

Board of Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired

Draft Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2015

Pierre, SD

Members Present: Eric Rippentrop, Kay Miller, Marcia Hultman, Catherine Greseth, Teresa Nold, Alan Vandenburg, Lynda O'Connor-Ohayon, Connie Sullivan, Patrick Czerny, Lyle Cook, Gaye Mattke.

Members Absent: Julie Briggs, Tim Neyhart, Koni Sims, Bruce Micheel, Ken Rollman.

Others Present: Marilyn Steffen, Steve Kelsey, Cole Uecker, Twyla Eggers, Nancy Hoyme, Sandy Neyhart, Ann Munce, Julie Paluch, Becky Blume.

Eric Rippentrop, Chair, called the meeting to order. Members whose terms expired at the end of June and newly appointed members were present. Thank you to Steve Kelsey and Marilyn Steffen for your time on the Board. New members will have orientation in conjunction with the next Board meeting. Gaye presented Marilyn with coasters that were made by the Braille unit at the State Penitentiary.

Dr. Lynda O'Connor made a motion to approve the agenda. Teresa Nold seconded. Motion carried.

Patrick Czerny made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 26th meeting. Connie Sullivan seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments

Lyle Cook notified the Board that Oun'iyekiyapi Vocational Rehabilitation Services in Eagle Butte received funding for the next five years. Standing Rock was also refunded. Lower Brule didn't need to request funding because they are on a different 5 year cycle. Pine Ridge did not receive funding because they did not meet the deadline for submitting their application. There was a meeting held with the state Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff (Rehab. Services and SBVI) and Pine Ridge VR to plan strategies to address services for consumers current served by the Pine Ridge VR Program. Pine Ridge will be able to reapply next year during the grant cycle. State VR will

have a satellite office in Kyle and Pine Ridge and expects a smooth transition.

IPE Timelines Program Guide

The revised program guide addressing timelines for Individualized Plans for Employment (IPE) was emailed to members prior to the meeting. Due to changes in the Rehabilitation Act, the IPE must be completed within 90 days after eligibility determination or an extension must be agreed upon by VR counselor and eligible individual. A general employment goal may be used for job exploration if an individual is not sure of a specific employment goal. If an extension is needed, it must be documented in the case management system.

Connie Sullivan made a motion to accept the changes in the Program Guide. Teresa Nold seconded. Motion carried.

Board Support for Individuals/Organizations

In the past, the Board has approved up to \$500 per organization for hosting public meetings. This past year, National Federation of the Blind requested the full \$500, however, SD Association of the Blind only request \$239. Currently, the Board allows \$150 stipend per organization for first time attendance at a state convention. At the last meeting, increasing the amount to \$175 was discussed, as well as making it available to anyone, with preference to first time attendees. Gaye drafted forms for requests for stipends and one that addresses requests for Board support of other activities. The forms explain what is allowed and the second page indicates what is required and deadline information. Discussion was held on estimated costs of attending conventions (registration, banquet, lodging, travel, etc.). Comment was made that the stipend is only to assist with costs associated with the convention, not pay for entire expenses. It was recommended that the Board offer up to \$350 per convention so there is the possibility for more people to attend. A summary report from the individual or organization representative is required. Gaye will notify the organizations of the new request form. Connie Sullivan made a motion to amend the wording to read “\$350 per convention or up to \$175 per participant.” Lyle Cook seconded. Motion carried.

The Board may sponsor activities related to training or outreach. Food cannot be covered. In the past, the Board has sponsored NDEAM events, White Cane March, and Disability Awareness activities. Catherine asked if the Board could sponsor “Lunch & Learns?” Catherine was advised that the Board could help with costs related to the activity, other than food, and a form or letter should be submitted for this request.

Dr. O’Connor made a motion that the request stipends and board support forms be approved as discussed. Alan Vandenburg seconded. Motion carried.

