected. That position was revised as Budget Analyst Basic and the job description was re-written. The second budget analyst position was vacated for a long time – the lead budget analyst took some of the duties. It has been revised & submitted to HR and hope to advertise soon. To clarify, the two budget analyst positions are equal – no lead position and subordinate position. The good news is that a temp (Karie Whitlock) has been hired to do some of the tasks. She used to work in DET Division as the budget analyst and is familiar with the tasks. The position, Program Manager, has several duties (covers the liaison with Community Rehabilitation Programs, Tribal relations, comprehensive state-wide needs assessment, Supported Employment, extended employment, etc.) She hoped to have that position advertised soon. She reviewed the vacancies on the organizational chart of all the VRBS and DET Division jobs. There is no budget report due to the vacated position. Anna talked a bit about the overspent in 2016 and penalty fees for the next few years.

Federal/State updates & Field Services updates, Chanda Hermanson-Dudley: Chanda reported that the MOE was \$5 million, the penalty would be \$4.9 million and \$6 million the next year. (*Data not verified by the program.) She also reported that Tammy Hogan is now the Bureau Chief of Pre-Employment Transition Services. She talked about the caseload for the VR counselors – average cases are about 60 with Bozeman having the highest number and Billings the lowest. Regarding the waitlist, about 150 clients were invited back to start receiving services. We are not opening cases at this point. Chanda shared which job positions are

advertised and filled. Some of the job vacancies need to have the job description updated. Chanda talked about the upcoming All-Staff meeting in few weeks. She asked the Council if any is interested in attending. Coreen Faulkner and Monique Casbeer expressed interest to attend. Chanda gave update on the policy and procedure – she will email it to the Council.

Pre-Employment Transitions Services presentation by Andrew Lowney: Andrew gave a PowerPoint presentation about Pre-ETS in the Missoula area. He showed pictures of the summer camps, touring local businesses, job shadowing, and few job tasks. He talked about Montana’s Leadership Forum and its activities. The students do not have to wait until 18 years old to get the services – we can start as early as 14 years old. The early age helps the students to get some work readiness experience and figure out what they want to do and what skills they want to learn. There are lots of choices for the students to choose from such as the vocational trade programs, post-secondary programs, or go directly to work. He talked briefly about the Order of Selection and the students are encouraged to apply for VR services. There is a wait list. However, the students can get the Pre-ETS as long as they are in school and can continue to get them until age 21.

Case of the Year stories: Chanda led a discussion of the different stories. The Council read and voted on four stories. Chanda will announce the winners during the All-Staff meeting in a few weeks.

Reports from the Committees

- Education and Membership
 - Denise May and Michele Letendre are working hard to recruit more members to serve on the Council. We have several vacancies: 4 seats to represent Business, Industry and Labor; one seat to represent Parent Training and Information Center; one seat to represent SWIB; one seat to represent Tribal VR Project; one seat to represent SWIB. We have called several businesses – this is a challenge to get the seats filled. Regarding the seat for Parent Training and Information Center, PLUK (Parents, Let’s Unit for Kids) is going toward the end of their grant and is unlikely to have someone to serve on the Council. There is a new organization called Montana Parent Training & Information Center headed by South Dakota. Hopefully we will have someone to fill that seat soon. Shannon Lewis of Workforce Investment Board is working with us to find someone.
- Planning & Review
 - Barbara Davis reported that the committee worked on the Governor’s Report, more specifically on the last page on SRC’s recommendations and the achievements. They added a couple things that the Council did this year. Barbara will edit the stories that the Council voted. We will need to do a group picture of the Council members the next time.
- Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment
 - The committee is continuing to work on this.
- Policy, Procedure, & Personnel Development
 - Brook reported that the committee took the time to review the outdated policy and procedure manual – they looked at the customized procedure and the referral procedure. The committee will listen in the monthly meeting with policy & procedure group.
 - Tiffany wants the Council to review the RSA’s list of questions; Beverly took notes of their comments and will email them to Shawn and Tiffany.

