

**Board of Vocational Rehabilitation
September 7-8, 2005
Chamber of Commerce – Pierre**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Grady Kickul, Julie Carpenter, Beth Haug, Ron Ronshaugen, Thomas Kober, Larry Tolzin, Brady Kerkman, Lynn Boettcher Fjellanger, Dr. Jessie Easton, Kati Seymour, Monte Tschetter, and Dan Rounds. MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary l'atala, Travis Hamilton and Shelly Schock. OTHERS PRESENT: Bernie Grimme, Colette Wagoner, Brooke Lusk and Cassie Stoesser. Interpreters were: Julie Paluch and Gretta Howe.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Tom Kober, Chairperson, brought the meeting to order at 1:10 PM and welcomed everyone to Pierre. He invited everyone to introduce himself or herself. **OPENING ACTIONS: MOTION TO APPROVE THE PROPOSED AGENDA MADE (M), SECONDED (S) AND CARRIED (C). MOTION TO APPROVE THE JUNE 8/9 MEETING MINUTES – MSC. MOTION TO APPROVE THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 18 – MSC.**

PUBLIC COMMENT: Board staff referenced two thank you cards received from Jeanne Vogel and students of the Youth Leadership Forum and passed them around. Brady mentioned that he was in Huron for the State Fair and toured the new Convention Center. He indicated that it was a very nice facility and they offered very reasonable rates, perhaps a site to consider for future meetings. (Ron Ronshaugen had to leave the meeting at this point due to an emergency.)

INSTALLATION OF NEW OFFICERS: Board members were reminded that election of officers was held at the last meeting. New officers are Tom Kober/Chairperson, Monte Tschetter/Vice Chairperson and Shelly Schock/Member-At-Large. Thank you's were extended to Tom, and Lynn for serving as officers for the last two years and Dave Vogel was acknowledged for serving in various

positions on the Board. At this time, Dan Rounds was welcomed to the Board as a new member.

DIVISION OF REHABILITATION SERVICES' DIRECTORS REPORT:

DIRECTOR'S COMMENTS: Grady stated that South Dakota is gearing up to possibly receive a thousand families in response to Hurricane Katrina. Relocation areas have been identified in Rapid City, Sioux Falls and Yankton. The Division has been asked to assess the need for interpreters and assistive technology (i.e., mobility devices). It was reported that some families have already arrived in parts of South Dakota, knowing that waivers were needed to enroll children into school. **REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (RSA) MONITORING CONFERENCE:** Grady reminded members of the downsizing of RSA staff prior to October 1st, staff size of 150 will be reduced to 45. The Division will lose the availability of technical assistance on service delivery once provided by RSA staff located in the regional office, this will lead to states relying on each other for different areas of expertise. One example provided was South Dakota being contacted by Texas and Colorado as a result of a presentation made at a national conference on transition. Grady thanked Dr. Easton for providing written comment on the document relating to the restructuring of RSA. Grady discussed the RSA Monitoring Conference that he attended August 24/25 in Washington D.C. Participants represented State agency staff, State Rehabilitation Councils, service providers, consumers and consumer organizations. The focus of the conference was primarily on state monitoring and program improvement (i.e., annual reviews, periodic reviews, performance indicators and standards and State Plans). Discussion continued on the down sizing of RSA staff and how it will impact states in terms of programming and receiving technical assistance. In terms of what is required, South Dakota is doing what is called for i.e., State Plan review and monitoring, statewide needs assessment, state goals and strategies. Grady explained the proposed organizational structure of RSA in terms of functional units and state teams and the states assigned to the units/teams. Grady talked about priority areas for the State of South

