

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MEETING
March 22nd and 23rd, 2012
Holiday Inn Express, Fort Pierre, SD

Members present: Elaine Roberts, Kathy Hassebrook, Craig Eschenbaum, Grady Kickul, Brett Glirbas, Robert Kean, Lyle Cook, Barb Storbeck, and Darla McGuire.

Members absent: Melissa Flor, Matt Cain, Carol Kirchgesler, Joe Rehurek, Nikki Darland, and Leo Hallan. **Others present:** Bernie Grimme, Colette Wagoner, Faith Korkow, Rich Eschenbaum, and via speaker phone, Charles Sadler, on 22nd; and Shelly Pfaff and Arlene Poncelet, the 23rd.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Elaine Roberts, Chairperson, called the meeting to order. She welcomed everyone to Fort Pierre and asked for introductions. Staff confirmed there was not a quorum and reviewed who was absent. **OPENING ACTIONS:** The Chair reminded members of the meeting protocol which was attached to the draft agenda. Next, she moved to the draft agenda and asked if there were any additions. Upon hearing none, the Chair moved forward in order to stay on schedule for the 2:00 pm conference call. Elaine asked if members had received the December meeting minutes, and if there were any corrections or additions. Upon hearing none, Chair asked for a verbal consensus for approval, and all were in agreement.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Elaine announced that she brought copies of 'The Circuit', South Dakota Parent Connection's spring newsletter (see attachment). She noted that the cover article was written by Rebecca Cain, spouse of member, Matt Cain. Elaine said the topic of behavior in our schools is well written and a key point is that we "train" our children to do so many things, and yet when it comes to discipline, we "punish" vs. train, and we need to adjust our thinking. She also noted the article in The Circuit announcing the Dare to Dream conference and registration details. There will be a presentation in the morning on this conference.

Elaine also shared a flyer (see attachment) on the upcoming "South Dakota Civil Rights Conference", Monday, April 30th, at the Sioux Falls Washington Pavilion. This is being conducted by US States Attorney Brendan Johnson, and includes Tom Perez, Assistant Attorney General, Civil Rights Division, and Judy Shepard, of the Matthew Shepard Foundation. They will conduct the opening session, from 1:30 – 3:30; following that, 3:30 – 5:30 will be breakout sessions on Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation, Bullying and Discrimination in Schools, and Rights of Persons with Disabilities. More details will follow as the date draws closer.

Robert Kean announced that Partners in Policymaking (PIP) will host a listening session with breakfast at the Sioux Falls Ramada Inn, Saturday, April 28th. Last year they had approximately 200 people, and they are hoping for another great turnout. Everyone is welcome to attend, contact staff for more details.

In holding for a quorum, Elaine reviewed the phone call she had with Charles Sadler, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) staff from Washington D.C. She explained what he intended to discuss, outlining the RSA on-site visit; introductions; overview of the VR monitoring process and monitoring focus area. The review will also include the roles and responsibilities of the State Rehabilitation Council - or what is known in South Dakota as the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR). Elaine mentioned the monitoring and technical assistance guide which RSA utilizes. She stated if members are interested in viewing this, staff can forward the information and related website links.

The Chair asked for any further public comment, and hearing none, moved back to the "opening actions". An additional member had arrived, and a full quorum was present.

MOTION (M) TO APPROVE TODAY'S AGENDA AS WRITTEN, SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C). MOTION TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 5-6, 2011 SIOUX FALLS MEETING MINUTES AS PUBLISHED – MSC.

Next, the Chair asked if everyone had reviewed the minutes from the BVR Executive Committee Meeting, held March 1st. Staff pointed out the financial commitments noted in the minutes: \$12,000 to support the 2012 National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) events held around the state in October; and \$3,000 to support of the Governor's Awards Ceremony to be held in spring or early summer. It was noted that approving the minutes would mean Board approval of these expenditures, utilizing the Board's Strategic Planning Funds.

At this point, a member inquired about the NDEAM proposal requests. What is received and approved, questioning the process, whether there would be opportunities for awarding funds to be expanded, or if it was deemed necessary. She also asked if each community was ever awarded a flat fee. The response was that the process can and has evolved in different ways to better meet the needs of each community. Bernie assured members, that if funding was short, the Division would be willing to contribute support. He also added that the RFP and funding

review process can always be modified as needed to fit growing or changing needs. Lyle asked if we knew the approximate shortfall, and he would follow up with the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) to see what or how much they can contribute again this year.

