

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Public Forum – Kansas City, MO

November 1st, 2018

SRC Members in Attendance: Clay Berry, Shelia Wright, Karen Nelson, Mark Bauer, Brady Clevenger, Chris Gray,

Public Attendees: Ruby Polk, Jay Robertson, Renita Strickland, Shawny Corb, Jessie, Tim McDaniel, Lauren McDaniel, Laurie McDaniel, Aggie Bolla.

Phone: No Callers

RSB Attendees: Keith Roderick, Michael St. Julien, Kayla Cole, Rekha Nanchal, Ali Rajabi, Charman Flagg, Haley

Open Meeting: Clay opens meeting explaining the duties of the councils and why it was formed. Explains purpose of guest speakers and ask Rekha to introduce the guest speaker of the night as well. Rekha introduces guest speaker Cathy Wolford with MO Def/Blind.

Speakers: Cathy Wolford introduces herself and explains the need for services for the deaf/blind. Explains her positive experience with working with RSB, getting to know staff, working together to better serve our clients, together with RSB and Voc Rehab. Cathy visited the Hellen Keller facility in February to learn and see the Assistive Technology they use. This was a learning experience for Cathy that she really enjoyed. Cathy's purpose with working with RSB is for outreach to services for Deaf/Blind Clients. Her goal is employment, more employment opportunities and furthering training for those clients in need. Cathy would like to see a statewide growth in employment opportunities for the Deaf/Blind. Missouri Assistive Technologies work with multiple agencies. They can loan out equipment to those in need. They can educate clients on the technology available to them, specific to their needs, that best serve them and help improve their everyday life. Examples of job duties that Cathy knows of that she has seen Deaf/Blind have are clerical at a license office where a staff member helped issue license tags for dogs. Another example was at Panera Bread where an individual helped make sure the food did not cross contaminate.

Lauren McDaniel is the second speaker who is a current client with RSB. Lauren just graduated from Colorado Center for the Blind. Lauren became blind last year when he was shot in the face and lost his eyes. Lauren's parents heard of RSB through an event held by Alphapointe and shortly after became a client of RSB. Lauren did research on the different facilities available to him through RSB and decided on going to

Colorado Center for the Blind. While at CCB Lauren was able to learn a variety of skills that lead him to not only get out of depression but also give him confidence on his “new” life. At CCB Lauren was able to ski, rock climb, canoe, etc. and those activities gave him new hope. Lauren has learned Braille and is learning to like it more and be more interested in learning it better. Lauren has been taught different cooking skills and while at CCB Lauren made a meal of “BBQ Cubs” with a dessert of Oreo Cheesecake. Lauren also cooked for a party of 15 people making a variety of Spanish foods. He also cooked a meal for 60 people with a variety of food, dessert and drinks. Lauren is now working at an after school program for teens and middle school age children in crisis, called “Hope Hangout”. Lauren hopes to go to college to study culinary arts in the future.

Q & A – Comments for the Public: Ruby Polk explains her work with RSB in teaching braille to deaf blind clients. She did not know sign language but RSB provided the interpreter to help the teaching be successful and she wanted to give Kudos to RSB for that.

Aggie Bolla lost her vision in her 30’s and was referred to RSB from someone through her work. She sought services and received them. From there Aggie came to alphapointe to receive further services. Alphapointe taught her about zoomtext, mobility training, sharefare, etc. All of these services have greatly improved Aggie’s life. Through education and Advocacy Aggie believes there is so much potential to better improve individual’s lives. Aggie believes the work RSB, Alphapointe and other agencies who provide these services, serve their clients well and greatly improve their lives.

Lauren Grandmother speaks on her grandson and explains her gratefulness for the services he has received.

Lauren’s mother explains how grateful she is to alphapointe as well as CCB for all of their work and their resources that help train their clients on how to be as independent and successful as possible.

Q & A – Comments for the SRC: Mark explains to the public the influence these public forums have on Workforce Development and that these stories are inspiring and educational to him and those that he works with.

