

BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION LUNCHEON
with the
SD ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES (SDACBS)
11:30 AM, November 13th, 2008
Best Western Ramkota Hotel, Pierre, SD

Public Meeting: The Board hosted a luncheon with members of the Association at the Ramkota Hotel in Pierre from 11:30 to 1:30. Notes attached.

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BOARD OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION MEETING
2:00 PM, November 13th, 2008
Chamber of Commerce Building
Pierre, SD

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Monte Tschetter Dan Rounds Joe Rehurek
Grady Kickul Beth Haug Robert Kean
Elaine Roberts Lyle Cook Cindy Koupal
Kathy Hassebrook Melissa Flor
Craig Eschenbaum

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mary I'atala Chris Olson
James Hayes

OTHERS PRESENT: Bernie Grimme Faith Ellis
Rich Eschenbaum Colette Wagoner

CALL TO ORDER: Monte Tschetter, Chairperson called the Board meeting to order at 2:10 PM. **WELCOME:** He welcomed everyone again, thanking them for their assistance in making the Public Meeting portion of the luncheon go so smoothly. Monte asked attendees to introduce themselves again briefly.

OPENING ACTIONS: A request was made to add the 2009 Mike Walling training schedule under the Freedom To Work Update section on tomorrow's agenda. A motion was made to approve the agenda as amended, Made (M), Seconded (S) and Carried (C). A motion was made to approve the Board meeting minutes from September 9th & 10th, 2008, as written was (M), (S) and (C). A motion to approve the November 3rd, 2008 Executive Committee conference call meeting minutes as written was (M), (S) and (C).

TIME FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS: There was no public comment offered, so Monte continued on.

DEBRIEFING OF PUBLIC CONVERSATION TIME (from Joint Luncheon with the SDACBS held earlier at the Ramkota): Dan commented that the participants at his table talked about funding/resources that support individuals working in enclaves in the Sioux Falls area, (supported employment vs. competitive employment). It was noted that there are inconsistencies from East river regions to the West river regions, variations in resources available from VR office to VR office. Attendees mentioned using VR services more for supported employment. It was mentioned how it gets to be a revolving door scenario for some clients, that files need to be left open longer, or be more willing to reopen them if post-employment services are needed. Again, they reported that some agencies in the West do so quite willing, but in other areas they have to make several attempts to have an individual's file reopened. Some individuals mentioned that they have been pleased with their relationships with vocational rehabilitation services, just less and less dollars available.

Some participants also sited high employee turnover contributing to difficulties maintaining consistency with the provision of services. A common thread was the requests for additional employment classes, especially with "soft skills" training i.e., resume writing, interviewing, and appropriate interview dress. A comment was made that education is an ongoing need for many clients. It was suggested that more trainings are needed and could be sponsored by several agencies, VR, DOL, ATC, and human resource managers.

A new pilot program called, "Project Search" is being explored in Aberdeen. This model is being borrowed from Cincinnati Children's Hospital, and it is a comprehensive approach to employment, job retention, and career advancement for individuals with disabilities. The goal will be to match qualified employees with open positions in a variety of settings. The key is to sell this idea as a business model, or a business plan to employers. Promote hiring of people with disabilities with a "soft sell" simply based on feelings, is no longer going to work in today's hard economy.

Advice was sought on how to help a friend with disabilities to become a house cleaner or possibly even start her own small business, but needs the agencies' assistance to learn about all the self-employment tax issues involved. Dan welcomed her to come visit with staff from his office and they can assist with benefits planning.

There was discussion at one table about how the economy is hurting everyone – everywhere, and due to cost effective strategies there is a national trend to return to the larger facility (institutionalized setting) model of serving consumers. On a similar note, one of the centers represented is serving four clients (living in one setting), and that financially they can't make it.

Elaine Roberts posed the question, if it's not these ATCs serving consumers then who is or who will be? At another table it was remarked that they are trying more and more to heavily involve the parents. A number of attendees felt the need to involve Special Education teachers and educate them about what the Centers offer.

It was stressed that we need to work to increase people's understanding to create a win/win situation to assist people with disabilities to become employed. It is an attitude, people need to decide that yes, they want to work and need to work, especially with parents raising children with disabilities.

It was agreed, that everyone is simply going to have to do more with less resources – which is the common story everywhere right now. All parties involved need to find better, more fiscally sound ways to solve problems.