Following the discussion, the Chair asked for a motion to approve. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE BVR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM MARCH 1, 2012, WHICH INCLUDES THE NDEAM AND GOVERNOR'S AWARDS CEREMONY FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS – MSC.**

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES OF SD CHANGE - Time frame clarification: Bernie Grimme explained that there are proposed changes to the administrative rules due process. In the past, many of the consumers requesting due process were missing review hearings (consumers move, addresses unknown, mail is undeliverable, and other factors) or not responding to correspondence which caused problems in meeting the 60 day requirement to hold the fair hearing. He shared a slide that showed the modified due process in a flow chart and explained the changes will implement time frames between the three levels of due process (i.e., review, mediation, and hearing) and hopefully improve the due process procedures.

It was mentioned that there are questions to be addressed on the exact language about "date of action", (i.e. actual date of services received or the date the case is opened). Bernie agreed there is some fine tuning, but those can be fixed fairly easy and he encouraged members to contact him directly. Robert also offered work on the draft language with Bernie.

2:00 PM CONFERENCE CALL - "Conversation with Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Staff Member Charles Sadler". The Chairperson welcomed Charles Sadler (via speakerphone) to the meeting and he thanked everyone for having them. Elaine had members introduce themselves to Mr. Sadler, plus she added that the membership listing had been sent to him previously. Mr. Sadler started with an introduction of himself, as a Program Analyst with RSA through the US Department of Education in Washington, DC. Sadler has been with the agency for over twenty years and is currently in charge of RSA Region 8, which includes SD.

Joining Sadler on the call: Zera Hoosier, Program Specialist with RSA; Christyne Cavataio, Julia Doyle, Data Unit Representative, and Timothy Beatty, IL unit. Also coming to South Dakota in May will be David Jones and Craig McManus, who are

both on an onsite review in Nebraska. Mr. Sadler asked that members hold questions until the end.

BRIEF OVERVIEW – Mr. Sadler explained that RSA is required to review electronic information annually (i.e. State Plan, numbers served, reports on goals and outcomes). But on-site reviews are scheduled every few years on a rotating schedule with different states. This year is South Dakota's turn. RSA will be conducting a monitoring review of the SD Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) with the on-site portion taking place May 14th – 17th. They use a "Monitoring and Technical Assistance Guide" (MTAG) to ensure a systematic approach. This is located on the website: <http://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/rehab/107-reports/index.html>. Elaine noted this is a huge download, over 200 pages, and suggested reviewing the three focus areas which are necessary for our purposes.

Mr. Sadler reported that RSA will review the agency's progress toward implementation of strategies and recommendations identified during the previous monitoring cycle, back in 2007. A particular area of interest will be the 'Best Practices' of the programs and services that have been instrumental in improving VR outcomes for individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Sadler said there are several stakeholders involved in this review. RSA gathers input from many possible points of view and this is done to ensure compliance. He added how important transparency is and that every effort is made to ensure that information is available. Information is available on RSA's website, including each state's reports. Mr. Sadler reported that they have held one introductory conference call with the Division, and it was the first step in reviewing the paperwork requirements and needed reports.

MONITORING FOCUS AREAS - Mr. Sadler stressed the on-site review will focus on the Division of Rehabilitation Services, general vocational rehabilitation services and supported employment (SE) programs. (The Division of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired on-site review will be held in June). RSA will concentrate on the following three focus areas: the organizational structure of the designated state agency and designated state unit, transition services and employment outcomes achieved by youth with disabilities; and the fiscal integrity of the VR program. The comprehensive review will look at:

1. **Organizational Structure:** the designated state unit (Division of Rehabilitation Services) and how it operates the Vocational Rehabilitation Services program, and

how it relates to the designated state agency (Department of Human Services) and how responsibilities are delegated. They ensure the state unit is independently performing those roles and responsibilities, developing programs and procedures freely and without oversight. Other items reviewed will include spending control, how contract agreements are developed, autonomy in procedures and practices, especially with personnel and staffing policies; and how the Division operates with the SD Workforce Development Council.

2. **Transitional Services and Employment Outcomes:** Mr. Sadler explained how the focus has changed over the years and now the focus is on youth and transitional areas, especially soft skills, as key to helping change the overall mindset from “just a job” to “having a career”. RSA will review collaboration with schools and special education personnel, service providers, post-secondary training, sharing of resources and best practices, and quality employment outcomes. Comparisons will be made with the previous review and any feedback obtained. Data tables have been compiled with five year trends and state indicators are compared to national averages.
3. **Fiscal Integrity of the VR Program:** RSA will look for the proper and legal management of federal funds to determine if the agency met employment goals of consumers served. All the financial details of matching funds, maintenance of effort, and internal controls will be reviewed. They will also review previous reports, purchase orders, contracts and agreements.

