

Minutes – December 5, 2013

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

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Thursday, December 5, 2013	12:00 PM – 3:30 PM	Rutland High School – Stafford Technical Center The Dollhouse - 8 Stratton Road Rutland, VT 05701
Meeting called by	Michele Hubert, Chair at 12:00pm	
Members Present	Diane Dalmasse, Anthony Williams, April Tuck, Kerry White, Adam Leonard, Allen Evans, Alaina Clements and Samantha Brennan	
Members Absent	Whitney Nichols, Ellen Vaut and Patti Shane	
SRC Liaison	James Smith, DVR Budget and Policy Manager	
SRC Coordinator	Rebekah M. Stephens	
Interpreters	Cory Brunner and Marian Eaton	
Speakers/Presenters	Mary Jean Inglee (Senior VR Counselor), Gary Jaquith (Business Account Manager), Marianne Langelo (Reach Up Counselor), Kelly Moriarty (General Assistance Counselor) and Mike Kingbury (Senior VR Counselor)	
Guests	Sam Liss, Karen Hussey and William Pendlebury	
1. Today's Agenda		
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Discussion	None.	
Conclusions	Approved.	
2. Approval of Minutes – October 3, 2013 Council Meeting		
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Discussion	April Tuck moved to approve. Kerry White 2 nd . No discussion.	
Conclusions	Approved.	
Action Items		Person Responsible
Put approved minutes on www.VTSRC.org		Rebekah Stephens
Deadline		12/13/2013
3. Approval of 6th Annual SRC Retreat Report		
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Discussion	Kerry White moved to approve. Anthony Williams 2 nd . No discussion.	
Conclusions	Approved.	
Action Items		Person Responsible
Put approved 6 th Annual SRC Retreat report on www.VTSRC.org		Rebekah Stephens
Deadline		12/13/2013
4. Consent Agenda		
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Discussion	April Tuck moved to approve. Allen Evans 2 nd . No discussion. Today's consent agenda includes the September 5, 2013 approved minutes from Policy and Procedures Committee, Steering Committee and Advocacy, Outreach and Education Committee and the December 5, 2013 Coordinator's report.	
Conclusions	Approved.	
Action Items		Person Responsible
None		n/a
Deadline		n/a
5. Rutland Office – Vocational Rehabilitation Staff		
-----	Rutland Office Staff	
Discussion	William Pendlebury, regional manager for Rutland and Bennington offices introduced his Rutland team. William also explained that Anthony Williams is from the Bennington office. Anthony is a VABIR employment counselor. Each staff member will explain their program and give a brief summary of what works and what doesn't work in each of their programs. Marianne Langelo, VR Reach Up (RU) counselor explained that the VR Reach Up Program "partners with the Economic Services Division (ESD) of	

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the Department for Children and Families (DCF) to help people with disabilities to get off Reach Up benefits through job placement, Social Security disability benefits, or a combination of both.” (quoted RU Program brochure) Marianne provides career counseling, developing of employment goals and makes referrals around training and employment goals to outside agencies on behalf of her consumers. What works: Marianne feels that the team approach with ESD and the DCF works well in assisting her VR consumers reach their employment goals. The training and education programs that are available in the community have also been very helpful with helping her consumers reach their employment goals. What doesn't work: The computer programs used for this program are cumbersome. There are two separate programs utilized by VR RU Program staff. Kelly Moriarty, General Assistance (GA) counselor explained that she works with adults that do not have children. GA does not provide a large amount of individual financial assistance. GA is usually an emergency or limited time assistance program. Kelly's job is to assist individuals in getting off GA through employment. The challenge is usually that the individuals have a doctor's note stating “that the individual can't work”. It is VR's belief that individuals may be able to work in a limited capacity and/or with accommodations. Kelly meets with consumers every 28 days and gently introduces the idea of work at some point in the future. Part of Kelly's job is to get the information from doctors about “what kind of work a person can do? Can work be attempted in a limited capacity or with accommodations?” VR is attempting to educate the medical profession around the VR program. Mary Jean Inglee, Senior VR counselor explained that her consumers are terrified of losing the benefits they have if they go to work. A lot of people agree to work, but only as long as it falls below the limit so they don't lose their benefits. Mary Jean, in addition to working with the general VR population, works with the Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) population. Mary Jean explained that job accommodations are essential to the TBI population. Just putting in the proper accommodations on the job can enable an individual to get and keep employment. VR counselors have to be very supportive, work as a team and think outside the box. Mary Jean also works with the Developmental Disability population. There is a lot of joy when an individual obtains employment and achieves their employment dream. There are large caseloads, but “we manage well. Our jobs are very flexible and if there is a “Will there is a way.”” Mike Kingsbury, Senior VR counselor shared a personal consumer story with the SRC. He was working with a consumer that was a recovering addict and coming out of stage 3 of the drug court program. Through a local job share experience this consumer was offered employment and is currently working and paying his bills. In this job there are a lot of challenges, but through coordination and hard work positive results can be achieved. Progressive employment is an amazing tool for getting people in the door. Also having a great working relationship with probation and parole officers enable the VR counselor to place a consumer in the appropriate job placement. Gary Jaquith, Business Account Manager (BAM) has found this job really satisfying. Creative Workforce Solutions (CWS) has allowed all the agencies to start working together. Rutland County offers unique challenges because of its drug problem. Private and public industry are working together to clean up the drug issues in Rutland. Progressive employment is an excellent program to assist consumers in the process of going from no employment to fully employed. A challenge in this area is finding employment that offers a livable wage to a consumer. A BAM's main job is to maintain trusting relationships between CWS partners and employers. A BAM helps open the doors into employers so that consumers can get jobs. Gary does a lot of work over the phone but also enjoys going out into the community and making face to face connections. Kerry White shared that it is always a pleasure to work with the Rutland Office staff. “It is a very positive office”. Allen Evans asked if the Rutland Office is seeing a lot of returning veterans. Mary Jean shared that the Rutland Office is not seeing as many veterans as were anticipated. Anthony Williams, VABIR (Vermont Association of Business Industry and Rehabilitation) employment counselor and SRC member shared that there are a lot of consumers coming back into the workforce after not being in it for

