

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Public Forum – St Louis, MO

Aug 3, 2017

SRC Members in Attendance Clay Berry, Carrie Ragsdale, Donna Borgmeyer, Karen Nelson, Shelia Wright, Geoff Barney, Mark Bauer, Chris Gray, and Karen Nelson.

Public Attendees: Robin House school counselor, Paralympic day Sept 17th partnering with MSB. Elton Thomos, LB, Janet Bold, Carrie Smith, client. Chris Tisdale, client, Kenny Gadess,, Jenna Berry, Ron Walters, Brain, Shultz, Kim Gillian.

RSB Attendees Ian Shadrick, Michael St Julien, Lisa Randolph, Sharon Silverstein, Lari Rieberg, Keith Roderick and Cindy Bitterman

Open Meeting: Clay Berry, Chairman, opened with an overview of the SRC and the public forum process. Clay thanked St Louis Society for hosting the public forum and talked a little about what they do. They provide services to school, assistive tech, community resources, and providing assistance to many older blind. An OrCam site training, open presentation Saturday. It will take a picture and convert it to text. Provide full range vision rehabilitation.

Speaker: Brenda Whitlock, Ian Shadrick. Talk about popular apps, IOS based

Guard app – to read text, download books directly. Various setting available. Also allows using braille books with it.

Learning Ally - is mostly education based books. If eligible for learning alley, can also download books there as well.

Social Media – twitterific, uses twitter content, twitter keeps the primary images and eliminates ads and such. Free.

Be my eyes-sign up then can connect with a sighted individual.

Transportation – Uber and Lyft

Q. Money reader app?

A. Most are free or low cost.

Over 40+ a video magnifier put on your phone, uses light from the phone and can take a photo of it.

SeeingAI –app that will read/scan. Can also scan larger documents. Can scan a upc.

Scene-describe the room,

The Ditto – app is wear ditto. It is a vibrating device to notify wearer of texts phone etc..

Echo-handsfree, Alexa will answer questions and message.

Blind Square is used with any other gps app. Gives info about things around you, giving you directions.

Q & A – Comments for the SRC

Q. What does TAP offer through RSB?

A. Coordinates with RSB to get people approved for TAP for Internet. MO is the only state in the US that offers TAP for internet to those who need assistance with accessibility to technology.

Q. How many?

A. Average 600 people a year. St Louis Society for the Blind does a lot for training in technology.

Q. I was waiting on deadline; can a counselor notify clients if a counselor is unavailable?

A. RSB tries to notify clients and identify pending actions.

Q. Is it possible that a message can be put on the phone?

A. If on an extended absence would try to. Should have an option to hit 0 then someone else can be reached.

Q. How often do teachers have to see the clients?

A. Itinerate based services, RT, VRC, OM go out and meet with clients as often as possible. If intense training needed, sometimes a training center is needed. Hope to see clients twice a month if possible. If interested in more intensive training, let your counselor know.

Comment: Many challenges that RSB has faced in the past has had to with the vacancies. Some of those vacancies have been filled.

Big thing is client load is too high for staff to handle. He went to Alphapoint for 5 months. A lot of self-sacrifice. Staff can't give that kind of attention to each client. The system in Mo is one of the best in the nation that I have seen. We have to put our own part in. I've appreciated all that I have received but it has come as a cost on my part.

The SRC congratulated Keith on his promotion to acting Deputy Director.

Upcoming :

MCB – Just finished summer programs. Summer programs are open to any child, not just students of MSB. Welcome to give tour.

Lighthouse – partners with MSB to provide employment experience, providing real work experience.

Alphapoint-also works with RSB to put 15, 16, 17 year olds into their first jobs.

MO AT – website will tell you anything that is going on. Applebizz will give info on good aps for accessibility.

RSB – St Louis district is attending a Reverse job fair.

MCB – MCB Convention in Kansas City 4th of October, leadership meeting in November.

NFB – national fitness challenge, 25 members of NFB have signed up, competing against other agencies across the nation. They have weekly meetings to get the activities in. Paralympics is a community event, no cost, to encourage fitness among blind people.

September 2nd the Recreation council of St Louis in conjunctions with Big Shark will have a Tandem bike ride 8-10p, anyone can come out and ride. “Ride to Unite” adaptive biking for all individuals.

Blind hockey is coming to St Louis. World’s Fair Park, mission to build a 100% accessible park here in St Louis. It is played at Kirkwood ice arena.

Metro Lane is looking for people to sit on the board or provide suggestion

Clay adjourned the meeting.

State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

Business Meeting – St Louis, MO

Aug 4, 2017

SRC Members in Attendance: Clay berry, Geoff Barney, Karen Nelson, Donna Borgmeyer, Carrie Ragsdale, Mark Bauer, Brenda Whitlock, Shelia Wright.

RSB Attendees: Ian Shadrick, Lisa Randolph, Keith Roderick, Michael St. Julien, and Cindy Bitterman

Minutes: Minutes were reviewed and approved. Shelia motioned, Donna Second, all approved.

Open Meeting: Clay Berry Chairman.

District report:

SLN – Lisa Randolph, St Louis North district supervisor stated they are on target to their goal. They conducted a pilot with three stages of job development. They received good feedback from the 10 clients that attended. They will do it again in September with next 10 clients. They are very excited about the upcoming reverse job fair. They have a number of clients attending. Staff continues to go out into the community to let people know about RSB and how RSB can help. The district has been working on locating clients that they have lost touch with, getting out there and meeting with clients, going to job fairs, and completing annual reviews. The two St Louis offices have been collaborating together and meeting together to learn from each other. They are fully staffed, except 1 RT.

