

**Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
Wednesday, August 20, 2014, 8:30 a.m. – noon
Prairie Rose Room – Prairie Hills Plaza
1237 W. Divide Ave., Bismarck, ND**

Members Present

Barb Murry
Gerry Teevens
Cheryl Wescott

Vickay Gross
Paul Vardanega
Eric Wittliff

Chad Kourajian
Ryan Volk

Members Absent

Tina Bay

Others Present

Russ Cusack
Cheryl Hess
Patty Wanner

Marv Erhardt
Brienne Skachenko

Trina Gress
Susan Wagner

Roll Call

Barb Murry called the meeting to order. Roll call was taken and introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda

Barb Murry requested an update on Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and Russ Cusack requested discussion about supporting a DD Council grant.

Action: A motion was made by Vickay Gross and seconded by Gerry Teevens to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Approval of February 2014 Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Chad Kourajian and seconded by Vickay Gross to approve the May 2014 minutes. Motion carried.

Budget Proposal to Replicate the 2012 Survey of Employment Services Offered by ND Community of Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs)

The main goal of the proposed research study is to establish the current level and types of pre-employment and employment services provided and available to individuals with disabilities in ND and the employment outcomes of those services by replicating the baseline survey conducted in September 2012. Comparison of both survey outcomes will be analyzed to determine current levels of employment and employment supports provided in ND and changes in community integrated employment outcomes.

The funding for this project is essential to document the employment status of people receiving services from Community Rehabilitation Providers (CRPs) in North Dakota

three years following the baseline study in 2012. The results of the survey will provide data the Governor's Committee on Employment for People with Disabilities and other decision makers can use to identify targeted strategies to positively impact employment outcomes for people with disabilities and measure the impact of future interventions. Information from the survey will also indicate whether or not there have been changes since the baseline study (2012) in the:

- Percentage of individuals with specific disability diagnoses working for pay
- Percentage of individuals employed at subminimum wage and percentage of individuals earning minimum wage or higher in various settings, work centers, community jobs, and community wages paid by independent businesses
- Average hours of work per week by workers employed in various settings, work centers, community jobs, and community wages paid by independent businesses.
- Percentage of individuals who are self-employed, their average hourly wages, and hours worked per week.

The results of the survey will also:

- Identify the reasons individuals with disabilities are not working for pay, the types of employment programs and services that people with disabilities are accessing, and the percentage of people who receive benefits planning assistance.
- Support the Governor's Committee's mandate to increase opportunities for individuals with disabilities who are of working age to obtain competitive and integrated employment as the first option.
- Aid the Governor's Committee in identifying where additional options are needed to assist individuals with disabilities to work in competitive employment in integrated settings and set benchmarks for improving community employment outcomes and services.

Action: A motion was made by Cheryl Wescott and seconded by Ryan Volk to fund the employment survey in the amount of \$10,000.

An amendment to the motion was made by Vickay Gross and seconded by Eric Wittliff to fund the employment survey in the amount of \$5,000. Motion carried on amendment.

Proposal to Fund Employment Project with ND SCDD

Cheryl Hess, Executive Director of North Dakota State Council on Developmental Disabilities, issued an RFP seeking proposals related to prevocational training and skills and customized employment. The focus is on individuals, age 21-30, who have not had an opportunity for competitive employment.

Cheryl is seeking funding support from the Committee to assist providers in meeting the general fund match requirement for the grant.

Russ Cusack indicated the project would develop an enhanced service delivery model which VR could work to sustain in the future.

Action: A motion was made by Vickay Gross to provide a 15% match for two projects. No second.

Barb Murry called for a second motion.

A motion was made by Gerry Teevens and seconded by Cheryl Wescott to fund two projects at the 30% match (\$12,600 per project). Motion carried.

Olmstead Commission – Subcommittee on Employment

Susan Wagner provided an overview of the Olmstead Commission – Subcommittee on Employment. Included in the overview was the vision and purpose of the Olmstead Commission – Subcommittee on Employment, history of the funding, goals and strategies, barriers to reaching the goals, and a status of efforts to date.

Handouts were provided and will be made available upon request.

In response to member questions, the following information is provided relating to Extended Services:

- 164 Extended Service slots for SMI – current wait list includes 2 individuals
- 6 Extended Service slots for TBI – no current wait list
- 51 Extended Service slots for Other – current wait list includes 5 individuals
- Budgeted amount for Extended Services Other is \$392,800.

Following is a list of disabilities of those individuals currently on the Other Extended Services wait list:

- Primary: Cognitive Impairment; Secondary: TBI
- Primary: Cognitive Impairment; Secondary: Congenital Condition or Birth Injury
- Primary: Other Mental Impairment – Depressive and Other Mood Disorders; Secondary: Other Mental Impairment – Anxiety Disorder
- Primary: Psychosocial Impairments; Secondary: Autism
- Primary: Cognitive Impairment; Secondary: TBI

Community of Practice on Transition – Employment Subcommittee

Gerry Teevens provided an overview of the Community of Practice on Transition – Employment Subcommittee. Included in the overview was the vision and purpose of the Community of Practice on Transition – Employment Subcommittee, history of the funding, goals and strategies, barriers to reaching the goals, and a status of efforts to date.

Handouts were provided and will be made available upon request.

North Dakota APSE – Employment First

Cheryl Hess provided an overview of the North Dakota APSE – Employment First. Included in the overview was the vision and purpose of the North Dakota APSE – Employment First, history of the funding, goals and strategies, barriers to reaching the goals, and a status of efforts to date.

Handouts were provided and will be made available upon request.

Changed Mandated in WIOA Related to Supported Employment and VR

WIOA was signed by President on July 22, 2014. Many provisions do not go into effect until the following year. One provision goes into effect immediately and that is Section 511. Section 511 states individuals age 24 and younger with disabilities cannot be employed for subminimum wage unless the individual has applied for VR services and determined to be too severely disabled to obtain employ; or the individual has applied for VR services, has been determined eligible, has been provided employment services through an employment plan and has been unsuccessful. VR becomes the gatekeeper for individuals entering subminimum wage. People employed as of the date of the signing are exempt.

Vocational Rehabilitation will develop a communication plan. Anyone on this committee who wants to be part of the committee who works on the plan is welcome to participate.

Russ Cusack will share more details on WIOA at the next meeting.

Action: A motion was made by Eric Wittliff and seconded by Vickay Gross to ask the Governor for reasonable accommodations to allocate funds to eliminate the waiting list for extended services for employment under Olmstead, considering full state funds. Motion carried.

Action: A motion was made by Vickay Gross and seconded by Gerry Teevens to designate Barb Murry as the Chairperson. Motion carried.

Vickay Gross volunteered as co-chair to assist Barb as needed.

Patty Wanner will look at 2015 meeting dates and will make recommendation based on room availability.

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 19, 2014, from 9 a.m. – noon.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30.