

**WSRC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES***Thursday, August 11, 2022**9:00am to 2:35pm***Members Present****In-Person:**

Erica Wollen, Workforce Training Representative, Olympia  
Ivanova Smith, Disability Advocacy Representative, Tacoma  
Laurae MacClain, Tribal VR Representative, Nespelam  
Michele Stelovich, Labor Representative, Bellingham  
Peggy Frisk, Council Chair, Community Rehabilitation Provider, Lake Stevens  
Terry Redmon, DVR Director, Ex-Officio, Lacey

**Members Present****Via Zoom:**

Dion Graham, State Independent Living Council Representative, Union  
Jen Chong-Jewell, Parent Advocate, Everett  
Edward Nicholson, Business Representative, Vancouver  
Jennifer Bean, Client Assistance Program, Bellingham  
Matt Newton, Business Representative, Tacoma

**Members****Absent:**

Lesla Dunphy, DVR Counselor Representative, Ex-Officio, Colville  
Alexandra Toney, OSPI Representative, Olympia

**Council Staff:**

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

**Visitors:**

Mary Crago, DVR Region 1 Deputy Administrator  
Pablo Villarreal, DVR Region 1 Administrator  
Francisco Felan, DVR Regional Supervisor  
Mercedes Bekke, DVR Regional Office Operations Manager  
Sam Blazina, DVR RTC, Yakima  
Michael Fox, DVR Assistive Technology and Assessment Practitioner  
Bryanna Campbell, Rehab Tech, Moses Lake  
Gilbert Garza, DVR Counselor, Toppenish  
Cassi Villegas, DVR Deputy Director  
Rayanne Miller, DVR Confidential Secretary  
Kim Conner, Executive Director, WA State Independent Living Council

Allesandria Goard, DVR Chief of Field Service  
Doug Burkhalter, Client Assistance Program  
Amy Lystad, DVR RTC, Tumwater  
Ann Martin, DVR Region 2 Administrator  
Bonnie Vintin, DVR Rehab Tech, Omak  
Carolina Perky, ESD, Job Training Counselor, Omak  
Don Alveshere, DVR Sr. Planning Manager  
Melinda Bocci, DVR Training Manager  
Rosa Estrella, DVR Counselor, Sunnyside  
Silvia Delgado, DVR Rehab Tech, Toppenish  
Don Kay  
Jayson Morris  
Lisa Castillo  
Amy Schneider

**Call to Order—** Meeting called to order at 9:04am by Peggy Frisk, Chair

**Motion:** Approval of May 2022 Quarterly Meeting Minutes

**First:** Michele Stelovich      **Second:** Jen Bean

No edits, no abstentions.      **APPROVED**

**Motion:** Approve the nomination of Michele Stelovich as Council Chair and Peggy Frisk as Council Vice-Chair

**First:** Erica Wollen      **Second:** Laurae MacClain

No edits, no abstentions.      **APPROVED**

- Michele and Peggy will assume their respective titles and duties effective October 1, 2022.

**DVR Director Updates:** Terry Redmon

- Current Priorities
  - Pre-ETS/Transition—SB5790 School to Work Program
  - WAVES roll out has been delayed in part to fixing accessibility issues.
- Staffing Changes and Recruitment
  - Cassi Villegas is the new Deputy Director
  - New DSHS Secretary, Jilma Meneses
  - Melinda Bocci is the new Transition Manager
  - Pre-ETS Program Manager and EDAI Administrator positions are open
  - Linds Phelan is the new Communications Manager
    - State Office will make updates to communication format
  - All IT positions, the EDAI Admin. And Customer Relations Manager positions consolidated into other DSHS programs
- Mass Ingenuity/Results Dashboards
  - Software that can assist DVR staff make and meet goals, prioritize, organize development activities.
  - Will incorporate customer satisfaction data.
  - Strategies will come from the State Plan and Strategic Plan

