

## Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)

Vermont State Rehabilitation Council (VT SRC)		
Thursday, February 1, 2018	12:30 PM – 3:30 PM	State Office Complex HC 2 South 280 State Drive, Waterbury, VT Conference Room OAK
Meeting called by	Sarah Launderville, Chair, at 12:38 pm	
Members Present	Max Barrows, Courtney Blasius, Jessica Brennan, Sherrie Brunelle, Nick Caputo, Martha Frank, Marlana Hughes, Christopher Kane, Amanda Kohle, Sarah Launderville, Sam Liss, Calla Papademas, Olivia Smith-Hammond, Deborah Tucker Boyce, Diane Dalmasse (ex-officio, non-voting - arrived at 2 pm)	
Members Absent	Michelle Paya, Robin Ingenthron, Rose Lucenti, Brian Smith	
SRC Liaison	James Smith, DVR Budget and Policy Manager	
SRC Coordinator	Debra Kobus	
Interpreters	n/a	
Speakers/Presenters	Marc Adams, Presenter, Jobs for Independence (JFI) Study	
Guests	Lee Reilly (Max Barrow's Assistant); Bill Sugarman and Mark Ciociola, Regional Managers, VR	
1. Today's Agenda		
2 minutes	Sarah Launderville	
Discussion	Sarah asked for any proposed additions or changes to the agenda. There were none. Sam Liss moved to accept the agenda. Olivia Smith-Hammond 2 <sup>nd</sup> . No further discussion. All approved - <b>Vote unanimous 14-0-0.</b>	
Conclusions	Today's agenda approved.	
Action Items		Deadline
	Person Responsible	
None	n/a	n/a
2. Open for Public Comment		
2 minutes	Sarah Launderville	
Discussion	None	
Conclusions	No one from the public was in attendance.	

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Action Items	Responsible Person	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
<b>3. Introductions</b>		
<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>Sarah Launderville</b>	
Discussion	Everyone went around the table and introduced themselves.	
Conclusions	We have a great group of members!	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
None	n/a	n/a
<b>4. Approval of Minutes – December 7, 2017 SRC Meeting</b>		
<b>2 minutes</b>	<b>Sarah Launderville</b>	
Discussion	Sarah asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the December 7, 2017 Full SRC Minutes. There were none. Sam Liss moved to approve. Calla Papademas 2 <sup>nd</sup> . No discussion. All approved - <b>Vote unanimous 14-0-0.</b>	
Conclusions	December 7, 2017 approved.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Upload approved minutes to <a href="http://www.VTSRC.org">www.VTSRC.org</a>	Debra Kobus	2/6/18
<b>5. Consent Agenda – Approved Minutes</b>		
<b>3 minutes</b>	<b>Sarah Launderville</b>	
Discussion	Sarah asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the following consent agenda items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy &amp; Procedures Committee – November 2, 2017</li> <li>• Steering Committee – November 2, 2017</li> <li>• Performance Review Committee – December 7, 2017</li> <li>• Coordinator’s Report – February 1, 2018</li> </ul> There were none. Martha moved to approve. Nick Caputo 2 <sup>nd</sup> . No further discussion. <b>Vote 13-0-1.</b> Calla Papademas abstained.	
Conclusions	Consent agenda items approved.	
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Upload approved minutes to <a href="http://www.VTSRC.org">www.VTSRC.org</a>	Debra Kobus	2/6/18
<b>6. Committee Chair Updates</b>		
<b>25 minutes</b>	<b>Sarah Launderville, Sherry Brunelle, Chris Kane, Sam Liss</b>	

