

Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR)
September 12, 2023

Meeting Held Via ZOOM and DHS Hillview Plaza/Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT: Shawn Lyons, Kara Schweitzer, Brooke Lusk, Chris Olson, Eric Weiss, Cole Uecker, and Kevin Barber. **MEMBERS ABSENT:** Jolleen Laverdure. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Vicki Stewart, Jennifer Trenhaile, Jonathan Englund, Betsy Drew, Bernie Grimme, Jordan Trumbo, Katie Gran, Kim Ludwig, Jessica Sehnert, and Colette Wagoner. The interpreters were Julie Paluch and Whitney Gard.

OPENING ACTIONS: Cole Uecker, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:01 AM. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. A quorum was present. A few housekeeping items were reviewed. **Welcome & Introductions.** Everyone present was asked to introduce themselves, members spoke to their role on the board, and others spoke to their purpose of attending today's meeting.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and BVR Basics: Eric explained that the Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) provides a variety of services intended to assist persons with disabilities in finding or keeping employment. Some individuals receive services for a few months and for others a few years. Services are very individualized, and it depends upon the person's employment goal. Federal funding comes through the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) which falls under the US Department of Education. DRS is one division that falls under the Department of Human Services (DHS). Other divisions include Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, Developmental Disabilities and Long-Term Services and Supports. DRS has a total of 102 employees with thirteen offices in the state. Under the Division, the VR program is the largest with 65 staff. Other programs include Independent Living (IL) Services, Activities of Daily Living Services (ADLS/Medicaid waiver program), Disability Determination Services (DDS), and Deaf Services.

Eric explained the role of the BVR as one of a partnership with the Division. Among its responsibilities/functions, the BVR reviews, evaluates, and advises the agency regarding its performance and effectiveness in the delivery of services. The BVR ensures the voice of the community stakeholders is heard as the agency develops policies and procedures that directly impact persons with disabilities.

Other functions of the BVR include assisting the Division in developing the goals and priorities of the State Plan. The BVR conducts a review and analysis of customer satisfaction with services in addition to preparing an annual report for the Governor and RSA Commissioner. The BVR is called to provide for the coordination and the

establishment of working relationships between the agency, Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) and the Centers for Independent Living (CILs) within the state.

Eric turned it over to Colette to provide more information about the BVR. Colette referred to the Rehabilitation Act, of 1973, as amended which outlines what the State Rehabilitation Council is, noting this council is referred to as the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation in our state. There are two State Rehabilitation Councils in South Dakota because there are two VR agencies, a general agency, and a Blind agency. In addition to the BVR, there is the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. Federal regulations outline membership composition, terms, functions and more. The BVR must have at least 15 members, of which a majority must be people with disabilities. All members are appointed by the Governor.

Colette explained that there is a contract in place to provide staff support to both the BVR and SILC. This contract is between the Division and Black Hills Special Services Cooperative. Staff make all the arrangements for meetings, including committee meetings. Duties include disseminating doodle polls to identify quarterly meeting dates, scheduling/sending out Zoom meeting invites, scheduling interpreters or other requested auxiliary aids and service. Staff assists with making needed travel/lodging arrangements for members for meetings or training events and processes reimbursement for mileage and per diem.

All BVR meetings are open to the public in accordance with State Open Meeting Laws, and they must meet at least 4 times a year. Quarterly meetings incorporate time for public comment, which allows members of the public to address a specific issue or an agenda item. The agenda and other supporting information are posted to the Boards/Commissions website located at <https://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/>. Other information can be found on the website including archived meetings, agendas, reports, and a page outlining BVR membership. The Board's two committees in addition to the Executive Committee, these are the Consumer Services Committee and Public Awareness Committee.

A manual was sent to new members which included a variety of information, i.e., membership listing, bylaws, committees, annual report, code of conduct/conflict of interest policy. This information will be reviewed during a new member orientation which will be scheduled in a few months. The BVR has voting and non-voting members, and voting by proxy is not permitted. When the BVR meets virtually, voting is conducted by roll call, seeking a reply of yes (in favor of), no (not in favor) or the voting member can abstain.

