

Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
Wednesday, August 19, 2015 from 8:30 am – noon
Prairie Room – Prairie Hills Plaza
1237 W. Divide Ave., Bismarck, ND

Members Present

Tina Bay	Vickay Gross	Chad Kourajian
Barb Murry	LouAnn Nider	Gerry Teevens
Paul Vardanega	Ryan Volk	Eric Wittliff

Others Present

Russ Cusack	Cheryl Hess	Debra Luecking, ELC
Matthew McCleary	Mary Mercer, MSU	

Roll Call

Chairperson Barb Murry called the meeting to order. Introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda

Request to add discussion of the request that has been made of the State Workforce Board.

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

Approval of May 2015 Minutes

Action: A motion was made by Tina Bay and seconded by Gerry Teevens to approve the May 2015 minutes. Motion carried.

Public Meetings and Open Records Law

Presentation and handout provided by Sandra DePountis, Attorney General's office. A question arose concerning the quorum for this committee and voting privileges for ex-officio members. Barb will seek legal clarification.

ND Hiring Initiative

Harley Engelman, State Rehab Council Chair, provided a brief history of the SRC and discussed the ND Hiring Initiative which the SRC began looking at six months ago. The initiative's focus is to encourage businesses to become more involved in hiring individuals with disabilities, looking at the state government as a model of employment. The SRC convened an ad hoc executive committee which has reviewed initiatives taking place in other states and also discussed timelines. A draft document of what the initiative might look like in ND was developed. It is hoped to present the draft initiative to the SRC in September and seek their approval to proceed. A representative from the Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities is being sought to participate in an ad hoc steering council to fine tune the draft document. Projected timeline to have this work completed is January 2016. The initiative would go back to the SRC for final

approval before submission to the Governor's office by early spring. It is hoped to have the ND Hiring Initiative operational by July 2016.

Vickay Gross stated that one issue to consider as the initiative work proceeds is whether people with intellectual disabilities are adequately represented. Harley responded that the initiative is a starting point for discussions, statistics will be compiled to prove that it's making a difference, then can build on this. Harley requested time on this Committee's November meeting agenda for further update. He will also inform Barb Murry of their progress which she will share with this Committee. Harley extended SRC's collaboration and support as this Committee proceeds with their work.

Employment First Training Debra Luecking

Mary Mercer introduced Debra Luecking, consultant with the Employment Learning Community (ELC). Debra distributed information and elaborated on the following points of discussion:

1. North Dakota's ELC: Purpose and Outputs
 - a. Participation in the ELC Community of Practice
 - b. Development of a Strategic Plan
 - c. Implementation of Training and Technical Assistance
2. Intensive Employment First technical assistance resources to consider
 - a. SELN, Supported Employment Leadership Network
 - b. ODEP's Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program (EFSLMP)
3. State level Executive Orders for Employment First from Governors' Offices
 - a. Letter from Governors and Secretary Perez
 - b. Examples of Executive Orders
4. Key points from the technical assistance activities occurring on August 18

Mary Mercer and her group will compile the information from the August 18 Employment First summit and will forward to Barb Murry to share with the Committee. It is felt North Dakota should consider participation in the national initiatives on SEP. DVR and DDD expressed interest in future participation but felt they did not have the time resources to participate at this point. Both national initiatives offer technical assistance.

Russ Cusack stated that Pride, HIT, Community Living Services, and KALIX were selected in response to the VR initiative to move people out of sheltered work settings into competitive employment. The projects will be funded for 3 years. NDCPD will coordinate technical assistance. We will look to them to tell us what they are learning, what kind of policy issues they encountered as they were starting, etc. Barb noted the Committee would be interested in an update on the providers' initiatives every six months.

Workforce Board Request

Russ Cusack provided background information on how the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) changes the ND Workforce Board. The state Workforce Board is no longer required to have a youth board and has eliminated that function. WIOA does require that the Workforce Board have a representative of a person with disabilities. Russ inquired as to whether the Committee is interested in becoming the guiding subcommittee on employment of persons with disabilities in ND for the state Workforce Board. Susan Gunsch, Job Service ND, would oversee this subcommittee of the Workforce Board. Susan will attend a future meeting to discuss the subcommittee's structure, etc. if the Committee expresses an interest.

Action: A motion was made by Vickay Gross and seconded by Eric Wittliff that the Committee gather more information on becoming a subcommittee of the ND Workforce Board. Motion carried.

Susan Gunsch will be invited to attend the November meeting.

Other New Business

Several Committee members indicated they have a conflict with the November 18 meeting. After discussion, the meeting was rescheduled to November 17. Patty Wanner will be made aware of the meeting date change and room arrangement.

Agenda items for the November 17 meeting include:

- Employment Workgroup/Committees report on their top two priorities
 - Employment Learning Community
 - ND Association of Community Providers
 - ND Association of People Supporting Employment First
 - Olmstead Commission - Subcommittee on Employment
 - State Community of Practice on Transition – Employment Subcommittee
- Barb Murry to review A Better Bottom Line and Executive Orders from other states
- How will we best utilize our budget over the next biennium
- ND Hiring Initiative Update from Harley Engelman
- Discussion on the subcommittee on employment of persons with disabilities in North Dakota by Susan Gunsch

Action: A motion was made by Gerry Teevens and seconded by Tina Bay to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.