Mr. Sadler stated that they're very early in the process, and that DRS has been very good to work with, and no troubles are anticipated to arise. On Monday morning, May 14th, there will be a welcome conference and an opportunity for an exit conference or a debriefing, upon leaving on Thursday the 17th. Later a conference call will be held, with first drafts of recommendations and findings. Sadler pointed out some key differences, that a recommendation is more like an observation, it is something RSA can say you “should do”, or “encourage you to do”, and meaning RSA can't make us do it. But a finding is something that RSA can tell you as an agency that you are “required to do”.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES – Sadler said the review will also look at the State Rehabilitation Council (the Board); looking at membership and composition, determine if the Board is participating and providing input on policies for procedures: State Plan, Statewide Needs assessment, agency goals, and strategic planning. Is there an order of selection? If so, how does that impact services

provided? Sadler said RSA will want to know things like does the Board provide recommendations to the Division and if so, are they acted upon and how? Does the Board have a good working relationship with the Division? At this point, Charles Sadler opened the floor to BVR members to offer input.

Robert stated that the Board is fully participatory with the Division. State agency staff is responsible to requests for conformation, staff is accessible and stated the Board is very productive. Another member noted that the Division has done a good job asking questions and for advice, they've used the Board in many positive ways. It was noted that the Division is very involved with Special Education, mental health issues, sharing resources with different entities, and collaborates with employers and businesses.

Mr. Sadler inquired about the visibility of DRS? Robert assured him that DRS is very visible and has a solid credibility, and this Board plays a positive role in collaborating with the Division. It was noted that yes, there are many, many partnerships developed proving strong collaboration with everyone trying to do more with less, and the agency has an Order of Selection but has not had to implement it.

As VR Director of the Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Program (Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe), Lyle reported that he serves on all three boards/council – the BVR, SILC, and BSBVI – he feels qualified to say that he sees a representative of VR at every one of these meetings. He also sees them working hard in the rural tribal communities, working long hours, especially long wind shield hours and yet, and meeting with consumers on every trip. Lyle stated he feels that DRS and the Native American Vocational Rehabilitation Program have a good, strong working relationship. Only four reservations have a 121 program in SD, and there are five others that do not, we need to keep working on that, to encourage one another to apply for those federal grants. Lyle spoke of collaboration – with the Division and other groups and agencies in terms of capacity building and sharing information and resources.

Sadler inquired about the Division serving Native Americans, and Lyle assured him that yes, VR counselors have hectic schedules, rotating days in different towns, but indeed services are provided to Native Americans and that there are individuals who are served by both programs.

Another BVR member stated for Mr. Sadler that Board Staff are very efficient and do an excellent job. Members rely on them for information, ensuring good communication, and sharing.

As a former VR consumer, Brett wanted Mr. Sadler to know that he has had a very positive, long-term experience. He had been on IEPs for years, that helped him graduate with honors, both high school and college, and he now owns his own business. VR made that happen; he feels he owes them, they always went over and above, and he gives much credit to their dedication to providing multiple services and an internship. Thank you to VR.

Sadler asked for any further comments, and upon hearing none, he offered that BVR members or other stakeholders can provide private feedback or comments to him at his email address: Charles.Sadler@ed.gov

He thanked the Board for their time today, he expressed his appreciation that members are willing to serve and to help others with disabilities. He reminded folks once more that there are more details and FAQs on the website, and to stay in touch if one would like.

As Chair, Elaine thanked Charles for the information he presented, it was informative and stated that she feels the on-site review will go smoothly.

BREAK

EMPLOYMENT & BENEFITS TRAINING – Shelly Pfaff, representing the SD Freedom to Work Project (SD’s Medicaid Infrastructure Grant-MIG) explained that this large agreement had come to an end on December 31st. The project received a no-cost one year extension. One intent was to continue more trainings. Shelly noted how FTW used to hire a national trainer, Mike Walling, who came in for a week and hit five different communities. The FTW Project has grown the idea to create more “train the trainer” type courses, developing our own knowledge base to conduct benefits trainings. These trainings are audience specific, targeting either providers or individuals with disabilities.

Currently Shelly and Brooke Lusk are conducting these trainings for providers. At a Mike Walling session you may have had several categories of people in the audience, consumers - past and present, providers, or family members. They cover much of the same information as Walling, and attempt to present in a logical format.

By targeting only one audience type, it seems to have a more cohesive flow to the course. They have held workshops in Rapid City, Pierre, Huron and Mitchell. It is tricky to accomplish in a day and a half, but staff is attempting to address the mindset of satisfaction level with earnings, inform and educate individuals with disabilities that they can work, earn more and not lose their benefits.

