

Board of SBVI Meeting Minutes DRAFT
SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, Sioux Falls, SD
June 18, 2018

Members Present: Tana Buresch, Patrick Czerny, Tami Francis, Catherine Greseth, James Konechne, Jill Kundtz, Gaye Mattke, Kay Miller, Eric Rippentrop, Connie Sullivan, Alan Vandenburg

Members Absent: Roberta Ecoffey, Marcia Hultman, Koni Sims,

Others Present: Dawn Backer, Melanie Dumdei, Ronda Williams, Bailey Rickels

Call to Order: Gaye Mattke called the meeting to order at 1:00 pm and introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda: Eric Rippentrop made a motion to approve the agenda. Jill Kundtz seconded. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes from March Board Meeting: Catherine Greseth made a motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting. Connie Sullivan seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments: Eric Rippentrop provided updates on the SDAB Convention as Koni Sims was not able to attend the meeting. The convention will take place September 7-8 in Sioux Falls at Country Inn & Suites. Check-in begins at noon on Friday and 8:30 a.m. on Saturday. The July SDAB newsletter will provide further details. Catherine Greseth discussed a training she conducted in Deadwood for a group of managers and customer service staff, where she learned not a single restaurant in the area has a large print and/or braille menu available for customers, though Ski for Light has taken place in Deadwood since 1975. Good discussions for improving this matter occurred with those present at the meeting.

Membership Update: Nominations have been sent to the Governor's office for replacements for Eric Rippentrop and Kay Miller. Additionally, it has been requested that Marcia Hultman, Roberta Ecoffey, and Catherine Greseth be reappointed. The individuals nominated are required to fit the requirements established by the Rehabilitation Act. The nominees were Zay Norman, who will represent business and industry as a rancher with a visual impairment and former consumer of SBVI, and Elaine Fritz, a parent of a child who is deaf and blind who also serves on the Deaf-Blind Advisory Board. If approvals are not received before September, the law allows for Board members to serve until a replacement has been named. Given this, if we don't see you again in September, thank you to Eric and Kay for your years of service!

Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act (WIOA) & Unified State Plan Update: RSA requested some minor edits to be made to the SBVI portion of the Unified State Plan: Goals for supported employment funds were requested; since SBVI does not receive a

federal supported employment allotment, this was information intentionally not included in the state plan submission. More details were given regarding how a range of assistive technology devices will be provided to people with disabilities. More detail was also provided on transition services, including pre-employment transition services and the initiatives SBVI has in place, such as Project Skills, Project SEARCH, etc. Gaye received an email on June 11th that the plan was approved and will go into effect on July 1st for program years 2018 and 2019. The goals and strategies will need to be reviewed and in 2020, a Unified State Plan rewrite will be due.

Postsecondary Program Guide: Edits and clarifications were made to the Postsecondary Program Guide to offer justification for the services we provide and to further support Counselors to make decisions regarding postsecondary related costs. Postsecondary funding is a large part of Vocational Rehabilitation budget for DRS and SBVI, as stated by Alan Vandenburg – and the requirements can be complicated when it comes to paying for tuition and fees, books and supplies, and so on. Other states have been cited for inappropriately paying for costs related to postsecondary. South Dakota is taking steps to avoid these issues. Changes include the role vocational rehabilitation plays with high school students taking remedial courses. Financial participation requirements were clarified, describing that a maximum effort must be made to secure grants or other comparable benefits (federal financial aid, Pell grants, etc.). Federal maintenance requirements remain mostly unchanged but highlights were made to those maintenance related costs such as food, travel, and daycare that help to ease the burden on clients when financial need is met. These maintenance costs can't be paid just because a person can't afford it; SBVI is instead asked to provide information and referral to other local resources. A section was added about remedial courses. Because they are available primarily online and through the Career Learning Center, clients should plan to take remedial courses in advance of starting postsecondary, as funding will not be provided for courses that do not result in college credit. Rules regarding funding for internet services will follow customary practices. Information was added about part-time student status – the cost will be prorated for those taking less than 12 credit hours (which is considered full-time). Information was also added about dual credits. Many high school students take dual credit classes and SBVI can assist with the associated costs if financial need is met. A section was added about non-degree postsecondary programs and 18-21 programs such as Augie Access. Costs cannot be capped. In general, the Postsecondary Program Guide instructs to keep options open if the services are justified.

Division Program Updates:

- Business Enterprise Program (BEP) – Nancy Hoyme retired after 28 years with state government. Her position has been announced and will remain open until filled. Details about the position can be found in the Bureau of Human Resources job postings and on the Department of Human Services Facebook page. Vendor

positions are also available: A blind vendor is needed in Pierre, EROS (Sioux Falls) is currently being run as a satellite by the Aberdeen vendor, and the longtime vendor in Yankton plans to retire at the end of November. Counselors in the field are the main resource in searching for eligible candidates for BEP sites.

- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) – The Fall Conference will be held October 9-11 in Aberdeen at the Ramkota. If Board members are interested in attending, the registration and associated costs are covered as part of Board expenses. Contact Becky if you're interested in attending. SBVI conducted its annual Case File Review in April; any areas rated below 90% have been identified for future training opportunities. Some of the items below 90% included the primary and secondary impairments not being coded correctly under eligibility, financial need being completed incorrectly, and services of maintenance and transportation not being well documented and/or justified. Ronda will review these issues by counselor and provide clarification and additional training as needed. Contact Ronda if you're interested in receiving the full case file review report. Additionally, it was recently brought to the attention of the Department that changes must be made to the contractual arrangements made directly with private providers including employment specialists. The IRS indicated that the private provider's contracts do not meet the requirements to be considered independent contractors. Effective June 30, the division will no longer be able to work with these private providers until they go through the Request for Proposal process, meet the requirements, and get approved. Providers have been made aware of this change as well as the new process. SBVI anticipates those private providers with a more significant income will submit an application, while others may establish an employer/employee relationship with a private business. The program guide will be revised to reflect these changes. These changes will primarily impact the number of job placement providers available in a community, resulting in fewer employment provider options for VR clients.
- Independent Living – Sandy Neyhart provided her report to Gaye, as she was not able to attend the meeting. Representatives from the Mississippi State University National Technical Assistance Center (MSU-TAC) will be visiting South Dakota over the next 16-18 months to review procedures, make suggestions for improvement, and compare metrics. Regarding the CCTV Lease/Loan program, in partnership with DakotaLink, out-of-date machines were removed from the program and one machine was lost. This is only the second machine to be lost since the program began in 2004. A \$10,000 donation was received from the Sioux Falls Lions Club to aid in the purchase of handheld video magnifiers, which are to be provided to individuals in Lincoln and Minnehaha counties. Since February 2017, there have been 33 instances of the Assistive Technology Access Project (ATAP) training being utilized. Training and services were provided by DakotaLink to 30 individuals, and surveys conducted with the participants indicate generally satisfactory experiences.

- South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC) – Transition Week took place at the Center from June 10-15. Of the 12 students that registered, 11 attended. During the week, the students toured businesses, took part in a full day of Skills of Blindness classes, where they practiced cooking, learned about assistive technology and braille, and rode the Sioux Area Metro, and participated in a full day of Employment Skills training, where they practiced job skills, learned about interviewing, and spoke with Business Resource Network Executive Director, Vicki Kerkvliet. On the final day, a success panel was conducted with mentors, including Board member James Konechne. Transition Week is a good opportunity to expose youth to the services available to them at SDRC as they move forward into postsecondary education and/or work. So far, this year, 40 students have been served in the Skills of Blindness area. A lot of clients attend part-time due to work and/or health issues, and most come from the Sioux Falls area. First Friday events continue every month, which include an Assistive Technology walk-in clinic in the mornings.

Board Priorities/Planning

- Public Forums – conducted in conjunction with the National Federation of the Blind Convention on April 27. A general discussion was held with approximately 25 participants.
- Governor’s Awards for Employment of People with Disabilities – nominations were to be postmarked by May 25. A nomination was submitted by Sandy Neyhart on behalf of the Board for Catherine Greseth. The Governor’s Awards ceremony has not been scheduled yet, but is expected to take place in the fall.
- National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) – the theme this year is “America’s Workforce: Empowering All.” Once the list of events is released, Board members will be informed about the events in their areas.
- Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) – YLF took place two weeks ago in Aberdeen. At least one SBVI client attended. Moving forward, there have been discussions about Transition Week being scheduled at a different time so that the two events don’t coincide.
- Other Activities/Sponsorships – organizers for the White Cane March (taking place on October 13) requested \$600.00 from the Board to cover the costs of billboards. James Konechne made a motion to approve this funding. Eric Rippentrop seconded. Motion carried. The Board will need prior approval from RSA, as the rules have changed regarding sponsorships using federal funds, as well as single assets that cost over \$5,000.00.

Statewide Independent Living Council: The meeting will take place this week at SDRC, with a report to follow. Patrick Czerny reported on the South Dakota Medical Equipment Recycle & Reuse Program being spearheaded by DakotaLink. All South

Dakota residents are now eligible to receive equipment from the program, primarily concentrated around the Sioux Falls area. The program is only the third of its kind in the nation. Available items can be viewed on the website here:

<https://www.sd.at4all.com/Items/ItemSearch.aspx?Mode=NewItem>

Election of Officers: Catherine Greseth and Koni Sims agreed to continue to serve as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively. Jill Kundtz agreed to replace Kay Miller as the Member at Large. Eric Rippentrop made a motion to approve these appointments. Connie Sullivan seconded. Motion carried.

Director's Report

- Pre-approval for Purchases – more details to follow after July 2.
- DHS Diversity Training – all DHS staff will be required to attend cultural awareness training regarding working with indigenous peoples. Several training sessions across the state will take place on tribal lands with involvement from individuals from our South Dakota tribes. After the initial training sessions, another session will be planned, location to be determined, for those who weren't able to attend.
- SBVI All Staff Training – August 27-29 in Chamberlain at Cedar Shore. An out-of-state optometrist will be coming to speak about low vision, as well as Dr. Alan Davis, who will be discussing the psychosocial aspects of disability.
- Next Meeting – the next Board meeting will be held on September 21st in Pierre.

Adjourn: Jill Kundtz made a motion to adjourn. Catherine Greseth seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.

Minutes submitted by Melanie Dumdei, SDRC Senior Secretary.