Blind & Low Vision Services Report, Beverly Berg: Beverly reported to the Council about the staff positions. Beverly went to Mississippi State University for their Older Blind program meeting. The university was able to do this after receiving funds/permission from RSA – one representative from each state was able to attend. About 35 states attended. Minnesota has lots of funds for Older Blind program due to partnership with

National Federation for the Blind. Lots of areas were covered including the ten best practices (which will be sent out to the Council later). We get \$250,000 per year grant for our Older Blind program. She talked about services provided in the program. Back to the best practices, Beverly shared the importance to the annual program evaluation. She would like to have a well-defined plan to do community outreach with handing out packets and toolkits. There is a discussion on the problem of recruiting qualified staff. Another best practice is the assistive technology. She discussed the statistics – more baby boomers will be needing the Older Blind services. More will have macular degeneration. More senior citizens will have significant vision loss. Women have higher prevalence of vision impairment than men (women live longer than men, so they will have age-related vision loss & don't get healthcare). It is a challenge for those in rural areas (lack of transportation and lack of services/healthcare support). Wal-Mart pharmacies now offer script talk (free), so the patients can hear instructions. Higher risk of depression due to lack of transportation and socialization. Beverly talked about Montana Association of the Blind and the summer orientation. There is a concern of funding to keep going. It costs \$3,000 for each person to attend the program.

Business Services Team Report, Mark Manhke: Mark shared that Business Services was created four years ago. This is due to the one of the WIOA requirements started in 2014. While there have been Business Services team monthly meetings, Mark started to meet with individual team members every month. The purpose is share what they are working on, their successes, troubleshoot challenges, and different business topics. The goal of the Business Services team is to find out what the businesses are doing in the area and what do they need. With that, we can find people with disabilities to work in those businesses. The more interaction with the businesses, the opportunities we have for those with disabilities. Business Services team has been working on a draft mission statement and guidelines. With their efforts, the team documented the information through Department of Labor's MWorks (database). The team is encouraged to meet with two employers per month and then document it in MWorks. While meeting with employers, the VR counselors share VRBS's Business Services and purpose. Mark updated the information on the website. The Business Services team will have their in-person meeting here in Helena in October.

Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment, Mark Manhke: Mark reported that Vocational Rehabilitation and Blind Services does the statewide comprehensive needs assessment every three years. The last ones were done in 2013 and 2016. We are in the process of creating another one for 2016 – 2019. Mark is tasked to take care of this. He explained that this kind of needs assessment is our way of gathering information from many sources regarding to vocational rehabilitation needs. It is an opportunity to for combining existing information and new information to form the State Plan. All that information comes from needs assessment. We have analyzed and priorities are set to what would be included in our State Plan or Strategic Plan as far as how we are going to address the needs we have determined. We will address the needs of individuals with disabilities, especially those with significant disabilities and their need for supported employment, minorities, unserved & underserved, students with disabilities, and Pre-ETS. We gather information from Town Hall meetings, surveys from individuals with disabilities and families, focus forums, employers' survey, etc. Mark was given a copy of the 2018 Governor's Report – on the back page has the State Rehabilitation Council's recommendations and achievements.

Windmills Training, Jeanne Stone: Jeanne led a training about Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). She asked the council to list causes of TBI. Causes are: car accident, illness (stroke, cancer, etc.), alcohol use, war, sports, etc. Jeanne asked them to list the symptoms. They said: long- & short-term memory loss, coordination & balance, dementia, lack of self-awareness, vision loss, hearing loss, impulsiveness, etc. Then they discussed the work performances of a person with TBI: poor social cues, can't multitask, poor organization skills, can't remember what they are doing, processing takes longer, comprehension is slower, staying on task is harder, can't drive or can't do things the same way as before. TBI means an injury to the brain caused by trauma to the head. There are three basic ranges of TBI: mild, moderate, and severe. If there is trauma to the brain but the skull is

not broken, that is closed head injury. If there is skull is broken, it is penetrating head injury. Concussion is when the brain gets a trauma from a hit to the head or a fall and bump the head. A penetrating skull fracture is when something pieces the skull and injures the brain (contusion, bruising or bleeding). Hematoma is the buildup of blood inside the body. Jeanne shared few statistics: people over 75 years old, majority of head injuries are caused by falls; 20% are from violence in child abuse; 3% are from sport injuries. TBI symptoms varies from mild to moderate. It is important for employers (and everyone else) to consider accommodations for the employees with TBI.

Wrap-up:

- Possible agenda items: Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment, Governor's Report, time for the committees to meet and give reports, the usual staff reports, core partners, labor sectors/partners in Livingston, visit Job Service.
- Next meeting will be in Bozeman; same time frame on Nov. 7 and start at 9:30 and finish at 12:30 on Nov. 8.