Closing-

Adjourn

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Business Meeting – Kansas City, MO

November 2nd, 2018

SRC Members in Attendance: Brady Clevenger, Shelia Wright, Karen Nelson, Chris Gray, Donna Borgmeyer, Mark Bauer and Clay Berry.

RSB Attendees: Keith Roderick, Michael St. Julien, Kayla Cole, Rekha Nanchal

Open Meeting: Clay Berry

Minutes: Minutes were reviewed- Change location, it was St. Louis and not Jefferson City.

District Report: Rekha explains they are currently serving over 700 clients. Currently they are still short staff. There is a potential counselor they're hoping to hire but they are having no luck with rehab teachers. In the last year the KC office has done about 20 outreach activities including visiting job centers, glaucoma screenings, presentations, look into job centers assistive technology and accessibility. Rekha explained that this has gone over really well. Rekha explains their struggle with recruiting rehab teachers. She explains that they usually have only one applicant but after interviewing, it comes they cannot offer them the job. The Kansas City Office has looked into clients who would qualify and encourage them to think about that position. They are still working hard to find candidates for this position daily. Rekha explains that new referrals are priority but that sometimes due to the large caseloads there may be delays' but staff work their best to stay within their timelines in regards to visiting clients. Shelia explains that when she calls it is to work together with RSB to see how we can better serve clients/potential clients. Rekha breaks down the timelines from referral and explain staff work within these timelines to make sure cases are flowing as they should be.

Field Report: **Michael St. Julien-** Vacancies in KC office, VRC is looking hopeful to officially be filled soon, the RT position that is open had one applicant who also applied for the position in STL as well and there is also a new position opening in the position of Rehab Assistant. Mid Mo has two RT positions open, they received two applicants for that position. One Mobility Specialist position open, this has been vacant for several months with no application. STL N- No vacancies. STL S – just filled the Mobility position but this will open the Rehab Teacher position. SE- Filled District Supervisor vacancy, Vance Read. No vacancies in our SW district.

Counselor Academy to begin again in February. RSB tends to get counselors that are very new into their counseling career. RSB and staff are excited about this and believe

it will be very beneficial to staff. RSB held webinars on things such as employment, benefits planning, etc. These seemed to go over very well and were educational for staff. Benefits planning is becoming more essential in not only serving our clients but understanding their immediate and future needs to plan for the most successful goals in becoming independent and successful.

- Ask Michael to send links to webinars to the council to share as they please.

Director's Report: Keith Roderick- Keith explains that he took Mark Gutchen, Pat Luebbering and Jennifer Tidball to the Center of Braille and narration. The tour went really well and everyone was very impressed. Look into setting up a tour for council members to view the center potentially at the May Meeting. RSB is working with legal on the VR Rule/ State regulation. The rule needed completely revamped due to WIA and WIOA. Maintenance is under the microscope the most. Somewhere in 2004 our RSB policy changed but the regulations did not update to match our policy. RSB has limits when it comes to maintenance in regards to when clients are in college. If clients are relocating for a job, RSB's current policy did not have clear limits. The state regulations are asking RSB to set limits that are exact numbers and clear. Changes would not only be setting a direct amount but also listing specifically what the maintenance covers and does not cover. The second change in these regulations would be the review process. RSB is trying their best to avoid cases going to civil court. Seeing what other options we have to resolve these circumstances before going to that step. There is also potential that Federal Regulations may be open for comment in the near future, this has not yet been confirmed though. The potential to open the regulations would be to look at competitive integrated employment but of course if you open the regulations, that's opening them to be reviewed in every aspect. Missouri Workforce System was selected for another National Cohort about two weeks ago. Meetings will begin to take place soon, Ian Shadrack will be going to these meetings in representation of RSB. This is the 3rd time Missouri has been selected for a national Cohort which is impressive. RSA and Department of Labor work together to select who to award. There are still issues in the understanding of RSA's rules regarding the 15% reserve. Depending on how you read the guidelines, interpretations are being taken differently. RSB plans to work on better understanding this to insure RSB is compliant to the rules and regulations being asked of them. Currently clients are working with Preferred Family Health on Pre Employment Skills Training. Working directly with MSB in providing these services. Feedback has been great so far on the training and clients have been happy with the services they are receiving during this time. RSB does not always have enough participants to do a group work skills framing so a different route has been looked into. This allows the training to be better individualized and hopefully even more beneficial as well. Payment is per the contract fees. Previously the program was limited to summer but RSB modified this to allow this to be a program available