Program Updates

Rehab Center for the Blind - Dawn Backer submitted the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind report to Gaye. Jennifer Geffre, summer intern for the past two summers, accepted the position of Orientation and Mobility (O&M) Specialist. Jen is teaching O&M and attending Western Michigan University online to obtain her masters in O&M.

After a short retirement, Bob Smith returned to SDRC September 9th, as a Program Specialist. Since his return, Bob has been helpful in reviewing policies and procedures, and program evaluation. He has also provided instruction to Jennifer for challenging O&M situations. Bob will serve as a mentor to Jennifer as she pursues her degree.

Due to the lack of participation, Saturday Assistive Technology (AT) Outreach classes were cancelled; however, SDRC is offering “First Fridays”. Anyone who has questions about AT can make an appointment between 8:00 -11:00 the first Friday of each month to receive training related to their AT questions. In addition, the AT instructor will have class in the afternoon between 1:00-3:00, covering the most popular topics of iOS devices. The AT instructor continues to provide assistance through telephone calls, video chat, and answers questions via email.

SDRC provided cultural diversity training for 4 students from the USD School of Medicine. The 3rd year medical students participated in 3 days of Skills of Blindness training. Students were encouraged to wear

a blindfold during training to experience blindness. The closing activity included a community training in downtown Sioux Falls. The students participated in the sculpture walk and had lunch at a pizza restaurant. Students rated the community training as the best activity; it allowed them to better understand the physical and emotional concerns of a person who is blind or visually impaired.

Vocational Rehabilitation – Twyla Eggers informed the Board that Karen Gerety resigned from the transition position shared with School for the Blind on June 19th. Steve Kelsey was selected for the position and began employment as the Transition Specialist on July 22nd.

Mike Webb was hired as the SBVI senior rehabilitation counselor to replace Steve. Mike's experience will be an asset as he worked as an SBVI Rehab Teacher and prior to that, as a counselor for the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Due to the Pine Ridge VR Program losing funding, Gary Frentz will be traveling to Pine Ridge Reservation to take applications for both DRS and SBVI.

SBVI may not meet the successful closure indicator this year. Based on August data, applications are the lowest in the last 10 years. Twyla will meet with counselors to brainstorm outreach activities. Outreach to optometrists is ongoing, but SBVI receives declining referrals from medical service providers. A comment was made that outreach should be directed at the support staff of optometrists as they are working directly with the patient. General physicians may also be a good source for outreach. The Public Relations (PR) committee previously developed an online referral form and referral packets with the help of former Board member, Dr. Karla Bucknall. The PR committee will convene once the state plan is completed to explore and recommend options for outreach.

Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Robert Jahner, Consultant presented via conference call, on the new requirements of the unified State Plan required under WIOA. Robert is the former assistant director of VR from Montana, and has contracted with SBVI in the past for the Comprehensive Statewide

Needs Assessment. He informed the Board of benefits and cautions with these requirements. A power point of Bob's presentation will be included with the minutes.

Lyle Cook asked if the Native American and Alaska Natives will be accounted for under WIOA. Five tribes in South Dakota do not have Tribal VR. Several families are moving to larger communities to find employment and the students are in larger school systems. He also notified the Board the 15 percent transition requirement does not apply to Tribal VR.

South Dakota fairs better than some states in the fact that we are co-located in most offices and we already have established a link with Department of Labor in the delivery of services.

Program Updates (cont.)

Independent Living Older Blind - Sandy informed the Board that Mike Webb's promotion to senior rehabilitation counselor and Mary Milne's retirement left rehabilitation teacher vacancies in the Aberdeen and Rapid City offices. Tricia Watson was hired for the Aberdeen vacancy and Heather Shelatz was hired to replace Mary Milne in Rapid City. Both are participating in training at the Rehab Center and are excited to start providing services.

The CCTV program purchased 47 new units about a year ago and all those units were placed. There is a small list of individuals waiting to receive a machine.

