

Boards of Vocational Rehabilitation & Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired  
Joint Meeting DRAFT Minutes  
September 26, 2019  
AmericInn, Ft. Pierre, SD

Welcome/Introductions: Present at the joint Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)/Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) meeting were BVR: Lisa Sanderson, Brooke Lusk, Kristi Eisenbraun, Peter Bullene, Kristina Allen, Joe Vetch, Kevin Barber, Brad Konechne, Kim Ludwig, Bill McEntaffer, Jolleen Laverdure, Eric Weiss, Kendra Gottsleben, Shelly Pfaff (BVR Staff); Board of SBVI: Catherine Greseth, Jill Kundtz, Tana Buresch, Cole Uecker, Cheri Knispel, Elaine Fritz, Koni Sims, Alan Vandenburg, Connie Sullivan, Burdette Clifford, Nichole Nelson, Marcia Hultman, Gaye Mattke, Zay Norman, Tami Francis. Other present: Bob Jahner, Alyce Neal, Lyle Cook; Staff: Becky Blume, Jordan Trumbo, Shayna Ebben, Ronda Williams, Bernie Grimme; Interpreters: Julie Paluch and Rick Norris

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA): Bob Jahner, consultant, was introduced and a handout was provided to all in attendance. Bob shared that he would be reading this information to the group, and in doing so, ensuring access for all participating this afternoon. Upon completion of the sharing of the information, Bob asked members to pair up and take time to have conversation about the report. They were asked to identify three top needs identified by the assessment, share them with one another and make any recommendations relating to these needs. At the conclusion of this time, Bob gathered these notes to incorporate them into the final CSNA. Bob explained that he would be working with the Board of SBVI on their State Plan goals at the conclusion of the joint meeting. The BVR will work through its Consumer Services Committee to draft goals to be brought forward to the full board at their next meeting. Bob thanked the boards and divisions for the opportunity to once again assist with this process. He encouraged them to begin their next CSNA process with their next meetings, identifying any assets that may surface and any needs in their minutes, so they might turn to these when developing their next state plan update.

The Board of SBVI met to discuss the results of the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and edits the state plan goals and strategies based on the results. Discussion regarding complex needs of those with multiple disabilities and mental health needs as well as benefits specialists, navigators, and Integrated Resource Teams took place. The meeting was adjourned for the evening with the agreement to revisit goals and strategies in the morning.

Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired  
Meeting Minutes  
September 27, 2019  
AmericInn, Ft. Pierre, SD

The Board of SBVI reconvened. Members Present: Zay Norman, Burdette Clifford, Tana Buresch, Jill Kundtz, Tami Francis, Catherine Greseth, Gaye Mattke, Cheri Knispel, Koni Sims, Alan Vandenburg, Nichole Nelson, Connie Sullivan, James Konechne (via phone). Members Absent: Cole Uecker, Elaine Fritz, Marcia Hultman. Others Present: Alyce Neal, Ray Tracy, Sandy Neyhart, Ronda Williams, Bob Jahner, Becky Blume.

Catherine Greseth, Chair, called the meeting to order. A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the June meeting. Motion carried. The agenda was amended to move the Unified State Plan discussion to the beginning of the meeting. Jill Kundtz made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Connie Sullivan seconded. Motion carried.

Board Appointments: Nichole Nelson was appointed to replace Patrick Czerny. Nichole is a Transition Specialist through an agreement between the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and SBVI. James Konechne, Tana Buresch, and Cheri Knispel were all reappointed to second 3-year terms on the Board.

There were no public comments.

Unified State Plan: Bob Jahner reviewed the comments from the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment and made suggestions for wording changes or deletions of the goals and strategies. Discussion was held on Bob's suggestions with emphasis on services to minorities and access to an array of services. Gaye suggested that the Strategic Planning and Policy committee review the draft goals and strategies and make recommendations for a final draft to present to the full Board at the December meeting. Tami Francis asked to join the Strategic Planning and Policy committee. Ronda Williams, Assistant Director will convene a conference call of the committee to discuss the draft state plan goals and strategies.

Program Updates:

*Vocational Rehabilitation:* Ronda Williams recently attended a Quality Assurance Summit in Maine. She met the new Rehabilitation Services Administration Commissioner who is originally from Nebraska. The Divisions of Rehabilitation Services and SBVI are working on a State Wage Interchange System (SWIS) data share program in which SBVI can find

individual's wages through Unemployment Wage records anywhere in the United States. SBVI currently has a data share agreement with the South Dakota Department of Labor, but the Unemployment Insurance wage records are only available for South Dakota. Three counselors from SBVI attended new counselor training September 24 & 25 in Ft. Pierre. Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) met in Brookings on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Doris Schumacher was the recipient of the Champion of Independent Living award. It was Shelly Pfaff's last meeting as administrative support for the SILC, and she was recognized and thanked for her years of service. The Fall Conference will be held October 15-17 in Sioux Falls. The theme is Working in Harmony. If Board members would like to attend, let Becky know.