year round. Vendors reach out to employers to make these trainings be and retain as successful as possible. Vendors reach out to employers to explain the process, give them waiver to show insurance is under vendor and not employer, as well as wages are taken care of by vendor and not of employer. This seems to be viewed as a positive to most employers and helps services be more welcoming.

Work in Blind Pension referrals have begun in the RSB central office. RSB has set up a mutual email that they use to submit their eligible referrals. From there, RSB disperses these referrals to the appropriate offices. 65 and under are being referred to VR, 66 and older are being referred to OBS. RSB is hopeful that cases can be started from these referrals but time will tell the success of these blind pension referrals.

Office case reviews will begin this month. This is an important process to be sure our offices are functioning as expected and cases are being handled properly and accurately.

Fact Sheet: Keith reviewed fact sheet numbers, discussed how we handle 28's pertaining to unable to locate.

Fiscal Report: Expenditures are where they should be for the year. Still in the middle of conversion into the new Aware system but RSB remains on budget in terms with that. RSB has been working with the Division of Finance on next year's budgets. Most things will remain the same with the exception that appropriations may change, potentially combining client cost with admin cost. Merit changes have affected RSB as we have found out that RSB staff are not considered merit. Another thing RSB is working on is prior approval. Looking into doing approvals based on last year totals as opposed to individual items. As one example, this affects our state vehicles as sometimes new vehicles are given without prior approval. Supported Employment grant has been reinstated in the sum of around 58,000.

WIOA Update: Potential of reopening regulations for comment. The regional meeting was held at the beginning of October. During these meeting discussions on Pre-Employment Transition Services and Prior Approval were discussed. No new guidance measures as of yet. Discuss the 15% and how this is being assessed by RSA as to whether or not RSB is meeting these requirements. RSB has been told we are meeting the requirements because we are providing the services even if the 15% is not met completely. This 15% has been a struggle to meet across the board for multiple agencies but everyone is looking into how to better serve and meet the requirements set upon them by RSA. RSB and MVR are holding quarterly meetings now to stay in contact and work together to keep up on what each of us are doing and give feedback and ideas to each other.

Blind Task Force\Children's Vision Summit – Looking into possible locations and dates. The Task Force meets again next Tuesday to discuss further meetings. Also discussed looking into doing a tour of Center. There are vacancies on the Task Force but they are hard to fill due to student schedules.

Survey Report: Reviewed survey results, not a lot to compare as it is only first quarter. So far things look to be holding an increase. Look into Survey Monkey to improve return rate for surveys.

Committee Reports: Discussion on Committee appointments, appointments will take place at February Meeting.

Keith opens discussion on maintenance and ask for Councils input/opinions on suggested changes. Change from 500 to 825/month. Include change in removing financial requirement and specifying related work expenses.

Clay- Motion to approve as it is written, RSB maintenance policy update going to the secretary of state office.

Motion seconded by Chris, all in favor.

Old Business: Reviewed SRC vacancies and potential individuals to fill them. Email was sent with list of current filled positions, vacancies, as well as a link to SRC By Laws.

New Business:

February 21st and 22nd- Joplin, Joplin Association for the Blind- Work with Brady

Announcements: Shelia- NFB scholarship season started yesterday. Good to encourage clients to apply for scholarships even if receiving help from RSB.

Donna- ILC in Jefferson City is providing a Sara Borgmeyer scholarship to wonderland camp. Youth age 15-22 can apply for this partial scholarship.

Meeting adjourned