



State of Connecticut

Department of Rehabilitation Services

*State Rehabilitation Council
to the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services*

**January 13, 2016
1:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Webinar
Meeting Minutes**

Attendance:

SRC Members: Tom Boudreau; Marisel DeCardova, Chair; Jan Hasenjager; Patrick Melfi; David Morgana, Jr; James Quick; VR, Bruce Stovall; Kate Travis, Business Committee Chair; Kristen Winkle, Secretary; David Morgana

Non-Voting Members: Warren Stamp

BRS Staff: Evelyn Oliver Knight

Excused: David Doukas

Guests/ Volunteers: Arlene Lugo

Absent: Shannon McCann, Gary Prushko, Andrea Richardson, Gary Robinson, Miriam Torres-Thorburn, Joe Wendover

Webinar Instructions: Arlene Lugo presented this for SRC Members to know how to activate this meeting webinar.

Introductions: Marisel welcomed everyone and introductions were completed. Evelyn Oliver Knight introduced that Marisel will be the new SRC Chair.

Bureau of Rehabilitation Services

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Minutes: Tom Boudreau noted two corrections from 11-18-15, “CT is in a good place for the Bureau of Special Ed and has a good working relationship with BRS. They have employees split between departments to address the upcoming work with WIOA.” Also, in regards to the Parent group mentioned it is the “Parent Bill of Rights that is being developed.” Minutes have been updated.

Budget: Evelyn spoke about the budget. She followed up with David Doukas about it. The budget carries forward the FFY 2015 obligation for the Survey that the SRC still owed \$8,682.50 (half of the cost for the survey). Since we had not budgeted the full amount to pay the bill this year, BRS gave more from the beginning to cover the survey. New budget for FFY 2016 is \$30,697.60; it was approved by SRC. For January, the budget shows the survey money coming out is \$8,682.50. Out of state travel will be added.

SRC Leadership: Marisel talked about the membership and that we are recruiting members. She let people know to refer individuals especially with disabilities for SRC. Jim talked about a possible referral, Melissa, for the SRC, Evelyn said to invite her to the next meeting. Marisel shared concern that Miriam may not be able to continue with the SRC anymore. If so, we need someone to Chair the Intercouncil/Nominations Committee. She added that we should set up adequate times for the committees to meet, in addition to the hour prior to meetings.

SRC BYLAWS were reviewed, revisions and corrections were made. WIOA, the Business Partnership and Consumer Satisfaction Committee were added. The BYLAWS were looked at two meetings ago, they were last approved and published in 2010. There is a reference change to WIOA and four standing committees not two. Also, designate the Policy & Planning committee to the BYLAWS; this will change to five standing committees. The BYLAWS were approved.

BRS Update: Dave Doukas wasn’t able to attend today. Evelyn spoke about BRS updates. There is a lot going on with BRS. David Doukas has signed a contract for the New Haven Office, 337 James Street, same building with DSS but, two separate entrances. It is a state of the art facility; they are building it to the BRS specifications. Trainings and meetings will be there. Lease is for 10 years with five-year renewable contracts. Work will be done on the building, May or June 2016. He is happy about this news.

Evelyn said that the SRC Annual Report isn't done. The state plan would have normally been done in the spring, but due to WIOA, it was due at the same time the SRC Annual Report was due. She did get an extension and will be working on it. She thanked all who submitted a report. The State Plan is following the rules of WIOA, working with partners to address employment options for people. DOL and Work Force Investment Board are taking the lead on the Unified State Plan. To read the BRS section of the plan, go to the BRS website (<http://www.ct.gov/brs/site/default.asp>) to review a draft copy of the State Plan. DOL has the State of CT draft plan on its website (<http://pschousing.org/news/dol-seeks-public-comments-state-wioa-unified-state-plan>). In the BRS section, there are goals that BRS are trying to achieve. BRS will host public meetings to review these goals. The public meetings are open to consumers, families and anyone interested in VR. The invitation is posted on the BRS site and has been widely shared. People may attend because they have heard about WIOA. Dave Doukas will be introduced as the new SRC Director and target goals will be reviewed for Unified State Plan.

