

Meeting Minutes

Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT)
May 4-5, 2017
Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center Auditorium
4800 N. Lamar St
Austin TX 78756

Present: Martha Garber, Chair, Coppell
Joyce Taylor, Vice Chair, Houston
Matt Berend, Abilene
Neva Fairchild, Carrollton
Rene Gonzalez, Alton
Paul Hunt, Austin
Susie May, Austin
Karen Stanfill, Houston
Crystal Stark, College Station
Troy Myree, Houston
Casey Hertel, Abilene
Jim Brocato, Beaumont
JoAnne Fluke, Abilene

Absent: Joe Tims, Justin

TWC Reps: Larry E. Temple, Reagan Miller, Cheryl L. Fuller, Ron Ayer,
David Norman, Belinda Salazar, Michelle McCall, Corey Turner,
Brian Owens, Karen Latta, Adam Leonard, James Farris,
Geoffrey Miller, Carline Geiger, Kimberly Watson, Christy
Lerche

Guest: Christina Bryant (TIBH), Kristin McEntyre (TWIC), Sandra Bitter
(TXSILC)

Welcome and Introductions

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

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Committee Meetings

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

RCT COMMITTEE REPORTS

- Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee, Joe Tims
Chair was absent so presentation was as follows:
 - Corey Turner gave a summary of the second quarter Customer Satisfaction Survey for both General Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and VR Blind services. The complete reports were included in the binders.
 - Due to the delay in contract execution completion rates are below 50 percent. Westat is confident they will be able to make up the difference over the next few months.
 - VR General has completed 3,888 surveys towards the goal of reaching a total of 13,034 open/closed case customers or 29.9 percent.
 - VR Blind has completed 572 total completed surveys towards the goal of reaching a total of 1,680 open/closed case customers or 34 percent.
 - Geoffrey Miller gave updates on the CSNA
 - **As there are lower percent of persons who felt they had a choice in providers the, committee asked that as a part of the CSNA to look at the distribution of providers across the state by category so that we can see if that is a part of the problem. Are there enough providers in certain areas?**
 - **Martha Garber and Geoffrey Miller will check with TWC HR to get data on the percent of counselors with disabilities. This will help to insure we are representing this area.**

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- **CSNA Town hall meetings for July were discussed. Lisa Godwin will work with Geoffrey Miller and David Norman to facilitate these meeting.**
- Education & Membership Committee, Susan May, Chair
 - Recruitment is top priority.
 - Currently there are three vacant positions that need to be filled. These positions are all representative of Business, Industry and Labor. The fourth position for this represented group will expire in October this year. Joyce Taylor will help recruit for the TWIC representative position that will become vacant in October this year. The other position that will become vacant in October is the Disability Advocacy Representative.
 - **Susie will check with Gaby about new recruits and renewing member. She will get an update on the number of applications received**
 - **Lisa will follow up with Melinda Paniniski to insure we have the list of business recruits and work with Susie to make contact.**
 - It was brought up that we need to recruit from the north and west side of the state to have a better representation of the state.
 - **Lisa Godwin will check with Gaby to verify if that member whose term have expired but they continue to participate because their position has not been filled, will they be able to vote and will they be reimbursed for travel.**
 - **Lisa Godwin will update the member spreadsheet to insure accessibility ie color.**
 - Council Member Training
 - Martha will present training today on Federal Regulations.
 - In August Susie May will present on Membership.

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- **Lisa Godwin will check with Elizabeth Adkinson for training on changes at TWC for November meeting.**
 - **After that the committee will look into picking back up on the IRI training if it has been updated. Lisa Godwin will check with NCSRC to see if they have updated information.**
 - The RCT Brochures were updated and handed out at the meeting. **Lisa will insure that the brochure is sent to everyone electronically to share.**
 - **Nomination for RCT Chair and Vice Chair are due to Lisa Godwin and Susie May by June 16, 2017. The slate will be emailed to all members on July 1, 2017 to review. Voting will take place at the August 2017 meeting.**
- Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development Committee, Karen Stanfill, Chair
 - There were several policies that were reviewed and comments and recommendations were made. We are continuing to conduct weekly conference call to insure all questions are addressed concerning changes to policy. Changes to the Policy Manual that will include the procedures.
 - Checking on the rate for tutoring, vocational training and eyeglasses frames to see if these need updating. **TWC has a rate review and we would like to know more about the process of the rate.**
 - Follow up to the question about IHO decisions and getting those decisions into the client file. This is not a policy at this time. Michelle has **asked me to resend an email I had researched and provided earlier this subject so that they could have their legal team review it.**
 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) TWC is spending \$126,000 per year on training. We were excited to

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hear that 459 out of 621 counselor positions have a master's degree.

