

# NH State Rehabilitation Council

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## NH STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL MINUTES

### ANNUAL RETREAT

October 10, 2019

Holiday Inn Concord, 172 North Main Street, Concord, NH, 03301

**Members Present:** Charles Saia, Chair, Holly Cadwallader, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, Chris Purington, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Kimm Phillips, Lorrie Ripley, Courtney Lockwood, Nancy Rollins, Jo Moncher, Brent Cote, Dawn Breault, Kristen McGraw, Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, Michael Rudis

**Members Excused:** Theresa Wilkomm

**Advisory Non-Voting Present:** Carrie Dudley

**Advisory Non-Voting Excused:** Peter Darling

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

**PCA:** Jeanne Keith

**Prospective Members:** Lauri Jean Pevear

**Guest (via teleconference):** Sherry Taylor, Executive Director of West Virginia SRC & NCSRC Vice President

The meeting was called to order by Chair Saia at 9:09 am. The agenda was reviewed and introductions of those attending today's meeting were made.

Chair Saia started the conversation off by sharing that he gave the SRC guidebook, distributed to SRC members today in hard copy and electronic copy earlier in the month, a thorough read. The guidebook contains good information and he encourages all members to review it. Asking Council members what they expect from membership on the SRC, members agreed that information sharing is paramount. It was acknowledged that misinformation exists out in the community and the SRC is a way to become better informed of available systems in order to best use information to connect with different populations statewide.

Nancy Rollins spoke of the independence of this body from the state agency and questioned how do we really demonstrate outcomes, i.e., return of investment, to share with stakeholders and consumers? How effective is state government in hiring persons with disability? We need to continue to talk about this in the coming year.

**NCSRC Update:** Sherry Taylor, Executive Director of the West Virginia SRC and Vice President of the National Collation of State Rehabilitation Councils was present today, via teleconference, to update the Council on the NCSRC and its work as a national resource to state councils on issues pertaining to the VR program.

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The NCSRC was organized in 2005 at a CSAVR Conference in San Diego when a few SRC members in attendance voiced the need for a network between SRCs in order to help their members make informed decisions and recommendations to their state agencies.

The website for the NCSRC is located at [www.ncsrc.net](http://www.ncsrc.net). Sherry invited all listening in today to visit the website as it contains a lot of information and resources that would be helpful to SRC members as they do their work in advocating for the VR program and persons with disabilities. Membership gives you total access to the website. The website contains training materials on the history of VR, history of the SRC, the role of the SRC and Rehab Act and how to make councils work. This is an excellent resource for training new people coming onto the individual SRCs and materials are updated frequently.

Upcoming training is occurring in the spring at the Bethesda Hyatt in conjunction with the CSAVR spring meeting. If anyone in NH is interested in attending, let Chairperson Saia know. This will be a good time to see what is occurring across the country. Registration will be open by mid-January, 2020.

**CAP PRESENTATION:** Lorrie Ripley, Ombudsman of the Governor's Commission on Disability's Client Assistance Program gave an in-depth overview of what CAP is all about and what her vision for the program is. Although she advises people of services and benefits working their way through the rehab process and about their rights and responsibilities, she frequently receives calls from potential customers who talk with others and get misinformation about what she can offer. She sees one of her roles as a resource for others, looking at the individual, collecting information and, when appropriate, referring them to other agencies which may be more in line to help with their particular issue.

CAP is also about:

- Employment equality and access
- Information and referral
- Advisory roles under the Rehab Act and ADA on the SRC and SILC
- Facilitating access to state and other rehabilitation programs to improve the delivery of services
- Development and the distribution of service advice
- Assisting customers of VR in pursuing appeals and other remedies to insure rights under the Rehab Act
- Assisting customers of VR in their relationship with service providers
- Providing technical assistance and guidance relative to services and benefits available to individuals under Title I of the ADA.

Moving forward, Lorrie would like to recommend to both customers and counselors that they communicate with one another ahead of time on all issues before there is a problem. Open communication and working together would mitigate a lot of what comes her way.

Council members voiced gratitude of Lorrie's presentation today and the importance of knowing that the CAP is a resource and not just a program.

**NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION:** As there are a few new members on the council this year, and several who thought a refresher would be helpful, Lisa Hinson-Hatz scheduled a presentation on orientation to the SRC. The SRC Guidebook, distributed to all SRC members, is five years in the making. All SRC members are encouraged to read this great resource cover to cover, paying particular attention to page 17 of the manual "Functions". The core functions of the SRC include:

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- Review, analyze & advise the designated State unit's responsibilities under the act
- Develop, agree to and review state goals and priorities
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the VR program & submit progress reports to the Commissioner of RSA
- Advise and assist in the preparation of the VR State Plan portion of the Combined State Plan and Amendments, applications, reports, needs assessments, and evaluations
- Conduct a Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) every 3 years
- Review & analyze the effectiveness of and the consumer satisfaction of the designated state agency, and
- Prepare an annual report to the Governor and Commissioner of RSA on the VR Program status 90 days after the end of the federal fiscal year.

