

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting Thomasville, GA

April 19, 2017

SRC Members Present: Chris Moder, Joy Norman, Brian Mosley, Peggy Veneable, Kayla Wilson, Mike Prior, Jennifer Page, Dana Skelton-Sanders

SRC Member via Conference Call: Steve Oldaker

SRC Liaison: Dana Skelton-Sanders, **Assistance:** Jacqueline Gregory

GVRA: Katie Womick

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: Let's go ahead. We'll call the meeting to order. Kip asked Jennifer to get started.

JENNIFER: I'd like to call the meeting to order, April 19, 2017, 9:00 AM. I'm Jennifer Page, and if we could go around the room and say who is here, that way Steve knows if he needs to address any of us.

Thank you all for being here today. I know the long drive for most of us to get here, but we came and hopes to go to the reservation where Peggy will be hosting us for lunch today.

So Dana and I will be co-running the meeting because she's the right hand of Kip, so she knows pretty much everything he wants to discuss at the meeting, but he wanted a board member to be able to fill in for him.

So the first thing I think we wanted to discuss were the federal regulations.

The thick packet here. This is one of the ones we got when we were in Maryland where they basically laid out everything, you know, about the SRC, then they did the federal regulation and in the second column, they did the plain English summary. And so basically, from start to finish, who should be on your board to the duties of the board, things like that. They discussed in here.

And so you can also find this information on the NCSRC website, and they also have PowerPoints and things like that for the people who actually did some speaking. So with

administrative costs, it just explains where our funding comes from, and you know with administrative costs, our costs that will fall where we have Dana and Jacqueline and that bunny going towards that. We also -- that money going towards that. There's a couple states where the SRC is kind of a standalone where they're kind of like how a church would be, a 5013C.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: That's totally different. Because it would be there federal program their state rehab council, their federal state rehab council. Does that make sense? For that state. And what they would actually do is they would get either -- I know I had heard 1% of the total budget of VR is what they actually requested, and the governor appointed that. And several states did that, whether they were just strictly 501C3, because sometimes it was harder to work with VR instead of independent to get your mandates done. That's what the actual programs were talking about.

We had four administrative judges from what I understood by her, and we are working on a date to actually meet with them. We don't necessarily train them. We actually provide them with documentation, talk about disability, those type things, make sure they're aware of our programs and you know our certain requirements, like the federal requirements, such as informed choice and just give them a brief overview, more or less.

JENNIFER: Right. And also them knowing the clients due process rights. And so that's always an important thing for consumers is for them to be able to know what their rights are, what the process is, and you know pretty much the resources that they can use, such as GAO, CAPP, things like that. Some people will not call these outside sources, so it's something that SRC would want to promote if they feel they're not getting their issues evolved on the VR level or with the client services?

BRIAN MOSLEY: It was your basic listening session, and you had a lot of the same basic verbal compliance from the -- only I think eight to 10 individuals showed up at the meetings, and they were really interested in finding more out about how meetings like that were being disseminated to the public so that they would be more aware of the meetings and could possibly attend.

There were some concerns over the experience of the new director of blind and deaf services.

But I think she handled herself rather well and let them -- Paul Raymond was there, so he helped too.

It really only sounded like the same complaints from the consumers, and because it wasn't an answering session, there was no true solutions brought to the table.

BRIAN MOSLEY: I would like for the SRC as a voice of the consumer to really inquire about that particular position having consultation with someone who is -- one person who's blind, just like she has a deaf person, in way of guidance towards better helping with services provided.

Because again, I keep hearing and I'm getting phone calls from the blind saying, you know, but there's no -- no one knows from the blind perspective what the blind are going through. It kind of difficult.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: Also some of the blind -- when we actually had -- I was a specific counselor back then when we actually had the separate programs, and they actually had their own unit. They all had their own region, literally. And I know we are -- we talk about numbers with counselors, and how many numbers they've closed, how many plans, how many referrals they received.

JENNIFER: Yeah. And so I just wanted to make sure that we know what's going on, you know, in meetings that involve consumers, and so that's one of the reasons having Dana go is a good thing in place of us, because we're still being represented as the SRC, and we're still getting that information from the consumers, so we know what's going on even though we can't physically be there.

BRIAN MOSLEY: Here is something that did really stand out from the consumers questions at the Savannah meeting and at the GVRS board meeting in Augusta, and that was concern for their voice, many of them weren't aware of using the SRC to use their voice, nor were they aware that the SRC was their voice, and that struck me as a serious default. Now, of course, I spoke up and urged a lot of them to use the SRC members to help their voices be heard. I don't know how effective me just saying that was going to be, but I do think as an SRC, we need to make that more visible.