BACK TO BASICS – Continued from September Meeting:

Vocational Rehabilitation Services – Grady reminded members that at the last meeting, sections of the on-line State Rehabilitation Council Training modules were reviewed. He asked if members liked it, if they wanted to do more of them or not? The Division also uses the on-line training for new employees. It was the consensus that the Board would like to do more of the on-line trainings. Staff will schedule time for these at the March meeting.

State Plan Document – Bernie explained that the State Plan is fairly straightforward and mirrors the Rehabilitation Act. The State Plan contains two sections. The first section is the pre-print and is a check off document which the Division answers regarding the delivery of services. The other section contains the attachments that contain detailed information of how the Division will provide services. He asked for the Board's assistance in reviewing and editing the attachments, especially the Goals and Strategies. The State Plan preprint and attachments are available on the Division's website. Bernie further defined the State Plan, as a living document that the Division and Board live by, and we contribute to it's content. Joe added that this is a great tool for new VR counselors, because it helps them see what's being asked of them and in what direction they are heading.

Kathy suggested that as a way to obtain more public comment, we could partner with Chambers of Commerce around the state to hold joint meetings.

BREAK

DIVISION DIRECTOR'S REPORTS:

Director's Comments - Grady announced that due to a very tight travel budget, the Mid-Winter Training Conference would be canceled. A joint meeting with the Board and Board of SBVI could be convened and that

should provide close to 40 people attending the Governor's Awards Luncheon, which is set for Tuesday, March 10th, 2009, at the Ramkota Hotel in Pierre.

The Division travel budget should focus on services and working with consumers to reach their goal of employment. The Department of Human Services (DHS) is limiting all out-of-state travel and limiting attendance to conferences on an every-other-year type schedule, and no more charter flights. The actual travel budget for the Division is near \$125,000, and Grady said that with tighter restrictions, he feels they can come in slightly under budget or right on budget for the coming year. The Division will use videoconferencing for supervisor type meetings, or meetings where a lot of information is shared, but it's not always conducive for larger groups, when you're trying to gather thoughts or ideas and formulate plans. Grady reassured members the Division is not cutting programs and is not going on an Order of Selection.

DRS Budget Updates – As Grady mentioned, budgets are being monitored closely. We're not out of money per say, just needing to make every dollar count. Currently there are no waiting lists for either the ADLS or Neuromuscular Program. Referrals are rising so the Division expects to see an increase in expenses. For the next budget cycle, the Division will request level funding. The Division will be requesting inflation for the independent living (IL), Activities of Daily Living Services (ADLS), and the state funded personal attendant services program for people with quadriplegia.

Fall Conference – The Division recently wrapped up the Fall Conference in Rapid City, October 14 – 16, 2008. Deb Russell with Walgreen's was a huge success as a keynote presenter. The Job Accommodation Network (JAN) and Sally Rhodes' presentation on SESI were well attended. The NDEAM luncheon served over 100 people and it also went great, working with local or regional agencies and providers really helped make the luncheon successful. There were also presentations on employer networks, post-traumatic stress disorder, follow-up on kids after leaving high school

and CORA. Bernie reported that they had 140-150 total registered participants and 18 vendor booths.

Lyle added that he really liked the PowerPoint presentation offered during the luncheon and is still hoping to get his hands on an electronic copy of that. Kathy mentioned that she would have ideas for future events on getting more employers involved with these types of events. One trick is to never have it be free – then they perceive it as having no value, and have no commitment to actually attend. It needs to have a formal tie in with the SHRM and ERN groups to get plenty of promotion.

Lyle suggested an idea for future presentations on CORA would be useful, especially for folks living on the reservations. Craig asked what had been the purpose of the CORA computer presentation? Bernie agreed that it was not exactly what was designed and more explanation was needed. CORA offers telework opportunities to returning wounded veterans and individuals with disabilities. Individuals can work from their homes in the areas of consultative design, web-based collection, technology and process innovation and collection consultants.

Next year, the Division will probably look at a host site on the eastern side of the state. Grady thanked those in attendance here today who had traveled to Fall Conference.

Final Draft of Policies Report was deferred until the 14th.

