

Board of SBVI Meeting
Minutes
June 21, 2019
Ramkota, Pierre, SD

Board Members Present: Catherine Greseth, Tami Francis, Jill Kundtz, Elaine Fritz, Cole Uecker, Patrick Czerny, Gaye Mattke

Members Absent: Alan Vandenburg, Koni Sims, Connie Sullivan, Burdette Clifford, James Konechne, Tana Buresch, Zay Norman, Cheri Knispel, Marcia Hultman

Others Present: Bob Jahner, Sandy Neyhart, Ray Tracy, Becky Blume

Catherine Greseth, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Jill Kundtz made a motion to approve the agenda.
Patrick Czerny seconded. Motion carried.

Catherine Greseth made a motion to approve the minutes from the March meeting. Tami Francis seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments: None

Board Member Updates:

Catherine Greseth attended the Americans with Disabilities Act Symposium in Dallas; there were over

1500 people in attendance. Patrick and Catherine were featured on a news segment on KEVN about assistive technology for citizens with vision loss. Link to watch the segment is:

https://www.blackhillsfox.com/content/news/Turning-disability-into-possibility-with-technology-510500981.html?jwsourc=fb&fbclid=IwAR1xIiH5qh_Koz75iOx5YV78xCm1R58IL9k_79ONqhBJvr80mJX8BR_uYxU

Elaine Fritz has been trying to get her son on the family support program. Her son is at camp at School for the Blind this week.

Cole Uecker traveled a lot in May and June. He has been summoned for federal jury duty.

Jill Kundtz toured the new ER at Rapid City Regional. She will be performing her nephew's wedding at the end of the month.

Patrick Czerny stated that the new grant program manager is transitioning into the position. Mark Fleming was hired as AT specialist in Sioux Falls. Ted is getting a new head worn device for mobility for people with vision loss and the cost is reasonable.

Tami Francis told about her farm and sewing business. SBVI helped her to obtain her embroidery machine. She is not on social media so if you need her help with something, please call her. There was discussion about a

tour of her farm/business during transition week in the future.

Membership Update:

Tana Buresch, Cheri Knispel, and James Konechne agreed to be reappointed to the Board. Nicole Nelson was nominated to replace Patrick Czerny. No appointments have been made as of meeting date.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Unified State Plan Needs Assessment:

Bob Jahner was contracted by SBVI and DRS to assist with completion of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. This assessment is done every 3 years to and the results is used to help identify goals and strategies for the Unified State Plan.

Bob attended the March meeting via conference call and explained the scope of the assessment. He attended meetings in June to gather information. He plans to attend the September meeting to give a summary, draft analysis, and to provide advices on developing goals that address the results.

Board members paired up to share the needs of the constituency they represent with one another and then reported back to the full Board. Topics included – impact of foster homes, elderly, limited resources for SBVI services, hidden disabilities, Medicaid waiver restrictions, assistive technology, educating professionals, employers

and society, inclusion for people with disabilities in the community, enforcement of those who take advantage of people with disabilities, employment, wording of old laws, transition, and insurance issues. SBVI recently met with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS), the Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) and other entities to develop strategies for the vision and goals in the DLR portion of the unified plan.

The Strategic Planning and Policy committee will meet after the September meeting to review the goals and strategies for submission of the plan in March 2020.

Program Updates

Independent Living – A proposal was submitted to purchase new units for the CCTV lease/loan program to replace machines that are 10+ years old. Participants who currently have one of the older units were given the opportunity to forfeit their deposit and keep their machine. Some of the new units will have the option of text to speech in addition to magnification.

Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) is proposing changes in the reporting for the Older Blind Program. SBVI's data collection system will need to be updated if these changes are adopted.

Sandy has been working closely with Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) to strengthen the referral process as part of the goal obtainment plan.

Rehab Center for the Blind –Dr. Paul Greenfield is no longer providing low vision services. The SDRC Manager is trying to find an optometrist to provide low vision examinations. She has identified a doctor but is waiting for him to obtain SD licensure before an agreement can be pursued.

Eleven students attended transition week June 16-20. Events included speakers on networking, motivation to work, work etiquette, professional dress, and fun evening activities. Students who attended this year had a variety of secondary disabilities, making this transition week more challenging than other years.

Seven transition age students have been attending the Center during the summer. They are attending Skills of Blindness classes and some are participating in Employment Skills Training as well. Health continues to be the main reason people attend part-time.

