

State Rehabilitation Council Meeting
December 7, 2007
9:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.
RCBVI Conference Room - Topeka

Present: Members: Barbara Crooks, Morris Taylor, Christine Owens, David Rosenthal, Wendy Blaauw, Julia Fonseca, Shannon Jones, Tami Schwindt, and Michael Donnelly
 Alternates: Kathleen Wilson
 Staff: Peg Spencer, Barbara Mah (Recorder)

Barbara opened the meeting and all present introduced themselves. The minutes from the September 7th meeting were reviewed and approved with no changes. Additions to the agenda – Barbara would like Julia to report on her trip to San Antonio to attend the CSAVR annual meeting.

Public Comment – None

Report from Michael Donnelly, KRS Director –

- Provider agreements are in process. Central office staff have met with representatives of community mental health centers. Additional meetings are planned with Interhab, independent living centers, and independent providers. We are also coordinating with SRS/Community Supports and Services. We hope to have the provider agreements finalized in March.
- We should see appointments to the Council soon. We continue to recruit for the designated representative of the State Workforce Investment Board.
- This past week all rehabilitation staff, along with several partners including Working Healthy, Economic and Employment Support programs, Medicaid, Workers Comp, Corrections and other groups, held a day and one-half training on comparable benefits. Then KRS staff spent the following morning working on action plans related to the State Plan goals and priorities.
- Questions about the Advisory Committee for Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired – I have received letters from interested parties wanting to be on the board and will make a decision by January.
- We are planning on stakeholders meetings in the spring.
- The Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas and KRS are working together on the State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL). There will be a new position in Rehab Services that will be a liaison for the independent living centers. January 4th there will be a public hearing by web cast. People in 11 communities can participate in the providing input on the SPIL goals and objectives, which will be updated and submitted to RSA by August 2008..
- Carol Dobak from the Rehabilitation Services Administration called yesterday and wants me to participate in a training session for other state VR agencies in the development of our state plan, because ours was done well and they liked it.
- Shari Campbell is leaving her position of KRS Program Administrator in the West Region to become the SRS Regional Director in the West.

- Julia asked if the vacant transition central office position will be filled. Mike said no, however we are hiring new people for independent living and training.
- KRS had collaborated with Wichita public schools and the KU Center for Research on Learning to submit a proposal to RSA for a special project related to improving transition outcomes. Our proposal was not funded.

Annual Report – Peg reported that two weeks ago Chris, Barbara, Peg and Mike met to review a draft of the report, and all thought it was well done. Peg passed around a copy of the cover which is a picture of a field in Kansas with a combine included. The annual report includes a cover letter from Barbara, an overview of the State Plan goals and priorities, summary of programs, results of the stakeholder meetings, 3-4 pages of a summary of SRC activities, and interspersed are consumer stories. Barbara thanked Peg for the great job on the report. The report will go to the Governor, Acting Commissioner of RSA, this committee, and will also be available at stakeholder meetings. Morris commented that he had just finished his annual report and he really likes this format and is very impressed. Chris moved to accept the annual report as presented, Morris seconded, the motion passed.

Committee Structure – Barbara, Julia, Peg and Mike met a few weeks ago to review input received from members about committees. The recommendation to establish the following committees was distributed: Executive Committee, Membership Committee and Policy Committee. The Committee of the Whole would continue to work on State Plan issues. Shannon asked if this was a shift from before and the answer is yes. Chris said she is good with the recommendation. Shannon asked if there is a term limit for officers and there is a 1-year term for an officer and the officer can serve two consecutive years. Julia is excited about the recommendation and thinks it looks good. Peg asked if the Council wanted the Committee structure to be incorporated into the bylaws. Julia moved to adopt the committee structure and place in the bylaws, Wendy and Chris both seconded, the motion passed.

Report from Prairie Band – Morris reported that he has finished their annual report and they had 38 return to work this past year, there are 118 clients with IPEs and a lot in training. The numbers are in good shape for the coming year with 44 currently in training programs. They are working on the revolving door problem of drug and alcohol clients relapsing as they have about 35% who seem to keep coming back for repeat services. The first time they return, the client must have 90 days clean and sober, the 2nd time back it is another 90 days, and the 3rd time they have to have 1 year being clean and sober before they can reapply for services. That has been helpful to date. The bad news is that the expectation of the new state operated casino has caused the projection of 96 layoffs in the next year which is about 20% of the Tribal work force. The tribe voted for higher per capita payments mainly from the people who do not live in the area and don't receive services from the casino profits. Vocational Services receives 90% of their funding from the Dept. of Ed. Social Services may lose 6 people in all of this, and everyone is anxious.

