



State Rehabilitation Council

Nebraska Department of Education
301 Centennial Mall South • PO Box 94987 • Lincoln, NE 68509

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Nebraska VR Lincoln Service Office and ZOOM Meeting May 11, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Public notice of upcoming meetings will be available on the Department of Education website under “Master Calendar” at least 5 days prior to each meeting.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Crystal Booker, Jerry Bryan, Michael Bursaw, Gloria Eddins, Lindy, Foley, Christine Gaspari, Theresa Hayes, Susan Madsen, Cody McEvoy, Tobias Orr, Diane Owen-Downs

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lonnie Berger, Gayle Hahn, Deanna Henke, Mike Tufte

VR STAFF PRESENT: Lindsay Brown, Angela Fujan, Ashley Hernandez, Mary Matusiak

VISITORS: Mydge Heaney, Brad Meurrens, Margie Propp, Ben Sparks, Stephanie Winter

The meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) commenced at 10:02a.m. public notification of this meeting was made on the Nebraska Department of Education website.

PUBLIC COMMENT/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Crystal Booker asked for public comment from members.

No public comment was shared.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Susan Madsen moved and Chris Gaspari seconded the motion to approve the agenda as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

MINUTES APPROVAL

Chris Gaspari moved and Susan Madsen seconded a motion to approve the February 9, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.**

FOLLOW UP OF LAST MEETINGS ACTION ITEMS

Council Membership

Crystal Booker introduced new member Gloria Eddins to the council. Gloria discussed her role as statewide ADA coordinator and her background relating to accessibility and her personal experience with VR. Council members introduced themselves. Angela Fujan discussed council membership and the needed representation on the council. Members discussed that currently

business representation is looking good but noted in a couple years as terms end many representatives will be leaving the council leaving a lot of spots to fill. Angela stated she will send an up-to-date list of needed representation to the council.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VR

Crystal Booker asked if any feedback was brought to council members. Crystal Booker shared she invited VR and ATP to Lincoln Circle which focuses on diversity and inclusion. Crystal shared her appreciation for their participation. Tobias Orr thanked Crystal for the invitation and stated he is open to share what ATP and VR services are about in the future if anyone has similar opportunities.

No additional feedback was shared.

MEMBER FEEDBACK ON WRITTEN REPORTS

Members were asked for feedback on the written reports provided from ATP, NSILC, NYLC and the Client Assistance Program.

Chris Gaspari discussed her participation with NSILC and summarized the written report provided by Dea Henke. Chris noted the focus of NSILC is filling the role of the executive director in the coming months. Tobias Orr noted the conference in the report will be held virtually and NSILC will determine their participation at the next SILC meeting.

Tobias Orr reviewed ATP's written report with council members. Tobias discussed they are looking for contractors as Medicaid providers, if anyone knows someone to please send them his way.

Angela discussed the written report from NYLC and members discussed the benefit it would be to have a NYLC youth member as a SRC member. Lindsay Brown noted she would reach out to Kathy to invite NYLC members to attend the next SRC meeting to see what is going on at the meeting so they could see the council and feel more comfortable with the idea of joining.

Jerry Bryan reviewed the CAP report and shared he believes they are doing a good job of getting the word out about CAP as more individuals have started to reach out. Jerry summarized the cases and their outcomes noted in the written report. Jerry asked if there were any questions regarding the cases, none were shared. Crystal asked if more cases were being seen, Jerry stated he is receiving more calls and questions and people looking for information from the hotline for disabilities but not necessarily more cases, but many more people are accessing the website. Crystal inquired how they are working to get the word out. Jerry discussed they are attending more information fairs, participating on other councils, and networking with other agencies while also updating their system on the website. Jerry discussed having the benefit of Gloria Eddins on the committee and utilizing her for ADA information and being able to bounce information off of each other.

Cody McEvoy reviewed the written report from the Deaf and Hard and Hearing. Cody discussed working on utilizing ASL as an approved DMV testing language and the benefits of that for those who use ASL. Cody discussed a project Ashley Wulf is working on with the Omaha airport to increase visual aids in airports for the deaf community. Cody also noted their work with NSAA for training in sports in the state for the deaf and hard of hearing community. Gloria Eddins asked about the town hall meetings series. Cody shared, yes, they are being held in cities across the state to gain involvement and discuss the goals of the department and to share topics and feedback for the organization. Cody shared there are five opportunities and details are posted on their website.

No additional feedback was provided.

SENATORS OUTREACH FEEDBACK

Angela Fujan discussed how outreach was done this year in its different form due to Covid-19 restrictions. Angela reviewed how it was done in-person in other years as well. Angela noted it may be too early to determine how things will be able to be done in February whether things will be opened up or not. Crystal Booker shared she did enjoy the panel discussion and video which was shared this year. Crystal asked if we could get numbers of participation for the Senators offices. Angela stated she would work on getting this information from Sarah. Crystal noted the possibility of adding a digital component in the future to get more senator involvement. Crystal noted this item should be moved for further feedback and preparation on the Fall agenda.