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Discussion	<p><b><u>Advocacy, Outreach and Education Committee:</u></b> Sam Liss provided the following update on the last AOE Committee meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A brief overview of the AOE was provided at the last meeting</li><li>• Discussion of how the AOE Committee meeting functions has been updated to make it more productive.</li><li>• The committee discussed the need for delegates from the State Rehabilitation Council to the Vermont Coalition for Disability Rights (VCDR). SRC is considered a nonvoting member and is allowed two members. Two representatives are needed from the SRC. There was some interest, but no one has been officially nominated.</li><li>• The Card Room is available on March 20 and we will need people to be present at the table. The Card Room is an open room located at the foot of the ramp to the cafeteria. It is customarily used for exhibits that promote an agenda, cause, etc.</li><li>• Finally, we had discussions about the AOE's priorities. There are a few updates on State and Federal issues but mostly we talked about how the AOE can work with entities like the youth transition core team to promote VR goals and objectives. We decided to have updates at each AOE meeting but to actively collaborate with other entities</li></ul> <p><b><u>Policy and Procedures Committee:</u></b> Sherrie Brunelle provided the update for the P &amp; P Committee.</p> <p>Sherrie wanted to recognize the increased participation on the P &amp; P Committee meetings. Employment transition services were voted upon at the last meeting and approved. It went through public comment and is on the VR website.</p>
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At the most recent P & P Committee Meeting, we reviewed the committee's 2018 priorities and discussed the need for some new chapters:

- Car Repair Guidelines
- Self Employment
- Post Secondary Ed
- Training

We talked about prioritizing some of these chapters and it was decided that Post-Secondary Ed and Self-Employment would be our priorities.

### **Performance Review Committee:**

Chris Kane provided the update for the PR Committee:

At the most recent PR committee meeting:

- James walked us through the latest edition of the goals and priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19;
- we made some recommendations for some minor changes to the goals and priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19;
- the PR Committee voted to approve the goals and priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19;
- the PR Committee recommends approval by the Full SRC;
- we had a short discussion about making documents and websites more accessible. Martha Frank has names of individuals that may be helpful.

### **Steering Committee:**

Sarah Launderville provided the update on the Steering Committee:

At the latest meeting we discussed

- setting the agenda for this current meeting;
- the Vermont Open Meeting law;
- preferences on how we are getting information out to

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	members.		
Conclusions	Thanks everyone!		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline	
None	n/a	n/a	
<b>7. Director's Report</b>			
<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>Diane Dalmasse</b>		
Discussion	<p>Diane Dalmasse, Director of Vocational Rehabilitation provided her update as follows:</p> <p><b>Careers Initiative:</b> In Diane's last report she shared VR's timeframe for the roll out of this initiative to all staff. Diane wanted to share the 12 vision statements (below) that she put together for this initiative. Each of these 12 vision statements need a work plan so we have a lot of work to do.</p> <p>Sam asked if Diane has identified the unique needs of those with physical disabilities versus those with developmental disabilities and mental health disabilities. Diane said the goals will be the same, the approaches may be different as we do not want to segment people as this is an integrated approach.</p> <p>Jessie Brennan said the approach is based on the unique needs of an individual. All agreed this is the best approach.</p> <p>Sherrie Brunelle said that as far as the assessment piece goes, she is not receiving quality VR assessments of consumers who then come to her to access services. This assessment needs to be better thought out and based on data. If she were to prioritize any of these, question 6 would be the one that would rise to the top.</p> <p><b>12 vision statements</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Allocation of resources reflects our qualitative measures.</li> <li>2. Every step of the rehab process messages and supports our commitment to careers.</li> <li>3. A new dashboard will be created that reflects the</li> </ol>		

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- Common Performance Measures – using “leading” measures.
4. Customers will have a short term and long term vocational goal. Our policies on closing and opening cases support serving our customers more than once on their journey. A system to reach out to closed cases will be in place.
  5. Counselors are trained to provide career counseling. All VR staff are trained to support career goals.
  6. All staff are trained to do vocational assessments and use assessments as a career planning tool. Counselors will be able to speak to customers, based on assessments, about possible career paths.
  7. MI coaches will facilitate coaching circles that support career counseling using MI strategies.
  8. A continuum of Progressive Education (parallel to Progressive Employment) will be developed and implemented.
  9. An education and training matrix will be done in each district, including a gap analysis.
  10. All staff will be familiar with education and training providers in their community and what career pathways they offer as well as stackable credentials.
  11. All VABIR staff will understand the career paths in the businesses they serve.
  12. AWARE will support the Careers Initiative.

