



WSRC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

Friday, February 11, 2022

9:00am to 12:09pm

Members

Present:

Erica Wollen, Workforce Training Representative, Olympia
Ivanova Smith, Disability Advocacy Representative, Tacoma (joined at 10:00am)
Jayson Morris, Former Recipient of Services, Seattle
Jen Chong-Jewell, Parent Advocate, Everett
Jennifer Bean, Client Assistance Program, Bellingham
Laurae MacClain, Tribal VR Representative, Nespelem
Matt Newton, Business Representative, Tacoma
Michele Stelovich, Labor Representative, Bellingham
Peggy Frisk, Council Chair, Community Rehabilitation Provider, Lake Stevens
Tania May, OSPI Representative, Olympia

Members

Absent:

Terry Redmon, DVR Director, Ex-Officio, Lacey
Lesa Dunphy, DVR Counselor Representative, Colville
Edward Nicholson, Business Representative, Vancouver

Council Staff:

Shelby Satko, WSRC Executive Director, Lacey
Jolie Ramsey, WSRC Executive Lead, Lacey

Visitors:

Allesandria Goard, DVR Chief of Field Services
Andrew Fickes, DVR Communication Specialist
Angela Merritt, DVR Supervisor, Spokane Office
Ann Martin, DVR Region 2 Administrator
Benjamin
Christina Frye, Trillium
Doug Burkhalter, CAP Staff
Catherine Herring, DVR Supervisor, Bellingham Office
Jaymie Heberlein, Trillium
Jo'el Roth, DVR ATAP Region 3
Justin DeFour, DVR Deputy Director
Kim Conner, Executive Director, WA State Independent Living Council
Kristin
Kristina Zawisza, DVR Performance Manager
Lori Magnuson, DVR Regional Trainer, Central Seattle Office
Lynessa Schofield
Mari Heusman, DVR Policy Manager
Mary Ravenna, Artisans

Rachael Baur, DVR Business Relations Manager
Ronnie Oswald, Holly Ridge
Ryan Newell
Tammie Doyle, DVR Transition Manager
Tennille Nicolette, DVR Training Manager
Wanda Thompson
Robb St. Lawrence, DVR Fiscal Compliance Manager
Vanessa Prendiville, The Arc of Spokane

Call to Order— Meeting called to order at 9:03am by Peggy Frisk, Chair

Motion: Approval of November 2021 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

First: Michele Stelovich

Second: Jayson Morris

No edits, no abstentions.

APPROVED

Executive Updates: Peggy Frisk

- Membership and Recruitment
 - Welcome new Council members, Matt Newton, and Ed Nicholson. Both are Business Representatives
 - Still recruiting for one more Business Rep and one Current/Former Recipient of DVR Services
- Letters to the Director, on behalf of the WSRC
 - IT Equipment purchased for DVR customers
 - DVR purchased several hundred laptops and tablets for customers to use in the early months of the pandemic. Last fall the Exec. Committee learned that only a small percentage distributed to customers.
 - CRP-IL workgroup to develop new contract
 - Workgroup comprised of CRPs, DVR Counselors, and DVR leadership
 - Reviewing each part of the contract to make suggestions and improvements
 - Due to the pandemic and other challenges such as rolling out the new case management system, DVR leadership has extended the current contract until 2023.
 - Workgroup will resume meeting later this year to see if there is anything else to incorporate into the current contract's extension.
- Check in on return to in-person meeting
 - Offer hybrid meeting (in-person and virtual) option to maintain accessibility for all
 - Executive committee will take member feedback into consideration
- Strategic planning timeline
 - Planning should ideally align with return to in-person meetings
 - Consider that the Council has new membership since the start of the pandemic, this will be a good activity to help us determine priorities and prepare for the 2023-2026 State Plan development that will be initiated in early to mid-2023

Partnership Subcommittee Updates:

Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board: Erica Wollen

- Experienced a lot of board member turnover with multiple retirements. Mark and Perry retired.
- Governor has offered to restructure the board to have Co-Chairs. Now Gary Chandler and Larry Brown serve as Co-Chairs. Gary is the VP of Strategic Initiatives and Larry is the president of the WA State Labor Council.
- Board's role in State Plan
 - Released Perkins' portion. At the March meeting, we will release the rest of the plan.
 - Confident an extension will be granted to submit the State Plan.

Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC): Ivanova Smith

- Jeremy Norden-Paul has left his position as Executive Director at the DDC.
- Adrienne Stuart is current lead on the Transition Collaborative

Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) & Transition Collaborative: Tania May

- Leadership transitions at OSPI.
 - Glenna Gallo nominated by President Biden to fill the Assistant Secretary for the Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) role. Awaiting a full Senate vote.
 - Once Glenna is confirmed, Tania May will move into her new role to be the new Assistant Superintendent of Special Education. Tania will transition off our Council/
 - Alexandra Toney will soon be the new OSPI Representative on the Council
- Watching several bills, such as SB 5790 (Transition Collaborative Recommendations), HB 1162 (High School graduation pathways), SB 5902 (High School graduation requirements), HB 1536 (Regional apprenticeships), and SB 5789 (Career and College pathways innovation program)
- Newest transition data released. LEVERS
- State Performance Plan (SPP) was submitted Jan. 31

Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC): Jen Chong-Jewell

- West Ed will be working with SEAC as an advisory council on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion training. We will get legislative updates and State Superintendent updates.

State Independent Living Council (SILC): Dion Graham

- Will be conducting a statewide needs assessment on race. Established an AdHoc committee and hired consultants to support this work. Intersecting BIPOC and disabilities.
- At Jan. meeting, SILC received trainings on Disability Justice by speaker Carmon Pacheco-Jones.
- Registration open for the virtual African-American conference on Disabilities. Their sessions focus on such things as addressing how the pandemic has affected African American families. Only nationwide conference that addresses the intersectionality between race and disability.
- Inland NW Experience is the new Spokane Center for Independent Living (CIL), newly opened following the closure of a different CIL in Spokane.

Tribal VR: Laurae MacClain

- Finished our year-end reports
- DVR Colville office will soon have a new DVR Counselor
- Our training structure have changed a bit

Policy & Planning Subcommittee: Michele Stelovich

- Working on developing a Counselor Reassignment best practices guide/checklist to use when a VR Counselor moves on and a customer's case is reassigned. Identifying key contacts, customer and contact who need to stay informed of changes
 - Jen Bean: CAP has heard from customers regarding this issue. Customers appreciate communication and staying informed about their case transfer. The great resignation has made this issue more urgent. It was an issue before the pandemic.
 - Matt Newton: At intake, are customers asked their preferred method of communication?
 - Allesandria Goard explained that in the new case management system, they are working on building that question in.
 - Tania May: I wonder if there would be an option for customers to have a customer portal where they can look up their own case plan, their counselor's contact info, etc.; similar to how doctors have patient portals.

Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation Subcommittee: Jen Bean

- Consumer Satisfaction Survey
 - Customers surveyed=303. Comments received=182.
 - Overall satisfaction with DVR services was 65%, remaining the same as Q2.
 - Those in eligibility status were not surveyed starting in Q3.
- Customer Listening Sessions
 - Working on coordinating with SEAC to hold sessions with Pre-ETS customers. If this does not work out this time, CSPE committee will hold listening sessions with Kelso/Longview customers.
- New contract with WSU includes more detailed and analyzation of data.

