



State Rehabilitation Council Meeting

Savannah, GA

June 22, 2017

SRC Members Present: Kip Slade, Chris Moder, Brian Mosley, Mike Prior, Jennifer Page, Dana Skelton-Sanders

SRC Member via Conference Call: Steve Oldaker, Kayla Wilson, Lewis Wheaton, Deborah Lovell

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

Guest: Chris Gray

Kip Slade: Welcome and introduction.

Personally Kip Slade thanked everyone for kind words and notes since his illness.

He will be resigning as chair at Callaway Gardens at our 4th federally mandated meeting in September. We need to get out into the field. I want each member and to going out to meet the customers, to hear what they are saying to bring back recommendations that we can vote on for the agency. We want everybody to benefit. Everybody to achieve their goals. So, I am going to turn the rest of it over to Dana, she will guide us through the meeting.

Dana reviewed the 9 mandates.

1. Develop, agree to, and review an annual VR state Plan, including attachments and updates.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the VR program and services for people with all disabilities, including those with cultural and linguistic differences.
3. Review and analyze the customer satisfaction within VR services and providers

4. Write and Annual SRC report
5. Examine Agency Policy, procedure and performance
6. Select impartial hearing officers and mediators.
7. Partner in the comprehensive State wide needs assessment development
8. Develop a resource plan
9. RSA's monitoring protocol includes soliciting input form the SRC as the VR agency's partner in the VR program and includes having SRC representation at the entrance and exit RSA meetings and conferences as well as.

Kip gave us a reminder that all this information is in our blue manual book that was distributed to each when appointments were done.

Dana - RSA will be visiting ATLANTA GVRA in August and we will be at the entrance and exit interview of the meeting and whenever RSA requests us to attend. GVRA has the information from Florida from their RSA visit. However that information was not provided to SRC when requested for this meeting. The State Rehabilitation Council and VR partnership book indicates that they will be reviewing the following forms.... RSA-2, RSA 113 and RSA911.

Dana - Minutes were presented and approved with no corrections. Mike Pryor made the motion and Deborah Lovell seconded.

Dana: CSPD model-

As a CRC, We have 4 major responsibilities we are required to do. Determine eligibility, write a plan, provide services and close the case. So those are our responsibilities as CRC.

The counselor has to have certain hours and classes in order to sit for CRC. The certified Rehabilitation counselor Commission will assess your degree – if it is in another area of expertise of counseling, and they will require you to take other classes to sit for the CRC exam.

A discussion was held about the marketing of the public hearings and how much better they went this year due to the communications department working with the Liaison. The ability to partner with the Independent living centers. Where 2 meetings of the public hearings were held.

Chris: If you don't invest in training the people throughout trying to serve the customers, you are doing everyone a disservice. You can't effectively use the funds if you don't know how to properly implement them

WIOA training was discussed and getting the word out about the ability to serve 14 year olds.

Customer satisfaction survey was discussed on how we did not include the Transition piece. No School systems were surveyed.

Dana -The reason we missed it last year was because we needed to do a survey. One had not been done in seven years. That was a mandate we had to get done. We just did the bear minimum last year, really

This is not being covered in our Customer Satisfaction Survey this year with UGA. It was going to cost more money to do the survey to Ga. DOE.

Public Hearing discussion indicated that we needed to do them at different times across the state of Ga. Dana responded with each hearing was done at a different time than the other. Two of them were held in the late afternoon. Public Comment was discussed as well. Individuals felt that they were not being heard as we cannot comment on public hearing.

Brian suggested we should put a little more friendly pressure on the agency to respond in some kind of way that would satisfy their customers, as, without violating any processes or making added work.

Dana responded- when we did these hearings, she actually worked with RSA Florida and Mississippi. I devised the narration that was read at the public hearing. After everything was over, just like Jennifer said, when we would adjourn, if someone had an issue that needed to be addressed, someone went up to them and gave them response a, card, for them to e-mail back. We addressed it at each hearing. Jennifer Page, Joy Norman, and Dana Skelton-Sanders were the only SRC members to attend. Comments from GVRA and the public indicated that these hearings went a whole lot better.

We discussed meeting the needs of the consumer and making every effort to their input.

We have been invited to Florida's next SRC meeting in August 8th and 9th in Tampa. They are having their next meeting, their federally mandated meeting is in Florida at Tampa. Kevin and Sean is going. Jennifer Page and I are going. If anyone else in the room wants to go, let me know?