- Will be able to post dashboard pages publicly.
- Synergy Consulting –Founded by former RSA Commissioner Janet LaBreck
  - DVR is consulting with Synergy at our current Pre-ETS operation, identifying specific areas in which we could become more efficient and effective, and recommending strategies of how to do so moving forward.
  - By this, DVR hopes to provide greater clarity for our staff, strengthen our partnership with the schools and our contracted vendors, and extend Pre-ETS services.
  - Held a week-long, in-person session in July with staff and partners across the state
  - Synergy drafted a comprehensive overview that they are now vetting with DVR staff through mid-August and will provide recommendations on where we can adjust or improve pre-ETS services to increase successes in their final report.
- Staff recognition program rollout
  - Working to change culture of DVR to improve retention and staff satisfaction, which leads to improved customer service.
  - Create a culture of gratitude for all staff's work and contributions
- Class and Compensation
  - Working with HR to review VR positions and compensation, including the RT class, to ensure the duties are accurate and evaluate salaries.
  - Due to collective bargaining agreements, DVR is unable to share specific details, DVR is making best efforts to support staff and utilize HR partners' vast knowledge to find solutions.
- Stay and Exit Interviews
  - DSHS interested in a department wide exit/stay interview effort
- Budget Update
  - DVR received \$5,148,510 in program income for SFY 22
    - DVR received \$7,804,749
    - Relinquishment of funds: Per guidance by RSA, DVR will relinquish \$10 million. Carrying forward too much money was not a good idea. Surplus of monies from non-spending during the pandemic. Money goes back to RSA and may be re-allotted to other VRs across the country.
    - Total spent on WAVES as of 7/15/22 is \$4,709,561
    - Laurae expressed considering the sharing of funds both from DVR to Tribal, and from Tribal to DVR. Benefits counseling contracts, job support contracts.
    - Basic Support FFY21 Current spending is \$3,048,698 and have \$16,228,015 to spend by 9/30. Current in 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the grant.
    - Basic Support FFY22 received \$50,122,068
- Order of Selection Update
  - On Sept 1, DVR will release approximately 300 Category 3 customers from waitlist.
- RSA Update
  - Finding around Pre-ETS, IFAs, DVR pays for space within Workforce Centers
  - Exit interview with RSA will be Aug. 16.
- WAVES Updates
  - Roll out has been delayed in part to testing and fixing accessibility issues.
  - Working to identify and address dependencies linked to the 07/01 go-live date.
  - Staff training will occur with new go-live date
- Transition Update
  - Melinda Bocci started 07/01 as the new Transition Manager.

- Her top priority is to work on SB 5790. She is working to connect with all county's programs, assess needs to participate in a School-To-Work program, build relations and show their staff the value of partnering with DVR.
- She will continue collaborating with DDA and OSPI and other community partners to build the framework and delivery of the program.
- DVR looking into integrating existing school-to-work programs

#### **Region 1 Updates: Pablo Villarreal, Mercedes Bekke**

- Staffing updates overview
  - Ongoing staff shifting and shortages due to pandemic
  - Shared staffing rosters of each regional office
  - Supervisors stepped in to serve customers and doing an excellent job.
- Recruiting/Retaining staff successes and challenges
  - Established handshake accounts with colleges for VRC recruits and interns
  - Established internship pathway through DSHS internship program
  - Updated recruitment announcements
- Increased demand for in-person services
- Strategy to address customer satisfaction concerns
  - Currently updating phone lists
  - Internal and external directories
  - Referral inbox
  - Focus on recruitment, hiring, onboarding
- Successes and challenges in serving rural and urban communities in the region
  - Fewer applicants, turnover in DVR and WorkSource partner offices
  - Reliable internet
  - Limitations around long-term supports
- Tribal VR
  - Concerns from Laurae MacClain about the lack of Tribal representation in staffing, on interview panels
  - Terry Martinez is now the Tribal liaison for Spokane Tribe of Indians
  - Carolina Perky is the Tribal liaison for Colville Confederate Tribe
  - Donna Adamson working with Tribal VR and coordinating resources with schools