Steve: If I could add to what Brian said. And statewide independent living council and to some degree with not speaking for the centers for independent living, but what we're hearing and seeing and there's much angst over in the deaf and/or blind community, is where they were formerly getting specialized training and support and services through voc rehab with the work force innovation opportunities act changes to include a lot of that now, and the changes in particular with GACHI, whatever they've reorganized under, they seem less responsive than in the past, the burden seems to fall on the centers for independent living to provide this sort of deaf and specialized deaf and/or blind training.

The fact that there's staff are not able to accommodate, and everyone's biggest done son, consumers, is where we go to get the support and training we need when we need it.

JENNIFER: That's the one thing. If there's something in your area that's related to the consumer showing up, if you all can be there, please be there, and that way SRC, our face is out there, our name is out there, and that way people know that the consumers know that we're a council and that we're the voice of the consumer, so that's why the board is comprised of businesses, and people with disabilities. So it's one of those things we're trying to bring those things together. So that leads me to our next topic, where SRC members must be appointed by the governor unless the governor has designated someone else. In our state, our governor designates who is going to be on the board after VR presents the members or who would like to be on the board. Right now, we actually have information to the governor, so Dana, can you give us an update on that?

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: Yes, I talked with Michael Nix yesterday. He actually said they're being vetted right now, individuals who we have submitted over to the governor, and they're actually in the process right now, the governor has seen the PowerPoint presentation about our council, and he knows what we need, he knows we have those people who we want on the board, I think he also has one person that he was interested in being on the board himself. So I thought that was really encouraging to me.

JENNIFER: By law, we're supposed to have at least 15 members at all time. Anything below that, and we are -- we are out of compliance. So we want to try and make sure we stay in compliance.

One of the ideas I was thinking, anybody who has someone they would like to recommend to the board, you know, when you know you're getting close to that time of rolling off, before you're even close to that, maybe six month to a year, you know, kind of mentoring the person that you actually recommend to be on the board, that way they're not coming in totally green, like pretty much all of us were, knowing absolutely nothing and it was just like getting on track with our mandates and all that kind of stuff. We were clueless, so once we got our chief Kip, and he just kind of took the reins and got us all in line, like this is what needs to be done, I think we have grown from there. It's been hard, but you know, I think having a liaison has definitely made that a lot easier trying to figure everything out.

JENNIFER: So if everybody on this board wants this person to be their chair, the governor can come in and say no, I'm not okay with that. And actually veto that and you have to find someone else that was one of those interesting facts.

So I think outside of that, we're doing the -- one thing I would like to see is us -- we have

Steve on our board, but just sometime maybe we can meet with everyone who is on the SILC board, because meeting those members and knowing who they are, they might be in areas we're in, and just you know kind of fostering that relationship, and seeing what we could do to kind of help them, and they also listen, are consumer based kind of board as well. So it's a good thing to keep in touch with them as well.

KATIE: I just talked to Paige, and they're going to hit the ground running on that in the next couple of weeks, they're put up a survey -- the contract is done, we finished that. They're in the preplanning process and they will be able to hopefully in the next couple weeks get started on gathering data.

It's about -- about 100 to 150 is what you get for a good survey.

Potentially, depending on what we want to build on and when you guys get this kind of -- last year's survey was just literally just talking to customers, customer satisfaction. This year we've added a provider piece and then a counseling piece. Then when we get all of that information, we get the final report this year, we can evaluate next year from what we've seen in last year's service and this year's, what do we want to build and craft it more specifically, because this last year and 24 year is pretty much about just acquiring that base dataset, because we don't have it.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: I also was looking at our reports and our mandates, and we're required to do a comprehensive needs assessment for vocational rehab. Other states were doing comprehensive needs assessment, out sourcing them, from what we were told. I was just looking at -- and I've talked to Dale Arnold, when he was transition, and he actually suggested that the vocational -- the actual council outsource our needs assessment.

So we've actually had people in house tell me we need to look at outsourcing.

MIKE: Go back to the satisfaction survey, I know there's a huge focus on transitioning youth. Is that going to be part of the survey? I know we have a council member, Debbie Gay that she and I have had a conversation about talking about -- talking to some of her -- the teachers out there in the field and the transitioning youth, and the concerns that she has. Is that going to be a part? Because I know when we started trying to talk to Paige two years ago, I guess, with this -- the survey --

KATIE: She's going to be targeting all of our clients, so all age ranges, we didn't specifically target the transitioning population this time, because there's so much in the general population data wise that we just don't have that she didn't specifically --

MIKE: What about the -- I guess this may get into the provider's part, it may fall into what you are talking about Kay we are surveying providers across the board.

