

Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT)
November 3-4, 2016
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
Jim Brocato, Beaumont
Neva Fairchild, Carrollton
JoAnne Fluke, Abilene
Paul Hunt, Austin
Susie May, Austin
Troy Myree, Houston
Karen Stanfill, Houston
Crystal Stark, College Station
Joe Tims, Justin

Absent: Rene Gonzalez, Alton
Casey Hertel, Abilene
Bruce Hooper, San Antonio

TWC Reps: Andres Alcantar, TWC Chairman & Commissioner Representing the Public, Julian Alvarez III, TWC Commissioner Representing Labor, Ruth R. Hughs, TWC Commissioner Representing Employers, Larry E. Temple, Reagan Miller, Cheryl L. Fuller, Ron Ayer, David Norman (RSD), Jeff Kaufmann, Christy Lerche, Belinda Salazar, Michelle McCall, David Johnston, Corey Turner, Karen Latta, Elizabeth Adkinson, Brian Owens, Claudia Peden, Kimberly Berry, Karen Latta, Adam Leonard

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Guest: Steven Aleman (Disability Rights Texas), Robin Orłowski, Craig David (SILC), Sandra Breitongross (TWIC) Christina Bryant (TIBH), Lee Rector (TWIC), Kristin McEntyre (TWIC)

Welcome and Introductions

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

Discussion: How TWC and RCT Will Work Together to Fulfill Shared Responsibilities

The TWC Commissioners introduced themselves.

- Andres Alcantar, Chairman and Commissioner Representing the Public
- Ruth R. Hughs, Commissioner Representing Employers
- Julian Alvarez III, Commissioner Representing Labor

The TWC Commissioners held a discussion with the RCT members as to ways they would continue to work together to fulfill their shared responsibilities.

The discussion included:

- Statewide Needs Assessment
 - The RCT reviews the 3 year report and breaks it down to a more detailed version to gain a better perspective of what population and what needs are not being met.
- Policy
 - RCT works closely with RDS and BSD liaisons to insure accuracy and consistency of policy changes. This practice will continue.
- Customer Satisfaction and Standards of Performance
 - RCT reviews quarterly reports to insure the progress toward meeting VR goals and making recommendations for changes.
- Combining of the State Plan

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- TWC will continue to work with the RCT on the development of the State Plan. RCT will provide their recommendation in writing for easy tracking.

The Commissioners embraced the opportunity to work in partnership with the RCT by reflecting on the terms of adopting strategies and defining goals. The intent of the Commissioners is to have good communication and dialogue with the RCT and to work together with stakeholders and volunteers serving on the RCT and other councils.

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

- Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development Committee, Karen Stanfill, Chair
 - This committee will start their weekly conference calls with VRS on November 14. This gives the RCT an opportunity to ask questions about changes in policy prior to giving their written recommendations.
 - They will only make recommendations to policy as to what directly impacts the customer's access to or participation in service.

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- **Recommendation** Karen made a recommendation that all RCT Comments be documented on the form that is submitted to the Commissioners for their review.
- There was a discussion about the Comprehensive State Personnel Development.
 - Karen Stanfill is preparing a literature review to support the need for counselors to obtain a master's degree.
 - This committee reviewed five different publications and found that counselors with a master's degree are able to produce more successful closures and a better record of handling a budget verses counselors without a master's degree.
 - There were three hearing officer decisions that were reviewed. There were no concerns with these decisions.
- Education & Membership Committee, Susan May, Chair
 - Recruitment was discussed.
 - Currently there are two vacant positions that need to be filled.
 - Looking forward to being prepared for October and the expiring terms of at least three (3) members.
 - The Council will start thinking about upcoming nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Nominations will be collected in May for August elections.
 - The Committee also looked at the revised RCT Brochure and made suggested edits. We are hoping a proof will be available to share for the February meeting.
- Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee, Joe Tims Chair
 - David Norman reported that both General and Blind VR services have a bid out for a new vendor for the Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment. The contract was awarded to Westat. They are looking at new ways to present the data to make it more user friendly. This report has been the same for many years and

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TWS is looking forward to working with Westat to produce a new and improved report. One of the new parts of the report will be that the customers surveyed will be stratified by the 28 workforce boards. This will allow us to compare different areas of the state.

- Planning and Review Committee, Neva Fairchild, Chair
 - Claudia Peden spoke on the revision of the State Plan to combine RSD and BSD.
 - A draft of the DSU's combined single VR portion of the Combined State Plan will be available around January 16, 2017
 - This will go to the Commission office for briefing during February 2017.
 - It will then go out for public comment for 30 days in February.
 - RCT will have an opportunity to review the plan prior to the draft.
 - RCT will be given two options as to how they would like to receive the review.
 - Option one would be to receive the plan in three sections at different dates to allow time to review and comment on each section.
 - Option two is to send the entire draft document at one time and you will have two weeks to review.

Public Comment

- Robin Orlawsky, Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services spoke about the need for college students with disabilities to be given transition help when entering the workforce. And the need to insure that college students with disabilities need to be more informed about their rights and choices in the workplace.