SLS – Michael gave the report on the south office. One mobility specialist remains vacant, an office support position is also vacant. They expect to exceed their goal for 2017. Hard to find an O&M specialist with the experience.

Field Report: RSB has seven vacancies. Three in KC (2 VRC, RT), an RT vacancy in SLN, and Brady Clevenger promoted to a Program Development Specialist; serve as a resource to all counselors, compliance issues and other duties, which created a VRC vacancy in the SW district. As well as a SOSA and RA position in the state office.

RSB still has their paid internship program. Newest intern will start in September for 2 semesters. Last intern moved into a counselor position after internship. Internship helped him lay his foundation for learning the ropes.

Job descriptions: VRC changes were approved. HR changed the application to an online application. It is now a continuous registrar. August 15th RSB will be able to see data and see how the new process has effected applications.

Training: Just completed a WIOA training in Jefferson City, all counselors and DS's. The data entry required for WIOA needed to be trained on. CS's will be trained soon. Regional leadership academy is meeting this week with several of RSBs staff, they are in stage 3.

CPR instructor course was completed in June. Instructors will be able to work within the department to train other departments as well as able to train outside the department.

Wages still continue to be an issue in hiring. We are able to use vendors to assist in serving with mobility teaching.

Director's Report: Keith Roderick. Keith attended the task force meeting at the governor's office yesterday, uneventful for RSB. Keith went over the requirements for the SRC and details of the membership. Three components of contract for transition to benefit the youth in transition.

Policy manual changes, all edits are complete and ready to go to committee. Then will need to go for public comment. RSB will also be making an administrative rule change. Public hearings right now on department admin rule changes. Required to review the admin rules every few years. Changes will generate a new set of public forums. We are under FSD if you are interested in making comments. No concern from the current forums as of yet.

Case management system; we are moving forward on this. RSB can purchase off an existing contract with MVR. It will impact our budget for this year. Benefit is that they are already have a lot of data that they will be needing, vendors, accounting system etc. This system is up to date for WIOA data elements needed. The two systems will work side by side for a short time. No tentative date yet, will take about 15 months after contract is established. The cost will include some train the trainer.

BEP manager Larry Branson will be retiring at the end of the August.

New DSS Director, Dr. Corsi-the governor's plan is to have a smaller footprint. Dr. Corsi is very personal touch oriented, valuing every persons roll.

Fiscal Report: No numbers for July, problems with system. June was end of SFY under budget in all categories. We're hoping the case management system would have started coming out last year but didn't. No budget cuts for this year. The 15% reserve on the Pre Emp. Transition services helps with the budget concerns. RSA interpretations have influenced what is determined PreETs services.

WIOA: Working on updating the state plan. Staff has attend a lot of the meeting. Some suggestions have been postponed until plan modification. Still getting clarification of what is required for updates. Closed the year at June 30. FFY for budget, Program Year is following SFY months but not the year. New performance measures will set the data line. July 1 starts Program year 17,

Fact Sheet: Reviewed the numbers. 3rd quarter, this is the info that will be on the 911 since this is when we have to close the year. WIOA has a greater emphasis of career, getting people to move up the ladder, working closely with employers, helping people stay in a position or get a new position in the same company. Happy with the replenish rate.

Blind Task Force/Children's Vision Summit- working on finalizing details, including working on speakers. October 28th at Capital plaza in Jefferson. Some updates to the state plan will be needed. IEP teams will be making more of the decisions instead of the field. Within RSB, our practices are within their new guidelines but may assist in some case. They are really pushing for assessments beyond just acuity, asked for council assistance. Theme – no named theme, key note speaker, Carlton walker

Ian's been working with partners and looking at accessibility at job centers, presented ideas to make more accessibility to WIB. Blindness is updates to software, other areas mind shift thinking inclusion not segregating, specialist equipment.

Survey reviews. – Survey was reviewed and discussed.

Committee Reports: No committees have met, the planning committee and policy program will meet within the next quarter

Program and Policy: review the policy manual.

Government Affairs: Advocating where needed. Sheila expressed concern about BEP legislation at federal lever, regarding privatizing road side vending. The bill has slowed down some. The best vending jobs are roadside vending. It helps maintain the BEP program. It would be a big hit on the Randolph Shephard program if they let fast food take over.

Silc- in process of trying to become and standalone entity separate but connected (fiscally) to MO Vocational Rehabilitation. Cuts to independents center are affecting them across the state. Community based services got cut too. Mpact steps in and tries to help where they can.

Clay mentioned JWOD and have been fighting battles to ensure purchasing of blind made products continue on military bases. Have allowed private companies to come in on some bases.

Old Business

Fort Lenardwood Letter-letter was sent, no response as of yet. Purchasing of blind products remains intent to protect the blind vendors has been going on 18 months regarding military bases. It is critical to protect those laws, still relevant to the blind.

Social media – DSS Facebook page. Check accessibility. The department wants a certain number of postings, is this sustainable. Any postings send to Cindy. Will link when possible to other organizations.

New Business:

Mpact- have a new executive director. Carrie is now the program coordinator over transition. Oct 17 is MPACT summit, looking for breakout sessions. A lot of fairs and mini summits going on. Let Carrie know if you want to participate or have students. Lighthouse and MOAT will want to participate.

Going to populate website, if a parent or a youth is visually impaired will have the resources on the website.

MO AT- Power Up in Columbia again. Joint with the SILC. April 16 & 17.

MCB – about to adopt new strategic plan which will be part of convention in KC on Oct. 5-8 Holiday Inn Country Club Plaza. St Louis will be the venue for the national convention in 2018. First week of July 2018

Next SRC meeting in November – St Joe – Drury Inn

Meeting adjourned.