What about the education component? The teachers in the education field, they have

so much input that we could learn from them, I really think with the money that's being thrown at youth, and especially that transition part, we're missing the both not finding out what is going on.

KATIE: We're doing the counselor portion. I know some of the counselors will be the transitioning counselors, so they are being included in the mass survey. Why we sat down and talked, we were looking at next year's survey will be when a lot of our transitioning population counselors and everyone will be in full swing. So trying to hit that in next year's survey, because right now they're still building it out so much that we don't know if we would have enough sufficient data, because we aren't able to track kids all the way through to employment outcomes yet. But it is on the radar and something we have discussed. We didn't hit on it specifically in this survey, because we weren't sure if we had enough. We just included it in the general counselor piece and customer piece.

BRIAN MOSLEY: Dana, briefly, real briefly, with our advising, what is the actual procedure for us, the SRC, receiving feedback on the advice that we provide? Do we have to wait until a report or --

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: Well, actually, we actually will provide a report to GVRA. If there's a specific person you'd like a question answered through, we'll get that question to that person to see if we can get an answer. But I don't know that there's a specific time frame. I'm sure if we pose a question, they're going to try to get back with us and answer it.

BRIAN MOSLEY: Here is why I ask that question, because I've gotten numerous complaints from consumers that the public comment is malarkey, they call in and give their comments and never receive true feedback on how it's being addressed or if it's going to just be ignored. They feel like there's no point in making the public comment, because it doesn't get any true attention, it's just heard.

JENNIFER: So we need to I guess, build that committee, I guess if anybody is willing to join that one, you can think about it and let us know at the next meeting if you want to join that committee and also we'll need a chair for that one as well.

JENNIFER: Communication and legislation. I guess that person, their best contact would probably be Katie or Kevin. For that to get updates, information, what's going on legislatively and communication stuff happening.

We'll table that and bring that one up again at the Savannah meeting.

State plan review, Dana?

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: Yes. I e-mailed you late yesterday or probably about lunch yesterday the state plan, the unified state plan. Our responsibility is to review, analyze and advise. We also are annually supposed review the state plan and provide a report to GVRA and RSA. That's our mandate.

This might be a place where we might could interject some of your concerns, Brian. So some of the things where you feel like we need to change something or something that you feel like -- you feel like the you public comment is not valid or whatever that might be a direction we could take for that. Because this actual report goes to GVRA to respond to and then we send the final version to RSA.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: And this is the direction we feel we need to give you direction on, regarding the voice of the consumer. That's something we're going to be working toward. We have a report for -- from training, finally. I got it yesterday. And it's just a highlighted report of what they've done in the past year and what they're projected to do this next year.

So a lot of the problem with the customer satisfaction survey was training for our staff, if you remember from that report. They really felt like their counselor was not informed or knew what they were doing in order to serve them to get them where they needed to be.

JENNIFER: I think the key to retaining counselors will be pay, and then getting them in there, get them trained, and then you know kind of moving from there.

JENNIFER: Is everybody in agreement with the state plan reviewing and us becoming more active with that?

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: I do have a hard copy here. I did e-mail you the version that I actually penciled a little, every now and again, you'll see I put, what? This is just words, where is the plan for training? Where is the review of the counselors that we have serving? Where is this? Where is that? Because it's mapped out in our manual how it's supposed to look. And so I actually went through and penciled it myself to say, where is this, this, and this? And that's the questions that we'll be asking.

JENNIFER: Since you wanted us to kind of break into small groups, what should happen is prior to our meeting, whatever area of focus we're going to be on, just send that out, that will be the area of focus everybody reviews. That way when we come together, everybody has reviewed it and we're ready to go, without having to sit here and try and read and give feedback at the same time.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: That's the personnel development part. And it talks about how many counselors we have, how many -- what our caseload looks like. Soy it actually details it under us as to what we need to be looking for. So a lot of that I did not

find in the state plan.

So I will be analyzing it and advising the VR program about it. I just kind of wanted to share that with you, because some of what we got from the training department does give us some detail, but not extensive detail, if that makes sense.

STEVE: How many hours of continuous training per year is required to maintain a CRC?

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: You have to have 100 hours for every five years, that and they actually have to be approved through the CRC commission, and they actually have to have 10 ethics hours.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: If you can make it every year to your conferences, you can normally get your ethics within a three year period and you can get your training within a four-year period.