Dakota: 1) identify a liaison to the state by October 1st; 2) look at the State Plan process as a continuous activity; 3) ongoing case file reviews; 4) define the role of the State Rehabilitation Council, as well as the stake holders; 5) look at the comprehensive system of personnel development. DRS BUDGET UPDATE: Grady explained that the year just completed (FY06) met its budget because funds were transferred from other areas within the Department. These monies were utilized to serve additional consumers. The Division's FY07 budget request has been submitted to the Department and it reflects only an increase in the area of case services (i.e., cost of living increase). Case service expenditures for FY06 were over \$5 million. The Division has been serving approximately 200 additional consumers each year, which increases case service expenditures. The Division doesn't see any change; therefore, by the end of this fiscal year, it might mean implementing an order of selection. BOARD/COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS: Grady explained that this is a standing agenda item for this time of year, referring to the recent appointment of Dan Rounds and the re-appointment of eight members. DRAFT/FINAL POLICIES: Bernie Grimme handed out three draft program guides: Voter Registration Procedures, Situational Assessments, and IPE Annual Review (see attached). Reasons for the proposed changes were explained (i.e., grammatical, legislative change). He noted that the draft program guides have been available on the Division's website for over 30 days for public comment and that the Division would like to finalize the program guides shortly. These program guides were discussed during the Consumer Services Committee meeting held in August and their recommendations have been incorporated into the documents. Bernie indicated that Brady would review the committee's recommendations in more detail under the Consumer Services Committee report.

(Permission was sought and granted to switch the next two agenda items around.) STATEWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT: Grady explained that this is a standing agenda item since the assessment was completed by USD. He indicated that there isn't anything to

report at this time, however the Division needs to take a closer look at the results. He asked if members had any ideas or suggestions on how to further break down the data, to be in touch, or another possibility was to go back to the vendor for ideas.

ORDER OF SELECTION: Bernie prepared a PowerPoint presentation to talk about the Order of Selection. He provided everyone with a copy of the PowerPoint presentation as a handout (see attached). He discussed in more detail the trends of serving more consumers, increase of expenditures, and Order of Selection. He highlighted the trends in serving more significantly disabled consumers as the years progressed, as compared to the average payment per case, which also increased each year. Basically, if the future projection remains accurate, the Division will not have the financial resources to continue to serve all eligible consumers. Bernie handed out the State Plan attachment, which outlines the order of selection priority categories along with the priority category definitions. The PowerPoint handout will be made available as full size for easier reading. This will require further discussion at upcoming meetings in order to prepare for implementation after July 2006. Another task the Division wants to complete is talking with district offices about expenditures and comparable benefits and how to best utilize the resources that are available to avoid an Order of Selection. This will remain as a future agenda item.

FREEDOM TO WORK (FTW) PROJECT UPDATE: Brooke Lusk, FTW Project Manager, was available to provide this report. WorkWorld Software: four "train the trainer" workshops were offered across the state to provide training on the WorkWorld software, which is a benefits' analysis program. Over sixty-five people were in attendance and the evaluations received to date were very positive. Individuals who attended the training were offered the software; they are then added to a database for subsequent software updates. Brooke made the software available to members. Members were encouraged to go out to the website and register, alerts and other messages will be automatically emailed to them as they are made

available. If there were an interested group in learning how to utilize the software, project staff would try to coordinate a training session for them. This software includes state specific information i.e., food stamps, economic assistance. TIPS NEWSLETTER: Brooke brought extra copies of the TIPS newsletter and made it available to members and offered extra copies for them to take to others who would be interested in it. MIKE WALLING TRAINING SESSIONS (Social Security benefits and employment training sessions): To date, the number of people attending the Mike Walling training sessions is well over 1,200. Upcoming training sessions are scheduled for October 4/Spearfish; October 5/Rapid City; October 6/Pierre and October 7/Mitchell. If registration forms are needed, members were encouraged to contact FTW or BVR staff. Project staff has also scheduled trainings in conjunction with two State Human Resource Managers' associations and the speaker will be Frank Pastizzo. The trainings will be held in Rapid City/October 25 and Aberdeen/October 27th. The morning session is specific to employers and the afternoon session will target service providers. PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES: One individual is currently utilizing personal assistance services in the work place. Work continues for project staff to look at barriers regarding employment (i.e., transportation, available providers), which will encourage more individuals to utilize this service. MEDICAID BUY-IN: Project staff is working with two national groups (Lewin Group and Center for Workers with Disabilities), which provide technical assistance to the project on different issues i.e., administrative costs, eligibility issues, case management, and data collection. Project staff is also working with their counterparts from North Dakota to build a consortium for mid-western states. Work is being done to look at how the project has impacted employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. One example included disseminating surveys to participants of the Mike Walling training sessions to obtain information (i.e., gaining employment, improving employment status). December will mark the end of the 4th year of the grant and currently project staff is awaiting notification of grant continuation. The next meeting of the FTW Steering Committee is September 14 and 15th. The Steering

Committee is making progress, however to impact “systems change” - change is slow. After amending the Medicaid State Plan and implementing personal attendant services, work now entails gaining public attention in order for more people to take advantage of this type of service.