Diane said these have been well received by the management team and regional managers are sharing with staff in their offices. VR’s two-day management retreat had to be rescheduled for February 7 and 8. VR is developing what Diane believes to be is a dynamic and productive agenda. During those two days VR will create a project charter for each of these vision statements. Diane sees the first three as overarching to the entire initiative. They are all inter-related. Each requires a body of work to make it happen. VR will be identifying leads, teams, deliverables, and timeframes. I think we have “seeded” this initiative with all staff over the last two plus years. AWARE interfered with our launch as it took

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priority over everything. I think staff are excited to be moving from a quantitative approach (how many rehabs) to a more qualitative approach to serving people over time on their career pathway.

**Vision, Mission and Values:** The management team also reviewed our vision, mission and guiding principles and made draft changes to align it with our new performance measures and career focus.

### **VocRehab Vermont January 2018**

#### **MISSION:**

The mission of VocRehab Vermont is to help Vermonters with disabilities prepare for, obtain, and maintain meaningful careers and to help employers recruit, train, retain and promote employees with disabilities.

#### **Vision Statement**

The customer will be the first priority for VocRehab Vermont staff and community partners.

All VocRehab Vermont customers will have the opportunity to support themselves and their families in a career pathway of their choice.

All VocRehab Vermont staff will be valued and empowered.

VocRehab Vermont will have the resources to meet the needs of all Vermonters with disabilities and employers who seek our services.

#### **4 VR Guiding Themes**

- **Organizational Effectiveness:** Continuous improvement in service delivery through data driven decision-making, constructive strategic planning, and development of

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new programs.

- Ongoing Engagement: Quality programs that comprehensively meet the needs of employers while offering ongoing education, training and services for people with disabilities.
- Valued and Empowered Employees: A skilled and dedicated staff who are offered opportunities for professional growth and a healthy and affirming work culture.
- Collaborative Partnerships: Alliances with a wide variety of organizations to develop comprehensive career pathways for people with disabilities in Vermont.

### **Our Pledge/Guiding Principles**

To treat all customers and employers with respect.

To listen to customer needs and provide timely services of high quality.

To be competent, creative and flexible in our approach to problem solving.

To be a trusted on-going resource to our dual customer – the employer and the person with a disability.

To advocate for full accessibility for people with disabilities to the career pathway of their choice.

To ensure a high degree of dual customer satisfaction.

**AWARE:** Diane reported that staff have been working in AWARE for over four months. We are rebuilding our infrastructure and continue to make improvements to our AWARE home. Alice and her team of experts continue to adapt and improve the system as they gain greater insight into how AWARE behaves and how it supports our practice. We are assimilating staff feedback along with options/changes associated with new version updates.

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Diane said that VR is putting together Aware Training 2.0 as staff are ready for this now. We just sent out a Survey Monkey to all staff asking how they are doing and where improvements are needed.

### **AWARE SharePoint Site:**

We are developing a central SharePoint site for all AWARE information. This site will contain Training Materials, up to date Business Processes, Tips & Tricks, and notices to staff. Our goal is mid-February/early-March launch.

**Training Plan:** Requests from the field have been for “small training bites”. We are developing a schedule of monthly, topical training webinars. District trainers meet monthly with the Help Desk to ensure feedback loop between field staff and the Help Desk.

**Help Desk:** The Help Desk meets weekly to review issues submitted by the field. The Help Desk determines which issues require formal training or business process guidance and is developing a process to share findings with District Trainers, Teams, Staff, and Managers. The SharePoint site will help us manage the exchange of information in real-time.