- We discussed training for counselors and the committee is being kept up to date as changes are being made.
- We discussed the results of the literature review. So the outcome is that counselors that had more education or the master's level provide services to consumers that resulted in more successful closures, less unsuccessful closures, and better use of the budget. So our committee wanted to make a recommendation to the council and maybe the rest of the council would like to see the review before this might come out to write a letter to Ms. Fuller and Reagan Miller, Mr. Temple and the three TWC commissioners providing that review and letting them know that we support and would like to see continue that in our state that counselors do achieve a master's level. **Karen Stanfill made a motion to send the literature review that the counselors maintain or obtain a master's degree to Cheryl Fuller, Reagan Miller, Larry Temple and the three TWC Commissioners. Martha Garber seconded this motion. Motion passed unanimously.**
- **Cheryl Fuller confirmed that VR counselors may attend training that is held outside of TWC with proper approval. And she will follow up the Managers to insure they understand that counselors can attend these training and that this is being communicated with the counselors.**

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Public Comment

- There were no public Comments.

Planning and Review Committee, Neva Fairchild, Chair

- Carline Geiger gave an update on the Combined State Plan.
 - Modifications for the State Plan were sent for public comment earlier this month. There were no additional comments for the VR portion of the State Plan.
 - It will go before the TWC Commissioners for approval on May 23rd. Then onto Texas Workforce Investment Council in June for approval to be sent to the Governor's office. By August 1st it will go onto the Department of Education to become effective October 3.

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

- **Ms. Fuller answered the following questions that were sent to her by the RCT.**
 - RCT would like to know whether or not certain DBS trainings/programs will continue to be offered as they are now, or if they may change in any way as a result of combining DBS and DRS and due to transition to TWC. We have been told that consumers who are blind will continue to receive specialized services, and as such, will that include those trainings and programs that are already in place? Ms. Fuller said that the group skill training is not going away. This includes the mini immersion training held by Criss Cole.
 - The second question about the number of VR vacancies. Ms. Fuller answered we had 740 counselors, around 500 general VRCs and

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less than 100 out of blind services. Out of that, there are 60 vacant counselor positions.

- Crystal Stark asked, with the combining of General VR and VR Blind services if there would be a reduction on the number of counselors. Ms. Fuller responded that she did not see where there would be any reduction in the number of counselors.
- Neva Fairchild ask about the counselors with less than two years' experience. Her concern was that they are still fairly new and to insure they are not getting overloaded to the point of not completing their training. Ms. Fuller stated that it is typical the senior counselors that have a heavier case load. She will be glad to look into this and knows that the Regional Directors are being as thoughtful as they can with the workload distribution.
- Ms. Fuller gave a summary of her report that was included in the meeting binder. We are on track to meet almost all of our targets. There is one that we are a little low on but I have confidence we will make it.
- We continue to go to entities that hold special wage certificates and provide career counseling. The number of certificate holders are down from last year and we are continuing to encourage them to turn in their certificates.

TWC Director Update, Larry E. Temple, TWC, Executive Director and Reagan Miller, TWC, Deputy Director of Workforce Solutions

- Mr. Temple spoke about the hiring freeze and that TWC will be ready on September 1 to start filling positions as soon as they are given the ok.
- Cheryl Fuller spoke about bills that focused on assisting individuals that are being paid sub minimum wage. To assist in developing a plan to help individuals being paid sub minimum wage and those entities move to being paid at least minimum wage.

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- Mr. Temple spoke about the budget during legislative session and feels good about it.
- Reagan Miller spoke about the office move. Three or four office have been moved. There are 20 more on the list to be moved this year. All counselors will be in hard walled offices.

Adjourned at 4:00 PM

Day Two

Welcome

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

Report from NCSRC Meeting

- Martha Garber gave a summary of the NCSRC meeting she attended April 1-5, 2017 at Bethesda, Maryland.
 - Add RCT Coordinator report to the meeting.
 - Talked about putting together two or three questions that all state would ask on the customer satisfaction survey so that these questions could be compared across the states.
 - **Have SRC member sign a conflict of interest form was brought up and something to consider.**
 - Texas has a new SRC Liaison Marissa Rizzi.

Training

- Martha Garber held training on the Federal Regulations Part 361. There was a handout titled SRC analysis of 361 Regulation that was included in the binders.

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Discussion Operational Insight Works & Our Partnership With Program Areas & Other Parts of the Agency, TWC Director of Operational Insight

Mr. Adam Leonard gave a presentation and provided a document: Using Data to Drive Innovation, Accountability & Results. 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.