In regards to CSPD- training, in reference to Georgia Rehabilitation Association (GRA), last year only 80 people were approved to attend the conference. The year before approx... 100. At GRA, there is diverse training.....training experts available, private individuals, and universities.

The customer satisfaction survey actually says the number one problem with clients who responded, they didn't know or believe that their counselor was trained to deal with their case.

Something that GVRA recognizes, the concern, according to their own state plan. It is pretty clear that concerns or problem with it, whether it is retention or whether it be general statewide training. It is unfortunate, sometimes mentioned, that people –don't know how to do their job. The Strategic State plan should be in place to actually develop a very clear pathway for training new as well as continual training of qualified certified personnel. This is one of VR's major problems at this time that needs to be addressed ASAP.

Public comments-

VaShaun Johns: So, I have been told by the GVRA board for the coalition United States wide coalition for employment for those with disability as well as -- to reach out to the SRC and make

sure we build a relationship with all of you all, as we move forward to -- it is has been reported that 200 blind cases were closed in 2016. That was by the coordinator of blindness services under GVRA program. They are significantly, tremendously low. I am familiar with the processes, the language and a lot of times protocol, as long as there are standard protocols. Again, we want to show our faces. The United States wide on employment is national group in Georgia. Total members on papers 1014 members, to date. We represent all individuals that have a disability. At any point you guys need representation of the coalition outside of the five people here today, we can come by van, by bus, if you really truly need to hear from us. One of our biggest concerns current I have the lack of movement from GVRA when it comes to cases. We literally have everyone with various counselors, with various disabilities at a standstill in various stages of having their cases closed. We are going back to August of last year. There has been little movement. There has been correspondence in attempts to reach the counselors, their supervisors. Contacting constituents. Reaching out to our Congress men and women. It is our goal to build a strong relationship between SRC, GVRA and the consumers that we all serve

You received my documents to initiate employment services. Dealing with the platform blueprint which solves the problem of individuals that are waiting to go through the self-employment track with GVRA, as you guys may be aware there is a tremendous hold there, when it comes to working with score which has no relationship with GVRA. In small business development center, which has no clue who GVRA is. They are literally turning down clients. As you guys know, I have built, based on my own case from Georgia. Largely, it is my goal to teach other disabled individuals how I did it, how they work and how to grow a successful six and seven figure business, as we have done. At this time I turn it over to Warren -- he has his own story share. Move to familiar -- and last you will hear from Angela Pratt. Thank you

Good morning everybody. My name is **Warren Krudeup**. I am here today because I have been in the system since 2010. I came to VR to get help to open my business. Health and life insurance. My business is just Internet for the most part of it. I -- a little bit of equipment in 2010. I am still standing here today. Submitted my all my paperwork again. In February. Including my business plan. I did not know I need to do seven years ago. My case will be closed out in three to five days. Three to five days. All I need is a little bit of equipment that can be ordered by phone, by e-mail, or by the Internet. Prepared to also hire a couple of people up under me in the next two to three months. To this day, I am being told somebody have to come out and look at my house, my office. Well, my job is going to consist of some work at home but mainly on the road. Why you need come out and look at my house in today's time, when there is telephone, we can talk about it. We can show videos. I can be closed out in three to five days. Thank you.

The vocational counselor, I was told Ken Smith needs to come out to my house and look at my house.

How much does the equipment cost? Or how much can you estimate that it might cost.

Right at \$6,000. Including Internet and a few little incidents, minor things and couple of laptops. A watch to help navigate myself around. A stationary equipment.

Web site and some stationary supplies, so I can get started in three to five days. I have been contracted with 12 different companies. I know the business. I learned the business. I have been in the business before.

Have you gotten any type of response as to why vocational rehabilitation has not come out to your home or other than that, not provide you with the supplies you need?

I was told the same, this times and a couple of years ago, there is only two people in the state of Georgia. And I have to wait. Just sent an e-mail to Mrs. Robinson. She said she is working on it. So, hopefully it won't take another three to five days

How long have you been waiting on an AWT person?

Again, this last time, I submitted the paper, was February the 14th or 17th. I submitted a business plan. All the paperwork that VR needs to have in their hand. I have sent several e-mails to say is there anything else that I need. Still waiting as of this day. Five months.

