

**Rehabilitation Council of Texas**  
**October 19-20, 2015**  
**Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center**  
**Austin, Texas**

## **Present:**

- Martha Garber, Chair, Coppell
- Joyce Taylor, Vice-Chair, Houston
- Bruce Hooper, San Antonio
- Cheryl Fuller, Austin
- Joe Tims, Justin
- Karen Stanfill, Houston
- Scott Bowman, Austin
- Troy Myree, Houston
- Yvonne Bates, Tuscola
- Rene Gonzalez, McAllen
- Brent Pitt, Austin

## **Absent:**

- Casey Hertel, Abilene
- Mark Schroeder, Grand Prairie

## **DARS Reps:**

- David Norman, DRS Liaison
- Ron Ayer, DBS Liaison
- Shiloh Gonzalez, DARS

## **DARS Staff:**

- Martha Bagley
- Michelle McCall
- Jeff Kaufmann

## **Guests:**

- Kaki Leyens (TWIC)
- Tania Jordanova (UT)
- Dr. Beth Gerlach (UT)
- Reagan Miller (TWC)
- Susan May (TEA)
- Steven Aleman (Disability Rights Texas)
- Karen Latta (TWC)
- Kim Watson (TWC)

## Welcome and Introductions

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Martha Garber, Chair.  
Each member introduced themselves and stated what they hoped the day of Strategic Planning would bring.

## Strategic Planning

Cassandra Marx, Facilitation Services Officer for Health & Human Services Commission (HHSC), lead the strategic planning. Cassandra will provide a detailed chart with the results of the strategic planning to Lisa Godwin.

## Committee Meetings

The following committees met with their members: Policy, Procedures and Personnel Development, Membership and Education, and Consumer Satisfaction and Needs Assessment.

### Planning and Review Committee

Dr. Rene Gonzalez, Chair of the Committee talked about the Combined State Plan.

- Submitted in March 2016
- Approved in July 2016
- Transfer to TWC on September 1, 2016
- Ron Ayers will provide the comments from the DARS/TWC Joint Public Meetings
- Data will be updated in December

## LIAISON REPORTS

The following people presented reports or briefings from their agency, and reports were emailed to council members prior to this meeting:

### DARS Council

DARS Council meeting was rescheduled and therefore there was no report.

### CAP Council – Karen Stanfill presented the report.

- Preliminary results for year:
  - 291 cases served with five staff
  - 175 closed cases
  - 180 open cases
  - 7 Independent Living cases
- CAP hired two advocates one for Lubbock and one for Dallas.
- Sheltered Workshop employment:
  - CAP is working with Disability Rights Texas to monitor 10 sheltered workshops and talking to consumers at those sites.

- With regards to changes in WIOA CAP developed a flyer and posters for the sheltered workshops in helps to make consumers aware of their rights with the VR agency.
- CAP along with Disability Rights Texas and DRTX provided testimony at the DARS/TWC Public Meetings
- CAP attended the DBS Senior management and plans to continue attending these meetings
- CAP continues to address individual and systemic issues across the state. Some examples are:
  - Eligibility Issues
  - Modifications
  - Master's Programs
  - Walking Aids/Prosthesis

### **SILC Council – No one present to present report - Report included in your binder**

### **TEA Council – Brent Pitt presented the report.**

- TEA is working with Education Services Center(ESC) Region 11 to make the transition website more usable to students. (<http://www.transitionintexas.org/site/default.aspx?PageID=1>)
- TEA is working with ESC Region 18 to publish the list of Transition and Employment Designee (TED). There are a few schools who have not identified someone as their transition employment specialist.
- TEA is exploring the possibility of developing online training modules to address training needs for TEDs.
- TEA continues to work with DARS, DRS and DBS on discussing of transition to TWC concerning WIOA and working toward developing an interagency MOU.
- The 2013 State Performance Plan-Annual Performance Report and data are all posted to the TEA web page.

### **TWIC - Joyce Taylor presented the report**

- TWIC approved the fiscal year's 2016-2023 Texas strategic plan for the Texas Workforce System.
- TWIC approved the 2016 work plan.
- System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC) held its final meeting.
- Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee (ATAC):
  - ATAC received reappointment of two current members and appointed two new members.
  - ATAC heard updates on current status of Chapter 133 funding for apprenticeship training program.

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## Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

Tania Jordanova, MSPH, Research Coordinator with the University of Texas provided a PowerPoint presentation on the progress of the statewide needs assessment. She also provided a handout with recommendations from preliminary finds.