Report from Families Together – Tami reported that the state conference is tomorrow in Wichita. They held a training for case managers and IEP meetings for CDDO's working with families. Case managers were making demands in the classrooms and so were being banned from the classrooms. The training helped them to understand their role in the classroom.

Report from the Client Assistance Program – The 2007 demographic show that 60 clients were assisted and there are still 24 open. Most of the clients are in the 40-60 year old range and currently they are seeing more females. The type of disability has shown an increase in clients with mental illness. The service requirements are mostly communication needs. They have 5 cases that went beyond information and referral or technical assistance – 3 were requesting representation at meetings and 2 mentioned litigation. Ethnicity is primarily white, with 2 client American Indian, 6 blacks and 3 Hispanics. In the closed cases 21 had communication issues and all were resolved. A mailing through Working Healthy was done which included a facts sheet about going back to work – if you like some, please let me know. We have seen a change in your closure letter which has helped us, so thanks for that.

Report from the Statewide Independent Living Council of Kansas – We are partnering with KRS for a public hearing on January 4th. Information gathered from the public hearing will be used to rewrite the state plan. KanSAIL program – Dianne, Shannon and Mike met and set up an action plan for the future – will be contacting former clients. In February they will conduct a telephone survey to current consumers and mail a survey to community providers. We want to ask customers how to get the biggest bang for our money. We have asked Morris to meet and work with the Prairie Bang group to include them in our future plans. There will be a meeting of all the SILCs in January and we have asked Julia to join us at that meeting in New Orleans. Tom Kelley from the Rehabilitation Services Administration is expected to be there to answer questions. We have our quarterly meeting next week and all are welcome to attend. Our end of the year report is also due. Kansas has a lot of Federal grants which require lots of work to get the protocol established. Closures of public and private ICFMR have been willing to shut down. Real choice system grant – design change to long term care system. Continue to work with Health Care Policy and Working Healthy. Comprehensive Opportunity grant – design more unique ways of employment opportunities – working healthy.

Report from the Kansas State Department of Education – Wendy distributed 2 different conference announcements. The post school outcome data for 2006 shows an 89% engagement rate in continued education or employment from 450 of 1100 surveyed. This establishes a baseline for the next four years of 89%, and we will have to show an increase each year. Compliance issue – transition mentors – 16 volunteer areas and have report from across the state. Mike asked for a copy of the final report.

Election of Officers – The council chair appoints the committee, so Barbara passed around a sheet so that members could choose the committee they want to serve on. When that was complete Peg went over the rules elections of officers. Members have to express interest in a position, there are no nominations made. Barbara asked who was interested in being the chair for the coming year. Julia expressed an interest. With no other expressions of interest, Morris made a motion to approve Julia as the chair for the coming year. The motion passed. Barbara then asked who was interested in being the vice-chair for the coming year. Tami expressed an interest. With no other expressions of interest, Chris made a motion to approve Tami as the vice-chair, David seconded, and the motion passed. Julia Fonseca will be the Chair and Tami Schwindt will be the Vice-Chair for the calendar year 2008.

Feedback from December 4 conference -- Feedback from participants at the December 4th Conference – Barbara was very excited about the conference and learned a lot. The break

session with Frank Stahl on waivers was excellent. Wendy agreed that the conference was very good. Morris got to see a lot of the counselors again and the three sessions he attended were really good. Morris thought KRS should have a conference like this every 2 years and that the conference was very helpful to him.

2008 Plans and Schedule – There will be an orientation for new members scheduled in a timely way, hopefully before the March meeting. The locations for 2008 meetings will be in Southeast Kansas, Emporia, Topeka and Garden City with tentative dates of March 7, June 6, September 5 and December 5. You will be kept posted on the locations. Preliminary plans are underway for focus groups with consumers, transition personnel and employers. All council members would not need to attend the focus groups – would rotate committee members – we do not want to overwhelm the focus group by having an over abundance of committee members there.

Round Robin Reports –

Julia – Youth Leadership Forum (YLF) applications were sent out with a deadline of December 15, but we always seem to extend the deadline. The Kansas Youth Empowerment Academy (KYEA) is moving to the YWCA building tomorrow. KYEA has a staff of 2 now, and they are very busy.

David – He just had a new cochlear implant, so is adjusting to it.

Chris – Finished the 704 report. They have 2 positions open – one part-time and one full time. This has been a tough year for their staff.

Barbara – She is very busy as they have only 1 teacher. She was ask to do the transition piece at this year's Autism conference in Manhattan and she is excited and happy to be asked.

Morris thanked Barbara for her service as the chair for the last two years; he expressed the thought that the council has come a long way under Barbara's direction.

Next Meeting – Our next meeting will be in March. Have a safe holiday.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 AM.

Minutes submitted by Barbara Mah.