

Kentucky Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation

Monday, April 27th, 2020

Zoom Call

Minutes

Members Present: David Allgood, Chairperson, Joe Cowan, Tyler Levy, Necholyia Wright, Kellie Smith (Proxy for Ian Rosser), Amy Luttrell, Dana Elbert, Matt Davis, Todd Stephens, Carla Rucshival, Cathy Jackson, Cora McNabb, Chris White

Guest Present: Adam Rucshival

Staff Present: Jonathan White, Becky Cabe, Holly Hendricks, Kellie Scott, Brent Sturgill, Chris Sheeting, Helga Gilbert, Heidi Kesterson, Kari Shipp, Nanci Soard, Jennifer Withrow.

Executive Director's Report:

Executive Director, Cora McNabb provide the Executive Director's report. She began by informing the council that staff have been diligently working on contracts with the agency. They passed the one year biennial budget and currently OVR is fully funded. She also discussed the adjustment staff have made during the COVID-19 pandemic. She reported that 100% of Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) staff are telecommuting from home. She said it was a huge effort for staff to be able to get everyone working from home efficiently. The Cabinet asked to transfer 66 OVR staff to work on Unemployment Insurance claims. Those staff are working from home as well. Adecco workers are also working from home. Staff has come up with a communication plan to ensure OVR consumers are being taken care of and resources to them. The Governor has put in an Executive Order that all staff and vendors to remain working from home. At the Centers, staff have done an excellent job getting

consumers and staff home. She announced there is also no out of state travel. Personnel actions were discussed. OVR is still hiring people throughout the pandemic. Staff are participating with many federal calls. Looking at regulations right now. Becky Cabe will report out on that. The state Plan has been submitted and is under federal review at this point. A call was conducted to discuss measurable skill gain. In the State Plan, we had to project measurable skill gain for consumers within one to two years out. In 2020, 19% gaining skills. In 2021, 20%. RSA wanted to increase that by 1%. OVR agreed to this. She commended staff that have done a great job that staff during this time.

Division Director Reports:

Director of Program Services, Holly Hendricks, provided her report. She began by discussing how staff are delivering services. On the website, there are a list by county of every counselor and their email address. Those lists are divided up by caseload, Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf and Rehabilitation Counselors for the Blind. In addition, she announced that each manager is responsible for ensuring point of contacts for counselors. Staff are allowed to visit offices however, they are not allowed to take those cases home. A lot of phone issues here and there at first. However, if staff have a voicemail, some are notified by email. Some are not. However, some staff are allowed to come and check mail and process invoices. She explained staff have started a request for a proposal for a new Case Management System (CMS). Staff are not able to move forward with the proposal. She explained, staff can process case notes on a Word document and save that to their computer. Trying to focus on accessibility as well. Limited with the population but what regional managers and leadership, every consumer should be contacted to make sure they have state and federal services. Some offices are down to one counselor where they were maybe down to three or four. She announced she has

sent communication to staff explaining the telecommuting policy. She asked staff to contact consumers notifying them of confidentiality limitations. She then announced that branch managers and staff have also been encourage to meet weekly in order to help with staff morale. She said she was proud of her staff. She said since WIOA was enacted in 2014 have been providing Pre-Employment Transitions Services (Pre-ETS). They would hire six Pre-ETS staff for the new branch if approved. OVR is currently developing a proposal with the Human Resources to establish the branch. Assistant Director of Program Services, Jonathan White, said staff are in the process of getting a form approved so that OVR can get permission for students who have guardian to work with them remotely and provide services.

Deputy Director, Becky Cabe, provided her report. She began by discussing the state regulations. Staff will be reviewing the regulations within the next month. She then discussed the Inclusive Workforce Summit on May 5th. Since the pandemic, the summit has not been held. However, it might happen in winter 2020 or early spring 2021. She discussed the process of the RETAIN grant. Director of Program Services, Holly Hendricks, discussed a question from council member, Amy Luttrell regarding referrals and applications with the agency. Referrals and applications are at a steady pace.

Director of Blind Services, Helga Gilbert provided her report. Referrals in Blind Services come from physician's offices. They seem to be having a lower number of referrals. However, staff have been working on mailouts, etc. to obtain more referrals. She said that staff have been working on getting students home and employee's working from home. She said their main focus is to work remotely and to provide quality services to consumers. She said staff are working on policies, manuals, etc. Some Blind Services staff are processing Unemployment Insurance claims. She concluded her report by discussing the Zoom app. Staff

have been able to connect through Zoom. Staff are thinking about using Zoom for the summer PATH program. She explained the PATH program to the council and staff. She said the Zoom app is being used for the Deaf/Blind population. She explained there has not been an individual hired for the Orientation and Mobility position.