- Top five disabilities were
  - Learning Disabilities
  - Cognitive and Intellectual Disabilities
  - Autism Spectrum Disorders
  - Speech or Language Impairment
  - Emotional Disturbance or Behavioral Disorders
- Recommendation is to recognize that this is a community wide effort and everyone plays a roll. The handout identified recommendations for DARS, Schools, Caregivers/youth and the Community.
- The final report will be posted on the website [UTCfri.org](http://UTCfri.org) or [DARSneedsassessment.org](http://DARSneedsassessment.org).
- Lisa will email the RCT members the PowerPoint presentation and the handout.

## DARS Commissioner Update

DARS Commissioner Veronda L. Durden provided these updates:

- Commissioner Durden shared the list of disability history and awareness activities that were held in October including White Cane day. Commissioner Durden along with Larry Temple and Reagan Miller from TWC participated in this event.
- She provided many of DARS accomplishments for FY15. These numbers will be provided to the RCT by Lisa Godwin.
- She summarized the purpose of the DARS/TWC Public Hearings that were held in 2015.
  - More than 460 people participated in the seven meetings.
  - Comments were grouped into the following areas:
    - Retention of staff expertise and specialized services
    - Ensuring quality services and continuity of services
    - Communication during program transfer from DARS to TWC
    - Transition and outsourcing of independent living services
    - Potential gaps in service
- During her travels across Texas for the Public Hearings she met up with 309 DARS staff. There were 5,000 years of combined state services among these 309 staff members.
- Are you a Carrot, Egg, or Coffee Bean? story

## DBS and DRS Assistant Commissioner Report

*DBS Assistant Commissioner Scott Bowman provided these updates:*

- DBS RCT Report

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- Goal 1, Measure 1.1 and 1.2 DBS surpassed our standards and communicated targets on those VR plan goals by serving 1,486 consumers with 75% successfully employed.
  - Goal 4, Measures 4.1 and 4.2 after a recent quality review we realized that there was an error in the way that employment data had been reported. This error resulted in double counting some of the consumers. See the corrected number in this report.
  - Combined State Plan
    - There is another public comment period during November 4-December 4.
    - It will go to TWC February 5, 2016 for approval.
    - The target date is February 28, 2016, a couple of days in advance of the March 3, 2016 deadline.
    - Commissioner Durden has approved the DBS portion.
    - Send to TWC for final round of edits later this week.
  - DARS/TWC Public Hearing Concerns among the blind, vision impaired consumers
    - Outsourcing of independent living
    - IL program for older individuals who are blind
      - Outsourcing and movement of the part B portions of IL going over to HHSC
      - DBS part of the blind IL program that goes to TWC
      - Will it be coordinated service delivery between workforce and HHSC with VR to the IL program?
    - BCP blind and visually impaired children's program
      - By virtue of having the programs under one roof, children can be referred by their specialist directly into the transition program at age 10.
  - Pre-employment transition services (Pre-ETS)
    - DBS didn't meet federal FY15 requirements leaving about \$7.25 billion VR funds
    - RSA is allowing this to roll over to FY16. Estimates after salary adjustments are figured into the mix will probably amount to \$2.8 million.
    - DBS will network with other agencies to see how they are doing with regards to Pre-ETS and the 15%.
  - Consumer Satisfaction Survey has been completed and we will have the report by December.

*DRS Assistant Commissioner Cheryl Fuller provided these updates:*

- Performance Measures
  - State
    - DRS exceeded all seven targets on their performance measures.
    - There was a 10 year trend where we were serving fewer consumers. This year we have turned that around and are serving more consumers from year to year.
  - Federal

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- DRS met or exceeded all but one performance goal 1, measure 1.5 (average hourly earnings)
    - Our average hourly earnings were between \$12.78 and \$12.82. To pass we would have had to achieve an average hourly wage of \$13.61. This could be due to not entering data correctly.
  - Customer Satisfaction Goal
    - The goal is that all consumers surveyed that 85% would say that we return phone calls no later than the next day. We just missed at goal with 80.4%.
  - Goals for state fiscal year 2016
    - 1. Continue to achieve both the number and rate of successful employment outcomes.
    - 2. Maximize our resources to serve the growing number of consumers serves.
    - 3. Keep working on improving the customer satisfaction indicator.
  - Sunset Recommendations
    - Commission Management Recommendation –Operational Established Joint Business Relations Team is started up. DRS will present more on this topic at a future meeting.
    - There was a concern about DRS not have a sufficient number of case reviews to indicate the proper amount of oversight by the management structure of the counselors work.
      - DARS initiated some policy changes and goals for the number of case reviews
      - Sunset requires 10% 8,600 of cases be reviewed.
      - In 2012 DARS report about 1200 case reviews.