Darla reported that as a provider, she attended the Mitchell Work Incentives Benefits Training. She said it was a great training, which incorporated several learning styles to give everyone a better shot at learning it. Darla added she thought the two trainers were very well informed and that she would suggest it for all her colleagues.

Barb added that she attended the Rapid City Work Incentive Benefits Training, and also felt it was worthwhile. She posed the question, from a consumer's point of view, are the benefit specialists simply under staffed? She added that whenever she phones, and has to leave a message, that they don't return calls very quickly.

Shelly replied that yes, with a limited number of benefit specialist, many offices are under-staffed and over-loaded with cases, and attempting to do the very best they can with limited resources.

Bernie added that in many cases, benefit specialists have placed a call in to the Social Security Administration on the consumer's behalf, and they are also waiting for a return call.

Craig inserted that many times the information can change extremely fast, and occasionally, even SSA has trouble keeping up with it all, and that adds to delays.

Barb returned to having attended the Work Incentives Benefits Training and recommended it to all BVR members.

Shelly inquired if there were further questions, and it was asked, are there any trainings on benefits that will be aimed at youth in transition and special education? Shelly explained that yes, Dan Rounds, with Black Hills Special Services Cooperative (BHSSC), will be developing similar trainings targeting this age group.

Shelly added that she and Brooke will be developing and offering smaller, very basic, one hour benefit trainings for providers. It was suggested that if those go well, maybe they will be videotaped and uploaded and made available on the web, or conducted via video-conferencing. Next, they want to target peer support groups of

mental health centers or other support providers. A question was raised about targeting the Native American population, and the response was the Project recognizes this as a very difficult area due to the few employment opportunities on tribal lands and the need to provide good information.

Shelly continued by explaining the FTW project is hoping to continue with these trainings, i.e. community support providers, community mental health centers, and other entities that can use these updates on helping people with disabilities to learn to earn. Again, it's about adjusting the mindset, expectations, and attitudes of many people and that will take time. Shelly thanked the Board for their interest in having her here today.

LOWER BRULE PUBLIC MEETING – Staff reported that she had been approached by the Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) and they invited the Board to partner on an upcoming public meeting. Gaye Mattke had already discussed the event with Division staff and they were supportive. These are valuable information sharing and gathering events. The event is planned for Thursday, April 26th, 11 AM – 2:00 pm, at the Golden Buffalo Casino Convention Center, in Lower Brule. Agencies that want to collaborate on this effort include: Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI), Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD), SD Parent Connection, and SD Advocacy Services.

During the discussions, it was proposed that the BVR, SILC and BSBVI each provide \$500 to this event. It came together quickly, and a display advertisement would be conducted 30 days prior to the event due to the SILC's regulatory requirements for the printed notice. The notice was placed in the Central Dakota Times newspaper, and another ad will be placed by the BSBVI. Flyers will be disseminated, along with a radio ad, to encourage attendance. There will be a soup and sandwich luncheon included, and gift cards will be used as door prizes. Plans are being made for about 75 people to attend. Gaye Mattke has been working with Ellen Durkin, Program Director of the Lower Brule Native American Program. Grady added that members are more than welcome to attend, let staff know and they can assist with arrangements (travel expenses would be covered). Elaine voiced her appreciation for the agencies get involved in these valuable sharing events.

Due to lack of quorum, Chair said without objection, if everyone is in agreement, we're going to cast our vote today, table it until tomorrow, and when other member(s) arrives tomorrow, they can cast a vote then too.

MOTION TO PROVIDE \$500 IN FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE LOWER BRULE PUBLIC MEETING IN LOWER BRULE APRIL 26, 2012 – ALL PRESENT SAID YES.

Chair apologized for jumping around the agenda and returned to the Administrative Rules that Bernie Grimme began earlier.

Bernie explained the proposed changes in the timeline involved for an applicant or consumer to file a complaint for the due process and fair hearing. The Division is gathering input on this proposed change. The biggest change will be that an individual who is dissatisfied with an eligibility decision or a service decision, they would now only have 30 days to submit a written request for a review. At any point in the process, an individual could choose to go straight to a fair hearing, but has been rare. Most appellants go to an "Administrative Review", and then the individual has 10 days to request the next step in due process, it will not automatically move forward. The Fair Hearing must be done in 60 days from the process starting, unless an extension is granted.