Field Services Update: Allesandria Goard

- Staffing Updates. New Training Manager, Tennille Nicolette. New Training Coordinator, Jeanese Hime.
- Exciting changes and expect more changes to quality and quantity of training over time as the new training manager continues to bring new tools, new ideas, and ways of streamlining DVR training goals.
 - VR Institute continuing: New supervisor training, new leadership training and new suicide prevention/awareness training. Will repeat topics from last year, including foundations of VR and Ethics, Counseling theories, Medical Aspects of Disability, Vocational Assessment, Behavior Change, and Labor Market Information.
 - Training Internally: Focusing on redesigning what and how we deliver content to best suit large number of new staff, meeting new and veteran staff where they are. Tennille is working to help onboarding processes and working with program managers to include various program needs to get specific trainings out.
 - High staff turnover these last 2 years. Great need for onboarding training.
 - Jayson Morris asked to be a part of training development. Allesandria will look into that possibility and referred to Shelby as the representative to DVR
- IT Equipment Distribution. Ordered 1,500 pieces of equipment for customers includes: Laptops, iPad, printers, backpacks, covers for iPad, and some peripheral computer equipment.
 - There are still 1,194 items that we still have not been able to deliver to customers
 - Pros: Entering and tracking it, changing policy to not be loaned. Worked to permanently change the policy so that they could loan equipment under \$5,000.
 - Cons: many barriers to delivering the inventory to customers
 - Closed lobbies, no in-person meetings, no resources identified for customers (IT workgroup for customers), staff vacancies, and takes time to track these actions so quarterly is likely the level of reporting. At times equipment was returned by the

customer because they did not know how to use it. IT customer workgroups were created.

- IT Support for Customers
 - DVR formed a workgroup to address what the field were seeing as barriers to customers utilizing technology to communicate, job search, and receive equipment we would like to give them. Sent out an update for staff to include: statewide computer resources list, technology questionnaire, guidance and expectations around having these conversations and entering case notes. Policy will be updated soon (Customer Service Manual).
- Efforts to mitigate impacts for customers when there are multiple counselors
 - VRC 4 floats being established and recruited, looking for RT floats to fill high vacancy rates.
 - P/T temp positions: VRC 4 potential 3 journey level
 - Goal is for these positions to have experience, could be retiree, former staff, and can provide continuity and expertise.
 - Regional Admins are taking inventory of how each office handles transitions and we will be working on identifying a clear process that can be followed statewide.

Client Assistance Program (CAP): Jen Bean

- Provided background on CAP's purpose
- Individual Advocacy. Info and Referral (I&R) referrals vs. CAP Client
 - A client becomes a CAP client when they sign a release
- Rehab Services Administration (RSA) Reporting
 - Problem areas
 - Communication issues between customer and VR counselor—30%
 - Conflict about VR services—23%
 - Related to IPE development/implementation—23%
 - Individual requests information—18%
 - Related to VR application/eligibility/order of selection process—6%
 - Intervention Strategies
 - Short term technical assistance—13%
 - Investigation and monitoring—27%
 - Negotiation with VR agency—38%
 - Informal administrative review (review by RA, Chief of Field Services Director)— 22%
 - Closure reason
 - Some issues resolved in individual's favor—36%
 - CAP determines VR agency position/decision was appropriate—27%
 - All issues resolved in individual's favor—25%
 - Individual not responsive/cooperative with CAP—8%
 - Closure outcome
 - IPE developed/implemented/services provided—22%
 - Communication re-established between individual and other party—22%
 - Controlling law/policy explained to individual—20%
 - Eligibility determination expedited—14%
 - Individual assigned to new counselor—9%
 - Individual participated in evaluation—9%
- Systemic Advocacy
 - Amplifying voices of customers and staff
 - Improve service delivery
 - Workload impacts customer satisfaction

- Policy and procedures
- Trends
 - Counselor changes and reassignment
 - Communication
 - Access to services
 - Vocational assessment
 - IPE amendments
- Developing an out-facing Annual Report.
 - It will be released soon.

Public Comment:

- No public comment received

Meeting wrap-up:

Discussion about State Plan Public Forum

- Jayson Morris: Customers want to know that they are heard. Sees a great need for customers to have an opportunity to share their experiences.
- Matt Newton: The VRC floater position is a great idea. This can help mitigate the staff turnover affects.

Meeting adjourned at 12:09pm