



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Department of Human Services

Office of Rehabilitation Services

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

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

Full Council Minutes January 13, 2015

4:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.

Department of Labor and Training ~ 1151 Pontiac Avenue ~ Cranston, RI 02920

Present: Christina Battista, Christine Botts, Rocco Bruno, Lea Colardo, Kelley Conti, Linda Deschenes, Laurie DiOrio, Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor, Dr. Judith Drew, Liz Graves, Roberta Greene-Whittemore, Kathleen Grygiel, Diana Kriner, Gail Lawson, Jeffrey Machado, Diana Marcotte, JoAnn Nannig, Dan Pieroni, Jack Ringland, Ronald Racine, Vincent Rossi, Catherine Sansonetti, Willa Truelove, Mr. Kim Wennermark

Guests: Dr. Yohann Greaves, Barbara Henry

Margaret "Peggy" Benz, Cynthia Cote, Joan Fino, Maryellen T. Hagerty, Paul Harden, Nicole McCarty, Jessica Mowry, Lori Norris, Jane Slade, Marilyn Walaska,

1. Call to Order: Jeffrey Machado called the meeting to order at 4 P.M. Quorum met
2. Additions/Deletions to Agenda: None
3. Approval of Minutes

Motion

Gail Lawson made a motion seconded by Jack Ringland and unanimously approved to accept the November 18, 2014 minutes. (vote – approved - Christina Battista, Christine Botts, Rocco Bruno, Lea Colardo, Kelley Conti, Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor, Dr. Judith Drew, Liz Graves, Diana Kriner, Gail Lawson, Jeffrey Machado, Diana Marcotte, Dan Pieroni, Jack Ringland, Vincent Rossi, Catherine Sansonetti, Willa Truelove, Mr. Kim Wennermark)

4. Office of Rehabilitation Services Report – Ronald Racine

* ORS is looking at projections for Order of Selection for category 1 clients. We are hoping not to go that route but we hope to make selection for a new CFO to make sure we can carry out services as long as possible.

* New Director at DHS – appointed by the Governor.

* There are six (6) vacancies waiting to go through already in the system and another six (6) in the selection process. Some of these positions are federal funding so this might help get them filled quicker. However, we are getting far less applicants applying for the positions other states have dropped the requirement to have a master's degree, we do not want to do that. Another issue is the other states near us are hiring for a lot more than we can.

* Our Director of DDS retired on December 26th; this is a big loss for us. The Director did not have an assistant administrator so it has been taking up a lot of my time making sure there is a smooth transition.

* The Department is working on the budget for next year; there will be public hearings in the Senate and House finance committees next month for this.

* Department of Justice

a. ORS is doing well with compliance; we are not waiting to put things in place. We have three (3) new counselors specifically working with the population.

b. ORS is working on data collection to see what we have available and work within our MIS system to make sure we have updated and accurate information. One of the positions hired, the Assistant Administrator, will be working with the DoJ as the point person on data collection.

c. Benefits counseling; we have a mandate to provide this counseling but we have a shortage of people to do this and do not have a mechanism in place to pay for Benefits Counselors other than the ones who work with ORS. We are trying to work out something with SSA and the DoJ to provide training in Rhode Island for vendors or individuals in Benefits counseling, rather than where they currently have to go, Virginia. And then set up a central place for folks to go for this counseling.

5. SRC Report - Jeffrey Machado

We are in a state of flux with the council. In your handouts, the role of the SRC facts sheet is there to give a better understanding of our primary functions as a council. We are now going to move forward figuring out the individual roles of members on the council and their roles on the subcommittees.

* Committee Structure - We have consolidated the committees down to the Leadership committee, which is comprised of lead personnel from ORS and the Council Officers as well as the chairs of the two remaining subcommittees. Those committees are, The State Plan, Policy and Quality Assurance committee and the Membership Orientation and Training committee (needs to create a mission statement). All members will sit on one of these two committees. It will be key for all members to have a good understanding of the State Plan, since this is what drives all of ORS's work and thus the Council.

Ad-Hoc committees will be formed as needed. Advocacy is something we will need to form at some point, and going forward in the year there may be a need for other committees.