Kellie Hauglid and Bob Smith developed training to help job placement providers to assist individuals with vision loss to find employment. This training is meant for employment specialists, private job placement providers, and any staff that assist with job placement, to help them obtain a better understanding of vision loss and how to best accommodate vision loss for job seekers. It is at no cost and the training is via Skype for Business. Certificates for Attendance will be given, and participants can submit the certificates for Certified Employment Support Professional credits. The trainings are scheduled

for: July 10, July 24, and August 7, with a final Q&A session on August 14.

Business Enterprise Program (BEP) – BEP recently held a bid process for vending at the Sioux Falls Post Office and other federal buildings. One vendor applicant is currently training at the Rehab Center.

File Director is not accessible, so Ray has been working with BIT and DakotaLink to remedy the situation. He is also in charge of updating and managing the computer and software inventory.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) –SBVI is currently switching to File Director which is an electronic filing system. Offices are in the process of scanning paper files into the system. This system will also allow easy access to the supervisor for signature purposes. There have been some issues with accessibility. The intent is to become paperless in all VR offices by September or October of this year.

Providers and VR staff are receiving Customized Employment training from consultants from Griffin/Hammis. Individuals approved for customized employment need to meet certain criteria including having most significant disabilities, not successful in a current job position (even with supports), require the job to be carved out from a current position, negotiated to meet the employer's needs or be within a business concept, and be eligible for long term supports through a

community support provider. A fee rate for customized employment services has been determined, but the providers must have successfully completed the ACRE (Assoc. of Community Rehabilitation Educators) training, participate in the on-line mentoring, and utilize the prescribed Discovery document (Discovering Personal Genius Staging Record). Customized employment is mainly in the east/southeast part of South Dakota however, we are hopeful it will eventually be a statewide option for VR clients.

The SBVI VR Program Case File Review was held in May. SBVI counselors met in Pierre May 6-8 and reviewed 86 case files for quality assurance, policy compliance and to ensure that we are meeting federal requirements. It's also a good opportunity to discuss best practices and provides good information about any training needs. High performance areas included documentation of financial need, level of contact initiated by counselors, documentation and justification of services, especially maintenance, and providing services consistent with the employment goal. Areas of improvement and need for training or clarification are in the wage verification, ineligibility documentation, repossession agreements, eligibility extensions and referrals to benefits specialists so clients on social security benefits can make an informed decision about their level of employment and how it affects their benefits.

Taylor Wold was hired as an SBVI counselor in Sioux Falls.

The next SILC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 26 in Pierre. The last meeting was hosted by WRIL in Rapid City on April 3. Jennifer Geuther, IL Program Specialist for DRS resigned. They are working to fill her position. Independent Living Choices recently signed an agreement with the National MS Society to provide case management services to people with MS in SD. Their goal is to offer assistance to 2,000 people in the current year. Western Resources for Independent Living continues to provide security deposit assistance through SD Housing Development Authority.

Board Priorities/Planning

Public Forums - SBVI held a public forum in conjunction with the NFB Convention in Rapid City in April. Gaye was unable to attend, but other staff represented SBVI. The goals and strategies were discussed with no comments from meeting participants. SBVI will be working with unified plan partners to schedule future public forums.

Governors Awards - The Governors Awards nominations were due recently. Governor Noem may change the location of the event. The Board of SBVI is a sponsor of this event and details will be provided when available.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) - Twelve communities across South Dakota

submitted requests for funding assistance for NDEAM activities planned in their area. Consensus of the Board was to contribute up to \$4000. If additional funds are needed, it will be decided at the next meeting.

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) - YLF was held in the beginning of June in Aberdeen. Gaye did not attend this year. Cole Uecker attended and observed that the kids are very engaged. Three or four students from SBVI attended this year.

Election of Officers

The election of officers will be held at the next meeting. The current officers are willing to continue to serve if the Board is in support.

Director's Comments

Gaye recently attended a regional meeting with representatives from Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota present. A variety of topics were discussed.

The SBVI All Staff training is scheduled for July 29-31. Training will be provided on a number of topics including: secondary disabilities, employment strategies, outreach, etc. Evening activities are also planned.

The Fall conference will be held October 15-17 in Sioux Falls. Poverty is one impediment to employment and that is a topic that will be covered.

It was decided to meet jointly with the BVR for the next meeting. The Board of Vocational Rehabilitation is meeting on Thursday, September 26th, and has asked the Board of SBVI to meet with them that afternoon. The Board of SBVI will reconvene Friday, September 27th until noon to conduct Board business.

Catherine Greseth adjourned the meeting.