

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Public Forum – Jefferson City, MO

May 2nd, 2019

SRC Members in Attendance: Clay Berry, Karen Nelson, Mark Bauer, Brenda Whitlock, Brady Clevenger, Chris Gray, Rita Lynch – In place of Shelia Wright, Geoff Barney, Betty Farley

Public Attendees: Teresa Milbrodt, Nancy Helland, Allen Helland, Ben Kane

Phone: 6 call in attendees

RSB Attendees: Kayla McFarland, Genny Asher, Gloria Bailey, Sam Scott, Melissa Kane, Katy Cawdron, Keith Roderick, Mark Runyan, Kayla Cole

Open Meeting: Clay opens meeting explaining purpose of council and their work with RSB

Speakers: Amy Nickless from Wolfner Library came to share about Wolfner and the services they provide. Wolfner Library is Missouri's Library for individuals with visual, physical and reading disabilities. Wolfner provides braille, audio, large print, print braille books, audio described DVDs, print braille games, activity kits, programming, magazines and newsletters.

Q & A – Comments from the Public: Teresa Milbrodt is a PhD student at the University of Missouri, studying English. Teresa explains she has a condition called ROP (Retinopathy of prematurity) which has caused her to be blind in her right eye since birth. In August Teresa experienced a Vitreous Hemorrhage, during that time is when the disability center at Mizzou referred Teresa to RSB. RSB has been able to provide Teresa with different services from reading devices, to marking her apartment with different materials, to mobility training with a white cane. Although Teresa was nervous about these changes at first she quickly grew comfortable as she discovered how the different materials greatly improved her daily life, especially her white cane. Teresa explained how grateful she is for her counselor, rehab teacher and the District Supervisor who helped teach her mobility skills to increase her confidence. All of the materials she has received and skills she has been taught allow her to remain successful in college and reach her academic and future career goals.

Nancy Helland is an OBS client and shared her experience with RSB and her Rehabilitation Teacher Gloria. Nancy shared that she is very grateful for the materials she received from RSB and that even more importantly for the relationship she has built with her Teacher and other RSB staff. She explained that they came to her house and strangers and left feeling like family. Nancy is very grateful for the RSB staff and the services they have and continue to provide for her.

Closing

Adjourn

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Business Meeting – Jefferson City, MO

May 3rd, 2019

SRC Members in Attendance: Rita Lynch in place of Shelia Wright, Chris Gray, Betty Farley, Brady Clevenger, Clay Berry, Geoff Barney, Karen Nelson, Brenda Whitlock, Mark Bauer, Donna Borgmeyer

RSB Attendees: Michael St. Julien, Kayla Cole, Mark Runyan, Keith Roderick, Katy Cawdron

Open Meeting: Clay Berry

Minutes: Minutes were reviewed and accepted.

District Report: [Katy Cawdron](#)- Mid Mo is almost fully staffed, opening for mobility specialist still open, currently only vacancy. 23 closures so far this year and on target to meet their yearly goal of 30. Lots of training has been taking place and there are a handful of more trainings planned in the future. These trainings are benefiting the new staff such as the two new rehab teachers that have started at their office. Mid Mo is hosting the Accessibility Business Summit next week, May 9th. Mid Mo asked if the Governor could speak at this event and although he was not available, the Lt. Governor did agree to speak at the event. One of the focus areas they expect him to speak about at the event is Missouri as a Model Employer. Mid Mo also host a student group that continues to be successful. One of our Children's Specialist noticed that our area didn't have anything like that so she decided to start her own. It is something that has been well received and the Mid Mo office is proud of the work that is happening there. Mid Mo has also been meeting with CRPs to collaborate on plans for clients who will be ready for work place learning experiences within the coming year. The vendor that will be hosting this is A.C.T. (Alternative Community Training) and is located in Columbia Missouri. Wolfner asked RSB to speak on one of their conference calls in July of this year. Wolfner expressed they believe they have patrons who are using their services that do not know about RSB. Mid Mo is hopeful to receive a good amount of referrals from this call as they educate that audience on the services RSB provides.

Field Report: [Michael St. Julien](#)- Vacancies, RT position in KC vacancy has been empty for some time but currently re opened to try and fill it. Mobility Specialist position open in Mid Mo as Katy stated, this position has been vacant for a little over a year. SLN office has an RT position open as well, has been posted, hoping to fill soon. There is a VRC opening in SLS office currently, one position but two postings, can hire trainee or VRC. This can confuse people as both positions are listed separately but it is just for one position. Mobility specialist and other openings seem to be hard to fill due to salaries. Missouri as a model employer meeting took place in February, which is where Keith was at the last SRC meeting. Michael is on the implementation team for this, their goal is to help individuals with disabilities find state

employment, improving the rate of higher for folks with disabilities in the state of Missouri. They have done outreach to other states to ask what they have done to improve in these areas. One of the things they have done is an Executive order, another thing they have seen states use is a state wide ADA coordinator, other states have also implemented quotas. Missouri's implementation team's goal is to create equal opportunities but not necessarily require a quota. They have also contacted internal HR directors to check with how many people the state has hired with disabilities, what types of trainings have taken place, application process concerns, etc. Next meeting to take place May 31. The goal for this model came from the National Governor Association.