Review & Approval of Agenda: Cole asked if there were any changes to the agenda.
MOTION TO APPROVE THE AGENDA AS DISSEMINATED – MADE (M),

SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C). YEAS: Brooke, Chris, Kevin, and Kara. NAYS: None.

Review & Approval of Meeting Minutes: Cole asked for changes/additions to the Board's June meeting minutes. There were none. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE JUNE 14, 2023, MEETING MINUTES AS PRESENTED, MSC.** YEAS: Brooke, Chris, Kevin, and Kara. NAYS: None. Cole asked if there were any changes to the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting, **MOTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST 15TH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES, MSC.** YEAS: Brooke, Chris, Kevin, and Kara. NAYS: None. **Review & Consideration of Organizational Funding Request:** Cole explained that the BVR received a funding request from SD Parent Connection for the 2023 June Lighting the Way Autism Conference. The request was for \$2,000 to support presenter costs. **MOTION TO APPROVE \$2,000 IN SUPPORT OF THE 2023 LIGHTING THE WAY AUTISM CONFERENCE FUNDING REQUEST SUBMITTED BY SD PARENT CONNECTION, MSC.** YEAS: Brooke, Chris, Kevin, and Kara. NAYS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Cole invited public comment. There was none.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Cole spoke to Disability Rights South Dakota and noted the Protection & Advocacy Developmental Disabilities Program has the fiscal year 2024 goals and priorities available for public comment through September 30th. The proposed priorities and objectives are available for review at:

<https://drsdlaw.org/about/priorities/proposedpaddpriorities2024/?fbclid=IwAR1vMI1OTz0G42nxN2fhvxyhrfvFEIdc-5iUWSHdNp9Z5P4hqmYoBIXm-Es>. Disability Rights SD is also accepting applications through October 2nd for Partners in Policymaking Year 32.

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES (DRS) DIVISION DIRECTOR'S

COMMENTS & UPDATES: Comments: Eric welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He welcomed new members and others to the Board and stated that a few more appointments are expected. Quarterly Data Report: Eric spoke to the quarterly report that was shared with members via email. This information was requested a few years ago at the request of a member. The report provides information on total applications, eligibilities, total served and closed case data for the agency. He referenced the most recent quarter 2022 4th Quarter Data (time period between April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023). The number of applications for VR services has been increasing since 2020. Total closures were down this quarter in addition to a few other reporting areas, which is something the Division will watch in terms of possible trends. Eric explained what constitutes a closure in response to a question. A successful closure consists of closing an individual's case after successful placement within competitive employment. Some individuals' cases might be closed unsuccessful, i.e., a person may move/cannot be located, moves out of state, person chooses to end

services. It was explained that vocational rehabilitation services are time limited, and individuals must be eligible to receive services. A person's case may be closed successfully, and they can return to the agency and reapply for services.

VR Outreach Campaign. The Division has taken steps to increase applications. The purpose of outreach is to reach individuals who are unaware of services. An initiative was started a few years ago, entitled "Ability for Hire" which was designed to reach employers. Information, resources, training, and technical assistance is available for employers across the state. This new campaign is designed to reach individuals who are not aware of services or know how to access services. A Request for Proposal was conducted, and ten interested providers submitted proposals. A review team will review the proposals and the Division hopes to have a contract in place with work beginning in early 2024. This will involve research and identifying strategies to assist the agency in conducting outreach to reach more eligible applicants. More information will come as work progresses. Positive comments were made in support of this.

