**Department of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)**

**Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)**

**Deafblind Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Draft Minutes**

**February 6, 2018**

**Voting Members Present:**

**Barbara Cloonan, Parent/Guardian Representative; Lisa Flaherty-Vaughn, Consumer Representative, Deafblind Association of CT; Sandra Miles, Department of Developmental Services - Southbury Training School; Karen Olson (representing Tracy Evans-Luiselli), New England Consortium of Deafblind Technical Assistance and Training; Kathy Morgan, Conservator; Emily Morgante, Parent/Guardian Representative; Hana Tyler, Consumer Representative; Still Fowler, Oak Hill; Robert C. Smith, Department of Developmental Services; Charlotte Spinkston, Helen Keller National Center (HKNC); Al Sylvestre, BESB Advisory Board Representative.**

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

**Marsha Brown, BESB, Adult Services; Chris Lassen, BESB, Adult Services; Brian Sigman, BESB Director; Andrew Norton, DORS Legislative Liaison; Mary Quinn, BESB Children’s Services; Patricia Richardson, DORS- Unit on Aging; Mark Ward, BESB Vocational Rehabilitation.**

**Voting Members Absent:**

**Erich Krengel, Capitol Region Mental Health Clinic.**

**Non-Voting Members Absent**

**Heidi Henaire, BRS.**

**Old Business**

**MOTION: On a motion by Al Sylvestre, seconded by Robert Smith, the minutes from the December 19, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.**

**New Business**

**Mr. Sigman asked Committee members to make recommendations as to what types of community inclusion activities and programs could be provided to utilize the additional funding that was approved in the FY 2018 state budget.**

**Marsha Brown stated her perspective that Communication Advocacy Network (CAN) and Oak Hill were in the best position to provide additional services because these vendors each serve a large number of clients. Contract amendments would be required and it would take approximately 120 days for the existing contracts to be amended. Activities would need to take place during the month of May of 2018 and billed in early June.**

**CAN submitted a proposal to fund a one day community inclusion outing in Boston that included a meeting with Massachusetts individuals from the deafblind community. The proposal included Support Service Provider (SSP) costs as well as travel expenses.**

**Ms. Brown also worked with Oak Hill’s NEAT Marketplace, the CT Tech Act Project, and CAN to set up a technology fair to be held at NEAT on May 30, with a focus on technology for individuals who are deafblind. Estimated costs for SSP services for this event were submitted by CAN. Vendors have already committed to this event. Arlene Lugo from the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services has agreed to help with marketing of this event.**

**Oak Hill requested $9,000 in additional camp costs for registration fees at the new rate of $900 per week and 20 additional hours of community inclusion services for consumers.**

**Finally, Marsha had been in communication with the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) staff members to discuss 2 Confident Living Programs for seniors. The cost of these two programs for tuition and housing was $1,350 per participant for two separate programs for five participants: one in mid -May for the culturally deafblind population and one in October for the hard of hearing population to be held at HKNC in New York. Ms. Spinkston presented an alternative of holding two separate programs in Connecticut at a cost of $10,000 each for a total of $20,000.**

**MOTION: On a motioned by Al Sylvestre, and seconded by Barbara Cloonan, the motion was passed to include up to a total of $70,000 for the following projects. Still Fowler abstained from the vote.**

**CAN Outing to Boston**

**SSP Costs: 70 hours x $44.00 per hour= $3,080**

**Van Costs: $1,540**

**Total: $4,620**

**Oak Hill**

**Camp Registration Fees: $900 per week of camp = $9,000**

**Community Inclusion Services: 20 hours at $31.19 per hour = $623.80**

**Total: 9,623.80**

**Tech Fair at NEAT Marketplace**

**SSP costs: $2,640**

**Interpreter costs: $5,400**

**Room Rental: $500**

**Total: $8,540**

**Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) Confident Living Programs**

**2 Programs, up to $10,000 each**

**Total: $20,000**

**Purchase of technology for individuals who are Deafblind:**

**Two Humanware Braille Touch Notetakers at discounted price of $3,600 each.**

**Total: $7,200**

**Two HIMS Braille Sense Note takers w/free Apple App (replaces DBC). $5,495 each.**

**Total: $10,990**

**Purchase of Environmental Notification components through Harris Communications.**

**Total: Up to $5,000**

**Purchase of 2 audio looping system(s) including receivers for adults who are hard of hearing and do not use telecoil hearing aids.**

**Total: Up to $2,810**

**Total Technology Costs: $26,000**

**Report from the BESB Director**

**Mr. Sigman reported that the Governor’s proposed FY19 budget amount for the Deafblind grant was $99,584. Mr. Sigman recommended that the funding workgroup for FY19 convene to begin receiving and reviewing proposals.**

**MOTION: On a motion by Al Sylvestre, seconded by Robert Smith, it was unanimous passed that the workgroup be formed to review FY19 contract proposals.**

**Mr. Sigman reminded the members of the public hearing on February 15, 2018 for the purpose of offering the public, consumers, advocates, agencies and organizations an opportunity to review and provide comments pertaining to the proposed updates to the Vocational Rehabilitation Section of the Unified State Plan.**

**MOTION: On a motion by Bob Smith, seconded by Al Sylvestre, the meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.**