Customized employment, still in the process of that. RSB has been approved for funding to help put on training for staff to accomplish this. All bases are lined up to get this kicked off and started. Different levels of training will take place beginning in July. A month later there will be a follow up in August with RSB's place in the training taking place in October and November. This will look like a 'Train the Trainor' set up. After initial round of training which is focused on understanding the basics of customized employment staff will enter the 2nd part which is more of a hands on approach. 3rd part of this will be training for our administrators, along with that will be 12 weeks of technical assistance. Final part will be the fidelity stage where we teach staff that will be reviewing these so they know how to appropriately maneuver this.

Aware – Training has taken place this week to prepare specific staff for the pilot that will kick off May 13-24. This will be the time we work in and test the new case management to find any hiccups or errors in the system. The actual implementation will take place July 1. Systems shut down June 14th. Second half of training will be where all staff come in and get training on this.

Training – Regional Leadership Academy beginning May 13th.

Missouri Way – Columbia Mo, training 150+ managers. Michael will be attending this in the coming weeks.

Director's Report: Keith Roderick – RSB has been working with Legal on bringing Regulations up to date, currently the proposed changes are awaiting approval at the Secretary of State's office. Business Enterprise Programs regulations are also being updated and are on a little bit of a faster track than those of VR. Another topic to discuss are changes with our 28 closures. In the past, RSB has been penalized for 28 closures even in circumstances of a client death, incarceration, admitted into inpatient facility, developed significant health problems, etc. That was considered a failed closure. RSA has recently revised the 911 report which is our primary reporting tool for performance measures and they have now exempted some of those categories. Due to those exemptions the fact sheet will have another column to show the exempt and non-exempt closure numbers. Revision of contracts are currently taking place, our contracts manager Angie is starting with our PVA contracts, doing some rewrites. She and I are also going to be working together on the state plan as she has never done that before so I plan to guide her through that. RSB has continued talking to and working with RSA to figure out the best and most clear way to understand and use the 15 percent reserve for

students with disabilities. The lines are still blurred as to the best way to reserve as well as expend all of these funds. RSB is focusing on doing their best to do the right thing and provide the best services and see what happens down the road. All other funds remain stable, budget expected to remain the same, no word on reductions thus far.

WIOA: [Keith Roderick](#) – No changes

Fact Sheet: [Michael St. Julien](#)- Fact sheet was reviewed.

Fiscal Report: [Mark Runyan](#) – Contract manager busy updating almost all of our contracts with vendors, some contracts are 15 or so years old so this will be beneficial to RSB and how we serve our clients. Aware as discussed prior is still moving along. On the fiscal side of things AWARE will be very beneficial as the payment process will be accurate, more controlled by RSB and District office staff will be able to track payments live from process to payment. This will also benefit staff and clients as payment inquiries are quiet a common discussion on a daily basis. Bill paying unit is fully staffed. POB has been doing more outreach in the public and even visiting some of the Prisons to screen individuals as well as staff there. Donations for the blind when you update your license go to the POB program, this is not as well known. Currently working on flyers as well as submitting Social media request to the department to share about POB donations at the DMV. Continue to work on opening a new BEP facility in the KC area, this will be a micro market facility and RSB is very excited for this. Mark continues to meet with district offices to build report, communication and relationships with district office staff. This has been well received and beneficial to the agency and staff.

Council Comments: Brenda asked if the new merit reform has made any difference in seeing an increase in applications for job postings and Michael explained that unfortunately we have not seen an increase. This is believed to be because of a misunderstanding of what we do and who we are.

Blind task force: November 2nd, Special Olympics training for life facility in Jefferson City, mo.

SILK: Meets next Friday

Survey Report/Board and Commissions: Survey's reviewed, no concerns. Council request RSB move forward expeditiously to send accessible electronic surveys.

Old Business: [*Committee Appointments*](#)

Program and Policy: Brady Clevenger, Mark Bauer, Clay Berry

Evaluation Committee: Geoff Barney, Betty Farley, Brady Clevenger

Planning Committee: Brenda Whitlock, MPACT employee, Karen Nelson, Mark Bauer

Government Affairs: Shelia Wright, Chris Gray, Donna Borgmeyer

New Business:

Plan next year's meeting dates and places:

August 1st and 2nd – St. Louis

November 7th and 8th – Cape Girardeau

February 6th and 7th – Kansas City

April 30th and May 1st – Columbia

Give updates on Boards and commissions

Five aside Soccer – Week of July 8th

Review minutes about alphapointe events.

Lighthouse – summer SOAR program June 8-29 12 participants, held at western university. Centered on orientation and mobility such as cooking, cleaning, interviewing skills, independent living skills, etc.

NFB – Braille Academy will take place in KC and STL area. Last week of July and first week of August.

Meeting adjourned