Performance Measures: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was passed in 2014 which was intended to help job seekers access employment, education training and to assist employers with their workforce needs. WIOA established performance accountability indicators. VR agencies (and other core partners) are now required to collect and report information on participants served. The six primary indicators of performance are:

- 1) Employment rate – 2nd quarter after exit – percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- 2) Employment rate – 4th quarter after exit – percentage of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after exit from the program
- 3) Median earnings – 2nd quarter after exit- median earnings of participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after exit from the program
- 4) Credential attainment rate – percentage of participants in an education or training program who attain a recognized postsecondary credential, or a secondary school diploma, or its recognized equivalent, during participation in or within one year after exit from the program.
- 5) Measurable skill gains – percentage of program participants who, during a program year, are in an education or training program that leads to a recognized post-secondary credential or employment and who are achieving measureable

skill gains, defined as documented academic, technical, occupational, or other forms of progress, towards such a credential or employment.

6) Effectiveness in serving employers – which has not been defined yet.

The Division has spent time the last few years deciphering what information to gather and report. The areas of credential attainment and measurable skill gains were the most difficult. Eric explained that the Division negotiates attainment rates with the federal government. The Division's performance as of the end of the program year (which ended June 30th), resulted in employment in the 2nd quarter after exit rate was 61.8%. Last program year, which ended June 30th, had 61.8%; employment after 4th quarter was 56% and the median earnings was \$3,599. (Median earnings looks at all VR participants who are employed and earnings, identifying the median). The measurable skill gains rate was 49.8%. The Division exceeded four of the five attainment rates. The one area that didn't meet the attainment rate was the credential attainment rate. The Division was only 1% away from meeting the rate. The measures combine data from both Divisions (DRS and SBVI). A state that fails to meet the attainment rate, and then if it fails the agreed upon adjusted rate, the agency will receive technical assistance from RSA, and if it continues for two or more years, there could be monetary sanctions. The Division will keep members informed regarding the performance measures but does not anticipate any issues moving forward.

Reallotment Process: RSA allows state agencies to reallot grant funds if it will not expend all its funds; and other VR agencies can apply for these reallotment monies. VR agencies must determine if they will give back funds or apply for funds by August 15th of each year. If reallotment dollars are requested and awarded, there is a required state match. The Division did not relinquish VR 110 funds this year; however, it did relinquish \$200,000 in Supported Employment (SE) funds. These funds are utilized to support those with the most significant disabilities. These funds are more difficult to expend because funds can only be spent on an individual after their start date of employment, i.e., funds cannot be utilized on job placement/job development. Plus, the funds are split between youth with disabilities and adults with disabilities, and an agency cannot spend more on adults with disabilities than the youth. Twenty-one VR agencies relinquished funds this year and 13 agencies requested reallotment funds.

Budget: The state fiscal year ended on June 30th. Division staff worked with Budget and Finance Staff to ensure optimum use of VR monies. The work involved in this process reflects that the VR agency is in good shape for the years 2024 and 2025.

Department of Human Services (DHS) Homepage: Work was started a year ago on revamping DHS's website. The focus has been to connect people with disabilities with services. Accessibility was also incorporated as changes were made. The site is now

live and it can be viewed at: <https://dhs.sd.gov/en>. Positive comments were made about the website and incorporating accessibility features.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION (VR) CASE FILE REVIEW: Jordan Trumbo, DRS Policy/Quality Assurance Specialist spoke to this item. The case file review was completed virtually through the use of the electronic case file system. The review ensures that work is being done to meet compliance; it also identifies areas that need to be improved upon and training needs. It recognizes strengths and improves consistency between offices. Nineteen staff were involved with each reviewing an average of 9 case files. Cases were randomly selected from active caseloads for a total of 174 cases reviewed. The review focused on areas of the VR process, i.e., application, eligibility, IPE, services provided, and case closure. A report was shared that identified the findings. The goal is to obtain scores higher than 90%. The areas identified below the 90% are identified as needing improvement. The report identifies areas that are color coded for areas continuing to need improvement and areas that have shown improvement from the previous years' findings. The summary included areas needing additional clarification, policy clarification, specific training needs, topics that require additional conversation, and needed changes to the review process. These areas are discussed during the supervisor's meetings which occur every 2 weeks. The review process has changed from once a year to reviewing cases more frequently. The targeted reviews assist staff with ensuring that the correct information is being gathered and identify if needed changes are occurring.