FREEDOM TO WORK (FTW) PROJECT UPDATE: Mary Livermont was unavailable, so Grady and Dan presented on her behalf. The FTW Leadership Council met in Pierre, September 23-24. The FTW Project was a \$500,000 grant, a federal initiative, to have a life of 11 years. South Dakota is now entering the 9th year. Project Staff are looking at ways to sustain or continue the program. Last week they had a Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) from the contract agency and SD scored well in several categories. Three major accomplishments:

1) The Medicaid Buy-In, which provides health care coverage for individuals with disabilities who are employed. South Dakota has 111 people enrolled. This is administered through the Department of Social Services (DSS). The hope is to grow the program by expanding thresholds on unearned income, but due to the economy, probably not within the next year.

2) Medicaid State Plan was amended to allow personal attendant services for people with disabilities on the work site, other than those with quadriplegia.

3) Employer Initiatives in SD were praised, including the Employer Resource Network (ERN) in Aberdeen and the Business Leadership Network (BLN) in Sioux Falls. Other initiatives are being started in other communities as a result of the activities of these two.

Lyle mentioned how good the turnout was for the Mike Walling Benefits Training in Eagle Butte. Next time the project schedules Mike Walling in SD, Lyle feels one is really needed in the Standing Rock Reservation area, which is right on the SD and North Dakota border. The best physical site to host such an event is in ND, so that causes some troubles. The idea was tossed around of hosting it in Mobridge instead. Grady asked Lyle to send a written request to Bernie for hosting training in that area, and it will be considered for Mike's next visit. When that is exactly, is still up in the air for now.

STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL: Grady explained that this is a component under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and that he is on the State council to help promote employment of people with disabilities. The Departments of Tourism, Labor and Education, as well as the Board of Regents are represented on this council. This group meets 4 – 6 times per year. Their next meeting is via DDN on January 8th, 2009. He encouraged BVR members to look at the DOL website at www.workforce2025.com for examples of the programs:

- 1) *Live Dakota* - which is an effort to retain our current SD people,
- 2) *Grow Dakota* - which prepares students to enter the workforce right here in SD,
- 3) *Dakota Seeds* - which tries to increase internships and assistantships,

- 4) *Dakota Roots* - which recruits individuals and businesses to come to SD; and,
5) *Build Dakota* - is an effort to better assess the workforce needs of SD industries statewide.

STATEWIDE INDEPENDENT LIVING COUNCIL (SILC): Grady explained that the SILC met in Pierre October 7-9th. It was longer than normal due to orientation and allowing time for public comment. They had a good turnout and gathered helpful information from consumers involved with Centers for Independent Living. The next SILC meeting is December 3rd - 4th, at the Ramada in Sioux Falls.

Lyle asked if there is a PowerPoint presentation from the SILC trainings, but unfortunately there is not. Grady referred Lyle to Alex Gourneau for further information. Lyle also suggested the idea of hosting a SILC meeting and public meeting in Eagle Butte, which would allow people from the area to provide feedback. Grady agreed, he admitted that some remote areas do not have the services they deserve and we should learn all we can to improve this situation.

Monte adjourned the afternoon meeting at 5:00 pm Thursday.

MEETING RECONVENED: Friday, November 14th, 2008, Monte reconvened the meeting at 8:30 am.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS: Monte welcomed everyone back and hoped they had a nice evening in the Pierre area. Joining us today, was Melissa Flor, who was unable to attend yesterday. Monte reminded members again of the meeting protocol that was attached to the agenda.

A request was made to move the Employer Resource Network (ERN) update to be first on the agenda and members agreed. As the agenda changed, Monte turned the floor over to Kathy.

EMPLOYER RESOURCE NETWORK (ERN). Kathy started with an overview of ERN and provided the ERN brochure and October 2008

Diversity Information flyer (see attached). ERN is a win/win partnership between the Aberdeen Area of Human Resources Association, Division staff, FTW and area employers to deal with diversity issues, to include promoting hiring people with disabilities. In just one year, ERN has successfully placed 18 people with disabilities in gainful employment. Training sessions have been offered to employers and for youth. ERN is a model that works.

Kathy announced that ERN of Aberdeen is being nationally recognized with an award from the national HR Chapter. For now this is a secret, so please keep it quiet. This award will be officially announced at a national conference in Virginia next week.

Kathy stressed that to pull in employers, you need to promote training as diversity training which includes the topic of disability. If it is promoted as only disability training, you will either spook them off or turn them off. The topic of hiring people with disabilities needs to be intertwined as a piece of leadership training, diversity training, or other return to work issues for employers.

