

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**  
**QUARTERLY MEETING**  
**PRAIRIE HILLS PLAZA**  
April 23-24, 2015

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Pat Anderson	Scott Burlingame	Christy Coughlin (Day 2)
Russ Cusack (Day 1)	Kirsten Dvorak	Harley Engelman
Rodney Gillund	Vickay Gross	Deborah Jendro
Kevin McDonough	Darcy Severson	Sherry Shirek
Sheri Wilson		

**Members Absent**

Christy Coughlin (Day 1)	Russ Cusack (Day 2)	Tim Davenport
Marshall Longie	Darren Moos	Kelly Smeltzer

**Thursday, April 23, 2015**

Chairman Harley Engelman called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

**Agenda**

**Action: A motion was made by Rodney Gillund and seconded by Darcy Severson to accept the agenda. Motion carried.**

**Approval of January Minutes**

**Action: A motion was made by Pat Anderson and seconded by Rodney Gillund to accept the SRC quarterly minutes from its last meeting on January 9, 2015. Motion carried.**

**Region 3 – Nancy Lundon, Regional Administrator from Devils Lake**

- Region 3 serves 6 counties (Benson, Cavalier, Eddy, Ramsey, Rolette, and Towner) and 2 Tribal 121 Programs (Belcourt and Spirit Lake).
- Outreach services are provided to twenty schools.
- Currently have one counselor vacancy which closes April 30. The current counselor has been on staff since July 2014.
- Older Blind Vision Specialist travels to Belcourt, attends Elder's Day out at Spirit Lake once per month, and facilitates a low vision support group once per month as part of her outreach efforts.
- Rural Services has been slow and tends to be cyclical with prices. Staff network with elevators and attend expos a couple times per year.

- New businesses include Super Walmart; Applebees (has been open a little over a year); a new strip mall on Highway 2 with Dollar Tree, Maurices, and more commercial shopping.
- The city is looking to bring a new diesel refinery to town within the next 24 months and will employ approximately 100 individuals initially with a potential of 400. Most positions are highly skilled labor.
- Condos and townhouses are being developed, however the cost is high and not affordable to everyone.
- Community involvement includes working with or being a member of Chamber Ambassadors, Rotary, Reentry Law Enforcement Screening Team, School for Deaf, Adult Learning Center, Career and Technical Committee, Mayors Committee on Employment, Senior Center, and School for Blind.

### **Region 2 - Peter Yung, Regional Administrator from Minot**

- Region 2 serves 7 counties (Bottineau, Burke, McHenry, Mountrail, Pierce, Renville, and Ward).
- 12 staff including 7 counselors, 1 rehabilitation technician, 1 business specialist, 1 administrative support; 1 regional administrator, and 1 vision rehabilitation specialist (serving 2 regions).
- The average caseload is 51 cases per counselor and they currently have a 100% satisfaction rate.
- 92% of the clients remain employed after 6 months of case closure.
- There is an emphasis on transition with outreach to all high schools.
- Minot continues to grow despite the layoffs in the oil field.
- Minot is experiencing a lot of new construction including expansion of schools, new city/county building, expansion of jail to add over 100 beds, two large parking ramps, and continued work on flood control.

Sherry Shirek inquired if the Vision Rehabilitation Specialists are involved in transition services for the blind and visually impaired. Russ Cusack indicated they work with a transition team to develop a plan for employment. VR is working with Paul Olson at the School for the Blind to identify additional services to enhance the services to students age 14-21 with low vision/blindness.

### **Russ Cusack – VR Director Updates**

The VR State Office will be submitting public comments in response to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) notice of public rule making. Comments will be shared with the SRC members.

Russ noted WIOA requires VR spend 15% of its federal funds on kids while they are still in school.

Pre-employment transition services are another tool to work with students at a younger age. VR will be issuing grants for service to groups.

Russ has talked to Don Olson from IPAT and indicated the SRC and VR should work to identify gaps in Assistive Technology and strategize how to meet those needs.

### **Appeals Report – Cheryl Wescott**

This item is being carried forward to the July meeting.

### **Business Award Nomination/Selection**

Chairman Harley Engelman provided background information relating to the annual business awards. The project was developed by a regional office staff through the Emerging Leadership Program and launched in 2008. The original intent was to look at businesses who support, not just hire individuals with disabilities in their community.

