

## Board of SBVI minutes

June 3, 2022

DDN locations in Pierre, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls

Members Present: Cole Uecker, Gaye Mattke, Jeff Nelson, Chelle Hart, Richard Crawford, Jill Kundtz, Elaine Fritz, Kate Kosior, Nichole Nelson, Burdette Clifford, Ryan Groeneweg

Members Absent: Kellie Hauglid, Tana Buresch, Kendra Ringstmeyer, Cheri Knispel

Others Present: Ronda Williams, Sandy Neyhart, Becky Blume, Raymond Tracy, Dawn Backer, April Schulte

Jill Kundtz, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Richard Crawford made a motion to approve the agenda.

Chelle Hart seconded. Motion carried.

Chelle Hart asked that the wording of the South Dakota Association for the Blind in the minutes from the March meeting be changed to South Dakota Association of the Blind. In addition, Chelle requested that the change be made for American Council of the Blind. Richard Crawford made a motion to approve the minutes with these corrections. Jeff Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

There were no public comments.

### Board Member Updates:

Jill Kundtz let the Board know that Monument Health hired another chaplain at the hospital, so she is excited about some time off soon.

Cole Uecker notified the Board that SD Disability Rights is returning to communities. The Kyle Cook-out will be held

on June 8. In addition, they have a couple of job openings to fill. Cole will become the Executive Director when Tim Neyhart retires.

Nichole Nelson has been gearing up for a busy month. Youth Leadership Forum, transition week, and on-campus summer school happen in June. She has accepted the position of Student Services Director and will transition to that job at the end of June. She plans to get her Masters in guidance counseling.

Kate Kosior told the Board that the State Library building is under renovation. NewsLine will begin July 1. eReaders currently has 30 patrons.

Richard Crawford is new to the Board. He is enjoying summer.

Burdette Clifford said his program is limited as they are operating on a no-cost extension until they hear if their grant has been renewed. He currently has two staff who are also business owners.

Jeff Nelson is looking to get back to work at EROS. He will be starting a micro-market at that location. It will be manned several hours a day and have a self-checkout kiosk. EROS houses many different agencies, but a lot of the employees are still working remotely.

Ryan Groeneweg is on the National Vehicle Infrastructure committee, which is tasked with creating criteria for charging stations for electric vehicles. They are currently looking at 40 stations in South Dakota, with more than half of them being along the interstates.

Amy Scepaniak is the Deaf-Blind Project Coordinator and is gearing up for Summer Institute.

Elaine Fritz is in the process of building a shed on her property. Her son, Matt, has completed his schooling and is transitioning to LifeScape's program. He has also been working with a program at Lutheran Social Services. These programs will give Matt support and activities to do. Unfortunately, she missed the deaf/blind advisory meeting due to other commitments.

Chelle Hart announced that the South Dakota Association of the Blind (SDAB) had started an outreach program for people to apply for adaptive equipment such as magnifiers and talking watches. Applicants can find the form on the SDAB website. SDAB will decide on purchase on a case-by-case as the funding is limited. She will replace Helen Hartman as a local peer support group facilitator.

Gaye Mattke has been working on State Plan revisions and the DHS Strategic Plan. The Rehabilitation Services Administration is asking for edits on sections of the state plan that were previously approved. SBVI changed the financial need requirements for assistive technology which addressed one of the focus areas in the Strategic Plan. SBVI has contracted with Independent Living Choices to hire Orientation and Mobility instructors to provide services across the state. SBVI will explore options to improve satisfaction surveys for different programs in the division to one format with statistical reliability and results that are comparable across programs.

## Membership Update

Several members' terms will expire at the end of June. Gaye has submitted nominations to the Governor's office and is awaiting appointments from the Governor. Nichole Nelson and Ryan Groeneweg are eligible for reappointment, and both agreed to be nominated to serve another term on the Board. Cheri Knispel has served the maximum terms, and Pam Fischer has been nominated for replacement. Tana Buresch has served the maximum terms and is no longer employed with Parent Connection. Carla Miller has been nominated to replace Tana. Zay Norman passed away, and Kelly Deckert has been nominated for his replacement. All Board members may continue to serve until replacements are appointed.

## Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA)

There are six steps for conducting the CSNA - Establish CSNA Goals, Plan for Information, Gather Information, Analyze Results, Develop Conclusions, and form State Plan Goals, Priorities, and Strategies.

SBVI is required to conduct a CSNA as a basis for state plan goals, objectives, and strategies. It also informs the public and enhances community awareness.

Focus areas include most significant disabilities, minorities and unserved or underserved, those served through the statewide workforce investment system and to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs.

SBVI contracted with Russ Thelin, Known Way Consulting, to conduct the CSNA. Russ provided a summary for members of the Board of SBVI:

- Continuing to review the most recent agency reports, publications, and other summaries/data provided by the SBVI and DRS leadership to highlight potential areas to consider for the needs assessment.
- Gathering existing secondary data for needs assessment analysis from the US Census Bureau, American Communities Survey (ACS), Bureau of Labor Statistics, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and Social Security Administration.
- Launched three CSNA surveys on May 23, 2022, one each to agency staff, agency providers, and businesses/employers. Responses have been received for each survey, with the surveys closing on June 10, 2022.
- Conducting focus groups with partner agency and entities of SBVI and DRS. One has been conducted with SD Higher Education Disability Service Coordinators, with others planned to include providers and agency staff soon.
- Holding one-on-one interviews with staff and providers in addition to focus groups.

Upon completion, the CSNA report will be used by the agency over the next three years for program enhancement and will be included in the State Workforce Plan, as required. Jill, Ronda, and Gaye are on the CSNA committee and work directly with Russ and Known Way Consulting. In addition, board members may be contacted to complete a survey for the CSNA.

### Division Updates

*Business Enterprise Program* – Raymond Tracy recently conducted a program visit at the EROS cafeteria. EROS is implementing a micro-market at the facility. A vendor

committee meeting was held on May 23. The committee approved funding for the micro-market. The Aberdeen site does a small amount of vending. Huron site has slowed down due to lack of a driver. Pierre site is operating as normal. Ray is working with the Bureau of Administration to update the agreement for vending in state buildings in Pierre. Interstate vending revenue is above average compared to previous years. This is due in part to an increase in the commission amount the BEP gets from the vending machines at rest areas. Winning bids for the 5-year Interstate vending contracts were awarded to Coca Cola Bottling Companies Chesterman and High Country. The Sioux Falls vending contract was awarded to Premium Food and Beverage.

*Vocational Rehabilitation* – Ronda Williams is analyzing the findings of the Case File Review to determine training needed for counselors. A Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act partner symposium was held on May 19. Department of Labor and Regulation Secretary, Marcia Hultman, gave a presentation. Paul Harrington presented on growth and change in the labor market via Zoom. There was an employer panel and small group discussions. A follow-up is planned for August. The symposium will be a yearly event. Nichole, the Transition Specialist, is resigning. Ronda will meet with Superintendent Dan Trefz regarding the contract for that position. There has been no recent turnover in Vocational Rehabilitation staff. There was an increase in applications at the beginning of the year, but it has leveled off. Staff are providing outreach. DHS is implementing a new contract system. An SBVI All-Staff Meeting will be held on July 26-28 in Sioux Falls. Topics include diabetes and adjustment to blindness & ethics training. The Fall

Conference will be held in Sioux Falls from October 11-13, 2022. Registration will be forthcoming. If Board members are interested in attending, please contact Becky. Registration and lodging will be covered for Board members. DHS 101 training is part of the strategic plan. DHS has approximately 70 new staff per year. This training will be held twice a year in Pierre. Each division will present and explain how we work together.

*Independent Older Blind* – Sandy Neyhart previously reported to the Board that Stephanie Grover was hired on March 15 to replace Heather Prince. She attended training at the Rehab Center for the Blind. The Rehab Teachers are seeing higher caseload numbers. The CCTV lease/loan program added 10 units for distribution to older blind consumers. With the addition of these new CCTVs, the plan is to retire some that are 10 years or older. Participants who have the older machines can keep their machine but must forfeit their deposit. Retired machines may be kept for those willing to relinquish their fifty-dollar deposit to own the units. Retired units are distributed to nursing homes, libraries, or other not for profit entities. There are 230 units currently in the program. Sandy has been involved in the planning of the SBVI All Staff training and the 2022 Fall Conference event. SBVI staff in Rapid City are looking forward to attending the Kyle cookout hosted by Disability Rights South Dakota.