TRANSITION SERVICES LAISON PROJECT COORDINATOR:

Brooke announced that an individual has been hired for this position. Robert Robbennolt will start September 26th. YOUTH LEADERSHIP FORUM 2006: It will be held on the campus of the University of Sioux Falls due to construction at University of South Dakota. Betsy Valnes has been assisting with some of the planning with YLF in the interim of hiring the new project coordinator.

MEDICARE PART D UPDATE: Grady reported that one of the primary initiatives regarding Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage is getting information out to individuals to assist them with making informed decisions. The worry is getting the needed information out to individuals who are on Medicare, individuals who are 65 years of age or older. The majority of these individuals do not have easy access to a computer let alone the Social Security Administration website. Local pharmacies, county extension offices, social security offices and senior centers are holding outreach and training events. Information is also being disseminated in various newsletters. The drug plans will be made available in October and peoples’ decisions will need to be made by January 2006. Monte indicated that he has information from Social Security that he could share with members, which includes items such as medication types, premium costs, and deductibles. Concerns were expressed with lapses in coverage, what drugs are going to be covered (specifically for individuals with mental illness), classes of prescriptions and out of pocket costs. There are obviously more questions than answers right now. The drug plans should be available very soon. A suggestion was made to have someone from Social Security and/or SHIINE to present on Medicare Part D and the available drug plans at a future meeting.

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (SRC) CONFERENCE

UPDATE: Those who attended the State Rehabilitation Council training held in Dallas, Texas were asked to share their comments with members (Brady, Tom, Dr. Easton, Grady and Colette). Comments shared included: very conservative training (didn't answer questions regarding the restructuring of RSA); good points brought up regarding history of the Rehabilitation Act; money well spent sending members to the training; the relationship between the Board and the Statewide Independent Living Council is very positive, which is not the case in some other states; CD video presentation was very good (utilize for future new board member orientation or staff training); easier to talk with others in the breakout sessions; broadened their knowledge of vocational rehabilitation services; good to talk with other SRC members regarding similarities and differences; very little turnout of other state agency staff or directors; and reinforced relationship building between the state agency and the SRC. Discussion following included a request for more copies of the CD, and the possibility of hosting a joint meeting or retreat with the SILC and Board of Service to the Blind and Visually Impaired. This stems from the earlier conversation on the restructuring of RSA and what impact it will have on Board, more importantly defining the role of the Board regarding "monitoring" in the future. The Board and Division could take a proactive approach and begin defining this role rather waiting for direction from RSA. This should be an agenda item for the next meeting's discussion.

The meeting adjourned for the evening at 5:00 PM.

The meeting reconvened at 8:35 AM.

BENEFITS, PLANNING, ASSISTANCE AND OUTREACH FOR SSI &

SSDI BENEFICIARIES: Cassie Stoesser reported that there are four new benefit specialists in addition to Vicki Nisich and herself. They are located in Yankton, Aberdeen, Rapid City and Watertown. The benefit specialists have been through the required training and they are now certified; they are meeting with consumers, however all their

plans are being reviewed by Vicki and herself. Cassie and Vicki have been scheduling appointments with consumers in conjunction with the Mike Walling training sessions and both of them are receiving follow-up calls from individuals following the trainings. Cassie reported that she is receiving phone calls regarding Medicare Part D and anticipates more calls once the drug plans are finalized. She is currently working with the Social Security's regional office to schedule outreach to the local social security field offices. The benefit specialists are participating in trainings on work incentives and Medicare Part D. She will present at the NAMI SD conference as well as the Fall Conference. Black Hills Special Services Cooperative is waiting to hear on the six-month continuation application, which would extend the program through April 2006, and this fall they should hear from Social Security about the request for the competitive grant. A question was asked regarding how involved the benefit specialists would be with Medicare Part D; the response was they would provide basic information and that referrals would be made to the Mickie Douglas who works with Social Security or to the SHIINE program. One of the biggest worries is people on Medicare who are not recipients of any other state programs or services that they are not necessarily getting the information they need regarding the upcoming changes. Discussion followed on the benefit specialists, the territory they cover, and contact information. Cassie said she would provide staff with their names and other contact information, which could be distributed, to the Board. Grady suggested that when the grant application is written, the Board write a letter of support for it.

STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (COUNCIL)

UPDATE: Larry reported that the Council met on July 6th in Sioux Falls. The meeting included a tour of Southeast Technical Institute. The Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Unified State Plan was submitted and the vocational rehabilitation sections were approved. The agenda included a presentation on a program offered at the Springfield prison teaching inmates carpentry skills. A major discussion item on the agenda included the possible closing of Ellsworth Air Force Base. The Department of Labor was awarded a

one million dollar planning grant to assist those affected by the closing. The monies will remain in South Dakota to be utilized to pursue other economic development options since the decision was made not to close the base at this time. The next meeting is scheduled for October 5th in Pierre. A new program is being started in Yankton at Mount Marty termed 'RTEK', which offers short courses in welding, LPN, and truck driving.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC): The next meeting will be held September 28 and 29th in Rapid City. The SILC was involved with the planning and financial support of the Americans with Disabilities Act Anniversary Celebration held on July 26th in Sioux Falls. Training sessions were held for employers, consumers and other service providers. The daylong event was concluded with a picnic, and the entire event was well attended. The SILC has finalized their funding policies for individuals and organizations, therefore applications are available.

BVR COMMITTEE REPORTS: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE – PROPOSED RESOURCE PLAN. Members were reminded that during the March meeting, the Board obligated \$11,000 to support 2005 NDEAM events. This was discussed during the committee meeting in addition to other activities that the Board has financially supported in the past. The committee presented the following resource plan for the Board's consideration:

<u>Total Dollars Available in Strategic Planning Funds</u>	\$28,675.00
2005 NDEAM	\$11,000.00
2005 Governor's Awards Luncheon	\$ 1,500.00
Hosting Public Forums	<u>\$ 1,500.00</u>
 Total dollars obligated	 \$14,000.00
 Remaining Dollars	 \$14,675.00

The committee explained that the remaining dollars would be reserved for any application for funding requests (individual or organization) once the Board finalized their policies. Further discussion was delayed until the Consumer Services Committee had the opportunity to present the draft funding request policies.

Consumer Services Committee: Brady presented the draft “BVR Strategic Planning Funding Application for Organizations” on behalf of the committee. He reviewed some the of the major discussion points of the committee which are reflected in the draft policy. The Board focused on Page 4 of the document, after a lengthy discussion, two changes were proposed. **MOTION MADE TO APPROVE CHANGES ON PAGE 4 WHICH WOULD NOW READ AS:**

- ___ We are a public agency, which provides vocational rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities.

- ___ We are a disability related organization, which provides technical information or other assistance for persons with disabilities.

MOTION SECONDED. Members turned to page 1. **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT TO CHANGE 3RD BULLET UNDER “WHAT CAN THE ASSISTANCE BE USED FOR? FRIENDLY AMENDMENT TO ADD STAFF EMAIL ADDRESS ON PAGE 3 IN THE LAST BULLET UNDER “HOW DO WE APPLY?” FRIENDLY AMENDMENT TO MAKE ANOTHER CHANGE ON PAGE 1, BULLET 3 UNDER “WHAT CAN THE ASSISTANCE BE USED FOR?”.** Discussion continued on other possible changes on page 1. Due to the amount of editing proposed, staff proposed that a vote be taken on the motion and fail it. Following such an action, the Board could discuss changes to the document and make a motion to approve the document as revised in its entirety. A vote was taken. **MOTION FAILED.** The Board continued to outline their recommended changes on the draft policy. Staff read the document with all the recommended changes. **MOTION TO APPROVE THE BVR STRATEGIC PLANNING**

FUNDING APPLICATION FOR ORGANIZATIONS AS REVISED PER DISCUSSION – MSC. (SEE REVISED ATTACHMENT AS APPROVED).

Brady introduced the next draft policy “BVR Strategic Planning Funding Application for Individuals”. Discussion followed on the draft policy and a proposed change was noted on page 3, under “After I receive funding, then what?” changing the first bullet to read as follows:

Funding arrangements will be negotiated with Board staff prior to the event.

It was explained that the committee did not want to limit requests to in-state trainings only, that situations could arise where individuals might want to attend an event across state lines, etc. Other issues discussed included the process or procedures for making the funds available to individuals (i.e., making the stipend check available at the time of registration vs. mailing the check to the individual prior to the event). After a lengthy discussion regarding individual requests for funding to attend various conferences or trainings a motion was made.