* Nominations for Council Officers - We are going to need a Secretary. We are taking names for this. Remember this position will be for someone to train and move up into vice-chair or chair so please give this some thought. It should be someone who is in their first term on the Council. Jeff stressed the importance of grooming the officers, with formal mentoring and training for our succession plan to move forward. Especially training into the process. We should be supporting our leadership to attend the national conferences, and teleconference meetings of the NSCRC because they have a lot of leadership training at these events. Also, try to get some regional training or meetings put back in place.

Jeff Machado put forth Gail Lawson's name for the Chair. Gail Lawson put forth Jeff Machado's name for vice-chair. All members can put anyone's name up for nomination as well as their own for any of the officer positions. They may also submit them to Nancy. An official vote will be taken at the March meeting.

6. Membership Nominations – Jack Ringland & Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor introduced and put forth Dr. Yohann Greaves and Barbara Henry for membership. Both were unanimously approved for the process of appointment to the SRC. (*vote – approved - Christina Battista, Christine Botts, Rocco Bruno, Lea Colardo, Kelley Conti, Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor, Dr. Judith Drew, Liz Graves, Diana Kriner, Gail Lawson, Jeffrey Machado, Diana Marcotte, Dan Pieroni, Jack Ringland, Vincent Rossi, Catherine Sansonetti, Willa Truelove, Mr. Kim Wennermark*)

7. State Plan - Catherine Sansonetti spoke about the Plan – Every year there are updates to the Plan. The RSA has authority to require changes but in addition, ORS also looks at the Plan to determine if changes need to be made. It is a long document; but if you start to think of ORS as serving the population, it comes through as a living document. From that prospective it becomes interesting. Looking at it as insight to how ORS is serving different sections of the population makes it more interesting and understandable. It is nice to have a State Plan, Policy and Quality Assurance committee with a lot of diversity, collectively coming together with thoughtful input. We might be more critical and diverse about how things are to be done; we try to make critical comments, positive and negative always with the result to help ORS. It is a good idea that the SRC is making this committee one of two mandated because some people will come into this with fresh ideas. We the Council, are expected to speak out on the Plan, the RSA wants this from us, it is our responsibility. That is why we have the Council and we have certain membership requirements. We need to get away from looking at this as a big boarding legal book.

Judi – Once the State Plan committee does its review, we bring it back to the full Council and look at the initiatives and see how ORS is actually doing on them. This is an opportunity for us to support this. We can do more work with data.

Proposal - *Officers need to sit on separate committees it is suggested and would be the most productive is the Chair sat on one and the vice chair on the other and the secretary run adhoc? Bring this to leadership for thoughts.*

Discussion - Gail, from my perspective this is a large document, so we need more time to review the draft Plan. We should reflect on the timeline that our colleagues at ORS have to work on. Make sure they built into the timeline for us to review the plan, so we can do a nice job to provide the voice of the consumer.

Kat – we have a Continuous Quality Improvement team. We heard your concerns about time factors, so we are looking at affording the SRC more time for review. We have the meeting to help go through the draft; the more the membership of the committee has read the document before they attend this meeting, the better off we are. We want to give you about three (3) or four (4) weeks to review it.

Linda - it would be more like four (4) weeks.

Judi – so we won't even have it until four weeks before you need it from us? The members of the State Plan won't have anything to do until then?

Jeff -Reading the plan is very boilerplate; trying to get a feel for the changes made. Highlight the changes you want people to look at. Why won't that work? Once people get familiar with the entire document, every year we need to look at the changes. Why can't we just highlight the changes? How do other states deal with the state plan? Perhaps we should look at this, do some research.

Catherine –Once there is an understanding of the document really, you just read the attachments.

Kathleen - go through the processes with us, reading the draft then have a conversation with us to understand how to make it less complex.

Meeting date set for joint ORS/SRC State Plan meeting – May 14 @ 2 pm @ ORS

8. New Business – Gail lead the Council in thanking Jeff for his work as the Chair.

9. Adjournment

Motion

Jeff Machado made a motion seconded by Gail Lawson and unanimously approved to adjourn. (vote – approved - Christina Battista, Christine Botts, Rocco Bruno, Lea Colardo, Kelley Conti, Dr. Mona Dorsinville-Phanor, Dr. Judith Drew, Liz Graves, Diana Kriner, Gail Lawson, Jeffrey Machado, Diana Marcotte, Dan Pieroni, Jack Ringland, Vincent Rossi, Catherine Sansonetti, Willa Truelove, Mr. Kim Wennermark)

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy L. Baker

Nancy L. Baker, SRC Facilitator