VR CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS: Jessica Sehnert, Division Quality Assurance & Support Specialist spoke to the survey and results. VR is required to review and analyze the program through consumer satisfaction surveys. There are four survey instruments disseminated to VR consumers at various points in the process. Each survey asks 6 questions, consumers are randomly selected, and surveys are disseminated on a quarterly basis. Indicator 3.1, the survey sent to consumers 6 months after they started their plan for employment and asks how satisfied they are with planning and implementation of the individualized plan for employment (IPE). The overall results reflected 96% strongly agreed/agreed with questions asked and 4% disagreed/strongly disagreed. Indicator 3.2 is disseminated to consumers who have been in the VR program for a longer period of time and had an opportunity to experience a variety of services. Overall results were 97% strongly agreed or agreed and only 3% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Indicator 3.3 is sent to consumers who have recently been closed as successfully rehabilitated, evaluating satisfaction with employment and involvement with the VR program. Overall results identified 87% strongly agreed or agreed and 13% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Indicator 3.4 is sent to clients who have recently been closed as unsuccessfully employed in order to evaluate their satisfaction with services and overall involvement in the VR process. The overall results were 86% strongly agreed or agreed with 5%

disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. Questions asked include: my VR counselor understood my problems and needs; my VR counselor gave me information about other programs that could help me; I was aware of my rights to contact the Client assistance program for help to settle differences and appeal any disagreements with VR; and I would return to this VR program for additional services. The remainder of questions asked about what services might have helped and why the person chose to stop services. Job training and job placement were identified as services that could be of assistance to the person obtaining employment. And a few other responses to why the person chose to stop services included health condition worsened, found employment of my own, VR didn't meet their needs and decision made not to get a job.

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM INITIATIVES: Bernie Grimme, Assistant Director, spoke on the first few items. Sioux Falls District Office will be moving early in 2025. A groundbreaking ceremony will be held on September 26th. It will be located on the east side of Sioux Falls, host over 14 agencies and accommodate up to 900 employees. Improved security and accessibility were reasons for the move in addition to co-located services. Disability Determination Services and the Rehabilitation Center for the Blind will remain where they are now. State Plan: A new 4-year State Plan will be submitted in early 2024 for review and approval. The Unified State Plan partners include the Department of Labor and Regulation, DRS and SBVI. The BVR's Consumer Services Committee has been assisting Division staff with work on State Plan sections. The committee is scheduled to meet again at the end of the month to continue work on plan sections. Public meetings will be scheduled in November or December and submittal of the plan will occur early in March.

Katie Gran, Transition Specialist, spoke to the following. Project SEARCH: Project SEARCH is a unique business-led transition program for students/interns with disabilities who want to work by providing them the chance to explore careers and develop transferable job skills. Several DRS staff attended the national Project SEARCH conference. The information learned at this conference was shared with the Project SEARCH coordinators and VR counselors in hopes of enhancing their programs. During the conference, the national Project SEARCH team recognized all sites that had positive employment outcomes after interns completed Project SEARCH. Two South Dakota sites were recognized for Excellent Outcomes – which is 70% or better of the interns secured employment in the community for the 2021-2022 SEARCH year. The two sites were Avera McKennan in Sioux Falls and Monument Health in Rapid City. The South Dakota State University site in Brookings was awarded the 100% Employment Outcomes, meaning all interns left SEARCH with community employment.