#### **Region 1 Transition and Assistive Technology & Assessment Practitioner (ATAP) Updates: Mary Crago, Sam Blazina, Michael Fox**

- Several hundreds' more students attending rural schools have been served by DVR until this year, such as Highline, Goldendale, and Waterville
- Summer Transition Conference held in Wenatchee. Spoke about a partnership between DVR and WSU.
- Colville High School held a resource fair.
- Starting conversations with Yakama Tribal School
- School to Work
  - Enrollment was down last year in Spokane, so office staff are collaborating with County DDA and Developmental Disabilities, and working hard to get students to apply.

- Sam Blazina helped to organize this year's Kittitas County Transition and Career Fair has been going for 25 years. Fully inclusive and included many rural schools. Over 348 students attended and 48 vendors participated.
  - Outcomes: Many students gave feedback that this fair increased awareness of so many job
- Sam proposed to DVR that Klickitat County SD and Goldendale SD be pilot school programs
- Mattawa held a resource fair all in Spanish. All 25 students there attended.
- Central WA Transition Network is now a charter organization.
- Michael Fox: Assistive Technology & Assessment Practitioner (ATAP)
  - Received 90 referrals so far this year to help with assistive technology needs.
    - ¼ of referrals were ergonomic related.
    - ¼ were communication access/assistive listening devices.
    - ¼ were vehicle modifications.
    - ¼ were ambulatory and mobility devices.
  - Mentored other RTCs in Regions 2 and 3.
  - Shared success stories

#### **South Central Unit Update: Francisco Felan**

- Moses Lake office has not had a VRC in 16 months. RT's and supervisors are providing services.
- Staff is strongly involved with WorkSource Committees
  - Business services team for Sunnyside, Yakima, and Moses Lake.
  - Serves migrant families
  - The MAG/Migrant Advocate Group
  - Sunnyside United Unidos Coalition
  - YVC Workforce Re-training (WRT) Advisory Committee
- Staff continue to seek local relationship opportunities by providing outreach
- Labor Market overview in Grant County
  - Agricultural, forestry, and fishing at 23%
  - Local government at 17%
  - Manufacturing at 10%
  - Retail Trade at 9%
  - Health services at 7.3%
  - Unemployment is at 5.5%
- Shared customer success stories
  - La Cookie Gourmet Doggie Treats by Lauren. Customer was provided with ITS services
  - Jared's road to successful employment. He is now a lab tech for Hanford.

#### **Customer Satisfaction & Program Evaluation Subcommittee: Jen Bean**

- FFY22 Q2 highlights
  - Customers surveyed—380
  - Comments received—222
  - Response rate was 36%
  - Overall satisfaction was 69% statewide
- Comment Themes—A new prompt for comment if the response was 'Disagree' or 'Strongly Disagree' better helps to understand why customers are dissatisfied
  - Overall:

- Positive—48%
- Negative—41%
- Neutral—11%
- Personnel—32%
  - Counselor untrained—4.7%
  - Staff/Counselor was good—17.4%
  - Experienced discrimination
- Program Outcomes—27.3%
  - Almost even split between positive and negative
  - Jobs were not suited to me—3.6%
  - Happy with progress—3.6%
  - Happy with outcome—7%
- Communication—16%
  - Staff/counselor non-responsive—6.7%
  - Wasn't listed to—2.3%
  - Tech issues
  - Staff counselor very responsive
- External Factors—14%
  - Covid—3.6%
  - Personal barriers—4.2%
  - Funding
- Program Access—10%
  - Process takes too long—3.6%
  - Time issues—3.1%
  - Getting into program was difficult
- Next Steps
  - Collaborate with the Policy & Planning subcommittee on the Recommendation to implement the Counselor Reassignment Best Practices checklist
- Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment
- Continuing to refine data analysis for the Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Customer Listening Sessions

**Public Comment:**

- No public comment received.

**Meeting adjourned at 2:35pm**