**Survey:** We are doing a survey monkey of all staff to get feedback on how they are doing and their support needs.

**Jobs for Independence:** There is very good news on sustaining JFI after the grant ends at the end of this calendar year. The Food and Nutritional Services staff from the Boston regional office met with the JFI team last week and strongly encouraged Vermont to apply to 100% federal SNAP Employment and Training funds that are available for distribution to states. The FNS staff in Boston are not the decision makers. Decisions are made at FNS in Washington DC. It is very promising news. An application will be developed and submitted soon.

**Budget:** Although still facing an MOE penalty in 2020, the

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	budget is on track which is a great relief after our loss of reallocation funds.		
Conclusions	Thank you for the update!		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
None		n/a	n/a
<b>8. Review and Approval of Goals and Priorities for VR State Plan for FY19</b>			
<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>James Smith</b>		
Discussion	<p>James distributed the Goals and Priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19. James provided an overview of the 11 goals and priorities along with their measures and targets. The Performance Review subcommittee spent about an hour and half reviewing the plan and made a few suggestions for changes. The PR Committee voted to approve the VR State Plan for FY19 and to recommend it for approval to the Full SRC. James answered questions from the committee.</p> <p>Martha Frank moved to approve the Goals and Priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19. Sam Liss 2<sup>nd</sup>. Additional discussion occurred - James will add the changes and forward a copy of the revised Goals tomorrow. All approved - <b>Vote unanimous 14-0-0.</b></p>		
Conclusions	The Goals and Priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19 passed.		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Send members the revised Goals and Priorities for the VR State Plan for FY19		James Smith	2/12/18
<b>9. Jobs for Independence Presentation</b>			
<b>50 minutes</b>	<b>Marc Adams</b>		
Discussion	<p>Vermont's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&amp;T) Pilot                      A Pilot Program to Help 3 Squares VT Participants with Significant Barriers Obtain Employment and Increase Wages</p> <p><u>Pilot Background:</u> The Agricultural Act of 2014 set aside \$200 Million to be used for SNAP E&amp;T Pilots</p>		

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Statutory Goal: to test new methods for E&T programs and services to “increase employment and earnings and reduce reliance on public benefits”

- 10 states received funding through a competitive grant application process
- States were awarded between \$3.4 and \$22.3 Million
- The goals of the grant are to enroll 3000 participants and provide employment services. JFI is committed to keeping the integrity of the study by monitoring how the services are delivered and data is accurately collected.
- Focuses on individuals in Vermont with significant barriers to employment
  - Homeless or “at risk” of Homelessness
  - Addiction Issues
  - Mental Health Issues
  - Criminal Convictions
- Participants Must be SNAP (3SquaresVT) Recipients (who are not receiving Reach Up, Reach Ahead or Reach First)
- Pilot will seek to enroll at least 3,000 participants (with at least 1,500 in “treatment group)
- In March 2016 the JFI program began recruitment. Enrollment while steady has not met the required targets. Strategies to meet targets were developed. One of the strategies was to use the 15% Vermont 3SQVT exemption as an incentive to enroll in JFI.
- We will continue to recruit participants through 12/31/2017 making the additional work load for district offices short term.

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- This JFI code 15 exemption will only be in effect until 12/31/2017.
- The Program will provide services to clients until 12/31/2018, but this will have no impact on district offices.
- JFI leadership is located in the DCF, Economic Services with Anne McBee as the Director, Tracy Collier as the Program Manager and Jennifer Herwood as the Data Manager.
- The partners of the project include; Community Action Agencies throughout the state who are providing targeted recruitment services.
- Vermont Department of Labor provides orientation, random assignment and employment services.
- VR-EAP provides assessment and supports around employment barriers.
- CCV is offering the Governors Career Ready Certificate.
- We also work with all of you and the service providers in the communities. We rely heavily on you for recruitment, enrollment and barrier support services.

Sam said that housing is an important solution and asked if JFI is working with anyone actively to help finding suitable housing. Marc said that yes, we are actively working with a variety of entities and found that there are usually strict guidelines, so we made funds available for those that don't fit in with these other entities. The housing problem is very complex, and we are trying to establish a link between the housing groups and the employment groups

James said that Vermont is the most successful state in this endeavor. Marc said we are using a coordinated care model

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that is promoting this individual support and have gotten about 500 jobs so far for those in the study.

