

Minutes – May 5, 2016

SRC Advocacy, Outreach and Education Committee

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Thursday, May 5, 2016	1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	Vermont Association for the Blind & Visually Impaired (VABVI) 60 Kimball Avenue South Burlington, VT 05403	
Meeting called by	Alaina Clements, Chair at 1:28 p.m.		
Members Present	Sam Liss, Olivia Smith-Hammond, Leslie Walker Mitchell, Diane Dalmasse and Martha Frank		
Members Absent	None		
SRC Liaison	n/a		
SRC Coordinator	Rebekah M. Stephens		
Interpreters	n/a		
Speakers/Presenters	n/a		
Guests	n/a		
1. Today's Agenda			
2 minutes	Alaina Clements		
Discussion	Sam Liss requested to amend "Updates – Federal" to "Updates – Federal/State".		
Committee agreed.			
Conclusions	Today's agenda accepted with change.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Include change on future AOE agendas		Rebekah Stephens	on-going
2. Approval of Minutes – March 3, 2016 Committee Meeting			
3 minutes	Alaina Clements		
Discussion	Sam Liss moved to approve. Martha Frank 2 nd .		
Conclusions	Minutes approved.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Upload approved minutes to www.VTSRC.org		Rebekah Stephens	5/13/2016
3. Updates – Federal/State			
10 minutes	Sam Liss		
Discussion	Medicaid for Working Persons with Disabilities (MWPD) is on track. The ABLE Act (Achieving a Better Life Experience) is on track. The Federation for the Blind News Line under the Telecom Bill is up for a vote today. The Governor proposed a budget that included the mental health and forced medication process be sped up to save money. The House Human Services Committee determined that this should be a policy issue and not a budget issue and subsequently struck this from the budget. There is an obscure rule in the social security handbook that effects disabled adult children and their SSDI income after reaching retirement age. Advocacy around this issue is set for the future. Diane Dalmasse suggested Sam draft a letter that the AOE Committee could sign to assist with this advocacy. Committee agrees.		
Conclusions	Thanks, Sam! Sam will draft an advocacy letter over the summer.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft advocacy letter for AOE Committee to sign in the Fall		Sam Liss	8/31/2016
4. Updates – VR Budget, WIOA, Career Access Project and How is PETS Rollout going in VT?			
30 minutes	Diane Dalmasse		
Discussion	VR is still doing well with budget, as long as VR continues to receive re-allotment money. There is no indication that re-allotment money will not continue. AWARE process is on target. VR may have some left over money to be used next year and would like to look at other areas for investing in consumers. One goal is to get every VR Counselor teamed with an Employment Consultant. This is a staffing cost that would carry on through the years, not just a one-time expense. Leslie Walker Mitchell is		

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<p>a VABIR Employment Consultant. She gave a brief overview of her duties. Her specific duties are as a YES (Youth Employment Specialist). She explained how she teams up with VR and other Employment staff. She would like to see a 1:1 ratio between VR Counselors and Employment Consultants. It would be beneficial to get to know who you are working with and develop a strong working relationship. Diane explained that if there was a 1:1 ratio the VR Counselor and VABIR Employment Consultant would get to know the whole caseload together and work together as a team. The Unified Plan is finally done. Memorandums of Understanding with VR partners now need to be done under WIOA. This is new for VR. VR is now working on them. VT VR is leading the way nationally. This is the right thing to do. A lot of states are struggling or just waiting for the final regulations to be released. Some states are putting out Requests for Proposals (RFP) to some of their larger community organizations like Goodwill and Easter Seals, to do the work around PETS. David Stapleton, Director of Mathematica’s Center for Studying Disability Policy, has been approached to be involved with the Career Access Project. Mathematica will partner with the World Institute on Disability (WID) to secure the grant that is coming from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR). This money will help to support the development of the Career Access Project so that it can be productive. The PETS rollout is moving along, however, VR is concerned about losing people as they transition from school into the young adult VR program. VR is exploring several options to help avoid losing people during the transition. Olivia Smith-Hammond suggested using a meet and greet with the new counselor before graduation. Leslie explained that this is already happening in her school. She also shared that a field trip for seniors to the VR/VABIR office is already being set up so that students graduating will know where to find the office. The transition counselor is also attending as many IEP (Individualized Education Plan) meetings as possible. Alaina Clements added that VCIL (Vermont Center for Independent Living) is also involved in some transition services work through group based workshops. These workshops concentrate on soft skills like confidence. VR is hoping to develop a portfolio concept for youth graduating from school. This would be youth driven. Martha Frank suggested VR take a look at the tool kits already available around various existing sources of information. These already exist, so why reinvent? These portfolios could contain internship work done, certifications received, job experiences, and education just to name a few ideas. It was suggested the information be put on a flash drive or uploaded to Google Docs or onto the Cloud for easy accessibility by the students and potential employers.</p>			
Conclusions		Thanks, Diane!	
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
None		n/a	n/a
5. Discussion – “The Use of Social Media and DVR”			
45 minutes		Diane Dalmasse & Committee Members	
Discussion		VT VR is not using social media at all at this time. However, VR feels they should be using it. As of right now, VR does not have the staffing capabilities to monitor using social media effectively. There will be some staff realigning over the next few months and VR is hoping this will provide the staffing capacity to manage a Facebook site. Diane is hopeful that VT VR will have a Facebook site established within 6 months. Confidentiality should not be an issue because Facebook will only be used to disseminate information. Olivia Smith-Hammond suggested VR do a video PSA (Public Service Announcement) that could be put on the VR Facebook page. The Committee members discussed other forms of social media like Instagram and Twitter. Olivia explained that each form of social media is used differently so VR will need to know what they want to do and choose the social media form that will fit. It is important to remember that anything VR posts will be public. Diane shared that Brian Guy, VR Program Analyst, has done a lot of research around this topic and it would be beneficial for him to come to a future AOE meeting.	
Conclusions		Schedule a follow up discussion for 8 months out. This will allow VR to begin using	

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social media. Invite Brian Guy to that meeting.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Include “Follow Up Discussion – The Use of Social Media and DVR” on January 2017 AOE agenda	Rebekah Stephens	TBD
Invite Brian Guy to January 2017 AOE meeting	Rebekah Stephens	TBD
6. Summary – March 24, 2016 Cardroom Event		
15 minutes	Committee members	
Discussion	Representatives from VR and the SRC attended the event. It was a little noisy for the video so it didn't attract too much attention. The candy on the table attracted a lot of people. They handed out several information cards. Several legislators came to the table. The new SRC sign was great.	
Conclusions	Ditch the video next time and bring more candy. A more interactive display next time might draw more attention. Maybe partner with Assistive Technology next time to bring some interesting AT tools that would draw attention.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
7. Other Business		
10 minutes	Alaina Clements	
Discussion	None.	
Conclusions	None.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
8. Adjournment		
5 minutes	Alaina Clements	
Discussion	Leslie Walker Mitchell moved to adjourn. Martha Frank 2 nd .	
Conclusions	Adjourned at 3:05 p.m.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft minutes submitted for approval	Rebekah Stephens	6/3/2016
Draft minutes uploaded to website www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	6/3/2016
Draft minutes emailed to Committee members	Rebekah Stephens	6/3/2016
Minutes approved by Committee	Committee Members	9/1/2016
Approved minutes uploaded to website www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	9/9/2016