Grady asked if the tool kit on the ERN website provides these details? Kathy explained that the tool kit was purposely designed to be simple, providing basic items as a starter and not overwhelm and scare people off first thing. The fine details can be incorporated a bit later after someone is truly committed, and details need to come from a SHRM representative so they're understood and implemented correctly.

A key component that ERN provides is networking. By getting the players – employers, VR, HR - in the same room, talking about diversity sends a strong message of its importance. It's breaking down barriers for employers and creating new opportunities. Grady agreed, that to get agencies and groups to work together and to not compete – or think they have to compete, is vitally important. So much so in fact, that Grady suggested that ERN stay in the forefront and be put on every future agenda for updates and review.

Melissa asked if maybe an ERN presentation would be a good idea for Special Education teachers at their upcoming conference. The “Call For Presenters” will be soon, and Melissa will send one to Kathy. Dan mentioned that he might already have a presentation designed specifically for Special Education teachers that he could share with Kathy. Kathy made the recommendation that the Board or Division needs to create and hire a full-time ERN position, that’s how important she feels this is becoming.

REVIEW OF YEAR END DATA FOR THE DIVISION: Bernie had two handouts: Year End Results on the Federal Standards and the Data Summary (see attached). He explained there are two standards. Standard #1, Employment Outcomes has six indicators, and three of those are considered Primary Indicators. The State agency has to meet at least two of three Primary Indicators. The Division has met all six of the indicators this year, with a couple of them being very close. The indicators examine such things as number of individuals successfully employed, types of employment outcomes, hourly earnings and percentage of minorities served.

Standard #2, Equal Access to Services, has one indicator, which examines whether individuals from minority backgrounds have been provided services at the same rate as non-minority individuals. The Division also met this indicator. Bernie reviewed the indicator results in more detail. He offered members, if they want more specific, line item explanations feel free to contact him. Grady said these are draft figures for now, and the final report will be available soon.

BREAK

COMMITTEE REPORTS: As an aid for newer BVR members and a refresher for the others, Colette shared a handout showing the Board’s committees. The handout reflected the main functions, and which members currently serve on each committee. Members were asked to review this and see if there is a specific committee that they feel they would like to serve on. Some discussion followed on what the committee duties entail.

Joe volunteered to be on the Public Awareness Committee, he said he felt his Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) experience would be helpful. Craig also volunteered for the Public Awareness Committee. Robert volunteered to be on the Consumer Services Committee. Kathy said it may not be on this list as an actual committee, but she would like to continue her work with the ERN project and keep the Board apprised of its efforts. Dan offered his support and to continue work with the ERN project also.

Grady expressed his satisfaction with all the committee ideas and thanked members for their involvement. Upon reviewing the committee handout, a member asked, who is Janet Ball. Grady explained that she is an employee of the Division, and that she provides technical assistance to the Public Awareness Committee.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Grady asked Colette about the status of the annual report which summarizes last year's activities. Colette explained that she is gathering details and will have the draft report for review by early December. The report is submitted to the RSA Commissioner and Governor by December 31st, 2008. There was nothing more to report.

CONSUMER SERVICES COMMITTEE: Dan reported that the committee met via DDN on November 3rd. They discussed their involvement with the Future's Initiative, and reviewed two program guides. He stated the Division would like to finalize the Financial Need policy guide by the end of the month and the Service Description program guide by the end of January.

The Committee is looking at the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. They will review existing questions, and ask what do we really want to be learning, and how to ask the questions correctly to get that data? They are also investigating what other state's surveys are asking to learn from them.

Dan suggested that agencies get an incentive to move consumers to an independent full-time job versus an enclave group work. The question was raised, is there currently any incentive now for an agency to do that, or even to move a consumer back through the VR system? The consensus was,

maybe not. Dan added that more agency training on this exact topic would come now after this program guide is completed.

Joe reported on the vocational rehabilitation brochure that he and his co-worker, Jennifer, are working on. He explained that this brochure is designed for the VR applicant, to entice and hook them, to get them involved. The brochure design has been going good, it's colorful, and has a lot of useful information. It will be shared with the Board before finalizing it.

Grady agreed that this brochure is looking good, and he thanked Joe for his efforts coordinating the redesign. Grady asked if a Thank You note could be sent to the Futures Initiative Workgroup from the Board, signed by Monte.