*Rehabilitation Center for the Blind* – Dawn Backer informed the Board that April Schulte will be acting director of the Center since she is retiring effective June 3. Referrals have slowly been increasing. Summer will be busy with local students and transition week. Transition

week is June 12-16, with nine students signed up to attend. JoMarie continues with First Friday when she is available to answer assistive technology questions. Mary Tommeraasen is a certified Brain Injury Specialist. She is on a Brain Injury networking group with Ryan Groeneweg and helps clients find resources. Vocational Resources continues with virtual World to Work classes.

### Board Priorities/Planning

Governor's Awards nominations were due by May 2. The Nomination Committee received a total of 37 nominations. Ryan Groeneweg and Cole Uecker serve on the Governor's Awards committee. Ryan stated it was a difficult decision as nominations were very good. The review committee met and decided on which nominations to present to the Governor for her consideration. The Governor's Awards ceremony is usually held in October at the Capitol. Board members will be invited to attend the ceremony, and the Board of SBVI contribute to help cover costs. A motion was made and seconded to contribute up to \$5,000 for Governor's Awards. Motion passed unanimously. Members were reminded that nominations for Governor's Awards are open year-round.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) is held in October. Nichole Nelson and Chelle Hart are members of this committee. There will be events in the following locations – Aberdeen/Pierre, Brookings/Volga, Madison, Mitchell, Mobridge/Selby, Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Sisseton, Watertown, and Yankton. These communities submitted financial requests to help cover the costs of the events held to raise awareness of hiring people with disabilities. Ryan



Groeneweg made a motion to sponsor NDEAM activities up to \$5,000. Chelle Hart seconded. Motion carried.

Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) is held in Aberdeen. This year there will be 44 students attending. The students meet other students, learn about advocating for themselves, and plan for the future. Unfortunately, Cindy Kirschmann, Transition Specialist for the Transition Services Liaison Project, and main organizer of YLF, suddenly passed away recently.

National Federation of the Blind (NFB) hosted a public forum in April in conjunction with the state convention. It was well attended. Topics of concern were transportation, Braille training, and member recruitment.

Thy South Dakota Association of the Blind will have its convention on October 7-8, 2022, in Sioux Falls at the Country Inn and Suites.

The Board of SBVI provides stipends for first-time attendees at consumer organization conventions. Forms are available to request stipends. Board member's registration and costs are covered if they attend as representatives of the Board of SBVI.

#### Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC)

The SILC met on April 11 via Zoom. Independent Living Choices (ILC) staff provided 3-day training for Western Resources for Independent Living (WRIL) staff in Rapid City. ILC requested reimbursement for per diem and lodging from the SILC. It was approved for the amount presented. The SILC members voted to provide support of \$1,000 for future training.

The SILC sponsored Disability Day at the Capitol. They also voted to support NDEAM with \$5,000.

Four members' terms expire on June 30. Two are eligible for reappointment. Six nominations were received.

The SILC is increasing awareness by selecting a SILC logo and opening a Facebook page. In addition, SILC members will discuss a social media guidance document at the next meeting.

SILC members voted to approve the modified language in the bylaws regarding a quorum.

The next SILC meeting is July 14, 2022, via Zoom.

SBVI Board needs to have SILC representation. Ryan Groeneweg serves in this capacity.

### Election of Officers

The Board Executive Committee also serves as the nominations committee for Board officers. The current officers are willing to continue to serve. The slate of candidates to be considered were:

- Jill Kundtz, Chair
- Ryan Groeneweg, Vice Chair
- Richard Crawford, Member-at-Large

Jill Kundtz called for any other nominations. Having heard none, Ryan Groeneweg motioned for the slate of officers to remain the same. Chelle Hart seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### Director's Report

Fall Conference planning is underway with several good speakers. Save the date and featured speaker information can be found at:

<https://www.sdrehabaction.org/fall-conference/2022-conference-agenda>

Board members are welcome to attend Fall Conference, and the Board of SBVI budget will cover registration, travel costs and lodging expenses. Contact Becky if you're interested attending.

After discussing the date and format of the next meeting, Richard Crawford motioned to hold the meeting via DDN with sites in Rapid City, Sioux Falls, and Pierre on September 9, 2022. Jeff Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned.