

# NH State Rehabilitation Council

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## NH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MINTUES

September 25, 2019

21 SOUTH FRUIT STREET, ROOM 100, CONCORD, NH

**Attendees:** Charles Saia, Chair, Holly Cadwallader, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, Chris Purington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Kimm Phillips, Lorrie Ripley, Peter Darling, Courtney Lockwood, Nancy Rollins, Jo Moncher, Brent Cote, Dawn Breault, David Morgan, Kristen McGraw

**Members Excused:** Michael Rudis, Theresa Wilkomm, Ann Ackerman, Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre

**Staff:** Lisa Hinson-Hatz, Ella McAllister, Jim Piet, Michelle Lapointe, Sue Roma, Tina Greco, Debra Orman

**Guests:** Christine Brennan, Deputy Commissioner of Education, David Hughes, Dorothy Hiersteiner, Human Services Research Institute

**PCA:** Jeanne Keith

**Prospective Members:** Laurie Jean Pevear

The meeting was called to order by Chair Saia at 12:25 pm. The agenda was reviewed and Introductions of those attending today's meeting were made.

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR:** Lisa Hinson-Hatz updated the Council on the great things happening at VR. The Order of Selection (OOS) is within 500 customers of coming to an end. The last release happened on September 6<sup>th</sup> and took 100 customers off the wait list. The next release is scheduled for October 25<sup>th</sup>. The agency continues to use the data and financial metric programs to monitor the progress. As it stands now, it is possible for VR to exit the full order in February of 2020.

Lisa is also pleased to announce that the agency has received a \$500,000 reallocation award from OSERS. The dollars received from this reallocation will be focused on developing an educational and pre-employment transition program for blind and visually impaired students. Dan Frye is heading this up working along with the SBVI advisory committee. This program will also enhance our internal STE work done by our STS counselors. Lisa hopes to have an update at the October retreat.

Lisa is currently completing work on the contract for the annual Customer Satisfaction survey.

**Audit Update:** VR staff are still working with the State Auditors. The audit team has been traveling throughout the state visiting the VR Regional Offices. They expect their work to be done in February of 2020. Lisa is meeting with the team next week and will update the Council at the October retreat on any progress. Nothing new is being reported on the federal audit. We don't expect to hear for some time but are being proactive and working on items we know that will be in their report.

Lisa has also been working along with Chuck Saia and the Architectural Barrier-Free Design Committee, which works under the Governor's Commission on Disability, on accessibility within our buildings, specifically the BRO lease, insuring we are in compliance with the law.

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**CSNA Presentation:** David Hughes and Dorothy Hiersteiner from the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) are here today to update the Council on the work they have been doing for NHVR's needs assessment. Traditionally, this work has been done in-house, but due to the current workload of agency staff, it was contracted out to HSRI in response to the state RFP process. David reported that the data collection piece is coming to an end. He noted that NHVR has an excellent database to work from and mentioned it was the cleanest that he has personally ever seen. The data was pulled from the agency's 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 911 for Program Year 2018, ending June 28, 2019. Qualitative findings were as follows:

## **System Strengths:**

- Project Search
- Project IMPACCT
- Responsiveness to Stakeholder feedback
- Representation within the SRC
- Strong interagency communication at the senior management level
- Seamless process for job placement after eligibility
- Adequate "menu" of services

## **Service Gaps:**

- Transportation
- Workforce Instability/limited capacity
- Communication from VR is at too high a level for the average consumer
- Lack of consumer knowledge about CAP

## **Barriers:**

- Burdensome paperwork for staff and applicants
- Challenges in interagency communication
- Insufficient funding
- 90-day VR services is insufficient in some cases

There were some focus group suggestions the agency may wish to pursue. HSRI's final report is not yet completed but is hoped that it will be available by the SRC retreat scheduled in a few weeks. Members were encouraged to email any questions they had about the process or findings to either David or Dorothy at HSRI.

**APPROVAL OF MINTUES:** The minutes of the SRC meeting of June 27, 2019 were reviewed and approved as written, with 3 members abstaining.

## **COMMITTEE UPDATES:**

**Governance/Membership:** Kimm Phillips reported on the work this committee has done over the past several months. An attendance sheet is now being used at each meeting in order to keep track of member participation on the Council. Letters have also been drafted to send to those members who miss 3 meetings within the year to encourage more involvement.

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Kim reviewed the latest changes made to the SRC by-laws and asks that the Council vote to adopt them.

**Motion** made to approve the SRC revised by-laws with the following change: On the front cover sheet, change the date to read: **“Revised September 25, 2019”**. **Motion** was approved unanimously.

**SRC Committees & Charges:** Lisa Hinson-Hatz asks council members to review what is currently in place to become familiar with the charges and language (within member’s packets) in place. This will be an agenda item at the October retreat. If revisions need to be made, it will be done then.

**SBVI:** Peter Darling reported that the last meeting of the SBVI Advisory Committee was held the day prior; it’s first under the leadership of the newly hired Administrator of SBVI, Daniel Frye. Peter feels that Dan has “hit the ground running” and will be a great resource for the state. Dan shared his vision for SBVI, where he sees a partnership of the Advisory Council and his staff, along with appropriate stakeholders on various upcoming projects.

Current initiatives include:

- RSA funded technical assistance for the Older Blind Program;
- The Development of a summer residential program for transitioning students with visual impairments.
- A Helen Keller regional collaborative meeting scheduled for October 17<sup>th</sup> in New Hampshire.

Along with overseeing the Services for Blind and Visually Impaired program in NH, Dan will also be taking on the lead role for administrative hearings for NHVR.

**CAP:** Due to the late hour Lorrie Ripley lightly touched on what the CAP has been involved with during the summer. A more in-depth presentation of the CAP will be made at the SRC Retreat in October.

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

The next meeting will be an all-day retreat:

**October 10, 2019**

**9:00 am to 3:00 pm**

**Concord Holiday Inn**

**Main Street, Concord, NH, 03301**