Questions were raised on some phrases in the actual rule that may need clarified, such as the difference between "date of action", "date of services approved", and the "date of services received". Bernie explained that ambiguities such as this need fine tuning. He agreed, and stated these are examples of what they are looking for when they ask for input. Any feedback can be sent directly to him via email or mail, please feel free to contact him with any suggestions (Bernie.grimme@state.sd.us). Bernie explained that what he presented to the Board must be presented to the Legislative Research Council (LRC) prior to hosting the public hearing.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS NOMINATIONS UPDATE – Staff reported that the deadline closed the end of February for Governor's Awards nominations. The review of nominations is done by a committee made up of members from the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC), Board of Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired (BSBVI), and Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR). BVR representatives are Melissa Flor, Lyle Cook, and Craig Eschenbaum. Lyle fills three roles covering BVR, SILC, as well as BSBVI. Other members on this committee are Angie Boddicker, BSBVI, and Shelly Schock, SILC.

Staff continued reviewing the numbers of nominations received by category, which were similar to levels of years past. Lyle noted that last year the committee worked

hard to create a ranking/numbering system. So with that in place this time, it went much smoother and faster. He encouraged others to think about volunteering for this committee because it is very worthy. Bernie stated there were great nominations this year, thank you to those who worked on getting nominations disseminated and/or back in. Elaine also thanked the members who served on this committee.

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH (NDEAM) Staff announced that eleven communities submitted requests for NDEAM funding for October 2012. There was \$18,735 requested for the 2012 events. The proposals for funding were reviewed and approved by a committee similar to the Governor's Awards Review Committee, made up of members from BVR, BSBVI and SILC. Seven towns are sharing the expenses to bring in the well-known motivational speaker, John Robinson. Pierre, Rapid City, and the Fall VR Conference also proposed sharing speaker costs for Geri Jewell to come the week of October 15th. In Sioux Falls, they want to have an attorney present on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and have an employer panel discussion with collaboration from the Business Resource Network (BRN).

After careful consideration the committee approved \$17,375 of the \$18,735 original request – two communities' funding requests were reduced. It was noted that these events have always come in under budget and have never been over. For further details on NDEAM events, contact staff. BVR members were encouraged to link up with area NDEAM committees in their respective towns, and of course if a member attends, expenses would be covered by the Board.

The Chair called for any other discussion items, and upon hearing none, the meeting was recessed for the evening.

8:30 AM, Friday, March 23rd, 2012. The meeting was reconvened by Elaine Roberts, Chairperson. She welcomed everyone and called for introductions, noting two guests, Arlene Poncelet and Shelly Pfaff. Staff confirmed there was *not* a quorum present. Elaine reminded members to please use proper meeting protocol etiquette.

DARE TO DREAM FUNDING APPLICATION – Arlene Poncelet, Director of the Council on Developmental Disabilities, and Shelly Pfaff, Executive Director of the SD Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, thanked the Board for allowing this

opportunity. Arlene and Shelly explained they were here today representing the Dare to Dream Planning Committee which submitted a request for financial support. Arlene explained this conference is a cross-disability conference held "every-other-year" for persons with disabilities, family members, or families with children with disabilities, caregivers and other providers. This year's conference will be held Sunday, June 10th, through Tuesday, June 12th, at the Spearfish Holiday Inn Convention Center. This is a unique conference because it used to be two smaller conferences that came together in the 1990's to collaborate as one large, all-inclusive conference. Shelly noted that many talk collaboration, but it's easier said, than done. There are 15 organizations and agencies that come together to support this important conference. At the last Dare to Dream conference there were over 230 adults and an additional 65 children and teens registered, this year the hope is to grow those numbers.

A special feature of this conference is the provision of child care and respite care allowing parents and others to attend sessions. Another new feature is the teen program with educational topics such as friending your IEP, the crucial transition years and self-advocacy. This conference is different in several ways. It allows the whole family to attend; opportunities to meet others with disabilities from around the state, learning from one another as well as what services and supports are available.

Arlene added that this year a new approach to recruit trainers and speakers was done through a "Call for Presenters". They received many proposals and it was hard to choose. A great line up of breakout sessions will be offered to the audience. Arlene noted that speaker, Isaac Baldry, is a young man who is a self-advocate and insightful motivational speaker. Dr. Thom Flamboe, a professor of psychology at Presentation College in Aberdeen, will provide a teen session and the final keynote.

Elaine injected that she has heard Isaac Baldry speak before and he was great! He demonstrates the use of assistive technology, speaks to transition issues and his involvement with Youth Leadership Forum.

Next Arlene shared the Dare to Dream "Call to Art" flyer (see attachment). There will be an art show with a variety of artwork done by persons with disabilities. This flyer is an official request to have persons with disabilities submit their original artwork for consideration to be shown during the conference. Deadline is April 13th.