Summer Pre-ETS Initiatives: All summer camps throughout the state have been completed; however, one agency must submit invoices and reports. Numbers of

attendees have been reported for all 13 camps which totaled 134 students with disabilities participated. Camps took place in Mitchell (Mitchell School), Sioux Falls (Teachwell Solutions), Brookings, Huron, Mitchell, Sioux Falls, and Watertown (all hosted by ILC), Zoom (Center for Disabilities), Rapid City (CSD/SD DROP), Milbank (Milbank School), Rapid City (BHSSC), Pine Ridge and Rosebud (Oyate Circle). Camp attendees are asked to complete a Pre-Survey and Post-Survey. Questions on the Pre-Survey included What skills are they hoping to learn, Do they currently have a job, and How confident do you feel about getting/keeping a job? The Post-Survey asks what they learned, what they liked, how confident they feel about getting/keeping a job, and whether they recommend this training to a friend. Of the student surveys received (still waiting for two camps/one agency), 93% of attendees would recommend the training to a friend. Regarding confidence about working, there were increases in ready-to-work and fairly confident responses about working from Pre-Survey to Post-Survey. Surveys also showed a decrease in responses of attendees reporting they still weren't quite ready to focus on finding employment.

Transition Services Liaison Project Staff (TSLP) Update: Dave Halverson retired this past spring after working for 20+ years. Stephanie Badwound was hired, and she is housed in the Spearfish VR office. She was a Project SEARCH skills trainer for the Spearfish area so comes with transition knowledge and experience. TSLP Transition Retreat: TSLP staff provide training and technical assistance to VR counselors and special education teachers throughout the state. On July 26th, TSLP brought together a variety of professionals to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of current transition services. Attendees represented DRS, DOE, DLR, a Special Education teacher, Disability Rights SD, SD Parent Connection, and a facilitator from the National Technical Assistance Center on Transition: the Collaborative (NTACT:C). Attendees discussed activities to increase collaboration for better transition services outcomes for students with disabilities. Some action items are thoughtful communication and resources, creating short online modules for new SPED teachers to learn about transition requirements and resources, and short videos created by students for students to increase self-determination efforts. TSLP will continue working with the NTACT:C facilitator to develop an action plan.

TSLP Summer Institute: TSLP hosted the annual Transition Summer Institute in July in Oacoma, SD. This two-day conference offered general and breakout sessions for secondary special educators, administrators, parents, and agency personnel in the area of transition. Session topics included Practical Strategies & Activities to Improve Transition Outcomes, Leveraging Assessment Methods, Guardianship, Creative Employment Opportunities, Career & Technical Education, Family Involvement, Poverty Escape Room Simulation, and more. DRS staff presented on Pre-Employment Transition Services and collaboration between VR and schools as well as had a table

at the agency round-up event. There were 115 attendees. The evaluation and written comments of the conference were very positive.

Jordan Trumbo spoke to the Program Guide on Self Employment. A workgroup was formed to review and update the guide. The updated guide incorporated revisions and clarification. The process started with training for staff on self-employment with a view that self-employment should be examined with all job seekers, and it explored counselor bias. The language in the guide was updated and the process to determine the amount of the VR's contribution was clarified. The workgroup looked at resources available for VR staff and the review process was changed (added another VR staff member from a different office as a reviewer of the self-employment plan). Changes to the policy simplified the process and increased the dollar amount that VR contributes to assist the consumer. **MOTION TO ACCEPT THE PROGRAM GUIDE ON SELF-EMPLOYMENT AS PRESENTED, MCS. YEAS: CHRIS, KEVIN, AND KARA. NAYS: NONE.**

Kim Ludwig, DRS Business Specialist, spoke about her role and duties. She explained that the VR program works with job seekers with disabilities and added the importance of the Division and working with businesses as an additional customer, in order to support their workforce needs. The Division can assist with matching businesses with qualified job seekers who are receiving services from VR.