To be an exceptional SRC member, Lisa suggests review of the items on page 38 of the guidebook:

- Have a commitment to disability rights
- Bring your skills
- Learn new skills
- Develop relationships
- Respect and Listen to Others
- Voice your Opinion
- Participate fully
- Follow Through
- Remember the Big Picture
- Offer Solutions
- Be an Ambassador

As noted previously, an updated copy of this manual should be available after the holidays. Once we get announcement that it is ready for distribution, members will be notified.

It was mentioned that it would be helpful for SRC members to get a listing of common acronyms used as well as an office and staff listing of VR staff.

**NEW MEMBER VOTE AND DISCUSSION:** Lauri Jean Pevear has expressed interest in becoming a member of the SRC, representing the Brain Injury Foundation, and has attended several prior meetings. She was recommended for membership by John Richards of the Brain Injury Foundation when the last representative for this agency resigned from the SRC. The Executive Committee has looked at her letter of interest and vitae and recommends her for council membership. A motion was made that the Council forward her name to the Governor's office for formal appointment to the SRC. This motion was approved **unanimously**.

**SUBCOMMITTEE DISCUSSION:** As it has been several years since the establishment of the standing subcommittees of the SRC and their particular charges, several members thought it a good time to review them to see if they are still relevant and if their charges should remain or be updated. The main VR subcommittees are:

- Advocacy/Outreach
- Governance/Membership Development
- Policy
- State Plan

The **Advocacy/Outreach** subcommittee has not been staffed for some time. The Council, however, believes the committee and description should remain as it may be needed at some point in the future,

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especially when the council takes on development of material to show the cost benefit/return of investment of the program.

**Governance/Membership Development:** Current members are Isadora Rodriguez-Legendre, Jo Moncher, Kimm Phillips, Nancy Rollins, and staff support from Jim Piet and Sue Roma. The deliverable of revision of the by-laws has been completed. A future deliverable will be to review the current vision and mission of the SRC and recommend changes if appropriate. New member orientation should be added to the responsibilities of the Governance/Membership Development Subcommittee.

The Executive Committee is asked to keep the membership list up to date along with reviewing applications for membership, vetting prospective members and preparing letters to the Governor's Office recommending appointment/reappointment, once brought before and approved by the full Council. It was also recommended the Executive Committee be responsible for the compilation of the SRC Annual Report.

It was further recommended that the **Executive Steering Committee** be added as a subcommittee to the SRC and a description developed.

**Policy:** The Policy committee has, since the initiation of the Order of Selection, become the OOS Management Group. Lisa is currently leading this committee. Other members include Chuck Saia, Courtney Lockwood, Lorrie Ripley, Holly Cadwallader, Chris Purington, Nancy Rollins, David Morgan and several VR staff.

Lisa would like to reconstitute the policy committee where it looks at upcoming policy changes and financial and program data on a quarterly basis. Once the committee is reconstituted, it is recommended members review the mission statement for the policy and update if warranted. It is hoped that the Policy Committee can reconvene in late January or early February to review financial and program data and upcoming policy changes. Lisa would like a representative from the OOS Management Group in attendance at this meeting.

**State Plan:** Ella McAllister has supported this subcommittee since the 1990's and is hoping to get more interested SRC members to join. Development of the state plan is critical to the VR program operating in the state. In order to receive funds, the VR program needs an approved state plan.

Public forums are scheduled for the public's input in November. Once the state plan committee compiles all the data it needs to complete the draft, the draft plan then goes to the full council for approval before being submitted to RSA for approval. The plan is due to the State Workforce Innovation Board in February and then onto RSA in March.

For those members not already assigned to work on a standing committee, they were asked to choose which they would be interested in joining: Lauri Jean Pevear volunteered to work on the Governance/Membership Development Committee, Brent Cote volunteered to work on the State Plan Committee along with Dawn Breault, Michelle Lapointe, Mike Rudis, Chuck Saia and Nancy Rollins. Kristen McGraw volunteered to become part of the Policy Committee.

Lisa Hinson-Hatz originally wanted a special meeting in November to give an in-depth update to the Council on VR's comprehensive goals, financial, transition, our business strategies to reach our business partners and information coming out of OSERS. Due to the late hour today and our uncompleted agenda, the SWOT activity and goals and priority discussion for the coming year will take precedence at this November meeting. This meeting will be held on Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup> from 11:30 to 2:30 in Room 100 of the Walker Building.

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