

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Public Forum – Springfield, MO

Aug 11, 2016

SRC Members in Attendance: Betty Farley, Sheila Wright, Gene Fleeman, Geoff Barney, Karen Nelson, Clay Berry, Brady Clevenger, Mark Bauer, and Paul Ajuwon.

RSB Attendees: Kevin Faust, Michael St Julien, Keith Roderick, Randy Custer, Carol Van Reign, and Nicole Hanlin.

Public Attendees: Emilio, Gary Maddox, Jay Hanlin, Liz Jordan, Tom Little, Linda Little, Hugh Bowling, Louis Lathith, Anna, Sandra Winger, Sharon Beck, Quincy Williams, Pam Houston, Cher, and Kim Trenno.

Open Meeting: Clay Berry, Chairman, opened with an overview of the SRC and the public forum process.

Speaker: Southwest Center for Independent Living, Choices and Empowerment for people (SCIL). Core services are information & referral, independent living skills training, advocacy, peer support, and transitions (Youth). They also offer personal care services, consumer directed services (hire themselves) in-home services (SCIL hires and trains attendants), youth program teaches independent living skills, life skills, and pre-employment skills.

Speaker Q & A

Q. Where do you get your funding, grants? Break out percent for federal/state fund/donations sources.

A. Medicaid reimbursement for personal care attendants. SCIL is very conservative with funds. 50,000 in grants from CW Titus foundation, Augments by cost allocating and leveraging the dollars, 100,000 through different grant services. They have started doing some fund developing activities. Donations are small.

Q. There were assistive technology issues with ILC's that had not been set up to help visually impaired. Was it Randy and his group that helped recognize the need and move forward to help fill that need?

A. Community needs assessments and surveys. AT kept coming to the top as well as ramps and home modifications. Randy works with SCIL and assisted with the AT accommodations.

Q. Association for the Blind ran out of room, thank you that you opened up and made room for us to meet.

Suggestion: If you are looking at a tandem bike, consider a conference bike.

Q. Are there more opportunities with WIOA?

A. Not near as much they would like it to. The passage is there with the next legislation. They worked with Workforce Investment Act. It has great opportunity.

Q. The makeup of employees, 51% have disabilities. Are some visually impaired?

A. No

Q. Have you partnered with employers to meet the outcomes for employment relations?

A. Working in that direction. ILC's federal mandates are to hire with disabilities, percentage of goals, 51%, serving all disabilities. Most staff have multiple disability, federal requirement that 51% at least be disabled.

Q & A – Comments for the SRC

Thanked Randy Custer for helping, SCIL does an awesome job.

Comment: Received services 20 years ago, to maintain a job and stay employed. 10 years later equipment got old and got laid off. They worked very diligently to find me employment and provided AT. They don't forget you. They do an excellent job to see what they can do to facilitate, to keep you employed.

Comment: Greatly appreciate the support, encouragement and guidance. Recently started a new business, they were very supportive. Assisted with business plan and working out the details. Business is now booming.

Q. Randy, tell us why SW is successful in self-employment.

A. Randy -The former director did a lot to develop the advantages of self-employment. It works down here well because we work well together with each other.

Comment: SW area is very good about hiring folks with disabilities.

Comment: Amazing counselor, Brady Clevenger. She was fired from job when she lost her sight. Brady helped with schooling, and certificates. She is looking to start her own business.

Comment: SW district office always does an outstanding job. There is a lot of staff down there; we have quite a team down here. They all do an outstanding job.

Comment from Phone;

Client shared the difficulty she was having starting her own business. RSB shared the steps that it takes to start your own business as a vocational goal.

Starts with an IPE, is it an appropriate goal? Can this be a successful business? Do they have the skills and the background? Then will look at business plan, is funding needed, look at the details. If RSB can't fund it is the plan written well enough to bring to a bank for them to possibly provided funding?

Counselor submits plan to DS, when fully tweaked it is sent to state office. The state office then reviews the plan to see what level of support RSB can provide.

Q. What does it mean to have an appropriate vocational goal? What is considered in the decision?

A. RSB sits down with the person and looks at goals, skills sets, needed training, may do some vocational testing, and evaluations.

Comment: There is a partnership and unification working toward a goal. On an individual and group level we need to align our goals.

MSU has a Master's program, any other programs for the blind? Opportunities of employment?

MSU's is the only program for teachers of visually impaired in the state, part of 28 that specialize in visual impairment. There's a chronic shortage of trained teachers in this area. Once you graduate and have the skills and knowledge you will find employment. MSU, RSB and DESE work together well.

If interested in that field, look at the professional organizations such as AER or Dr Eddy Bell at Lou Tech. Scholarships and funding is available.

Closed by Clay Berry

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind Business Meeting – Springfield, MO August 13, 2016

SRC Members in Attendance: Clay Berry, Gene Fleeman, Brady Clevenger, Randy Custer, Sheila Wright, Betty Farley, Karen Nelson, Geoff Barney, Mark Bauer, and Paul Ajuwon.

RSB Attendees: Keith Roderick, Michael St. Julien, Kevin Faust, and Cindy Bitterman

Minutes: Reviewed and accepted

Open Meeting: Clay Berry Chairman.

District report: Fully staffed for the last year. Employment goal of 47, currently at 49. WIOA has helped the outreach, working with other entities. Randy has spoken at the nursing schools teaching informational classes about blindness. He is going to contact other nursing schools to do the same.

