

Montana State Rehabilitation Council
February 9, 2023
Virtual Meeting
Meeting Minutes

(RRO handouts: [Quorum](#) and [RRO Motions Chart](#))

https://budget.mt.gov/docs/execbudgets/2025_Budget/Section-B.pdf (b-3 to b-6)

SRC Members present: Gabrielle Broere, Celina Cline, John Gorton, Kathy Hampton, Chanda Hermanson, Kendra Joyce, Lacey Keller, Mike Manhardt, Tom Manthey, Doug McElroy, Corinne Moore, Marcy Roberts, Emma Rooney, Jean Schroeder, and Brian Tocher.

SRC Members absent: Wes Feist, Denise May, Carlos Ramalho, and Joleen Weatherwax.

Staff and guests: Lacey Conzelman, Anna Gibbs, Brook Hodge, Tammy Hogan, Darrel Hannum, Shawn Tulloch, Jim Nys, and CART transcriber.

Welcome, introduction of Council members and staff/visitors, and reading of the mission statements

Lacey Keller called meeting to order at 10:30 AM. Lacey reported that she is taking over chair for 2023 and vice chair will be Gabrielle.

Shawn shared the ground rules for the meeting and mission statements were read. Introductions occurred following the mission statements. Gabrielle led introductions.

Nov. 30 – Dec. 1, 2022 meeting minutes- Following introductions, the meeting minutes were motioned and approved.

Public Comments: No public comments.

Announcements: SRC logo voting and approval. Lacey showed the logo with the most votes. There were small edits to be made and Lacey agreed to make these edits.

Legislative Update, Chanda Hermanson: Chanda reported there is not a lot of updates in the legislature due to the session just beginning. Chanda reported on the budget bill. Chanda reported that at this time there are not a lot of bills that impact the voc rehab program directly. Chanda did report briefly on House Bill 64 to eliminate the Montana telecommunication access

committee which is similar to SRC committee. This was identified through Red Tape relief. The committee was found unnecessary and created barriers to getting work done. The budget bill is House Bill 2. There is about fifteen steps until we will know the final stop of what reality is going to be. Chanda reported that on the day of the meeting we were on step 4. Chanda reported on the process of the executive budget and stated that the budget comes out usually in November 15th of even years. The voc rehab budget is called program 1 and is usually first in the reports. Executive planning process begins in the fall. Chanda reports that this year the budget for VR was one of the highest it has been since she has worked in her position. Chanda presented an organizational chart. There are five bureaus. From the chart, Chanda reported on FTE, personal services, benefits, and claims. The Governor's request for changes as reported by Chanda were to adjust to the present law, wage adjustments due to inflation. The next adjustment was proposals of new ideas, including more money to purchase more equipment through MTAP. Chanda explained where the MTAP money comes from, from phone bill tax. With the MTAP funds VR is requesting \$144, 000 to hire another person and buy additional equipment due to the need for equipment. This is all contingent on House Bill 64. Chanda reported that they hired ten new VR counselors since January 2022. All positions were temporary until 2023. Due to the outcomes of having more employees being so positive, they reached out to the governor to make these positions permanent. VR proposed ten and he approved eight. The last change that Chanda reported on was the WIOA business services FTE. Sherry Reed currently serves in this title and due to her good work with businesses she has created enough partnerships that she now needs help so this would help support her important work. Chanda ended the discussion on the executive budget there. This information and charts will help educated lawmakers and legislators on the needs of our state and how we fill those needs with our programs. Chanda summarized how they walk through the benefits of the program with legislators including impacts, cost savings, and more.

Jean asked how SRC can support these changes further. Chanda answered not at this time due to the amount of time that still is ahead in the process. She said in the future individuals can reach out for public comment later in the process.

VR Update, Chanda Hermanson: Chanda reported that although VR is still seeing shortages in staffing, but they are seeing an uptick on applications. The Billings office General Supervisor position has been open for some time. The Billings office currently has no managerial position but only clerical staff. The Helena General Supervisor position is open, and the Butte General Supervisors last day was the day after this meeting. They are taking the

hiring process serious and trying to get the right fit. There was a subcommittee created last meeting for retention and recruitment. This has helped with getting insight and suggestions on hiring. Brian asked if they are doing something different for the Master's degree component of the VR job. Chanda reported that the Master's Degree component will stay the same. Mike and Chanda discussed the challenges of the requirements of a Master's Degree yet not offering competitive pay. Chanda then reported on VR projects. The first being the Montana Center For Inclusive Education and contracting for benefits planner specifically for VR clients. Chanda reported that they did grow some CWICs internally and they have all left expect one. Chanda then talked about IPS, the individualized placement support model. This supports people with a severe mental health or substance abuse disorder. VR has been working with behavioral health for about two years to figure out how to build capacity around this and make sure there is access statewide. There are currently only two IPS programs in the state. Yellowstone boys and girls ranch for youth and Mountain Homes for young women. Very limited access to IPS so the work continues on how to increase that. Work will also begin to create a program at Warm Springs.