The Assistive Technology Access Program (ATAP) consists of one-on-one training for individuals who need training on technology device. DakotaLink provides the training on a one on one basis statewide. According to the satisfaction survey, 90 percent would like more training. We are authorizing follow-up training to those requesting. Kay Miller, Mitchell Peer Support group leader shared that JoMarie Laughlin and Laurie Megard will be providing AT training at an upcoming meeting. There may be referrals to the ATAP from this meeting.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP)

Nancy Hoyme reported that BEP has two new vendor operators. Richard Jangula began on June 1st at Kneip Coffee House & Vending. He is originally from North Dakota. Ismael Collazo began on July 20th at the Earth to Orbit Café, located at EROS Data Center near Sioux Falls. Izzy, as he prefers to be called, is originally from Florida and has a culinary arts degree. BEP will conduct its annual vendor meeting on Saturday, September 19th.

Board Activities

Joint Board/Council Discussion - The Development Disabilities Planning Council held a joint Boards/Council meeting on July 15th to obtain input for their 5 year state plan. The purpose of the meeting was to address the following questions:

1. What are the purpose, priorities and/or goals for your board or council?
2. What are the trends or areas of concern for children, youth and adults with disabilities and their families?
3. What new initiatives would help people with disabilities have greater inclusion and integration in their communities?
4. What grant opportunities are needed?
5. How and around what goal or activity can collaboration happen between your organization and the Council?

SBVI Board members Tim Neyhart and Julie Briggs attended on the meeting in Oacoma. The meeting was conducted using Person Center Thinking (PCT) strategies which are becoming routine in the Department's service delivery system. Tim provided Gaye with a report on the meeting which she shared with the Board. Notes were also provided by the DD Council regarding input at the meeting. This information will be considered as part of the comprehensive statewide needs assessment.

Governor's Awards – Lyle Cook and Teresa Nold are Board of SBVI representatives on a committee with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation to help in the selection of recipients for this honor. The 2015 Governor's Awards ceremony was held on September 3rd in the Capitol Rotunda. The event is planned based on the Governor's

schedule to ensure that he is available to present the awards.

Recipients of the 2015 Governor's Awards are as follows:

- Thore Jenshus of Rapid City – Outstanding Citizen with a Disability
- Michael Tieszen of Watertown – Outstanding Employee with a Disability
- Slumberland Furniture of Pierre – Outstanding Private Employer (Small Employer)
- Target of eastern Sioux Falls – Outstanding Private Employer (Large Employer)
- Clark School District of Clark – Outstanding Transition Services Award
- Don Kinneberg of Florence – Distinguished Service Award

Board Member Attendance at SBVI Sponsored Events - If members would like to attend a Board sponsored event, registration, per diem and travel expenses will be covered. You should contact Becky or Gaye in advance of the event(s) to make arrangements for support with Board funds.

White Cane Walk - The annual White Cane Walk is scheduled for October 10th in downtown Sioux Falls. The committee has requested \$100 from the Board/Division of SBVI to help cover costs of interpreters. Lyle Cook made a motion to approve \$100 for interpreters for the White Cane Walk. Catherine Greseth seconded. Motion carried.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is held every October. Julie Briggs and Lyle Cook are representatives for the Board of SBVI on a committee with the Board of VR. The committee reviews requests from communities around the state for monetary assistance for events related to NDEAM. This year's theme is "My disability is only one part of who I am." Lyle Cook and Catherine Greseth handed out flyers for the NDEAM events in their communities. The event listing will be mailed with the minutes and is available on the website. The Board of SBVI contributes to the events, and members are encouraged to attend an event in your area.

The Fall Conference will be held October 13th-15th at the Best Western Ramkota in Sioux Falls. Local and national presenters are on

the agenda. Topics to be covered include: Mental Illness, Transition, Private provider training, WIOA. Information about the conference is on the SBVI website at: <http://dhs.sd.gov/sbvi/>

Costs for Board members to attend will be covered by the Board budget.