Now is, your direct case worker, you know, providing you with either information or response to what you doing and why it is being delayed or the hold up? Are you your direct case work to you who you are assigned to?

Well there was nothing said to me that she had to come out and to May 1st to have an e-mail. And since May 1st, personally in a few days. What is the hold up? We can do this by phone. They have been to my house two years ago. Two years, two months ago. They know where I live. Exactly where I live. Still have nothing from two years ago.

Another public comment –

People in my remote area of GA are having difficulty with waiting on GVRRA to provide services to the blind.

CAP and Customer Care information was given to each individual.

Angela Pratt. I want to thank you all for just the opportunity to speak and get my comments. Ironically while we were on the break, I got a response. I was going to push the envelope about the timing and process. I am currently in the self-employment track. I am a transitional life coach. I want to open up a business to help people transition from being able-bodied to being disabled. I started this process in February. Up until today when I got the response, I have not gotten a go ahead, we can go forward. One of the reasons, I am currently volunteering as center for independent living. They offered me opportunity to be apprentice there. While I am on the employment, self-employment track, I ask my representative could I take advantage of this opportunity. Because for me, it adds to my expertise and what I want to do. Because it is hands on working with the client. It took from

March up until today to say yes go forward. Mind you that is not saying we are going to purchase the equipment, what you need. We are going to do, you know, help you to organize the Web site. It is just a blanket you can go forward. I don't know what that means. My question is: in a situation like that, what is the process as far as the timeline? I understand when you become a newly disabled person, you have to go through process. Once you have been deemed as eligible and you have a track record of doing what they required you to do, I am sitting, waiting that.

So we did meet with the center for independent living and myself on May the 18th. Up until yesterday when I sent an e-mail, I didn't get a response. When I sent the e-mail I got a response today saying I had your answer a while back. To me that is not acceptable

Did you kind of demonstrate why it is important to ask the customer to stay on your case report to keep reminding and confirming with the agency that, hey, I am still here waiting? Because, again, just like us in the disability community, they are dealing with all of us, not just one. Sometimes it is imperative that we let them know how serious we are without making the wrong kind of noise. Like you just pointed out, until you sent an e-mail, then finally got a response that I had your answer but forgot to send it.

Brian Mosley - We do -- let me tell you, I have work for an independent living center. I hear about how important it is for the caseworkers to be trained to have a better understanding of how to address individuals and their case. With the newly blind, sometimes it is because we are sitting kind of in a different environment, time does seem like it takes longer than it does when we are in the sighted world. Even from March to June is quite a time frame. Again you are dealing with a bunch of cases. We are talking about addressing with the agency, training so that they can better or be better equipped to address issues. That may actually expedite some of the process. Then they will be better informed and trained.

So, are we able to have all of you guys on the SRC's e-mail address? The reason I ask, I realize Dana is the liaison, great. Love her to death. Is more apt to address or feel more comfortable talking with. Go to Web site and look up SRC under GVRA Web site. It lists Robin as the contact. Even if it lists Dana, that doesn't build a relationship and rapport with everybody. That is Dana taking comments and forwarding to you guys on our behalf.

BREAK for Lunch

Training was provided regarding application for services through Vocational Rehabilitation.

Committee Reports

Jennifer Page – Policy -We don't have anything knew. I know we just did a round of hearings. WOIA's in transition that is coming in. Outside of that, they have yet to do anything new that we need to address, so

Dana responded that communications were done regarding new policy changes, job retention, and the new percentage for poverty level which will aid more people to qualify for VR services, per the public hearings and the technical Assistance Briefs from RSA.

The policy unit will submit four quarter reports for, in July for the exceptions, overrides and appeals. The draft policy manual that was previously shared with us, has been set aside in a new manual format will be developed by the policy unit and ready to roll out February 1. It will be it will from all the information. It will be, the procedures will be in the same document, as policy.

The only thing I can come up with now is our statewide needs assessment has not been done. We did a little bit of it, when we did our visits around Georgia. But it was not a comprehensive Statewide Needs assessment. This is only required to be done every 3 years. Dale Arnold had suggested that we outsource the statewide needs assessment for the VR program so that we had something pretty substantial and accurate. Probably won't happen this year. Because it is too late, obviously. But that is something we definitely need to get on to for next year.

Meeting adjourn 4:00 PM