Chanda then reported that they will be doing a RFP request for proposal to do marketing campaign around disability employment.

Chanda then reported that VR is involved in a study in regardless to preemployment. RSA is funding the study. This study is looking at the effectiveness of the Pre-ETS for students. The Pre-ETS Capacity Building Institute is coming up in May.

Future learning opportunities reported on by Chanda were in May there will be a business conference for employers focused on disability employment. There will also be the Montana Association for the Blind summer orientation program. Individuals who are new to experiencing their vision loss can come to campus for a couple weeks to get good hands-on experience with orientation and mobility.

Lastly Chanda closed with employee details on VR including paying overtime, applications, trainings, and internal barriers.

The next National conference for VR is in April. Lacey and Gabrielle to send out the details on the conference if someone is interested in attending.

VR Budget, Anna Gibbs: Anna reported on the CR budget. The VR grant comes from the Federal Government and the state. Anna reported that the state fiscal year ends on June 20th, 2023. Anna shared a visual of the budgets. The 2021 money was 14 million of federal and 3.8 of state. The

Federal award for the 21 fiscal year was 12.7 million. Pre-ET set aside 2 million. 12 million for general CR. The state match was 3.8 million. Anna then reported on the 22 fiscal year. The Federal award was 11 million with 1.6 million set aside for Pre-ETS leaving 9.4 million for general CR. The state match was 3 million. The 23 fiscal year budget was unknown at the time of the meeting. The federal was estimated at 13.8 million, 2 million for Pre-ETS and 11.7 million for general VR. Anna then reported on Ticket to Work. This is program income for reimbursements of VRBS services provided to clients that are SSI and SSDI recipients under the Ticket to Work program. Anna to send the reports shown in the meeting out to the council.

SRC Manual Updates, Marcy Roberts: Marcy reported on updates with the manual and other updates that naturally came about along the way. The application process has been updated. The online manual shows updates in the "how to apply" feature. This automatically goes directly to the governor. Shawn has instructions on the online application if there are any questions that arise with future applicants. Marcy then talked about narrowing in on the responsibilities of the chairperson, vicechair and the past chair and functionary. This will feature dates for meetings in 2023 through November. Marcy walked through the process of this for future meetings. All meeting duties and processes are on documents that Marcy walked through. Marcy and committee worked to update the manual so that responsibilities are more clear. This will assist in strategic planning and consumer satisfaction surveying in the future as well. In the fall new members will be welcomed and oriented. There will be a review of the Governor's report and election of new officers will be moved up to the summer. The winter will consist of welcoming new members and focusing on the legislative executive planning. The new logo will go on future agendas. The public comment will need to be reimplemented and prioritized at the beginning of meetings. Merging tabs on field offices and staff into one tab was a suggestion. Marcy ended her report answering questions. Shawn expressed that merging can be done on the website. Marcy to send out the correct report to everyone. Additional updates suggested to update and Marcy to communicate further with members and work on this.

Robert's Rules Training, Jim Nys: Emma introduced Jim Nys who presented on Robert's Rules. Jim introduced himself. He reported that his 100% disabled in terms of the VA but years ago worked for the state of Montana as Equal Employment Opportunity director.

Jim began talking about parliamentary procedure in the sense of Robert's Rules. He introduced who "Robert" was. Jim reported that parliamentary producer is a process to help facilitate getting work accomplished in a

meeting. The goal is to facilitate action not to obstruct it. Jim began explaining a quorum. Which is the number of members that is needed to transact business. This is established in the bylaws. Jim distributed the chart of motions. Jim explained the responsibility of the Chairperson in being as neutral as possible. And what a Chairperson can and cannot do. Jim then walked through seconding a motion. Then clarified the debate stage. He also spoke on who can and cannot vote. The chart provided was walked through in detail regarding all of the above mentioned. Robert reported that he will send the books on Robert's Rules to the council. Robert answered questions on quorum.

Logo Discussion: Suggestions were made on the SRC logo design by members. Lacey to work on a ramp on the mountain path and other details. Lacey will work on the logo to finalize it.

Wrap-Up:

- SRC dates:
 - Helena May 10 (Joint Meeting with SILC)
 - Helena May 11
 - Anaconda August 10-11
 - West Yellowstone November 2-3