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a while. As a result, there is a need for technology training, job edict skills, resumes and general work place knowledge. Anthony is hoping that VABIR and VR will be able to offer more training in these areas; preferably in a group setting. Anthony is the only VABIR employment counselor in Bennington. He would love to have the tools available to offer the most basic training to these consumers. William Pendlebury and Samantha Brennan shared that they have developed a training curriculum for this type of job skills training and will share with Anthony.		
Conclusions	William shared that the Rutland office has gone through a lot of transition in the past. “However, there is a great core group of staff that is sure to make the Rutland office outstanding.”	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
6. Director’s Report – Summary of Finalized Corrective Action Plan from RSA Audit and Overview of Next Steps – Results of Consumer Satisfaction Survey		
-----	Diane Dalmasse	
Discussion	1821 people were assisted to go to work in the last fiscal year. Budget wise VR is ok right now. Consumer Satisfaction survey and next steps: data was broken down to the office level so supervisors have been able to really dive into the data and start to make plans based on that data. VR had their annual retreat and spent the day looking at ways to improve consumer satisfaction. Each VR office will be doing an AIM project. The intent of this project is to identify an issue in an office, develop solutions to address the issue, put the solution(s) into effect and then determine if solution(s) helped correct the issue. Each office is launching its office specific AIM project. All of the AIM projects will be targeted at communication between staff and consumers. VR does not want this dip in consumer satisfaction to become a trend. Curtis Milner, Market Decisions, submitted a proposal to VR to do four focus groups around the issue of consumer satisfaction. This will provide a deeper dive into the areas identified by the consumer satisfaction survey. There is a knowledge base in the legislature around CWS and the positive results it has been achieving. VR video conferencing equipment is now operational. VR is really excited about this. The test meeting went off without a hitch. This should help reduce in-state travel costs considerably. The Office of Child Support (OCS) pilot program seems to be having encouraging results. Vermont did not receive the Promise Grant. This was very disappointing but it was a valiant effort on the part of all participants. Employment staff training curriculum is underway. Hopefully, by this Fall it will be ready for delivery. VR is developing a high quality workforce. We (VR) are getting better at interviewing candidates, monitoring probationary periods and training. RSA final findings report has been received. Diane provided a copy to Rebekah Stephens. The report is not available to SRC members in electronic form. The official name of the report is “Corrective Action Plan for Vermont Vocational Rehabilitation Division – Agency of Human Services Through July 30, 2013”.	
Conclusions	Diane will keep the SRC informed of the results of the consumer satisfaction focus groups. Rebekah will scan the RSA Corrective Action Plan and email to SRC members.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Scan RSA Corrective Action Plan	Rebekah Stephens	12/13/2013
Email RSA Corrective Action Plan to Full SRC	Rebekah Stephens	12/13/2013
7. Order of Selection		
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Discussion	No one in category 3 has applied for VR services since last meeting.	
Conclusions	No order of selection needed today.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a

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8. Round Table		
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Discussion	Very valuable to have the VR staff come in and participate in the SRC meetings.	
	BAM is a very valuable resource person. BAMs are essential for developing meaningful relationships between schools, employers and partner agencies.	
Conclusions	Great meeting today.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
9. Other Business		
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Discussion	The SRC members enjoyed the food and venue for today's meeting.	
Conclusions	The SRC would like to send a thank you note to the Dollhouse staff.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Send a thank you note to the Dollhouse staff	Rebekah Stephens	12/17/2013
10. Adjournment		
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Discussion	Allen Evans moved to adjourn. Adam Leonard 2 nd . No discussion.	
Conclusions	Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Draft minutes respectfully submitted for approval	Rebekah Stephens	1/2/2014
Draft minutes emailed to all Committee members	Rebekah Stephens	1/2/2014
Draft minutes uploaded to www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	1/2/2014
Minutes approved	Full SRC	2/6/2014
Approved minutes uploaded to www.VTSRC.org	Rebekah Stephens	2/14/2014