**MINUTES OF MEETING**

Georgia State Rehabilitation Council (SRC)

October 25th, 1pm – 4pm

 Virtual

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Juliet Hardeman (Chair)

Karen Addams (Co – Chair)

Matthew Barnes

Jerry Haywood

Katie Hearns

Deborah Hibben

Lisa Leiter

Michele Mason

**Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

Juliet Hardeman**,** SRC Chair, did the roll call and called to approve minutes from the July 2023 meeting and agenda for today’s meeting. The minutes from the July meeting and agenda for October 25th were approved unanimously.

**Chair Update – Juliet Hardeman**

The Chair informed the Council of her attendance at the GVRS Board March meeting. She informed them of Jeff Allen’s presentation on the RSA Monitoring and the Chair would like to see more focus on the VR GROW program.

**SRC Committee Reports**

***Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) 2023***

Dr. Jinnah and her team are almost finalizing the survey. The web portal is almost finalized along with the flyers. The SRC can assist Dr. Jinnah and her team by spreading the word, sharing information about the survey within their networks and providing contact information with other agencies and entities for her team to contact. Dr. Jinnah shared with the council how the survey would be distributed to the public via email and social media.

***Membership***

Carla Murphy is working with the Governor’s office on the pending new appointees. One concern addressed by the council is the seat for sensory blind/visually impaired. The goal of the council is to have 18 members. The council discussed the Monitoring and Technical Assistance Order of Selection sent by RSA which relates to the makeup of the SRC.

***Policy and Legislative***

The Chair attended Advocacy Day at the Capitol, during this event, HB 648 was in committee. The Chair is interested in how GVRA is handling the concerns that were addressed in the hearing. Jeff Allen provided updates on vendors that are currently working with VR for blind/visually impaired consumers. The Chair and Jeff also discussed other concerns relating to service providers.

***Program 121 Update American Indian VR Program***

Peggy Venable, at the current time there is no communication from GVRA regarding outreach. The American Indian VR Program would like to reestablish the partnership they shared with GVRA prior to COVID and as stated in the MOU.

**Program Updates**

Director and Policy & Compliance, Jeff Allen provided a general executive GVRA update about:

* ***Notable Hires –*** Dennis “Chip” Medders – RWS Residential Director, Matthew Salmon – District 1 Manager, Tamika Wright – District 3 Manager, Shannan Brown – Transition Liaison, Georgia Academy for Blind, and Earnest Baulkmon – Training Manager.
* ***Program Highlights*** – Statewide training in February on the VR Process, with a focus on rapid engagement, agencywide Supervisor Training in March, conducting interviews for the SWTCIE grant Project Coordinator, partnering with Shepherd Center. There was also another round of counselors’ postings and interviews took place in February. 929 clients have closed since July 1, 2022.
* ***Legislative Updates –*** Jeff provided a summary of the following Bills:

[*Georgia General Assembly - HR 168 (ga.gov)*](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.legis.ga.gov%2Flegislation%2F64292&data=05%7C01%7CChris.Wells%40gvs.ga.gov%7Cbf8f9621d9ae47f4079e08db141721c3%7Ce54ad2e331314ed797e3e6e95d089c4e%7C0%7C0%7C638125862255098054%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=Gf3EumSamgxehMc5XCR%2BNs9ItEhLT8mpMfWXB5pKv%2BU%3D&reserved=0)

*Senate Bill 8, Senate Bill 274,* [*Georgia General Assembly - HB 399 (ga.gov)*](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.legis.ga.gov%2Flegislation%2F64358&data=05%7C01%7CChris.Wells%40gvs.ga.gov%7Cbb1d0f3b58934c979aa508db10728f20%7Ce54ad2e331314ed797e3e6e95d089c4e%7C0%7C0%7C638121856452303989%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=BsanpLNI7lKOrPPUNJAP4gPZ7rLDPlQWyyTMx6cKr34%3D&reserved=0)*and* [*Fiscal Note*](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fopb.georgia.gov%2Fdocument%2Ffiscal-notes-2023%2Flc-33-9269-sb-8%2Fdownload&data=05%7C01%7CCarla.Murphy%40gvs.ga.gov%7C27866a8b28cc48f8f77108db15c0613c%7Ce54ad2e331314ed797e3e6e95d089c4e%7C0%7C0%7C638127688257041601%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=WR2mO0s5WayIbsXanoYTbRh7IYN2kpdci1xbelSR77c%3D&reserved=0)

* ***RSA Monitoring and Technical Assistance*** *–* RSA focused on identifying the cause of the return of unused federal funds, residential expenditures, services, and outcomes. Two additional areas of focus are: Performance of the VR and Supported Employment programs and Financial Management of VR and Supported Employment program.
* ***Transition Services Updated*** – Planning for GROW is taking place. There are 37 providers approved to provide GROW. Pre-ETS numbers as of 3/31/2023:
* Total SWDs- 13,600
* Total In-House Pre-ETS- 8,676
* Total Provider Pre-ETS- 8,371
* Grand total for Pre-ETS- 17,041
* **SRC Community Spotlight**

***Georgia High School High Tech (HSHT) –*** Karen Royston provided a detail overview of the program. Some of the highlights provided were the HSHT Benefits, HSHT services, the new Program Pilot – Youth Employment Transition Program and the program’s statistics.

* ***Statewide Independent Living Council*** (SILC) – Shelly Simmons, provided an update on the SILCs. The state plan will be extended due to the template not being available by ASL. The SILCs will work on their state during the summer months. This year’s legislative session was successful. The SILC’s requested $750,000 for expansion and received $100,000. The Home Access program requested $800, 000 and were received $300, 000 to provide home modifications. These funds will be distributed from the Dept. of Community Affairs after the Governors signs the bill. A board will be held on Thursday, April 27th at 1 pm virtually. SILC has completed their project called Inclusive; more information can be found on their website. SILC is currently working on Enable Work to assist individuals who received waiver services to be able to work and receive compensation and still maintain their benefits to in home care. More information is to come, hoping to receive the SRC support in this endeavor.
* ***Roosevelt Warm Springs*** – Chip provided an overview of the Summer GROW program at RWS. This is a new program to RWS. The sessions will consist of Self-Advocacy, Career/Job Readiness, Work Based Learning, Career/Job, and Post – Secondary. Chip provided a sample schedule of what the students day would consist of. The program is scheduled for June 5th – 9th.

**New Business –** None

**Old Business** – None

**Public Comments** – None

**Adjournment** – The meeting adjourned at 3:20 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 26th, the meeting will be virtual.