Director of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center (CDPVTC), Barb Pugh, provided her report. She began by discussing the effect the pandemic has had on the center. Staff took action immediately and were able to get all students home. She discussed that some students were not able to stay at the center or at universities due to them potentially living an even more infectious situation. At the time of the pandemic, the center had about 165 students enrolled. Since students have went home, staff are 100% telecommuting. Staff are still maintaining the campus grounds and building inspections. She mentioned there are two to three staff, who come in the building to do various projects on campus. There is also a significant sanitation project as soon as the students left campus. She said in terms of staff and students, she is participating in weekly meetings with leadership staff. Staff are focusing on training and the teaching staff is working on adding lesson plans and as a result, they are becoming more creative with their lesson plans. Staff are reviewing policies, etc. as well. She said case managers and counselors are taking the time to contact students. She also said that staff have been participating in various virtual trainings. She discussed the ALPHA which is a transition to college program. She said the program is still up and working and instructors are continuing to work with those students involved in the ALPHA program. Some staff are detailed to Unemployment Insurance as well. Two counselors have taken on those duties.

The council broke out in their respective committee meetings and reconvened.

Katie Wolf-Whaley from the University of Kentucky's Human Development Institute provided a presentation on the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. No discussion. It was well received.

SCVR Chairperson, David Allgood, called the meeting to order.

A motion was made by Joe Cowan to accept the January 27th meeting minutes. Phillip Donahue, second. No discussion. Motion carried.

Staff Report:

SCVR Staff Liaison, Nanci Soard, provided the staff report. She asked that if any council member had suggestions on how Zoom calls could be set up in the future to email her and let her know.

Chair Report:

Chairperson, David Allgood participated in a teleconference with RSA and federal administrators. It was well received. He said he appreciated staff efforts.

Vice Chair Report:

Vice Chair, Joe Cowan, provided his report. He commended OVR staff for their hard work during the pandemic. He also stated he felt the Zoom call has gone really well.

Member at Large Report:

Member at Large, Todd Stephens echoed the chairperson and vice chair sentiments. He felt the meeting has been productive and informative.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee

Chairperson, David Allgood provided the Executive Committee report. He reiterated what a great job OVR staff have done during the pandemic, specifically with the Unemployment Insurance claims. The committee discussed having the YES Group present at the next meeting. She said that Director of Program Services, Holly Hendricks, provided an update on how the agency is doing under the circumstances of the pandemic. He conclude his report by asking the full council for suggestions for topics at the next meeting.

Policy and Planning

Chris Sheeting provided the Policy and Planning committee report. He informed the full council the committee discussed the Self-Employment policy changes. He said they also discussed the proposed policy changes and there were a lot of questions about the policy. There were some issues raised regarding the idea with sharing the policy with the staff. This will be discussed with the manager.

Consumer Services and Program Evaluation

Vice Chair, Phil Donahue, provided the Consumer Services and Program Evaluation committee report. He said the group had met with Katie Wolf Whaley before the report was given to the full council. He reported the committee agreed that at the next committee meeting discuss questions to be include on the next survey. Committee Chairperson, Matt Davis, said there should be more statistical data presented at a later time, preferably at the next council meeting.

Public Awareness and Legislative Committee

Chairperson, Tyler Levy provided the Public Awareness and Legislative committee. He began by explaining that the committee had discussed Employer Recognition Awards, seven employers were nominated, and legislative updates. Of those

seven nominated, all seven employers were chosen to receive recognition.

Blind Services

Chairperson, Carla Ruschival, provided the Blind Services committee report. She began by stating the committee discussed issues that were of concern to the committee, related primarily staff working from home. She said that committee member, Kathy Jackson, brought of the concern of furloughs for staff. She said the committee also discussed the issue of providing services to individuals with disability. The committee touched on the issue of hiring the Orientation and Mobility Specialist.

Ad Hoc Bylaws Committee

Chairperson, Carla Ruschival provided the Ad Hoc Bylaws committee report. She informed the council the committee had not met due to the interference of Covid-19. However, she explained the committee has set a time to meet via Zoom to discuss changes to the bylaws. That meeting date is set for May 15th. She said a second meeting could be necessary but the hope is to have a draft to the full council at the July Zoom meeting.

A motion was made by Todd Stephens to accept the committee reports and all it entails. Joe Cowan, second. No discussion. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Nothing to report at this time.

New Business:

Council member, Carla Ruschival, discussed voting procedures. She explained that some polling places are not providing accessible absentee voting systems. She asked for

more information from the full council. Fellow council member, Susan Farra, suggested reaching out to Protection and Advocacy. Council member Kelly Knoop has advocated voting rights for a number of years. Cathy Jackson also suggested meeting with the National Federation of the Blind for support. Carla expressed concern over graphics held on the Governor's daily briefing. Council member, Todd Stephens, echoed Carla's concern regarding the graphs.

Next Meeting Date:

Monday, July 27th, 2020

Zoom Call

A motion was made by Todd Stephens to adjourn the meeting. Cathy Jackson, second. No discussion. Motion carried.

Minutes taken April 27, 2020; submitted by Nanci Soard, ASIII

APPROVED: July 27th, 2020 at SCVR Meeting

Elizabeth Thompson, ASII