

Meeting Minutes

Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT)

August 3-4, 2017

Texas Workforce Commission

101 E 15th Street Room 151

Austin TX 78778

Present: Martha Garber, Chair, Coppell
Joyce Taylor, Vice Chair, Houston
Matt Berend, Abilene
Jim Brocato, Beaumont
Neva Fairchild, Carrollton
Paul Hunt, Austin
Susie May, Austin
Troy Myree, Houston
Karen Stanfill, Houston
Crystal Stark, College Station
Joe Tims, Justin

Absent: JoAnne Fluke, Abilene
Rene Gonzalez, Alton
Casey Hertel, Abilene

TWC Reps: Cheryl L. Fuller, Belinda Salazar, Michelle McCall, Corey Turner, Karen Latta, Adam Leonard, Geoffrey Miller, Carline Geiger, Kimberly Berry, Christy Lerche, Claudia Peden, Kira Hollywood, Elizabeth Adkisson, Velissa Chapa, Jeff Kaufmann, Glenn Neal, Carolyn Francis, Commissioner Alvarez, Lee Rector

Guest: Kristin McEntyre (TWIC), Diane Salazar (TEA), Tammy Percy (TEA), Christina Bryant (TIBH), Steven Aleman (Disability Rights TX)

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Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by Martha Garber, Chair.

Committee Meetings

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

Presentation from Texas Education Agency

- Diane Salazar, Director of Career & Technology Education, TEA, provided a PowerPoint presentation on career and technical education (CTE). CTE gives learning a boost for students because it combines the regular academic courses with the career-focused courses, the technical courses, and it helps to build their skills and work opportunities and gets them ready for college and career.
- Tammy Percy, Assistant Director, Special Education, Division of Student Populations, provided a presentation on the new organizational chart.

Public Comment

- There were no public Comments.

Planning and Review Committee, Neva Fairchild, Chair

- Carline Geiger gave an update on the Combined State Plan.
 - The VR portion of the combined state plan was uploaded into the portal on July 31 and the RSA liaison, Mr. Ed West will start reviewing it today August 3, 2017.

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RSD and BSD Director's Report, Cheryl Fuller, Director of Rehabilitation Services Division and Interim Director of Blind Services Division

- An update on the CSNA timeline.
 - TWC is going to contract with Texas A&M to conduct the surveys of stakeholders, customers, and staff.
 - Looking for a completion date of December 31, 2017 for this report.
- A PowerPoint presentation on the structure for TWC combined designated state unit.
- An update on the vacant counselor positions. There are 39 counselor positions posted and 15 additional that should be ready to post next week. Then an additional 7 positions. **Ms. Fuller will provide the RCT with a more detailed report at the November meeting.**

VR Co-Location Offices Update

- Mr. Glenn Neal, TWC Director of Business Operations, & Carolyn Francis, TWC Project Manager and Strategic Advisor provided this presentation.
 - Handouts were provided.
 - Questions were answered throughout the presentation.

TWC Update from Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Representing Labor

- Commissioner Alvarez expressed appreciation for the partnership with the RCT.
- Recognition awards were presented to Martha Garber, Joyce Delores Taylor, and Joe Tims for their service on the RCT.

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Vote on RCT Chair and Vice Chair for FY18 conducted by Susan May

- Joyce Delores Taylor made a motion to vote for Neva Fairchild as RCT Chair by acclamation as there was only one nomination. This motion was seconded by Joe Tims. Approved unanimously. Neva Fairchild is the Chair for the RCT for FY18.
- Ballots were handed out for the Vice Chair position. Nominees are JoAnne Fluke and Troy Myree. Susan May counted the votes and Troy Myree was voted in as Vice Chair of the RCT for FY18.

RCT COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development Committee, Karen Stanfill, Chair
 - Counselor vacancies and positions were discussed. There are 621 counselor positions, and of those 545 are filled. Most of the counselors in the state are meeting the educational requirements to be a counselor.
 - Counselor caseload was discussed and Ms. Fuller clarified that the caseload average per counselor is 101.
 - Update on training - TWC has 33 new classes approved for CEUs for the CRCs, and many of these are in management. They are conducted by TWCs human dynamics team, not the VR team, but they have been looked at by VRCC and have been approved.
 - Policy is working on combining the VR General and VR Blind manuals and this committee has been involved in reviewing and providing comments and recommendations on these updates. Michelle McCall also mentioned that they are working on the combination of 300 different forms.
 - There was a discussion on WIOA RSA 9-11 about completing an application for a closed case prior to July 1 and the customer comes back in August. **The committee would like to**

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continue this discussion and receive more information on this as there are concerns.

- Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee, Joe Tims
Chair:
 - Geoffrey Miller reported on the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment.
 - Town Hall Meetings were held across the state in July. The transcripts from these meetings are in the process of being coded for textual analysis.
 - Key Informant interviews have been completed and a report of the needs that were identified were provided to the RCT.
 - Comments were provided by RCT members that attended the Town Hall Meetings as to some of the concerns heard:
 - Counselors' relationship with transition-age youth and really understanding their disability.
 - The importance of specialty counselors that understand specific disabilities and build a good relationship between the counselor and customer.
 - CRPs expressed frustration about getting things signed and approved when the primary counselor was not available, no backup plan, and the length of the forms. Another issue identified by from CRPs pertained to misconceptions about budget and funding.
 - Transportation is an issue.
 - The need for Mexican Sign Language Interpreters and other services for the deaf community.
 - Corey Turner gave a summary of the third quarter Customer Satisfaction Survey for both General Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and VR Blind services. The complete reports were included in the binders.

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- The VR Blind Report now includes additional analyses by impairment cause.
- Education & Membership Committee, Susan May, Chair
 - Recruitment is top priority.
 - **Follow up with Gaby about RCT applications and appointments.**

Adjourned at 4:00 PM

Day Two

Welcome

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Martha Garber, RCT Chair.

Cheryl Fuller answered questions from previous day

- This question arose from the Town Hall Meetings. There were several comments/questions about funding. That customers are being told that TWC is out of funds or that funding was tight. Ms. Fuller provided an explanation about funding and why there may have been some misunderstandings. It was mentioned that TWC may need to provide a budget management class for counselors so they can learn to make better decisions. It was also brought up that counselors have a budget to work with and if their budget is used up they should go to their manager to request additional funds. The agency budget is also affected by the requirement of 15% of the VR funds must be spent on Pre ETS services. Additionally, TWS-VRS is serving more consumers than the year before, which requires more money. Therefore, TWS-VRS is serving more customers with in essence less funds.

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Training

- Paul Hunt held training on the State Rehabilitation Council Membership Overview. There was a handout that was included in the binders.

WIOA-Based Outcome Data for VR

Mr. Adam Leonard gave a presentation and provided a document: WIOA-Based Accountability: Initial WIOA-Based Outcomes. This document was included in the binders.

Questions were answered throughout the presentation.

Liaison Reports

Reports were provided to the council members prior to the meeting and are included in the meeting packet.

- TWIC report provided by Joyce Taylor
- CAP Council report provided by Karen Stanfill
 - **Karen Stanfill made a motion that the council provide feedback to the agency to fax number and email address to submit the appeal form to the appeals office and to add this information to the "Can We Talk" brochure.** This motion was seconded by Neva Fairchild. This motion passed unanimously.
 - **Paul Hunt made a motion that TWC produce an accessible, embossable file, a Braille Ready File (BRF) file, for the "Can We Talk" brochure and make it available to the offices that have embossers.** Neva Fairchild seconded the motion. This motion passed unanimously.
 - **Karen Stanfill made a motion that she and Cheryl Fuller on behalf of the RCT, will draft a letter to RSA requesting clarification on whether the standards for providers manual would be considered policy. The letter will be**

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reviewed by Martha Garber prior to submission to RSA.

Neva Fairchild seconded the motion. This motion passed unanimously.

- PRN no report available from JoAnne Fluke
- SILC report provided by Jim Brocato
 - **It was requested that Jim inquire and provide a report in November about persons under 55 that are blind or visually impaired and are not VR bound because of health issues, are being told that Independent Living Centers are out of money and they will be put on a waiting list for services that is at least two to three years long.**
- RCT Coordinator report provided by Lisa Godwin

Old Business

- Consumer Satisfaction Committee –
 - ON-GOING review the Consumer Satisfaction results and Needs Assessment.
 - Martha Garber and Geoffrey Miller will check with TWC to get data on the percent of counselors with disabilities. This will help to insure we are representing this area.
- Membership and Education Committee –
 - ON-GOING: Training - IRI Chapter Review – Susan May will prepare to go over the first chapter at the November meeting.
 - ON-GOING: Continue to work with Governor's Office on appointing new members
 - ON-GOING: Work with Melinda Paniniski TWS to obtain contact information for business recruits.
 - CARRY FORWARD: Susie will check with Gaby to get an update on the number of applications received.
- Executive Committee
- Planning and Review Committee
 - ON-GOING: Review Combined State Plan

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- Policy, Procedures and Personnel Development
 - On-GOING review Impartial Hearing results, follow up on TWC's policies on developing VR goals and review all policy manual revisions.

- RCT Coordinator
 - CARRY FORWARD: Lisa Godwin will check with Gaby to verify that members whose terms have expired can continue to serve on the council until their positions are filled. Also, check to see if their vote will count and if they can be reimbursed for travel.
 - CARRY FORWARD: Lisa Godwin will check with NCSRC to see if they have updated the training for council members.

New Business

- Approval of the May 2017 RCT Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve minutes was made by Paul Hunt, and Karen Stanfill seconded the motion. No further discussion; motion passed unanimously.

RCT Coordinator Report

- Current balance for travel is \$13,807.76. Current balance for operating expenses is \$15,097.50. Detailed report was provided in the binders.

Adjourned at 12 Noon