Shelly shared the registration form with members (see attachment), noting other special features of this conference – there are stipends available to help cover expenses for individuals with disabilities and their families to attend. For those details, please see the registration packet, or you can contact either SD Parent Connection or Arlene directly for more information.

Grady inquired about the request of a \$2,000 commitment from the Board and what would the financial support be used for? The response was that it will be applied towards the costs of speaker's travel expenses, and meal costs. Another member inquired if this group has ever requested or received funding before from BVR? Arlene replied no, not from the Board.

A MOTION WAS MADE TO APPROVE THE REQUEST OF \$2,000 TOWARDS FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE 2012 DARE TO DREAM CONFERENCE – MS.

The seven members present were in favor of supporting this motion. Members were expecting the arrival of one more member, thus they would table the vote until later in the morning. Grady reminded members they are welcome to attend the Dare to Dream conference as a Board representative, if interested, contact staff and registration fees and travel expenses will be covered.

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORT -

RSA On-Site Visit: Grady indicated he was curious about yesterday's call with Mr. Sadler, and asked if members were comfortable with sharing comments.

Elaine explained that it went well, that Mr. Sadler had reported on the upcoming on-site review, reviewed the process, and timelines involved. At the end, he asked for feedback, which was all very positive. Elaine added that Sadler invited her as BVR Chair to attend on Monday, May 14th, for the entrance interviews. Grady said he'll be sure to have her on the agenda. It was pointed out that members can still provide RSA feedback or comments and the contact information would be made available.

Director's Comments: Grady reported there has been a lot of discussion on transition, and the crucial transitional timeframe of moving from high school education to the next stage of post-secondary education, work, or whatever. He spoke of efforts on the federal level, and the need for language changes (i.e. phrases such as using intellectual disabilities vs. developmental disabilities). He talked about an initiative at the state level and different groups talking with the Governor's office about a secondary-education program for students with intellectual

disabilities. Currently there are 33 other states that are taking part in a federal program called, "Think College!" The Division is speaking with a group from Rapid City exploring the concept of "Think College" and they are inviting stakeholders to meet to see if this could become an option for South Dakota. The three main proponents in Rapid City are Monica Burgess, Jane O'Leary, and Dee Knutson. Also working hard to see this take shape is Judy Struck, Center for Disabilities, Sioux Falls. This grant option requires a post-secondary educational institute to apply for the grant.

Grady mentioned that some educational institutions, like Augustana in Sioux Falls, do a wonderful job of offering/utilizing natural supports to aid students with disabilities and he would hope others can learn from them. Anyhow, he wanted to let the Board know that this is becoming a statewide discussion item.

Next Grady reported on the meeting he attended yesterday in Sioux Falls involving educators, policymakers, parents of children who are deaf or hearing impaired, and representatives of deaf organizations. He learned that Dr. Cooch and Dr. Calhoun, Black Hills State University (BHSU), have been contracted to conduct a survey of parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing. This came about due to closing of the SD School for the Deaf, and needing to learn more about children with hearing loss.

Grady mentioned this is similar to the survey regarding "Indicator 14" (Office of Special Education) targeting youth on IEP's and attempting to track where they were one year after graduating from high school. To determine what they are doing, are they working, are they in secondary education, or living independently?

Marge Kaiser, Ann Larson, several deaf educators, and many parents were there to fine tune the survey instrument. The Division is assisting with developing a fact sheet for parents and encouraging them to fill out the survey. Grady added this endeavor is moving things forward, and has witnessed that the deaf community has little knowledge of available services and programs and this group is trying to better understand how to enhance the education of children with hearing loss.

DRS Budget Update: Grady announced that the coming fiscal year budget will be close to \$5 million, which is actually down from last year. Fiscally busy, doing contract renewals in April, the state loads the new budget in May; the Division will start on the new budget July 1st. This past legislative session went fine; the

division's budget was approved on the first try. There was more optimism this session, but the world of education had struggles with bills trimming their budgets.

Rehabilitation Service Administration (RSA) On-Site Visit: Grady reviewed that there is a group of four RSA staff coming to Pierre for an on-site review. Most of you were on yesterday's conference call with Charles Sadler, with the RSA. Prior to them arriving here, there are four more conference calls scheduled with Division staff to assist with information/report gathering to prepare for the on-site review. Follow-up letters with the findings and recommendations will be expected 30 days following the review. Grady felt this had been discussed adequately earlier and moved forward.

BVR Appointments: Grady confirmed with staff that there was only one BVR position up for re-appointment this year, and that was Matt Cain. And yes, Matt has agreed and accepted to serve again, if appointed. His re-appointment request will be submitted to the Governor for his review and action.

