

Kentucky Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation

Meeting Minutes - Zoom

July 27, 2020

Call to order- David Allgood

Chair called to order this quarterly meeting of the Kentucky Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation (SCRV) at 9:03 am on July 27, 2020, Zoom Meeting platform.

Welcome/Roll Call- Cora McNabb

Members Present:

David Allgood (Chairperson), Joe Cowan, Tyler Levy, Kellie Smith (Proxy for Ian Rosser), Amy Luttrell, Dana Elbert, Matt Davis, Todd Stephens, Carla Ruschival, Chris White, Cathy Jackson, Susan Farra, Kelly Knopp, Phil Donahue

Guests Present:

Adam Ruschival, Camille Collins, Sallie Bolton, Robert Sloan, Elise Gurney

Staff Present: Cora McNabb, Becky Cabe, Holly Hendricks, Jonathan White, Kellie Scott, Brent Sturgill, Chris Sheeting, Helga Gilbert, Kari Shipp, Susie Edwards, Emmaleigh Barnes, Page Butler, Cory Marcum, Elizabeth Thompson, Brenda Eadens, Marlon Linton

I. Executive Director's Report by Cora McNabb

- a) 100% of Field Offices remain closed with close to 100% of Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) staff telecommuting from home with state issued Virtual Private Network (VPN) access and equipment to continue working effectively.
- b) Extra measures have been put in place with each OVR district developing a plan including additional steps to address consumer complaints with phone issues and to address mail distribution.
- c) Monthly meetings are being held with the Kentucky Department of Education to coordinate services. Regional Managers and Directors are holding regular meetings. Executive Director, Mrs. McNabb is sending out messages.

- d) The Department of Workforce has put extra security in place to address concerns at some of the offices. Recently, the career center building located at Sixth and Cedar sustained damage from protestors.
- e) The Cabinet has a plan to make any needed accommodations to the buildings for COVID such as signage and Plexiglas coverings for the reception area. There is not an active plan to bring staff back in to offices at this time with the increasing COVID numbers.
- f) After a meeting with Behavioral Health, an Essential Services memo was sent out to provide guidance in the provision of services. Additional assistance measures are being provided to KY Business Enterprises (KBE) vendors. Nationwide calls have shown many providers are struggling.
- g) Monthly meetings are being held with the Kentucky Department of Education to coordinate services. Regional managers and division directors are holding regular meetings. All staff have transferred back to OVR from Unemployment Insurance (UI), except two assistants. If those two assistants choose to remain with UI at the time of the reorganization set for August 16, we will fill those assistant positions.
- h) Camille Collins from Protection and Advocacy (P&A) is with us today. Cynthia Collins is no longer with the Client Assistance Program (CAP). The Cabinet discussed transferring the CAP to P&A.
- i) There were two large issues brought up in the Executive Committee, the Order of Selection and the language changes required for the State Plan. David or Joe will report out on those. (Addendum 1, attached)
- j) There has been a substantial budget savings with staff working for UI Claims. There are still some 2019 funds available, with none of 2020 funds spent so far. Holly has suggested a temporary suspension of the cost-sharing requirement for consumers until December. Cora shared the nationwide OVR calls have shown many service providers are also struggling, especially the smaller providers. Jonathan concurred, stating we will lose some providers because referrals are way down across the state. Jonathan shared basic information on how cost-sharing works, reporting it involves about 10% of OVR consumers.

Discussion:

Carla Ruschival inquired about the phone issues at the Elizabethtown Independent Living Center (ILC), to contact Cora McNabb if issues reoccur.

Kellie Scott shared that the Kentucky Workforce Incentive Counselors (KWIC) have been providing services remotely. Many previous consumers are calling for assistance.

II. Division Directors' Reports

- a) Becky Cabe, Deputy Director is currently out on medical leave, may stop by.
- b) Helga Gilbert, Director of Blind Services

We are seeing individuals ready to embrace training via telephone or Zoom. Staff have worked together to provide services by creating a shorter application, bypassing the background check as students are not on site, launched a remote version of a vocational evaluation. Gary Cusick has already been doing this successfully prior to COVID-19.

We have 15 active consumers doing computer work and working on Braille at home.

PATH camp is occurring remotely this year, with six students participating.

The McDowell Center's boiler blew out and is being repaired. We will look at larger repairs to HVAC.

Independent Living for the Blind Program's counselors are all back. Chance Groves is our new counselor in Bowling Green. Gay Pannell is now the Independent Living (IL) manager.

Chad Hunt is our Deaf-Blind Coordinator. He has helped guide us on some best practices to running Zoom meetings. He worked with Susie Edwards to get the OTTER Artificial Intelligence running for us.

Cory Marcum provided an update on blind vendors. Kentucky Blind (KB) staff are meeting weekly, if not daily, to support each other. Only four vendors out of thirty have not seen a decrease in services. One vendor at the Ron Mozzoli building retired after forty years. This opened a bid (vacancy) for anyone who would like to apply. Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS) is to reopen the L&N building in October, after two years of construction. Two new Request for

Proposals (RFP) have come in from Kentucky Career Technical Centers (KENTUCKY COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGE). Multiple sites have been upgraded with new machines.

- c) Barbara Pugh, Director of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Training Center

In her place, Brent Sturgill, Eastern KY Regional Program Manager provided a brief update. The remote driver's permit class was made available to the Field Counselors for referral and opened up to outside consumers. This is sort of a trial period that may continue for consumers not wanting to attend the Center. Sixty-five students are currently receiving online training.

Open discussion: Council members discussed a demo virtual job-shadowing program.

David Allgood called for Committee meetings at 10:30 am. The council reconvened at 12:35 pm, call to order by Joe Cowan, Co-Chair.

Division Directors' Reports (resumed)

- c) Holly Hendricks, Director of Program Services

The three primary areas of updates are cost sharing, Order of Selection, and the development of a Transition Branch.

Fifty-seven of our OVR Counselors went to UI. Currently, referrals and applications numbers are down for that reason and as a response to the pandemic.

The contact list on the website is updated regularly with counselor's contact information, including email addresses. These lists are also divided by caseload, rehabilitation counselors for the deaf, and rehabilitation counselors for the blind also divide these lists.

Staff are allowed to visit offices briefly with some coordination. However, they are not allowed to take consumer cases home. Staff also check mail and process invoices. There are ongoing phone issues, with some consumer complaints. Several phone issues here and there at first. However if staff have a voicemail some, but not all, are notified by email.

Since Workforce Innovations and Opportunities Act (WIOA) was enacted in 2014, OVR has been providing Pre-Employment Transitions Services (Pre-ETS). We

have been working on the development of a Transition Branch providing resources to VR staff, adding positions with not all being brand-new, monitoring students. OVR is currently developing a proposal with 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.

Order of Selection- Rehabilitation Service Administrator (RSA) said they could not accept our priority category designations. Priority of services needs cannot be 361.36d based on the individual. Change in the definition and priority categories. We asked for input and received clarified on category 4. Public hearings to discuss the updated plan will be held via Zoom or other virtual venue. Holly read the Order of Selection guidelines to the council, asked for questions.

Holly clarified Category 4 for a council member.

Becky asked for any additional questions-no questions from the council.

Cost-sharing- We have a budget surplus with lower numbers of consumers. The division would like to suspend the Cost-sharing for consumers through December, although consumers must still provide financial information.

Division meetings have included talks on how to spend money fairly. Increasing fees for dental, vision, etc. to determine appropriate fees.

Holly called for questions, none shared by council.

Bioptic Driving Program Slideshow- presented by Marlon Linton and Brenda Eadens.

III. Business Meeting Call to Order – Joe Cowan, SCVR Co-Chair

IV. Committee Reports- Complete committee minutes follow on page indicated.

- a) Executive Committee- Chairperson provided a summary of the Executive Committee report.
- b) Policy and Planning – Amy Luttrell-Substitute Chair

Approval of Self Employment Enterprise, talked about in recent meetings. The policy documents are based on Federal regulations that were compared to other states. Chris worked with committee, provided highlights and recommended council to approve. Joe Cowan, Co-Chair asked for a motion to accept

committee recommendation. Todd Stephens made motion to accept, with Cathy Jackson, seconded. Mr. Cowan, Co-Chair called to accept the report, Carla moved for acceptance of report, Todd provided second. Council approval granted for recommendation and acceptance of the report.

c) Ad Hoc Bylaws - Chairperson, Carla Ruschival

Becky submitted questions and the committee has not heard back, currently in a wait and see mode.

d) Consumer Services and Program Evaluation, Matt Davis

Reviewed and approved minutes from the last meeting. Kellie provided updates on the KWICs, Consumer Satisfaction Survey, and DB101 information. Kellie reported that the contract with UK for the consumer satisfaction survey had been finalized and fully executed. The Disability Benefits 101 and KWIC contracts were completed. Joe asked for motion to accept the Consumer Services and Program report. Tyler motioned with Todd providing a second. Call for the council to approve the report, approved with none opposed.

Cathy Jackson shared information on the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky's resolution regarding absentee ballots and accessible voting. Cathy has been working with Leslie, through P&A.

e) Public Awareness and Legislative- Chairperson, Tyler Levy

The committee looked at the Arthur Campbell, Junior awards.

f) Blind Services- Carla Ruschival, Chairperson

The committee discussed the Bioptic Program and the counselors coming back from UI.

Approval of April 27, 2020 Minutes

A call was made to accept the April 27, 2020 meeting minutes, with one correction of adding an attendee. A motion was made by Todd Stephens to accept, Tyler Levy provided a second. No discussion. Motion carried.

V. Old Business

Phil Donahue revisited last meeting's seven employer awards, inquiring if the plaques will still be made for them. Brent Sturgill shared the decision for the plaques to be

made and sent with a letter to each award winner. Restrictions are not expected to be lifted in time for an in person presentation of the award.

VI. New Business

Todd Stephens recommends a refresher course of Robert's Rules, asked if Carla Ruschival would do a refresher for the council. Todd would also like the council to consider being more flexible with the committee ending times due to the current situation.

VII. Announcements/Public Comment/Adjournment

The next meeting of the SCVR is scheduled for Monday, October 26, 2020 via Zoom.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Todd Stephens to adjourn. Tyler Levy seconded.

No discussion. Motion carried.

Minutes submitted by: Elizabeth Thompson

APPROVED: October 26, 2020 at SCVR Meeting

Melissa Peel