Kim explained her primary responsibility is to work with businesses throughout the state as a single point-of-contact. She provides technical assistance and support when they're recruiting, hiring, and retaining employees with disabilities. The following were provided as examples of her work:

- Conducting outreach to businesses to build partnerships with them and to learn more about their companies, workforce needs, etc.
- Be a contact for businesses if they reach out to VR to answer questions or provide guidance depending on their needs.
- Conduct training to businesses and business associations on disability-related topics, such as disability awareness and etiquette information, ADA basics, basic information on workplace accommodations, etc.
- Connecting businesses with local VR offices for workforce needs and partnership opportunities.
- Receiving and distributing job openings to VR offices and providers.
- Working with businesses to educate them about the VR program and services available to them.
- Providing individualized assistance to VR counselors and/or providers to work with businesses on specific situations with job seekers with disabilities.

Updates on Trainings to Businesses and Other Organizations: Earlier in September, Vicki Stewart and Kim co-facilitated a presentation on reasonable accommodations from the WINDMILLS training program during the SD Conference on Developmental Disabilities. WINDMILLS is a disability awareness training program designed to change attitudinal barriers and create a new perspective on the skills and abilities of individuals with disabilities. WINDMILLS includes a series of interactive training modules, where participants interact with one another, along with certified trainers to gain knowledge, skills, and tools to create inclusive workplaces. Training incorporated discussion on the reasonable accommodation process and the interactive communication process. Conference attendees included people with disabilities, family members, professionals in the field of developmental disabilities, state, community, and agency providers.

Kim visited with the Workforce Readiness & Equity Director from Elevate Rapid City, which is their Chamber and Economic Development Corporation. Elevate was seeking assistance with identifying an expert to conduct disability awareness training on October 24th as part of their Elevate Employer Education (E3) program. The purpose of the E3 program is for businesses to incorporate hiring strategies into their recruitment and selection process in a collaborative environment. Kim assisted by recommending a presenter, which will be Trina Allen who is the Vice President of Human Resources at Monument Health and is also the board president for the Workplace Disability Network of the Black Hills.

Kim spoke to the VR's Performance Measure for Effective Employer Supports and Services (Indicator #6): (Eric mentioned the performance measures earlier) It was noted that it is hard to measure because of it being in a pilot project status, however, the Division is still required to submit data as part of the WIOA requirements. VR began tracking the services and supports provided to employers in January of 2018. Within this performance measure, VR measures two approaches: retention with the same employer (captures the percentage of participants who exit are employed with the same employer in the second and fourth quarters after exit); and repeat business customers (tracks the percentage of employers who receive services that use core program services more than once). This is a shared performance measure with other WIOA core partners (e.g., Department of Labor) and is reported once a year on the WIOA Annual Report.

The following data pertains to the overall services and supports employers received from VR during Program Year (PY) 2022. A total of 483 employers were served; a total of 608 services were provided; and 267 employers received more than one service among multiple program years (pertains to the repeat business customer approach).

LUNCH BREAK

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC) UPDATE: Eric spoke to this topic, noting it is a standing agenda item. He explained that in order for a state to receive independent living grant funds from the Administration for Community Living (ACL) each state must have an established SILC. The SILC is responsible for developing and monitoring the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). The SILC met last on June 29th via Zoom. Other standing agenda items include, i.e., CIL updates, Division IL Specialist update, and SPIL update. The 2025-2027 SPIL will be due next summer, and members are working on the goals and objectives for the new plan. The agenda also included a presentation from SD DROP (Deaf Resources and Outreach Program), regarding available services and programs for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing. Susan Ray-Degges, North Dakota State University, provided information on: How do we define Home Modifications; Statistics to Consider; The Value of Home Modifications, Universal Design Principles; Universal Design Principles to Enhance Well Being; and Examples of Home Modifications to Maximize Usability. She presented at the Fall Conference last year. The SILC's September 26th meeting will host the Champion of Independent Living Services Award Presentation. Eric shared the Boards & Commissions website and how to locate the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation and the Statewide Independent Living Council. The link to the website portal is: <https://boardsandcommissions.sd.gov/>.