JENNIFER: But you got to go. You got to go to the conferences, and that's the thing. Being supported by GVRA with the councils being able to go, because outside of that it's hard for them to get the CEUs to keep their -- maintain their licensures.

Okay. Is there anything else that we need to discuss? I think we've gone through -- yeah, it's a really good thing for you guys to read those layman's terms, plain English summary that Graham put into this thing for the regulations, it really gives abettor overview of some of the -- a letter over view of some of the laws that govern the SRC. So take a look at that. And I think outside of looking at the policy that we're going to be covering in the public hearing, those are probably like the two most important things to read, and us adopting our minutes from the January meeting for tonight's reading. So there's nothing else. We'll adjourn for lunch.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: Let's get started.

PEGGY: This is a short film that we put together -- a short film we put together. I don't know what we put it together for. For culture. And it shows you our place in Florida. We have an office down in Florida. So you'll see both communities. The community here, our people have been here for -- since 1884. We can document, but they were here before that, but you got to have proof.

And we have proof since 1826 actually, but we have records of the meetings since 1844.

Actually, WIOA has changed those regulations, but Georgia still acknowledges the CRC.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: WIOA, actually has, excuse my language, but dumped down our profession to a bachelor's level, and Peggy is shaking her head, because we

went to school, I went to school for 138 hours credit for a master's degree that no other master's degree required you to have that many hours. So we went to school for that, and we're being told, you don't necessarily need that. Someone with a bachelor's degree can do this.

And so that's what WIOA new changes have done to our profession.

A lot of the programs like Katie had said before, a lot of the programs in Georgia are going away from rehab counseling, because it is a lost trade, I think. It's just going by the way side, because they think it can be done by whomever.

DANA SKELTON-SANDERS: In Georgia, the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency -- the Georgia rehabilitation association will always hold their training. Every year, annually.

So we actually offer CRC credits. And we were talking earlier, that if you attend four years of training through GRA, you get your actual hours for your credit hours and your ethics hours within three to four years. And you have to have 100 hours every five years.

STEVE: Oh, sure. First, I would like to acknowledge and thank my membership committee leagues, Debra, Brian and Chris. Their input has been invaluable, and I think -- I think we have some solid recommendations to make and hopefully you'll concur as well.

Nomination attached.

JENNIFER: Let me adjourn the meeting

Okay. Meeting adjourned. We'll pick up tomorrow. Thank you.

SRC Membership Committee Report 4/19/2017

Roles still needing filled:

- We have 13 current members, 6 with a disability. Must have at least 15 and 51% with a disability.
- At least 2 members with a disability (more if some of the positions below are not filled by someone with a disability)
- 1 representative of a parent training and information center
- 1 representative from the State Workforce Investment Board
- 1 representative of individuals with disabilities
- 1 qualified VR counselor
- 1 more representative of business, industry or labor

3 pending appointments:

- Gloria Glass - on State Advisory Board, has a disability
- Justin Pressley - on the ABLE Act board, has a disability
- Karen Addams - representative of a parent training and information center (Parent to Parent), no disability
- If all are approved, 16 members, 8 with a disability

Strong nominees:

- Rossany Rios - works for Workforce Investment Board, a required role, no disability
- Dawn Johnson - strong candidate to replace Kathy Carlisle as representing individuals with disabilities, has a disability
- Brenda Bentley-Parish - works for IRS, great candidate for business, industry or labor, has a disability
- Carl McKinney - anxious to advocate, has a disability, unrepresented area (between Macon and Atlanta)
- If all are approved, 20 members, 11 with the disability (meets 51% requirement)

Potential CRCs to fill required role:

- Kathryn Edger, Ruby Kaspers, Janice Cassidy - we need to select only one of them
- If approved, 21 members, 11 with a disability (still meets 51% requirement)

Membership Committee is leaning towards Kathryn Edger as her focus is youth transition and she won a Rookie Counselor of the Year recognition. Dana leans towards Janice Cassidy for her extensive experience. All 3 are adequately qualified. May try to arrange to have Kathryn Edger and Janice Cassidy attend a future meeting so we can meet and hear from both.

Governor's recommendation:

- Lisa Leiter - strong youth transition experience, has a disability though not specified, from metro Atlanta
- If approved, 22 members, 12 with a disability (still meets 51% requirement)

We need to stagger appointments to avoid having so many members term out at the same time.

We all need to be thinking about recruiting our replacements, especially if you serve a role with a small pool of potential candidates.