Annual Report

The Annual Report is the Board's report to the Governor of South Dakota and Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). The report consists of data required by the RSA, along with success stories and highlights of the Board's activities. SBVI staff will draft a report and send via email to the members for review. Any edits should then be reported back to staff. At the December meeting, the Board will vote to finalize the report so it is ready for submission by December 31st.

Committee Updates/Members

The Executive Committee is made up of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Member at Large.

The Strategic Planning and Policy committee members include Bruce Micheel, Connie Sullivan, Eric Rippentrop, and Alan Vandenburg. Twyla Eggers is the staff liaison. This committee will help with development of the Unified State Plan for WIOA.

Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) members include Patrick Czerny, Lynda O'Connor, Teresa Nold, Ken Rollman, JoMarie Laughlin, Chelle Hart, and Keith Bundy. Nancy Hoyme is the staff liaison. ATAC membership includes non-Board members who use technology.

Public Relations (PR) committee members include Julie Briggs, Eric Rippentrop, Lyle Cook, and staff liaisons Sandy Neyhart, and Nancy Hoyme. Catherine Greseth volunteered to serve on the PR committee.

Lyle Cook and Julie Briggs are Board of SBVI representatives on the larger committee for NDEAM. Teresa Nold is a representative on larger committee for Governor's Awards.

Kay Miller said she will think about a committee commitment. Koni Sims was also recently appointed to the Board, however, due to health issues, she was unable to attend this meeting.

Director's Report

Gaye did not request additional funding for the 2017 budget request. She doesn't anticipate needing additional funding due to current caseloads and expenditures. There is adequate funding to cover personnel and operating costs with the option of moving funds in the operating load to activities as needed.

The 2016 Legislative Session begins on January 12th and ends on March 11th with veto day on March 29th. There is no legislation impacting SBVI proposed at this time, and Gaye has not heard of any for the Department of Human Services.

DHS continues with Person Center Thinking (PCT) activities and training. There will be a quarterly meeting with Coaches and Leaders in October. PCT has changed how we conduct meetings and communication within DHS.

The Board Portal website is available to access information on state boards and councils. The site includes information related to membership, agendas, minutes and other pertinent documents for state board and council meetings. It can be found at <http://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov>

WIOA Activities - A letter to Community Support Providers and a survey regarding Section 511 (subminimum wage) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) has been drafted to explain the law to schools and providers. DHS will begin tracking individuals in subminimum wage beginning on October 1st. Reviews for those receiving subminimum wage will be conducted every 6 and 12 months. WIOA training was held for staff in August, and providers will have to opportunity to participate in training at the fall conference. Pre-employment transition services (PETS) will allow for job exploration counseling, work based learning experiences, counseling on post-secondary education, work readiness training for social skills and independent living, and self-advocacy. The WIOA mandates that 15

percent of the vocational rehabilitation allotment be spent on pre-employment transition services. This mandate is for the state allotment and is not based on individual division budgets. SBVI will be working with DRS to meet the 15 percent requirement.

Discussion was held on the requirement that students be 16 to receive transition services. We will be able to start working with younger students to offer the PETs services as eligibility and a plan are not required. Worker's compensation insurance won't cover until age 16, which is why students cannot participate in Project Skills at a younger age. Other services would be available starting at age 14. Cole Uecker mentioned an online application from Kansas that he is looking into more closely that serves as a guide to students, parents and educators on transition planning. Teresa Nold informed the Board that the Parent Connection uses a PCT transition assessment that is individualized to the family and student. Elaine Roberts is working to get facilitators trained. Home-schooled and private school students are a concern. The need for outreach is great.

Catherine Greseth made a motion that the next Board meeting be held in Pierre on December 4th. Kay Miller seconded. Motion carried. Orientation for new members will be held from 8:30-10 a.m. on December 4th, all members are invited to attend. The Board meeting will begin at 10 a.m.

Lynda O'Connor made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Catherine Greseth seconded. Motion carried.