## RCT Committee Reports

*Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee*, chair Joe Tims – We do not have the final Consumer Satisfaction Report but your contractor did get us caught up. We surveyed 12 fewer closed cases than were surveyed the previous year.

*Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development Committee*, chair Karen Stanfill – There are a lot of policies to review for both DBS and DRS and this will continue through March. We talked about adding a conference call so that we can discuss changes prior to submitting comments.

There was discussing about looking into the training for IHOs. Cheryl Fuller said that she would pass this information along to Sylvia Hardman-Dingle.

Education & Membership Committee chair Mark Schroeder – Mark Schroeder was absent so Joyce Delores Taylor presented on his behalf. New members and reappointments will be appointed after October 29 and we should receive then in January.

There was a question as to if RCT has representation on the Employment First Task Force? Martha Garber answered that RCT does not have representation on the Employment First

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Task Force. However, DARS does have representation. Commissioner Durden suggested that we ask if RCT can have representation. Cheryl Fuller said that we may be ex-officio members.

It was discussed as the new appointments are being made that we make sure that we are covering all the disability membership requirements.

There was a discussion about RCT member term. We are asking for clarification on example Ms. May will be appointed this year. But she is taking over Brent's place which expired 2014. So, the question is will she be able to serve six years or only five since one year went unfilled? Martha Garber stated that their expiration will be on the letter received from the Governor's office.

## Public Comment

Steve Aleman, Attorney Disability Rights Texas

- Transition of VR Programs to TWC and VRs connection to pre-employment transition services with public schools. The 15% is very important for gaining employment after high school and/or providing post-secondary higher education's opportunities

No other public comments.

## TWC Transition and Legislative Implementation – Larry Temple and Reagan Miller

Larry Temple, TWC Executive Director

- Stakeholder Meetings
  - All comments and concerns gathered went into the transition plan. Keeping in mind the idea is to have a transition that doesn't interrupt services.
  - Audience varied from each location
    - Lubbock had more families and more children testified.
    - McAllen there were a lot of parents attended but didn't have the children testify.
    - El Paso was older blind. Concerns about independent living and reimbursement rate on caregivers. ADAPT also attended and helped tie this together.
    - Austin was flooded with people from Criss Cole Center.
  - It was reassured that the TWC employment counselors would not replace the rehab counselors. This seemed to be a big concern.
- Transition to TWC
  - DARS to renew all of the contracts for the service providers.
  - TWC will use DARS HCATS systems in the interim.
  - Rehab works will be used by both TWC and HHSC for consistency of one case management system.
  - TWC is excited to bring their contacts and the business community to open up and provide many more opportunities for individuals for career growth.
  - Next public hearings are being planned for January and February 2017

- We are looking at the procurement process.
- TWC Structure
  - Three Commissioner that are appointed by the Governor
    - One represents the public
    - One represents employers
    - One represents labor

Reagan Miller, TWC Workforce Development Division Director

- Stakeholder Meetings
  - Qualified Counselors
  - Consumers are concerned that there isn't enough capacity of CILs. On the other hand CILs says they do have the capacity and are excited to handle it. So, this is on our radar and we have been working with HHSC and DARS to have an entity look at CILs capacity.
  - Purchasing client services were another concern from the consumers.

## **OLD BUSINESS:**

- July 20-21, 2015 RCT Minutes – Joyce Taylor made a motion to approve minutes, Karen Stanfill seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.
- Reviewed the January To-Do List
  - Executive Committee
    - Review Strategic Planning
    - CARRY FORWARD: Invite Dr. Suzanna Hupp Associate Commissioner for Veteran's Affairs at HHSC to speak at October or January RCT meeting.
    - ON-GOING: IRI Book Review - Review a chapter each meeting
    - ON-GOING: Discuss updates of State Plan at every meeting
  - Planning and Review Committee
    - NA
  - Consumer Satisfaction Committee
    - ON-GOING: Continue to review consumer satisfaction results
  - Membership and Education Committee
    - ON-GOING: Continue to work with Governor's Office on appointing new members
  - Policy Procedures and personnel Development
    - Review the training provided to DARS and IHO.
    - CARRY FORWARD: Follow up on DARS policy on developing vocational goals
    - ON GOING: Review impartial hearing results
    - ON GOING: Continue to review all policy manual revisions

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- Lisa and Shiloh gave an update on the RCT Annual Report.
- Budget Update – Lisa Godwin noted that there were no concerns about the budget. Budget has been updated through September 30, 2015.
- Town Hall Meetings for 2017. Look at budget.
- Next meeting with SILC January 25-26, 2016.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm, October 20, 2015.