

**NORTH DAKOTA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**  
**QUARTERLY MEETING**  
**JOB SERVICE ND**  
**July 16-17, 2019**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Tina Bay (Day 2)  
Marshall Longie  
Trevor Vannett

Joseph Hall  
Gillian Plenty Chief

Teresa Larsen  
Robyn Throlson

**Members Absent**

Tina Bay (Day 1)  
Bruce Murry

Uma Hoffmann  
Jodi Webb

Bruce Klootwyk

**Others Present**

Barbara Burghart

Jacki Harasym (representing Jodi Webb)

**Tuesday, July 16, 2019**

Trevor Vannett called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Roll call was taken and there was no quorum.

**VR Director Update – Robyn Throlson**

Both the Devils Lake and Grand Forks VR offices have co-located with the local Job Service offices. VR counselors have enclosed offices. A decision has been made for the State office to remain at the Job Service ND central office. There will be updates made to the floor.

HB 1125 passed – The fines for parking in a handicapped parking space will now be sent to the SRC to be used to support the employment of individuals with disabilities.

HB 1406 passed – This bill creates a ND income tax credit for ND employers who hire individuals who have a most significant disability and have been placed through customized employment. DVR is identified as being responsible for certifying that the individual meets the requirement for the tax credit.

To meet the governor’s request to reduce state employees, DVR gave up two FTEs. In order to serve clients, an office assistant position was repurposed so we could hire a vision rehabilitation specialist in Dickinson. In addition, the Williston region had a vacant counselor position which was transferred to Devils Lake to meet the needs of growing caseloads and referrals.

Members from the state office attended a region eight meeting in Wyoming. Region eight consists of Utah, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana.

Teresa Larsen asked a question about the ND DVR program. ND is a “combined” state meaning DVR provides both employment and vision services. Other states have separate “blind” and “general” agencies.

The Council of State Administrators for VR (CSAVR) is part of a project to identify processes and best practices to increase counselor’s efficiencies and promote expedited services to our clients. They have reached out to our State office to request our staff complete a survey to share our secrets to success.

### **Legislative Update – Teresa Larsen**

Teresa reported on bills most related to people with disabilities. Her report included the following: older adults and individuals with physical disabilities, environmental access, children and youth, juvenile justice, education, protective services, decision making, employment initiatives, behavioral health, housing, rights of people with disabilities, Centers for Independent Living, and Veterans and Administration of services.

Training sessions on “Supported Decision Making” will be forthcoming with Protection and Advocacy taking the lead.

There was much discussion on the new marijuana laws. Robyn Throlson will check with Colorado VR to see if they can speak to SRC about issues their state has encountered.

### **CAP Report – Teresa Larsen**

There are two new staff for CAP. One is located in Grand Forks and one in Bismarck. Teresa is very pleased with the downward trend in CAP numbers. In 2012 there were 68 clients and in 2018 there were 20 clients.

Teresa discussed working with students in general, and one student where blended funding from the tribe/high school/VR filled a gap.

There was much discussion regarding ASTEP and how the SRC could support that program. Their grant funding is ending in 2020.

### **Public Comment – Trevor Vannett**

Committee agreed to leave the public comment section on the agenda but shorten to 15 minutes.

## **Other**

Joe will call the Governor's office to check on member applications and re-appointments.

Discussion was held on a joint meeting in 2020 with SRC and SILC. There was no interest in a joint meeting.

### **Wednesday, July 17, 2019**

Joe Hall called the meeting to order.

#### **Region 5 – Curt Markel, Regional Administrator from Fargo**

Curt provided a report on their regional goals. Currently, the Fargo region has a 2.3% unemployment rate. Fargo and West Fargo pre-employment transition contracts are going well. Major employers in the area include Sanford, NDSU, Essentia Health, and Microsoft

#### **Region 8 – Becki Hoff, Regional Administrator from Dickinson**

The Dickinson regional office has experienced significant turnover in the past year. The Dickinson High School pre-employment transition contract is going well. Staff members have been busy with training opportunities. Becki provided a report on their regional goals. The employment rate is up slightly from last year.

#### **Customized Employment (CE) – Cheryl Anderson**

The supported employment project gave VR direction on how to implement CE. There were four CRPs involved in that project. There are four new CRPs who will be trained on CE and more training to come in two-year cycles until all CRPs are trained. VR counselors are also receiving training. Customized employment involves discovery and carving positions, not the traditional job placement. Customized employment is typically for persons with the most severe disabilities. Cheryl gave several examples of successful placement that have occurred through the SEP project.

#### **Tribal Update – Marshall Longie**

Marshall presented his report.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.