STATE PLAN SUBMISSION PROCESS - Bernie spoke to the State Plan Document as the official document reported to RSA on how the Division has done the past year. Similar to last year, the Division is required to submit six attachments requiring annual updates and the remaining attachments don't require updates. He continued and reviewed the handout with timelines (see attachment) i.e. posting draft copies, public meetings, etc. He provided copies of the draft attachments as well. In May, the attachments will be reviewed by the Consumer Services Committee. They'll make recommendations to the full Board at the June meeting and the finalized draft will be presented to the State Workforce Development Council for approval and submitted to RSA by the end of June. Bernie reminded members these can be reviewed anytime at <http://dhs.sd.gov/drs/> and suggestions or other edits can be forward directly to him.

EMPLOYER RESOURCE NETWORK (ERN) UPDATE – Kathy Hassebrook briefly reviewed that ERN started as a partnership between the FTW Project and Aberdeen Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM). The partnership included vocational rehabilitation staff, employers and private providers. ERN worked hard to get established, and was recognized by the national chapter with a Pinnacle Award, and they're trying to replicate that energy in other communities. They are coming up with ideas to get the business community involved by taking the ERN model and adding financial incentives. This required confident buy-in from the State SHRM Chapter. Kathy is now the State SHRM Diversity Chairperson, which brings her a bit

more clout to keep this effort on the forefront. There will be online toolkit, which provides the diversity chairpersons monthly sheets to model, complete with templates, timelines and other resources. There are areas for them to add their own information too. The informational sheet provides a snapshot of an individual with disability which connects vocational rehabilitation services to the project. Kathy talked about collaboration, and getting a SHRM representative active with every NDEAM event around the state.

Kathy announced that financial commitments were secured to sponsor the future statewide conference; there are several pieces of this puzzle yet to go. A member inquired about who's in charge of the Rapid City SHRM? Kathy replied she did not know, but it should be available on the web. The SHRM Conference will be held May 17th, at the Aberdeen Ramada Inn. The Board has agreed to provide some support towards speaker fees, and she thanked them for that. She also thanked the Division for its support – financial and staff.

Kathy encouraged members to attend this training which provides the opportunity to partner, build relationships and promote diversity. By not selling or pushing the disability aspect quite so hard in the HR world, it becomes embraced a bit more easily.

Grady clarified for members that the Freedom to Work Project gave monies to ERN with the no cost extension for SHRM Chapters to get involved and to increase disability and diversity awareness, a win-win situation.

Kathy mentioned that relationship building is key between area employers, VR staff, and SHRM groups. As an example, it was Kim Crossan, Aberdeen VR office, who believed in ERN as a great direction to collaborate and it was, but it took years of relationship building. Elaine thanked Kathy for the report.

BREAK

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC) - Grady reported the SILC met in Pierre on February 2, and welcomed as guest speaker, DHS Secretary Laurie Gill. She talked about her time in office, her first legislative session as the new Department Secretary, and briefly on her vision for the Department and upcoming strategic planning. SILC members appreciated her visit. This meeting was held to coordinate with a meeting of one of the Medicaid Solutions Committees, the medical equipment reuse workgroup. A new member orientation training was

conducted in conjunction with this meeting. Grady mentioned that the SILC is soliciting nominations in a joint effort with Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired, which are forwarded to the Governor for his review and action. He added that the SILC has representation on the Governor's Awards Review Committee and the NDEAM Review Committee. He also noted that the Division and SILC were involved in the Activities of Daily Living Services (ADLS) waiver renewal process, noting that now the program serves approximately 116 eligible individuals. Grady anticipates the waiver to be renewed.

The SILC had a presentation made by the SD Housing Development Authority (SDHDA) on chronic homelessness. SDHDA was active in the official homeless count last fall and talked about the troubles encountered. Collaboration was discussed on how to bring the worlds of IL and low income housing together to better meet the needs of people who have disabilities and are homeless. Grady noted that a large percentage of SD's homeless were children, 40% of the people who are homeless are under the age of 15.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL UPDATE - Grady reported the Council met on January 5th. On the agenda was DHS Secretary, Laurie Gill, similar as he just mentioned for SILC. He suggested the BVR arrange an opportunity for her at a future meeting. He turned to staff noting the June meeting is scheduled for Aberdeen already, and asked them to possibly have it arranged for her to meet with the Board at their fall meeting in the Pierre area.

Grady stated that the National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) Program was reported on in depth. The number of people taking this certification test is increasing at Department of Labor and Regulation local offices around the state. More employers are learning about this testing and certification system and are starting to ask for it more often from applicants.