Cole asked Eric to speak to the various components under the Rehabilitation Act, including the State Rehabilitation Council. The Act contains sections for the State Rehabilitation Council, VR, SILC, the Centers for Independent Living Centers (CILs). RSA also awards the Tribal Native American VR Programs funds through a competitive grant process. Functions described in regulations falling under the Board and SILC direct them to coordinate activities with other entities in the state that provide similar services. Thus, there are standing agenda items for each board/council to share information with each other and coordinate activities.

STAFF UPDATE: National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/ndeam>. The US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) announced the 2023 Theme: "Advancing Access and Equity". NDEAM is an annual event held during the month of October and celebrates the contributions of America's workers with disabilities. ODEP's website has a poster and other resources available, and the items are free. Staff is compiling a list of events of all the scheduled NDEAM events. The list will contain the community, date, location, speaker, and topics. Once the list is finalized it will be shared with board/council members. Members are encouraged to attend an event if they are able to do so.

Governor's Awards Update: A statewide solicitation was conducted earlier in the year for the Governors Awards nominations. There are five categories: Outstanding

Individual with a Disability; Outstanding Employee with a Disability, Employer, (has 3 subcategories of small and large private employer and public employer), Transition Services and Distinguished Service. Once a date is coordinated with the Governor's office, plans will be finalized, and information will be disseminated. The event is held at the Capitol in the Rotunda with a reception that follows at an offsite location. Once a date is identified, BVR members will receive an invitation and an RSVP to attend if interested. The Governors Awards Ceremony is sponsored by the BVR, B/SBVI, SILC and Divisions. The date was announced this morning of hosting the ceremony and reception on October 30th.

During the previous BVR meeting, there was discussion about generating greater awareness about the Governor's Awards. One possibility included obtaining time on KeloLand Living to talk about the awards. Staff spoke with Vicki, as she has been interviewed several times on this segment. Vicki has agreed to reach out to KeloLand staff and inquire about obtaining time on the show. Talking points were developed for an initial interview to include what/who the awards recognize, nomination categories, solicitation process and the ceremony. Talking points were also developed for the possibility of doing a 2nd and 3rd series. The Talking Points were shared with the Public Awareness Committee. Vicki has agreed to reach out once the date of the ceremony is scheduled.

Fall Conference: The Fall Conference will be held October 23-25 at the Ramkota Hotel & Conference Center in Pierre. National speakers have been contacted and sessions are being locked in. Topics will include advocacy, accessibility/universal access, ethics, working with participants with TBI, Mental health/chemical dependency/criminal backgrounds, boundary/safety considerations, case file documentation, counseling practices and client engagement. Breakout sessions will include presenters from SD Parent Connection, Division of Developmental Disabilities and Division of Behavioral Health. Registration information has been disseminated. If you are interested in attending, please let staff know. Member expenses would be covered through the staff support agreement (registration fee, hotel, mileage). To date, three BVR members have indicated an interest in attending.

Budget: There have been limited expenditures within the BVR expense line items through the month of June (the contract started January 1st). Again, expenses are tracked separately for the BVR and SILC in terms of meeting expenses, member travel, and strategic planning expenditures. To date a few expenses have been incurred. Expected expenses will be coming to support the Governor's Awards Ceremony, NDEAM events and member expenses to attend the Fall Conference.

OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: Shawn was welcomed to the Board and invited to introduce himself to members at this time.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: Cole spoke to members about the ability to share suggestions on possible agenda topics. If members have ideas, please pass along suggestions to Cole or staff. Jonathan asked about having a success story shared with members to share the individual's story, VR services utilized, employment goal. Scheduling next meeting: Staff will disseminate a doodle poll to identify a meeting date that works for the majority of members to meet either late November or early December. Adjourn for the day: Cole asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 1:48 PM, MOTION, MSC. YEAS: Brooke, Chris, Kevin, Kara, and Shawn. NAYS: None.