- RCT Coordinator report provided by Lisa Godwin
- TWIC report provided by Joyce Taylor
- CAP Council report provided by Karen Stanfill
- PRN no report available from JoAnne Fluke
- TEA report provided by Susan May
- SILC report provided by Jim Brocato

Old Business

- Consumer Satisfaction Committee –
 - ON-GOING review the Consumer Satisfaction results and Needs Assessment.
 - Geoffrey Miller will provide a copy of his report/notes to Lisa Godwin to distribute to the RCT Members. This was completed and can be removed.
- Membership and Education Committee –
 - ON-GOING: IRI Chapter Review – Susan May will prepare to go over the first chapter at the May meeting.
 - ON-GOING: Continue to work with Governor's Office on appointing new members

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- ON-GOING: Work with Melinda Paniniski TWS to obtain contact information for business recruits.
- Carried Forward: Joyce Delores Taylor and Susan May will participate in a conference call with Gaby at the Governor's office to verify positions, reassignment for this year and if they have received any applications for the RCT. This was completed and can be removed
- The committee will participate in a conference call with Melinda Paninski and Robert Mejia to discuss recruitment of RCT members. This was completed and can be removed.
- Committee will participate in a conference call with TWC Communications to discuss the requested edits to the RCT brochure. This was completed and can be removed.
- Executive Committee
 - Joyce Delores Taylor will lead a group to revise the RCT Bylaws. Martha Garber, Neva Fairchild and Karen Stanfill volunteered to serve on this group. The edited Bylaws will be emailed to the RCT and given a due date for comment of March 3. This group will hold a conference call to discuss any additional comments and prepare the Bylaws for vote at the May meeting. This was completed and can be removed.

Planning and Review Committee

- ON-GOING: Review Combined State Plan
- Geoffrey Miller will provide a copy of his report/notes to Lisa Godwin to distribute to the RCT Members. This was completed and can be removed.

Policy, Procedures and Personnel Development

- Policy, Procedures, Personnel Development – On-going review Impartial Hearing results, follow up on TWC's policies on developing VR goals and review all policy manual revisions.
- Recommended that the RCT send a letter to TWC to request that they set up a database to capture the numbers needed for the CSPD staff as required for the State Plan. It will include the new hires, terminations and the educational progress toward the Qualified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (QVRC) requirements. This was completed and can be removed.

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- Recommended that Elizabeth Atkinson from TWC be invited to the RCT meetings to give an update on the VR training. Lisa Godwin will contact Elizabeth. This was completed and can be removed.
- Karen will review the regulations and report back to the committee as to if IHO decisions are required to be placed into the client files. The committee will review several policies that have financial restrictions and give recommendations. These include the fees TWS-VSR will pay for tutoring and the amount TWS-VR will pay for vocational training. This was completed and can be removed.
- Karen will provide a report on the literature review that the committee did with regards to the need for counselors to hold a master's degree. This was completed and can be removed.

RCT Coordinator

- Lisa will coordinate with Carline Geiger to obtain information on the Outreach to Individuals Making Subminimum Wage in Sheltered Workshops to be distributed to the RCT. This was completed and can be removed.
- Lisa will coordinate with Cheryl Fuller to obtain information on the five Initiatives she discussed at the meeting to be distributed to the RCT. This was completed and can be removed.
- Lisa will coordinate with Carline Geiger to obtain the summary of the comments received at the public hearings to be distributed to the RCT. This was completed and can be removed.
- Lisa will coordinate with Carline Geiger to obtain information from Mr. Temple about benchmarking for the things that the sunset committee pointed out when it is available. This was completed and can be removed.
- Lisa will coordinate a conference call with TWC and RCT to go over the CSNA. This was completed and can be removed.
- Lisa to update address and phone number on the brochure and webpage. I can't remember if we decided to keep the phone number for TWC on the brochure. This was completed and can be removed.
- Lisa will email the requested edits for the RCT Brochure to the Communications Department and schedule a conference call with them to discuss the changes. This was completed and can be removed.

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New Business

- Approval of the February 2017 RCT Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve minutes was made by Karen Stanfill, and Neva Fairchild seconded the motion. No further discussion, motion passed unanimously.
- Joyce Delores Taylor made a motion to approve the updated RCT By Laws, and Casey Hertel seconded the motion. No further discussion, motion passed unanimously.

RCT Coordinator Report

- Current balance for travel is \$21,639.10. Current balance for operating expenses is \$15,257.50. Detailed report was provided in the binders.

Adjourned at 12 Noon