SRC Members should attend Public Meetings, recruiting could be done during the Public Meeting. Reviewed all of the members that are planning to attend the upcoming Public Meetings. There will be at least one member at all three meetings. Publicize the Public Meetings at offices for individuals to attend.

Evelyn has sent out the CCSU Survey and Evelyn communicated with CCSU in regards to the survey. We are now done with the survey, the final report dated December 2015. One problem with the survey was the recommendation section generated from CCSU. CCSU recommended that BRS provide incentives to employers and meet more often with staff. As there was not a clear link from the consumer input to the recommendations and they appear to have been made in a vacuum without clarifying what kind of incentives already exist nor how often BRS meets with counselors she followed up with CCSU to provide additional insight so the recommendations could be amended based on valid info. BRS did not want the recommendations to stand without the ability to correct the statements (for example, once it is published on the BRS website) CCSU opted delete the recommendations rather than follow up with Evelyn's suggestions to them to make the recommendations more reflective to what is going on. Also, they used the word providers for BRS Counselors; instead it has now been changed to staff. It was noted that 75 % of consumers were satisfied with the services. Also noted, consumers didn't mention the signage or finding offices' being an issue, as this is something that the SRC has brought

up previously for concerns. The concerns with CCSU's approach to the recommendations were discussed during meeting especially given that a lot of money was spent on the survey. In general the survey is impressive. The SRC scheduled a meeting to review the survey on 2/10/16 at 1 P, location TBD, Evelyn will follow up about it.

Reviewed the SRC Calendar of activities, some events have taken place. Public Meetings are coming up NCSRC Meeting is, 2/9/16, next SRC Meeting is 3/9/16, location TBD. NCSRC National Conference 4/16/16 – 4/20/16. November 9, 2016 is the last meeting (and SRC Meeting for the year) scheduled in the calendar. She recommended that SRC Members review second page of calendar.

New members will be coming on board, new membership list was sent out today. SRC Members are encouraged to attend BRS staff meetings. We are down to 12 members, quorum of 1/3 of members plus one equals 5. Members need to sign on to a committee. The member demographic sheet shared today. Governor requests demographic info for all of the boards and committees where he appoints members. Pat acknowledged a correction for his race on the sheet; change will be made and redistributed.

Question for BRS: How does BRS handle working with Sex Offender cases? Arlene Lugo commented that they will pursue having them get bonded and work with employers that will employ individuals with a criminal background. BRS won't turn the individuals away and there won't be an issue with it. Employment counseling and guidance will be addressed. Consumers are noticing that DORS is now on the letterhead. Evelyn clarified that BRS is in the footer of the letterhead; DORS is in the header.

Committee Reports:

- Business Partnership - Kate Travis, Chair, No updates at this time.
- Consumer Satisfaction - Jim Quick, Chair, is leaving SRC, his term is up. SRC will need a new chair soon. The committee will review the consumer surveys.
- Intercouncil/Nominations - Miriam Torres-Thorburn, Chair, new applicants, Malita Arms & Shannon McCann. They will need to be interviewed for their recommendation for the governor. Miriam may not be part of the committee anymore; SRC will need more committee members for it.
- Legislation, Policy, & Planning - Tom Boudreau reached out to BESB Director, Brian Sigmin, Director, who shared the chair of the BESB

SRC, **Nayema Pinkney**, to discuss how the two SRCs may collaborate and he will continue to reach out to them again. Need members for the group. The draft poster that SRC will publish to be posted in local offices for consumers to understand services and responsibilities was finalized. It will be shared with Dave for approval to print.

Consumer Issues: None reported

Question/Comments: Update on Amazon, noted that there are no new updates or interactions noted at this time, Evelyn will follow up.

Next Meeting Wednesday, 3/9/16, 1:00 PM – 3:30 PM, Site TBD

Meeting was closed at 2:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristen L. Winkle – SRC Secretary