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

- Performance
 - There are new federal standards and indicators for performance.
 - The two divisions of VR served over 102,000 Texans with disabilities.
 - VRS met most of the performance for 2016 and those that were not met were very close.
 - The final analysis of the regulations is being worked on now.
 - Several people including Cheryl Fuller attended a meeting with RSA in Chicago on September 7, 2016. This meeting was to talk about the final regulations. There was talk about integrated employment and supported employment.
 - Strategies to address the Section 511 changes.
 - This includes sheltered workshops subminimum wage and to provide career counselling and information and referral to individuals working at subminimum wage. TWS is being proactive by contacting the facilities and going out to the facilities and providing information to the individuals about services that are available and how to access these services.
 - Second is addressing the change of minimum age for VR services in the Combined State Plan.
 - Public Hearings will be held throughout Texas in January to address the required changes in the Combined State Plan and the Standards for Providers.
 - Designated State Units (DSU) will be combined by October 1, 2017 per Senate Bill 208.

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

- Mr. Temple is proud of the transition for VR services to TWC.
- Mr. Temple has contacted several large companies that are ready to work with hiring individuals from the VR program.
- He recognized that there is no one size fits all and is ready to insure there are counselors to address all the needs of the VR customers.
- There is talk about offering recognition awards at next year's TWC conference to employers who are working with the VR customers.

Statewide Needs Assessment, Cheryl Fuller, TWC Director of Rehabilitation Services Division

- A briefing document was provided by Ms. Fuller and was included in the meeting packet.
- It was noted that VR services is working with TEA to insure transition services provided to students are not duplicated.
- 2016 completed a three year cycle. The next cycle will be 2017-2019 and will include a full demographic view of individuals with disabilities in Texas to insure specific elements laid out in the law are addressed.
- Ms. Fuller laid out a proposed plan for the next cycle and asked the RCT to provide feedback.
- There were no questions or from the RCT.

Adjourned at 4:30 PM

Day Two

Welcome

Meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Martha Garber, RCT Chair. Lisa Godwin, RCT Coordinator provided guidance for the travel form for TWC.

Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who are Blind, Jeff Kaufmann, TWC Interim Director for Programs Management South Division for Blind Services

Jeff provided a PowerPoint presentation about Independent Living Services for Older Individuals who are Blind. This presentation was provided in the meeting binder. The presentation included a brief history, the different services that are provided, and the staffing that will deliver services and strategies for coordination with the centers for independent living. Questions were answered throughout the presentation.

New Measures, Adam Leonard, TWC Director of Operational Insight

Mr. Leonard provided a PowerPoint presentation "Performance Accountability in the World of WIOA and What does it Mean for VR?". This presentation was provided in the meeting binder. The topics included:

- WIOA brings Massive Accountability Changes – Especially for VR
 - Changes in Key Accountability Concepts
 - New Measures
 - Structured Target Setting
- Implementation is a Work-in-Progress
- Texas is particularly impacted due to biennial measure/target process for state reporting

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
- PRN no report available from JoAnne Fluke
- TEA no report available from Susan May
- SILC no report available from Jim Brocato

Old Business

- Executive Committee – On –Going IRI Chapter Review. We will discuss changes and how to proceed with reviews until the new IRI is published.
- Planning & Review Committee – On-Going review Combined State Plan.
- Consumer Satisfaction Committee – On-Going review the Consumer Satisfaction results and Needs Assessment emphasizing on transition services.
- Membership and Education Committee – On-Going – continue to work with the Governor’s office on appointing new members; work with Melinda Paniniski with TWS to gain contacts for business group recruits.
- Carried Forward Membership Committee will review the federal membership requirement to insure we are in compliance. There is a question as to who the CRP representative is.
- Carried Forward Joyce Taylor will contact Gaby at the Governor’s office to inquire if we are going to be able to get appointments this year.

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- 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.

New Business

- Approval of the July 2016 RCT Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve minutes was made by Jim Brocato and Paul Hunt seconded the motion. No further discussion, motion passed unanimously.
- Karen Stanfill made a motion that the RCT quarterly meeting be held on the first Thursday and Friday of the months of February, May, August and November for 2017 to accommodate receiving reports and scheduling of important people to attend the meetings. Neva Fairchild seconded the motion. There was a comment made by Joyce Taylor that she had spoken with Gaby in the appointments office about the change in the quarterly meeting and the affect it would have on October member appointments. It was determined that the appointments would not affect the change in the meeting schedule. The motion was passed unanimously.
- New for To-Do List
 - Lisa will contact Mark and ask for his PowerPoint presentation so that we can modify them with the new regulations.
 - Lisa will check the federal requirement and identify if we have a community rehabilitation programs (CRP) representative on the RCT.
 - Lisa will check on the MOU to determine if it needs to be updated with TWC.
 - Joyce Taylor will lead a group to revise the RCT Bylaws. Martha Garber, Neva Fairchild and Karen Stanfill volunteered to serve on the group. The revised bylaws will be available at the February meeting.
 - Lisa will coordinate with the RCT members as to who will attend the Public Hearings in January.

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RCT Coordinator Report

- Lisa Godwin was not able to verify the final totals on the budget due to transition from DARS to TWC, but was showing from her documentation that the RCT did not go over budget for FY16.
- For FY17 the RCT starting budget is \$20,350 in operating expenses and \$38,000 for travel.

Adjourned at 12 Noon