Elaine added she took an online course via the web, and NCRC was one portion of this training. She took this as a result of Dr. Outka's presentation at the December BVR meeting in Sioux Falls, along with other educators. It sounds great if they have the buy-in from employers. Concern was raised for this possibly hurting people with disabilities or others who may not test well, and won't qualify for the certification. A comment was made about developing individual's skills and training for higher levels of skills. Grady inserted that its part of long range plans for state government to be using this certification process. Bernie added that some of the VR offices use the

NCRC program, and it's going well. Staff is using the soft skills curriculum/assessments more than other components.

Staff mentioned that the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) a federal labor program has released a curriculum aimed at transitional aged youth. This target age audience comes high-tech ready and yet, there's a huge need to learn communications/soft skills in the workplace or they could have trouble holding jobs. This curriculum comes with easy activities and covers a variety of topics, it can be found at: <http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/youth/softskills/>

Grady noted that at the next Workforce Council meeting, DRS will present the State Plan for review and provide opportunity to provide input. Grady mentioned on the national level there is news out of Washington that a Workforce Investment Re-Authorization Bill is coming to the House of Representatives. And coincidentally, the Republicans released their proposed budget cuts. The Division is watching this and will report further when possible.

TECHNOLOGY UPDATE: Grady turned it over to Bernie for this brief update. Bernie announced that at the VR offices, they've been videotaping trainings, making them available online for other staff (http://dhs.sd.gov/drs/recorded_videos/training/). He explained that social media – Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, etc. – are special training topics. There are many right and wrong ways to interact on these sites, and a lot of gray area. Blurred boundaries are hard to define and frequently get crossed. Region 8 Tace and the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor have also provided online training on "Ethics".

Elaine remarked that the state's new home page design is not user friendly in her opinion. She added that studies have shown that if people have to click more than two or three times, they may not come back. It's about the ease of navigation.

Brett asked Grady if there's any way for him or other Board members to be of assistance on this topic. Grady replied that if there are areas of interest to members that they want to explore, let Bernie or staff know. These could then become future agenda items.

OTHER BUSINESS – Elaine called for any other business. Craig announced that the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) held in June, was originally scheduled for the NSU Student Union Center which is being remodeled. Now all activities are being

relocated to the Johnson Fine Arts Center. Brett gave a brief overview of YLF for newer members. This year the Board will be attending the luncheon. Elaine added that unfortunately she will not be available to attend the next meeting, she has a commitment as the co-Chair of the Autism Conference, Lighting the Way, in Sioux Falls those same dates.

CLOSING ACTIONS: Future Agenda Items: Bernie mentioned there will be three Futures graduates and two of them are from the Aberdeen area, and it might be a good opportunity to bring them in and honor their achievement. Grady agreed that was a great idea.

Bernie also added that at Presentation College, the "18 - 21 Program" is very strong, and has some students that could share their stories and experiences with the Board. Again, Grady asked to check into the availability of those dates, since it is in June, and not the regular school timeframe.

Grady suggested the Board meet longer than normal on the first day, Wednesday, June 7th. Then the Board could attend YLF events Thursday morning prior to the luncheon. Craig suggested reviewing which sessions are planned that morning and their locations before deciding for certain.

Grady said that the YLF committee meets early in April, with final details being arranged, and asked if the Board would allow the Executive Committee to approve the final day's schedule after that. All agreed that was fine.

Elaine returned to the Vote previously tabled due to a lack of a quorum adding that the Board needs to finalize the vote for providing the \$500 in BVR Strategic Planning funds towards the Lower Brule public meeting, and the \$2,000 to the Dare to Dream Conference. Since there was not enough members to fulfill a quorum, Grady asked if the Executive Committee, which is present today, to vote on these financial awards on behalf of the Board. Members present encouraged them to do so.

CHAIR OF EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MOVED TO PROVIDE \$500 IN FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE LOWER BRULE PUBLIC MEETING ON APRIL 26, 2012 – MSC BY ALL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FUNDING REQUEST OF \$2,000 TOWARDS FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF THE 2012 DARE TO DREAM CONFERENCE – MSC BY ALL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS.

Schedule Next Meeting: Again, this was lined up after that last meeting to coordinate with YLF activities: June 6th and 7th, 2012 Aberdeen Best Western Ramkota Hotel, final details to follow. Fall meeting in Rapid City or Pierre.

Grady reminded members to think about attending as a BVR member, any or all of the events discussed today, contact staff for details regarding reimbursement. He thanked members for serving and contributing to this Board. Elaine also thanked everyone for their time and wished them safe travels home and asked that we all please stay in touch.

CHAIR MOVED TO ADJOURN BY THE AGREEMENT OF ALL, ADJOURNED AT 11:45 AM.