



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
Department of Human Services  
Office of Rehabilitation Services  
**STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**



*To work with the ORS assuring that all Rhode Islanders with disabilities are able to obtain and keep meaningful and satisfying employment.*

**SRC May Breakfast Meeting May 9, 2017**  
**Crowne Plaza Warwick, RI**  
**9:00 A.M. – 11:30 AM.**

Present: Christina Battista, Peggy Benz, Rocco Bruno, Lea Colardo, Cynthia Cote, Dr. Judith Drew, Linda Deschenes, Laurie DiOrio, Joan Fino, Kat Grygiel, Maryellen Hagerty, Paul Harden, Diana Kriner, Gail Lawson, Jeff Machado, Jack Ringland, Diana Marcotte, Ron Racine, Vincent Rossi, Catherine Sansonetti, Jane Slade, Willa Truelove, John Valentine, Nancy Baker (Staff)

Absent: Christine Botts, Liz Graves, Lori Norris, Daniel C. Pieroni

Guests: Deb Belanger, Jamie Brelsford, Sharon DiPinto, Angela Hawkes, Jeffrey Machado, Michael Montanaro, Kim Sanchez, Christine Yankee

- 1. Establish Quorum/Introductions Guests, ORS, SRC - Dr. Gail Lawson**
- 2. Agenda Review/Additions or Deletions (None)**
- 3. Acceptance of Minutes from March 7, 2016**

*Motion*

*Jack Ringland made a motion seconded by Joan Fino and unanimously approved to accept the March 7, 2017 minutes.*

*(Vote Approved - Christina Battista, Peggy Benz, Rocco Bruno, Lea Colardo, Cynthia Cote, Dr. Judith Drew, Joan Fino, Maryellen Hagerty, Paul Harden, Diana Kriner, Gail Lawson, Jeff Machado, Jack Ringland, Diana Marcotte, Vincent Rossi, Catherine Sansonetti, Jane Slade, Willa Truelove)*

**4. Presentation of Awards – Jack Ringland**

- \* Mr. Jeffrey Machado, President/CEO Goodwill Industries of Rhode Island, representing a Community Rehabilitation Service Provider. Council member from 2010 – 2016. The Council Chair for 2 years and Council Co-chair for 2 years. He was also the Chair of the By-laws Committee and a member of the State Plan, Policy and Quality Assurance Committee.
- \* Mr. Kim Wennermark, representing the Veterans Administration. Council member from 2010 – 2015. He was a member of the State Plan, Policy and Quality Assurance Committee and the By-laws Committee.
- \* Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor, representing a Community Rehabilitation Service Provider. Council member from 2006 – 2012 and then again from 2014 - 2016. She was a member of the Nomination and Leadership Committee, Employment Committee, and more recently a member of the Membership Training Committee.
- \* Ms. Marilyn Walaska, representing Business, Industry and Labor. Council member from 2013 – 2016. She was a member of the Membership Training Committee.
- \* Rhode Island State Rehabilitation Council Outstanding Service Award presented to Mr. Domenic DiOrio. In grateful appreciation for eight years of service and dedication to the Rhode Island State Rehabilitation Council. Domenic is the first recipient of this award. Laurie DiOrio accepted for Mr. DiOrio.

**5. Presentation by Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN) – Deb Belanger, Jamie Brelsford, Diana Kriner and Kim Sanchez**

RIPIN's mission is to assist individuals, parents, families, and children to achieve their goals for health, education, and socio-economic well-being by providing information, training, education, support and advocacy for person/family centered care and system

change. Peers make RIPIN unique. Providing information is key. RIPIN coaches, mentors, and partners with families so they can reach their goals.

\*Programs offered by RIPIN; Communities of Care, Early Intervention Program, Family School and Community Engagement, Family Voices/Family to Family Health Information Center, Parent Training and Information Center (PTIC), Pediatric Practice Enhancement Project (PPEP), RI Insurance

\*Support Services; Resources, Biblioteca de Recursos, Workshops, Community Information Sessions, Early Childhood, Special Education Support, Transition to Adult Life, RIPIN Healthcare Advocate

[RIPIN 2017 Family Resource Guide](#), & [RIPIN Informational Video](#)

## **6. Office of Rehabilitation Services Director's Report** – Ron Racine

There have been many challenges for ORS this year with the implementation of WIOA, focusing a lot on pre-employment transition services, and the Department of Justice Consent Decree. Despite this, ORS placed over six hundred fifty consumers this year. This speaks to the resiliency of our personnel, many stay late to finish things and give the extra time whenever they can. Their dedication has helped the agency's productivity despite these challenges.

\*[Rehabilitation Service Administration](#) (RSA) is not monitoring RI in 2017 because they are focusing on size of state and productivity starting with the larger states that have not met their goals and objectives. Over the next five years, all states will undergo monitoring with ORS slated towards the end of that period.