Sarah asked where are the biggest policies that need to change. Marc said it has shown that with a little bit of flexibility with funding, we are able to get to people who do not qualify for funding elsewhere.

Deb Tucker asked how many people are in the study. There are about 2800 people in the study and we are trying to get 3000 which are evenly split (1400 in control and 1400 in the study).

Diane Dalmasse said there was a meeting last week with the Economic Services and the JFI team and how we can sustain this very good work. The outcome was that the F & S folks from the regional office in Boston told us there is 100% funding from SNAP funds are available from the feds and strongly encourage Vermont apply for these funds.

Marc read a note from an individual who was in the study that was very complimentary to the JFI Program. He also told the story of other individuals that had great successes.

Sam said it goes to show what good can come from eliminating silos. Is there any component of this that can be used with other VR projects? Marc said that VABIR does a lot of this work and one of those places where we could do more is around teaming with VDOL.

Diane said the most successful we've been with offenders is when we had the Medicaid funding but that is now gone. We now have a staff person doing readiness work in the facilities and reaching out to those in most risk. John Howe is doing this work in Corrections.

Marc asked the VR Regional Managers how JFI was working in their regions. Mark Ciociola said that there have been success stories in his region.

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	Bill Sugarman said that one of things that you may want to know is that it takes a lot of time. It is worth it, but it does mean a bunch of time.	
Conclusions	The JFI Project has been very successful. The PowerPoint has been posted to the SRC website: <a href="http://vtsrc.org/presentations/">http://vtsrc.org/presentations/</a>	
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
None	n/a	n/a
<b>10. Orientation to Vocational Rehabilitation</b>		
<b>40 minutes</b>	<b>Diane Dalmasse and James Smith</b>	
Discussion	James developed a PowerPoint presentation on an orientation to Vocational Rehabilitation for new and veteran members of the SRC. This PowerPoint presentation has been posted to the SRC website at: <a href="http://vtsrc.org/presentations/">http://vtsrc.org/presentations/</a> .  Sherrie Brunelle asked that consideration be given by the Steering Committee to have a presentation on the Social Security Ticket to Work Program and how VR benefits.	
Conclusions	Great presentation and quite helpful to new and veteran members.	
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
James will forward the PowerPoint Presentation to Debra for posting to the SRC website <a href="http://vtsrc.org/presentations/">http://vtsrc.org/presentations/</a>	James Smith and Debra Kobus	3/3/18
<b>To Steering Committee Parking Lot:</b> Presentation on the Social Security Ticket to Work Program and how VR benefits	Debra Kobus	2/19/18
<b>11. Other Business</b>		
<b>5 minutes</b>	<b>Sarah Launderville</b>	
Discussion	None	
Conclusions		
<b>Action Items</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
None	n/a	n/a
<b>12. Adjournment</b>		

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<b>0 minutes</b>		<b>Sarah Launderville</b>	
Discussion	Sarah asked that people go around the table and add their thoughts about the meeting prior to adjournment. Sherrie Brunelle moved to adjourn. Max Barrows 2 <sup>nd</sup> . No further discussion. All approved – <b>Vote unanimous 14-0-0.</b>		
Conclusions	Motion to adjourn approved at 3:35 pm		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Condensed minutes uploaded to <a href="http://www.VTSRC.org">www.VTSRC.org</a>		Debra Kobus	2/6/18
Draft minutes uploaded to <a href="http://www.VTSRC.org">www.VTSRC.org</a>		Debra Kobus	3/3/2018
Draft minutes emailed to Committee members		Debra Kobus	3/3/2018
Minutes approved		Full SRC	4/5/18
Approved minutes uploaded to website <a href="http://www.VTSRC.org">www.VTSRC.org</a>		Debra Kobus	4/10/18