There was discussion about the SRC potentially taking the lead on a project to take a look at this program and make recommendations for improvement.

**Action: A motion was made by Darcy Severson and seconded by Scott Burlingame to form a committee to review how businesses are nominated and how to recruit more nominations. Recommendations would be made to Vocational Rehabilitation. Motion carried.**

**A motion was made by Kevin McDonough to amend the motion to include members of Vocational Rehabilitation in the process. Darcy Severson accepted amendment and it was seconded by Scott Burlingame. Motion Carried.**

Chairman Harley Engelman provided an update on VR's request for proposal for a statewide campaign on rapid response. KAT Communications was awarded the contract and is working with VR. A 30 day campaign will run around the middle of May. Employers and employees will be directed to the campaign site located at [www.NDAdvantage.com](http://www.NDAdvantage.com). This is a collaborative effort reflecting members of the workforce leadership group.

Kirsten Dvorak was assigned to the Planning/Evaluation Committee.

The council broke into committee group meetings and recessed for the day.

### **Friday, April 24, 2015**

#### **Public Meetings and Open Records Law – Sandra DePountis, Attorney General's Office**

Sandra DePountis, Assistant Attorney General, presented information on Open Records and Open Meeting Laws. A handout of the information presented was given to all members.

#### **CSAVR/WIOA**

Patty Wanner distributed information on the new regulations.

### **Budget – Lynn Derman**

Lynn indicated VR is working to meet the non-federal match for the 2015 grant award. Do not have any maintenance of effort concerns.

The Council discussed professional development and Council members' attendance at conferences. Individuals would bring their requests forward for Council approval.

**Action: A motion was made by Vickay Gross and seconded by Scott Burlingame for the SRC to provide financial support for Sherry Shirek to attend the NDACP Conference in Fargo. Motion carried.**

### **Planning/Evaluation Committee – Pat Anderson, Chair**

A request for proposal to provide a client satisfaction survey was sent out and a contract has been awarded to Market Decisions, LLC. Market Decisions will conduct telephone surveys as first option, followed by letters and electronic. Survey questions will be developed by Market Decisions staff, Robyn Throlson from VR, and a Decision Support Staff member. Surveys will begin with first quarter, October 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015. The first quarter results will be available in January 2016.

The Council recommends inclusion of a committee member to participate in the meeting to develop questions.

### **Resource Committee – Sheri Wilson, Co-Chair**

Members of the committee did not meet. No report at this time.

### **Membership/Public Relations Committee – Vickay Gross, Chair**

Member Updates:

- Pat Anderson is interested in continuing with a second term.
- Scott Burlingame's second term ends on January 1, 2016. The committee would like to recruit a representative of a larger business to fill this vacancy.
- Kelly Smeltzer's second term ends November 1, 2015. Will be looking to fill Kelly's position and may be able to reassign one of the additional members to this vacancy.
- Committee is extending invitations to the Tribal 121 Directors to apply to the SRC.

The SRC training modules are on hold and will be revised after the WIOA regulations are finalized.

SRC Overview document has been printed and is available for members to distribute.

The Committee recommended a business present on 503 changes and how it is impacting them. This will be considered for a future SRC meeting.

Vickay reviewed a proposal for townhall meetings to be held in the fall with a focus on businesses with a theme 'Building Partnerships with Employers'.

**Gillian Plenty Chief – Tribal Update**

Gillian indicated Standing Rock is experiencing difficulty obtaining medical documentation from providers. The Bismarck regional office is having the same difficulty and they have started asking the clients to bring their own records in and have found this to be helpful in some cases. Gillian stated they have been putting clients on extended evaluation. It was recommended that Gillian work with directors and field chiefs from North Dakota and South Dakota for a joint discussion.

Standing Rock is up for grant renewal and in process of writing their grant which is due by June 8, 2015

**Ad Hoc Executive Committee Update – Harley Engelman**

Chairman Harley Engelman indicated the Ad Hoc Executive Committee is exploring the potential pursuit of a Governor or State hiring initiative for individuals with disabilities similar to what is imposed for federal agencies. The committee is working to support this effort from the bottom up and has a one year goal to establish language and gather support to move the effort forward.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 23-24, 2015.

Meeting adjourned at 11:29.