\*Re-allotment Money: Typically ORS gets three to four million, recently used mostly to supplement the budget to comply with the Department of Justice. This coming year we are not sure what the funding availability will be. Already this year some states have seen big cuts in the money with the RSA formula changing. ORS will know in August what our re-allotment will be.

\*Employer Cadre: This year ORS is increasing its focus on employers by starting an employer cadre. ORS would like active engagement from the Council as it builds its reputation as a resource for employers seeking new hires.

\*\*[Comprehensives Needs Assessment](#) - John Valentine

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, mandates the Office of Rehabilitation Services, in partnership with the State Rehabilitation Council, to complete a Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) at three-year increments. The CNA is intended to determine the rehabilitation needs of Rhode Islanders with disabilities, identify the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those in need of Supported Employment, minorities with significant disabilities, underserved individuals, youth with disabilities and individuals served by other components of the workforce development network. In addition, the CNA is intended to identify the need to develop or improve Community Rehabilitation Programs.

The Office of Rehabilitation Services views the CNA as a dynamic and evolving process that incorporates information from several diverse sources rather than from any one event or data source. During Federal Fiscal Year 2016, the Office of Rehabilitation Services addressed the Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment by incorporating data from several resources including:

- Environmental Scans
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment activities developed & implemented by the State Rehabilitation Council and Office of Rehabilitation Services
- Ongoing Continuous Quality Improvement Activities

The findings of the CNA are presented to the personnel of the State Rehabilitation Council and Office of Rehabilitation Services. These findings contribute to the development of the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment state plan.

## **7. Subcommittee Reports**

Membership Training – Lea Colardo & Maryellen Hagerty

The committee will meet on May 25, 2017 from 2 PM – 4 PM to finalize changes in the membership binder. The training event will be in late August or September and will focus on the history of rehabilitation services, the rehabilitation act and policy, and the expectations and duties of Council membership. Lea Colardo attended the [NCSRC](#) conference in San Diego and learned that the RSA is updating the training modules for the SRC, however they have not given a timeline. The committee is hopeful they will be ready for our planned training meeting in the fall.

State Plan, Policy & Quality Assurance – Catherine Sansonetti

The committee reviewed four policy updates from ORS. The first, [Supported Employment Policy](#), which we have previously commented on but there were additional changes. The additional changes are due to the agency undergoing revision of all its policies to come into compliance with a statewide initiative. The committee also looked at three additional policies during an in-person meeting that was well attended and very productive. The three policies were, [Eligibility, Ineligibility, Trail Work Periods](#), [Motor Vehicle Modifications](#), and [Adaptive Housing](#).

Moving forward the committee wants to look at Goals and Objectives. Get together with ORS and pick one topic that we can springboard off and hopefully see how setting a goal and objective comes to fruition, how it plays out. Are we doing what we are supposed to do? In addition, if not, how do we fix it? Do we make a new goal? New benchmarks?

Resource Plan: The committee could participate in that process. Our committee could definitely use more resources.

The committee needs a co-chair; it is time to train a new person to do this. I want to groom someone else to take the lead with this committee. It is good to have cycling of fresh perspectives on the committee.

Thanked the committee for their hard work this year, including those members that worked on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment.

### 8. By-Laws Update – Dr. Judith Drew

\*Resource Plan is designed to support the work of the Council, sending folks to conferences, holding meetings, staff, materials etc. We have an interim plan in place while Jeff Machado works on a more formal one. We want to codify this into our By-laws so that there is a clear understanding moving forward that the plan necessary and reviewed annually and changes made as needed.

Thanked Lori Norris, Gail Lawson, Jeff Machado, Christine Yankee and Nancy Baker for help with this.

\*Insurance and Liability; Ron Racine reached out to the Department of Human Services Legal Counsel and they provided the language for the By-laws. The committee will review the general laws to make sure they cover the Council.

\*Conflict of Interest statement is already in the By-laws in section 12. The Council is required to have a conflict of interest statement for membership. The committee will review what a conflict of interest is, regarding work with ORS, and create something for the members to sign.

### 9. [State Rehabilitation Council](#) Chair's Report - Dr. Gail Lawson

Last year at the breakfast meeting, I indicated that we would refocused the work of the Council on the regulations and WIOA, making sure that the Council did what was required under the law. For the past year the Council has done this well. There was tremendous involvement in development of the State Plan under WIOA, and the CNA, which was an enormous endeavor. I want to thank John Valentine and Linda Deschenes for their generous time and efforts working with us. We are also coming into compliance with the responsibilities for the Resource Plan. This coming year, the Council needs to come into compliance with our role regarding the Consumer Satisfaction Survey.

The Council is invigorated with the implementation of the WIOA changes and has cheerfully embraced that shift and moved to make itself a more energized organization and a better partner to our colleagues at ORS.

To all the members of the Council and our partners at ORS, thank you for your time, energy, thoughtfulness and hard work and have a great summer.

### 10. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 11:15 A.M.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Nancy Baker*  
 Nancy Baker, RISRC Facilitator