

NH State Rehabilitation Council

NH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MINTUES

APRIL 25, 2019

21 SOUTH FRUIT STREET, ROOM 100, CONCORD, NH

Attendees: Charles Saia, Chair, Holly Cadwallader, 1st Vice Chair, Chris Purington, 2nd Vice Chair, Kimm Phillips, Lorrie Ripley, Mike Rudis, Courtney Lockwood, Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, Nancy Rollins, Jo Moncher, John Richards, David Morgan, Kristen McGraw, Ann Ackerman, Peter Darling

Members Excused: Theresa Wilkomm

Staff: Lisa Hinson-Hatz, Ella McAllister, Jim Piet, Michelle Lapointe, Dee Clanton, Sue Roma, Laura Lieberman, Tina Greco

Interpreters: Laurie Meyer and Jola Leary

PCA: Jeanne Keith

Prospective Members: Brent Cote, Laurie Jean Pevear

Guests: Frank Edelblut, Commissioner of Education, Christine Brennan, Deputy Commissioner of Education, Susan Wolf-Downes, Executive Director, NDHHS.

During a working lunch, Susan Wolf-Downes, who is retiring from her position as Executive Director of the Northeast Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services, was honored for her many years of service to the deaf and hard of hearing community in New Hampshire. The public meeting began at 1:00 pm.

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: Lisa Hinson-Hatz updated the Council on the current state of the NH VR Agency. Since the last meeting in January, 800 customers have been released from the OOS waitlist. She is pleased to report that the MSD Category is now fully open.

Staff Update: Daniel Frye has been hired as the new Administrator for Services for Blind and Visually Impaired. He is a former Director of the New Jersey Commission for the Blind and also has experience working for RSA where he managed the federal Randolph-Sheppard program. He is scheduled to begin work here in NH on July 19, 2019.

Two new counselors have been hired in our Concord Regional Office. Positions still unfilled include an Administrator I in Central Office, a Regional Leader in the Concord Regional Office, a STS Counselor in Manchester, and a Rehab Counselor in Manchester. Postings for these positions are expected to be made this week.

Lisa has been working on several contracts. These contracts include :

- Assisting the agency with the CSNA
- Updating the agency medical fee schedule
- "Think College", a higher education 2 year certificate program
- Dan Habib – Intelligent Lives, a small marketing program in collaboration with Wintac
- A counselor training system to keep our counselors constantly learning.

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The IL Part B, RFP recently went out for the contract that begins on October 1, 2019. Responses to this RFP are due by May 24, 2019.

Financial Management: Lisa feels that the internal controls the Department has in place are substantial. A weekly spending tracker, which is a live view of our finances helping us to stay on top of our spending, has been developed. We also have the OOS management model developed last year as well as quarterly financial meetings that key department staff participate in. Laura Lieberman, VR's Business Administrator gave an overview of the current status of the VR grants.

COMMISSIONER UPDATE: It's been one year since the VR Agency entered into an Order of Selection. Commissioner Edelblut shared his thoughts with the Council on progress made. Although he is very proud of the work the VR team has accomplished and the distance they have come over the past year, there is much more work to do. Upon reflection, there are a couple of things he would have done differently to improve the bounce back of the agency and bringing customers back in from the order. The OOS management group continues to examine the process to see where the bottlenecks are. At the current time, the roll out of the new CRP pricing policy appears to be a bottleneck but he is excited to see how it all plays out within the next several months when things even out. As of right now we are open to all MSD customers and can see the end of the road coming for the rest of the categories, but he cannot give a definite timeline they when will be released. All in all, the Department is feeling positive in the continuing developments as we build on measures to increase the quality of services.

Deputy Commissioner Brennan hopes that the information that the Council has received from the Department/Bureau of VR has been beneficial during the past year as the Department has, and continues, to strive for full transparency after entering the order. The consensus of the group was positive.

The Commissioner took comments from Council members on how their experience during the past year has been. He continues to hear positive feedback about the VR agency, specifically around the STS counselors in schools, from superintendents and school personnel. Council members expressed appreciation that both the Commissioner and Deputy have taken an active role in the Council by attending meetings and providing Departmental updates. The Commissioner was asked to assist the Council in its efforts to engage with New Hampshire's business community more effectively, specifically in terms of membership. He agreed to reach out to his contacts within the business community to see if they would like to attend a future SRC meeting to learn more about VR's mission. Jo Moncher also brought to his attention the need to complete a MOU between the DOE and HHS.

APPROVAL OF MINTUES: Minutes of the SRC meeting of January 24, 2019 were reviewed and approved unanimously.

CAP UPDATE: Lorrie Ripley reports that customer contacts to the CAP have slowed down considerably. The biggest complaint she now sees is in communication. Lorrie will be happy to provide general updates at future SRC meetings when requested.

NH EMPLOYMENT LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE: Jo Moncher, Community Relations Manager within the Division of Long Term Supports and Services in the NH Dept. of Health and Human Services did a power point presentation on the NH Employment Leadership Committee. This committee is comprised of

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employment professionals from local, regional and state partners dedicated to advance inclusion of individuals with cognitive, developmental and brain injury disabilities in the workforce through collaboration, education and advocacy. Among their identified priorities is the development of an MOU between the Bureau of Developmental Services and NH Department of Education, Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. Lisa Hinson- Hatz indicated that after the federal audit of BVR concludes, the Bureau will begin the development of the MOU.

GOVERNANCE/MEMBERSHIP UPDATE: Due to the late hour, discussion on the work the Governance/Membership subcommittee has done relative to the revision of the Council's by-laws and proposed letters to inactive members will be tabled to the June meeting. Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre and Kimm Phillips would like members to review the material in member's packets and provide feedback prior to the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: Chuck Saia is seeking nominations for the Governor's Accessibility Awards. The deadline for nominations is May 15, 2019.

Motion made to adjourn the meeting at 3:00 pm.

The next meeting will be:

June 27, 2019

12:00 to 3:00 pm

21 South Fruit Street, Room 100

Concord, NH, 03301