*Independent Living:* Sandy Neyhart is preparing information for the RSA 7-OB federal report. The information compiled for this report is also included in the Board of SBVI Annual Report. She recently attended a program manager's meeting in Minneapolis. After hearing from other states, she feels positive about what South Dakota is doing. The SBVI Older Blind program has been working with the Division of Long Term Services and Supports on outreach strategies. The CCTV lease/loan program continues to do well.

*Business Enterprise Program (BEP):* Ray Tracy reported that a vendor applicant was trained at EROS cafeteria and on vending machines in Pierre. He passed the ServSafe exam and is in the process of becoming the new vendor at EROS, with an expected start date of October 7<sup>th</sup>. Ray attended accessibility training in July.

*Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC):*

SDRC staff attended the All Staff SBVI meeting in Pierre, July 29-30. SBVI management staff met with the Nebraska Commission for the Blind in Lincoln, Nebraska. While in Lincoln, Dawn Backer, SDRC Manager, met with the Nebraska Rehabilitation Training Center manager to exchange ideas and tour their Center. SDRC hosted 4 medical students from USD Sanford School of Medicine for 3 days of training. This experience allows medical students to understand how vision loss impacts people and their ability to live and work independently. Dr. Paul Greenfield did not renew his contract as low vision optometrist. Dawn is working with an optometrist in Mitchell and hopefully a contract will be finalized soon. Rehabilitation Center enrollment numbers are down. Most referrals to the vocational programs at the center come from the Division of Rehabilitation Services. Program Specialist Hauglid inquired about the decrease in referrals; DRS contributed it the low unemployment rate and fewer clients being served. The SD Vocational Resources team have met or plan to meet with all the Rehabilitation Services district offices to discuss services and promote the programs at the Center.

Governor's Awards: The Governor's Awards will be presented by Governor Noem in the Capitol Rotunda on November 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be a reception following at the Casey Tibbs Rodeo Center. A press release will be forwarded with the award winners.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): October is NDEAM. Several events/activities are planned around the state in the month of October. A listing will be included in the minutes. Please feel free to attend an event in your area. If there is a cost for your attendance, let Becky know and the Board will cover the expense.

White Cane Walk: The White Cane committee has requested Board support in the amount of \$600 for a bill board display. Koni Sims made a motion to contribute \$600 for sponsorship of the White Cane Walk. Zay Norman seconded. Motion carried. Discussion included that the White Cane Walk Committee should work on getting additional sponsors for the event. Gaye will speak to Rose Moehring (committee chair) regarding future support from more sources and budget/sponsor information to accompany Board of SBVI support requests in the future.

Annual Report: The Board annual report is due to RSA by December 31<sup>st</sup>. Past reports have included projects, pictures, and success stories, in addition to data. Members recommended a similar format for the 2019 report. Staff will draft a report to present at the next meeting.

State Plan Activities: The Unified State Plan is due to RSA in March. SBVI will have a draft prepared by early December. There will be a public forum held in conjunction with Workforce Development Council and Board of Vocational Rehabilitation in January for input on the Unified State Plan. The public forum will have Dakota Digital Network and call in options. A date has not been set yet.

Election of Officers: Current officers are Catherine Greseth, Chair; Koni Sims, Vice-chair; and Jill Kundtz, Member-at-large. The current officers are willing to be re-elected. Connie Sullivan made a motion to re-elect the current officers. Tami Francis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Director's Report: With Bob Smith's retirement from SDRC, the vacant position was reclassified to a Program Specialist II and that position will supervise all counselors statewide. Interviews are currently taking place. SBVI received a letter of concern regarding the loss of an Orientation and Mobility Specialist (O&M) position from Koni Sims on behalf of the South Dakota Association of the Blind. Gaye explained that the position that was

reclassified was a Program Specialist position, not an O&M specialist. The position was defined based on Bob's training not on the actual job specifications. The Program Specialist position was intended to provide technical assistance to field staff and plan training/activities on evenings and weekends for clients in the apartments. Due to Bob's certification as an O&M specialist the position duties were tailored to fit his skill set. Jen Geffre is the O&M specialist at SDRC, and is classified the same as senior counselors, not as a program specialist.

SBVI will pursue getting purchase of service contracts for orientation and mobility specialists who want to provide services to vocational rehabilitation clients utilizing the current fee schedule.

Shawnie Rechtenbaugh, Secretary of DHS, created a Deputy Secretary position. Tom Martinec was hired for that position. Tom who is an attorney, comes from Department of Health where he served as the Deputy Secretary for many years.

SBVI is not anticipating any legislation in the 2020 session. Session begins on January 13, with the last day on March 12. Veto day is March 30.

Catherine Greseth commented that Rapid City was listed as Number 3 for employment of people with disabilities. Darren Sealy, past president of the Workforce Diversity Network, was appointed as Commissioner of Bureau of Human Resources.

The next meeting was scheduled for December 6, 2019, in Pierre. There will also be a call-in option in case of inclement weather.

Meeting adjourned.