Director Report: Currently 9 vacancies statewide. These vacancies are due to retirement, WIOA, moved out of state, combined offices-which resulted in resignations. 5 counselors vacancies (3 KC) recruitment continues to be an issue. The counselor vacancy in St Louis is because she promoted to DS. Posting to professional list serves, consumer list serves, mo.gov, media outlet, job fairs, and internet. Now on the open register. RT vacancies as well. RA position is going through HR. WIOA- has opened up 3 positions. They require intensive write ups. This sets up possibilities for advancement within RSB. In addition RSB is still working on making a tiered advancement for counselors.

Political climate; received several requests to outline major initiatives, within DSS major restructuring going on.

Outreach; State Fair our biggest outreach is maned by RSB employees, provided Glaucoma screenings. Sikeston district have had several Glaucoma screenings running 20% with high pressures compared to 1-2% normally.

RSB provided another Code Master training in June. Overseen by Sheila Wright, was very successful. It's an accelerated Braille teaching program.

Department of Defense has come out with a regulation that can seriously affect our blind vendors. Wanting to redefine what a cafeteria service is.

Empowering Yourself to Employment-seminar in St Louis Oct 21-23 at Society for the Blind. It will cover job exploration to selling yourself, resume writing interviewing, finding jobs that are not as easy to find

as open, and how to present yourself. RSB is helping distribute info and on agenda to talk about VR services. It has the ability to serve about 50.

Youth Transitions fair in Nevada, MO. in Nov.

Confident Living Program last week in Kansas City. It was the 2nd one, first was in St Louis. 37 individuals came to learn about issues regarding deaf/blindness. They learned a little from St Louis, KC was more interactive, some training. We'll see where we go from here.

56 RSB staff completed CPR training, 16 of which were blind or visually impaired.

St Louis taxis association is trying to shutdown Uber. If successful it will have an impact on blind/visually impaired.

WIOA-Workforce Investment Opportunities Act: Keith reviewed some of the RSA changes.

Clarified the difference between youth with disabilities (14-24) or student with disability, a 14-24 year old student who is in an education program (can be homeschooled, private, public or post-secondary).

Discussed competitive integrated employment definition.

Discussed the Transition Coordinator position that starts on Monday.

Define a rehabilitation program. It leads competitive integrated employment and lead to self-efficiency.

WIOA added the SRC working with MO Assistive Technology, they have joined our council.

State plan went up, was reviewed, had 3 minor changes. Dept. of Labor had significant changes, working on those.

Got some good partnership going, RSB is getting better known.

Supportive employment: change in CIE (competitive integrated employment). We are allowed to work with severe disabled in integrated, under timelines, to be headed toward CIE. Some changes will need to be made in our policy manual. Have been able to participate in employment services, and also been a client of RSB. Showing we have made reasonable attempts to find CIE.

Discussion regarding competitive integrated employment, how long they stay in CIE and requirements for referrals to ensure client continues to get services to move out of CIE.

Will need to work closely with MVR to ensure those in sheltered workshops are being served.

Q. Anyone who says they want a new/better job, is there criteria to be a client?

A. Will they lose their job because of disability or are they under employed.

Q. What is section 363? Pre-employment students can be put in integrated but not competitive.

A. They still need to be working toward CEI.

Fiscal Report: Started new State Fiscal year, Fiscal year will end September 30th. Expenditures are looking good. First time we didn't get any cuts. Contribute that to the outreach of NFB, MCB, the council, the annual report. FFY15 VR average amount spent per case \$2,646 during one year, closed 26 VR total cost \$16,547. The 28 average total cost \$12,232. ROI - Other programs can't quantify their success like that. Left over client service dollars, will be carried over and utilized the next year.

Fact Sheet: Currently RSB has 203 successful VR closures, 31 of which are homemakers. Goal is 273. We have 16 that are self-employed. 30% of those closed in status 26 were not employed at application.

Blind Taskforce: at meeting talked about CPNP, new facilitated IEP process, having a mediator when contentious. They have started planning Children's Summit. They are looking for more people to apply to be on the task force.

Committee Reports

Evaluation Committee: will meet later in the year.

Government affair:

- Activities from NFB, MCB, SILC have made a difference in RSB. Thanked them for the foot work they have done.
- Consumer groups filed comments on the defense of the regulations for vendors.
- Gearing up for next legislative session. Anything that needs to be addressed please let us know.
- Braille bill - getting reading for accessibility assessment. One bill got stripped of all amendment, the other didn't make it.
- The SSP bill passed. 300,000 funded for it. MCB did a lot of work on that bill. Must meet the Helen Keller definition of deaf/blind to qualify.

Program policy: Discussed VRC salary restructuring.

Planning Committee: Since WIOA it will take time to see the SRC's role.

Committee reassignments in Nov. review.

Survey Results: Survey results were review and discussed.

Old Business:

- Status of Appointments: challenge to council to find representative for 2 vacant positions.

New Business:

- Discussed recruiting for vacancies. Paid internships have been discussed including, what are RSB's expectations, what the intern might expect.

- Outreach: post-secondary training institute held in June at Tan-Tara. Put on by DESE. Working type of conference.

CAP KC office has moved.

Officers: Officers: discussed positions, reviewed each position. Voted on positions.

Chair: Sheila nominated Clay, Betty Seconded, all in favor

Vice-Chair: Betty nominated Geoff, Sheila Seconded, all in favor

Ex 2: Sheila nominated Chris, Geoff Seconded, all in favor

Ex 1: Sheila nominated Betty, Geoff Second, all in favor

Sec/Tre: Sheila nominated Gene, Betty seconded

Motion to adjourn: All in favor. Meeting adjourned.