OCTOBER EVENT

Mary Matusiak shared she will be sending out applications to VR staff at the end of the month for nominations for the five awards categories. Mary shared the employment committee will be working on this and will review the nominations prior to the October event and summarized the event will follow the same format as last year.

MONTHLY CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

Mary Matusiak summarized this topic's discussion at the last council meeting. Mary noted this was to be discussed by Michael Bursaw who was not available at this time of the agenda. Council members determined to discuss this again at the next council meeting to get Michael's perspective and a more well-rounded council discussion. Lindsay Brown shared she felt this would be a very beneficial thing to do and share. Lindsay noted successes could be at any point during the process sharing there are many successes at all points of the client's experience.

LB 83 OPEN MEETINGS ACT

Lindy Foley shared in summary this legislative bill addressed the open meetings act and the option to offer those virtually and in-person. Lindy reviewed the prior restrictions and how that was handled and then allowed video conferencing for these meetings by the Governor which has now expired. Lindy reviewed this bill was signed which allowed the SRC to meet virtually today. Lindy shared VR as well as ATP shared concerns and advocated to the Department of Education in collaboration to support these needs in the bill. Tobias Orr shared they wanted to have the opportunity to have all meetings virtually to allow for better recruitment from the western part of the state. Tobias reported currently the passed language of the bill is that half of the council meetings can be held virtually, while they would like all, this is a move in the right direction and there may be continued updates to the act.

WIOA STATE PLAN GOALS

Lindy Foley reviewed the goals within the state plan and increasing the transparency and sharing of progress on those goals with the SRC. Lindy shared they felt having more involvement from the council on tracking these goals is something they would like to do. Lindy stated perhaps at the next meeting there can be break-out sessions to review and evaluate the goals and priorities. Members discussed how this could be addressed by the council committees and the VR representatives could lead these questions.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Members broke into committees for discussion.

Client Services Committee

Jerry Bryan reported the committee reviewed the Client Satisfaction Survey. Jerry shared the committee reviewed some dissatisfied comments in the survey from consumers. Jerry reported the committee discussed if there is a follow-up to survey comments when the survey is to be somewhat anonymous. Angela Fujan shared overall the results of the survey were very positive but they did focus on a few comments most frequently to question thirteen. Angela discussed they reviewed if a follow-up question added in QE2 could be added for a possible follow-up question while in the survey to address and learn further about any dissatisfied comments.

Employer Services Committee

Susan Madsen reported the committee discussed Project SEARCH. Susan shared they discussed at her Project SEARCH site they have one virtual participant and discussed how this was the first their first virtual Project SEARCH experience but it was not ideal. 5 virtual job expos attracted more attendees from outer areas of the state. Susan reported they will see if they can have a large in person event next year.

Transition Services Committee

Theresa Hayes discussed the transition assessment they will be adding and are currently writing. Theresa discussed they hope to have training modules for transition for schools and students to use on the website as well as incorporating a student voice, possibly through videos on the website. The committee discussed the summer transition programs and developing a method to assess those programs as they are occurring if any assistance or support is needed throughout versus awaiting assessment at the end of the programs.

DIRECTORS REPORT

Lindy Foley reported Nebraska VR is in the middle of a federal monitoring with RSA and she has been working with that and feels things are going very well. Lindy noted the last time Nebraska was monitored was in 2012 so they knew their turn was due. Lindy shared the review will continue through the end of the week. Lindy shared prep calls were held with RSA and now the last few weeks they have worked in depth with RSA in detail over the workings of Nebraska VR. Lindy discussed things are going very well but she does know there will be recommendations and feedback from the review to work through.

Lindy updated the council on the order of selection and summarized the Public Meeting held on April 29th. Lindy shared 83 people registered to participate and 62 attended. Lindy shared there were partners present for BIA-NE, DHHS, Disability Rights Nebraska, PTI and the Ombudsman office. Lindy discussed she was very pleased with the high turnout and noted the virtual aspect was likely a benefit. The public meeting was regarding opening priority group one and participants were very supportive. Next steps are the three documents presented at the public meeting were submitted to RSA for review. Once RSA approves then VR can officially say priority group one is open but, in the meantime, individuals are being served from group one and their wait time is approximately a week to receive service. Lindy shared the recording of the public meeting is posted on the VR website.

Offices are in the process of planning to look at re-opening the offices to the public and having a hybrid schedule for staff to work both remotely and in the office. Lindy discussed there are a lot of details they are working through to determine how this will work most effectively and efficiently. Lindy shared the Scottsbluff office did reopen to the public in mid-April per their local health

directives and other offices are in the works to reopen in the future per their local health department guidelines.

ADJOURN

Susan Madsen moved, and Chris Gaspari seconded the motion to adjourn. There were no objections to the motion. **The motion carried by unanimous consent.** The meeting adjourned at 12:21pm.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Senator's Outreach
- Monthly Client Spotlight
- WIOA State Plan Goals Review