MOTION TO SEND THIS DRAFT POLICY (BVR STRATEGIC PLANNING FUNDING APPLICATION FOR INDIVIDUALS) BACK TO THE CONSUMER SERVICES COMMITTEE FOR FURTHER REVISION.

It was agreed that further modifications were needed to the draft policy. Grady commended the Board for the detailed discussion on this draft policy. **MS.** Other concerns were addressed (i.e., reimbursement process, adding an evaluation form). The comment was made that the organizational funding policy was approved and the Board should continue with it. If the need to change the policy is raised, the Board can address it at that time.

MC. Brady noted the three draft program guides (IPE Annual Review, Voter Registrations Procedures, and Situational Assessments), were reviewed earlier in the meeting by Bernie. Brady reported the committee’s recommendations were already incorporated into the draft program guides as presented. Clarification was sought regarding the process of reviewing draft program guides of the Division. It was explained that any policies requiring a change,

are routed through the committee for review, and their recommendations are brought to the full Board for consideration. It was explained that a case file review, public meeting, legislative change, etc could prompt changes.

PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEE: NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH (NDEAM) - Staff apologized to the committee chairperson, for the lateness of this update. Information was being received right up until the meeting, and it was incorporated into a handout (see attached). Staff reviewed the handout noting the communities across the state that will host NDEAM events. Grady asked BVR staff to draft a NDEAM press release. Board members were encouraged to attend events in their communities and expenses would be reimbursable by the Board, if needed. Grady discussed the printing of another NDEAM compendium booklet and utilizing Board dollars to pay for it. Last year the cost was less than \$1,000 and there was consensus from the Board to proceed with this. Finalized information regarding the upcoming events will be disseminated to the Board as it becomes available.

PROJECT SKILLS VIDEO PRESENTATION: Bernie introduced the video and explained that it isn't in final format, that work is still being done with captioning. It is eight minutes in length and copies will be mailed to the Board once it is finalized. Comments on the video included: nicely done, the student in the video did a wonderful job highlighting the Project Skills program, the program allows students to develop good work skills and work ethic at a young age. Some suggestions included: adding information to the video on how the schools are involved, what services are paid for and by which agency, and how many hours the student can work in a week.

CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM – VIDEO PRESENTATION: Brady introduced this video explaining that it does have captioning but for some reason it is not working on this television. The video will be available on DVD and VHS and will be available on the South Dakota

Advocacy Services homepage. He explained that this is the finished product, after several months of work. Comments on the video included: one member didn't care for it and felt that it blasted programs that work with people with disabilities; one member indicated they liked the section of going back and working with a doctor to alleviate misunderstandings; one member felt the video was geared towards the consumer and it laid out the proper route of working things out. A question was asked if the video could be shared and discussed with the director of SBVI, explaining the section in the video regarding the statements of the consumer working with SBVI clearly violated the law, and wondering if that is fair and/or accurate. One member asked about the level of fairness, and if this is depicted. After several other suggestions were offered, the response provided was that video was finalized and they are unable to make any revisions. A suggestion was made that if there is any opportunity to revise it, or make another one, to present it as a supplement to DRS or SBVI because of the adversarial issues. It was explained that adversarial issues do exist, thus the reason for the Client Assistance Program. Brady explained that the video will be shared with various groups across the state i.e., Partners in Policymaking, staff training and other events. He further stated that he believes that vocational rehabilitation and independent living services do a great job in our state and the majority of cases are simple miscommunications between the counselor and the client. Grady asked if he could have a copy of the video for the agency to utilize it with staff, and the response provided was, "yes".

OTHER BUSINESS: BVR staff handed out copies of the Fall Conference brochure, which will be held October 11-13, in Brookings. Grady announced that South Dakota State University is now offering a masters degree program for vocational rehabilitation counselors, which is a first in South Dakota.

CLOSING ACTIONS: **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** Items noted for future agenda items: Order of Selection, Medicare Part D and available drug plans (Mickie Douglas/Social Security, Tom

Hoy/SHIINE and Mike Parker/Social Services), Monitoring/defining the Board's future role, and the draft policy "BVR Strategic Planning Funding Application for Individuals". SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING – Members selected December 6-7 in Sioux Falls. ADJOURNMENT – **MOTION TO ADJOURN AT 12:10 PM - MSC.**