PUBLIC AWARENESS COMMITTEE: Colette reviewed the feedback compiled from the NDEAM community activities. The evaluation summaries received to date were handed out to members.

Joe reported that the Yankton activity was very successful. They had made tote bags with Mt. Rushmore and this year's slogan, "America's People...America's Talent...America's Strength" printed on it. He gave each member one of the tote bags. The Yankton NDEAM event is held in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce and because of that they get a great mix of people there. They also have a strong, active planning committee that makes the event successful.

Grady thanked Joe for the bags and for all that the planning committee there does to positively promote NDEAM.

Kathy reported that the Aberdeen NDEAM event had a multi-cultural theme. With 74 attendees, it also went really well. Don Rounds was their featured speaker.

GOVERNOR'S AWARDS LUNCHEON, also under the umbrella of Public Awareness Committee is scheduled Tuesday, March 10th, 2009, at the Pierre Best Western Ramkota Hotel. Nomination forms were disseminated

to a large list as of November 7th. The forms are also available on the DHS website. Nominations are due December 12th. Several Board members and DHS staff review the nominations and their recommendations are sent to the Governor's office for his final selection. Melissa, Craig and Lyle Cook volunteered to assist with reviewing these nominations.

Grady expressed his concern that too many of his employees were being nominated and he asked that we spread the word to please not do too much of that this year. He feels it looks self-serving to award an employee for a job they're supposed to be doing anyway, and that we should be trying to avoid that.

Kathy suggested promoting the nomination process by doing more press releases to the media, or getting storylines out to newspapers, and remembering, it usually takes constant pressure to get them to run human-interest stories like these.

Colette mentioned that she had been approached with this question; can someone be nominated for these awards posthumously? Someone talked about creating a new category, or the idea to name the luncheon in someone's honor. After much discussion, it was agreed that the Board would accept any posthumous nominations, and they would be reviewed as the others, and a new category would not be created. It would remain open for discussion before next year's awards. It was also suggested that if such a nomination was selected for an award, that we would contact the family members to ensure it's ok with them.

OTHER BUSINESS: Staff reported that two copies of the Richard Pimentel movie, "The Music Within" were purchased. Once staff receives them, the videos could be checked out. Call staff at 945-2207 to reserve a copy.

CLOSING ACTIONS:

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Melissa asked if members would give thought to bringing in Greg Cooch again to speak about the survey results of post high school graduating students.

FUTURE PUBLIC MEETING OPTIONS: Elaine suggested the idea of holding a public meeting in conjunction with the Mental Health Center Directors from all over the state like the Board did with SDACBS.

Beth agreed that yesterday's meeting was helpful, that we need input and she suggested doing one with BLN in Sioux Falls, or even one with a state transportation type group for their input. Dan said DOL would be good to meet with and gather input. Grady agreed that all of these were good ideas; he said that Mike Ryan, with DOL, would be a good contact to start working with on this idea, so Grady offered to call him.

The March meeting is being worked around the Governor's Awards Luncheon and meeting with the Board of SBVI. The June meeting is in Aberdeen, to coincide with the Youth Leadership Forum and to possibly include Richard Pimentel. The Board would be looking almost a year out, the September or October 2009 meeting to set up something with the BLN in Sioux Falls. Bernie agreed to contact Mike Frost to discuss this as a possibility.

Monte asked Dan to please try to arrange something with Richard Pimentel for the June meeting, a training presentation or planned seminar. Kathy asked if she could be involved with planning this to involve SHRM, ERN and other employers.

Regarding the June 2009 meeting in Aberdeen, the question was raised regarding the accessibility of the Ramada. After much discussion, staff was asked to identify an accessible meeting location, even if the sleeping rooms have to be at a different site. Grady expressed serious concern, that as a Board, we simply cannot meet somewhere that is not fully accessible. We have to promote compliance and not promote businesses that do not comply.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is Tuesday, March 10th, 2009, to be held in conjunction with the Governor's Awards Luncheon at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel in Pierre. Following the awards luncheon the

Board will meet with the Board of SBVI. BVR members will meet again for a half-day, the following morning, Wednesday, March 11th, 2009.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn the meeting – MSC. Meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m. Both Monte and Grady thanked everyone for their time and input.