

**Maryland State Rehabilitation Council
Workforce & Technology Center
September 22, 2010**

Members – Present

Thomas Barkley
Michael Bullis
Charles Crawford
Tim Daly
Laurie Elinoff
Paulette Epps
Beth Lash
Carol Lewis
Kali Mallik
Mary Manzoni
Suzanne Page
Anne Rea
Michael Shaw
Alfred Sonnenstrahl
Josie Thomas
Jennifer Whitcomb

Members Unable to Attend

Ross Edwards
Daniel Frye
Michael Whitehill

Support Staff Present

Polly Huston
Donna Lippa

DORS Liaison Staff Present

Donna Lettow
Sue Schaffer
Jean Jackson

Guests Present

James Evans, DORS
Kathy Schwabeland, DORS
Barry Shaw, SRC Candidate
Rashid Reyazzuddin, SRC Candidate
Mary Jo Verdery, DILA
Ronald Winter, DORS

Recognitions and Approval of Minutes

Kali Mallik, Chairperson, welcomed members and guests to the meeting. Kali began by acknowledging guests Barry Shaw who works for the Baltimore City Public School system, and Rashid Reyazzuddin who is a business owner in the Blind Enterprise Program. Both of these individuals have expressed an interest in membership on the Council. Kali also announced the member Michael Shaw will be leaving the Council after serving two full. The Council presented Michael with a thank you gift of appreciation for his service on the Council. We will miss you Michael!

Minutes from the May 5, 2010 meeting were approved as written.

Welcome to New Director Suzanne Page

Kali Mallik introduced Sue Page who is the new Assistant State Superintendent in Rehabilitation Services. Sue served as director of the MD Disability Determination Services and as a member of the DORS Executive Staff since 2006. She began her career with the Department in 1974 as a disability examiner at the DDS. Ms. Page and the MD

DDS have received numerous awards over the years from the Social Security Administration for excellence in serving the residents of the State of Maryland.

Ms. Page stated that it is a pleasure to be a part of this important group and looks forward to continuing the tradition of support, collaboration and partnership with the Council and work to expand initiatives which have a positive impact on the lives of persons with disabilities in Maryland.

Presentation – Workforce & Technology Center Deaf Services Initiatives, Jim Evans, WTC Assistant Director, Workforce Services and Kathy Schwabeland, Staff Specialist, Deaf Services

Jim Evans began by stating that his area of responsibility at WTC is the vocational training program. Jim stated that in 2007, WTC became aware that there were very few deaf consumers at the Center. The actual numbers being served were very low, but the interpreting costs very high for the few being served and employment outcomes not strong, which was a major concern. At that time, Director Bob Burns formed a committee to reassess and take a look at this program. Several goals were established as a result of this action:

1. Make all the training programs accessible;
2. Spread deaf awareness;
3. Advance the system technology by bringing back a team effort at WTC in regards to deaf services;
4. Establish a deaf resource room;
5. Establish a position at WTC of Staff Specialist for the Deaf to redevelop that teamwork between WTC deaf services staff and the DORS field staff.

Kathy Schwabeland, Staff Specialist, Deaf Services, was the person hired for this job. Kathy began by stating that she began her job talking with service providers at WTC, DORS field counselors and the Staff Specialist for the Deaf and H/H, Hank Passi, to see what their needs were. Kathy also spent time talking to consumers to find out their needs. After much discussion, Kathy came up with the following suggestions:

1. Basic computer class for the deaf and h/h;
2. Spoke to the DORS field counselors to find out why consumers were not being referred to WTC;
3. Kathy does not work as the case manager for the consumers, but works closely with the case manager to give them the expertise to work with the consumer i.e. accommodations in the class rooms, scheduling interpreters and other services the client may need.
4. Develop a closer relationship with the Maryland School for the Deaf;

5. Develop a closer relationship with the public school system so that deaf students can be referred to WTC;
6. Set-up a deaf driver education program;
7. Kathy has been working with consumers on job seeking assistance. Kathy felt there was a need to enhance the job seeking assistance for deaf individuals so a separate course was developed. Consumers accompany Kathy to businesses to find out what qualities businesses are looking for. Many times the consumers are taken to a volunteer function to find out what their skills and tolerance is.
8. Future plan are being made to offer the same job seeking assistance program in the DORS field offices because many consumers cannot come to the WTC
9. Many DORS field counselors have stated that they would like to see more training opportunities for deaf consumers because many of the trade schools are not always accessible. The DORS field counselor would also like to see these training programs in their home area.
10. There is a need to also develop more on-the-job trainings where DORS will pay for the person's salary for 30 days and the person is working in a real business doing a real job and it gives the employer time to access their skills and make the workplace accessible.

Beth Lash stated that the Council had an impact on the above initiatives. In 2007 DORS had a very large waiting list, and many of those individuals were deaf consumers. It was also the period of time where DORS and the SRC had a public meeting at the Maryland School for the Deaf. This meeting location was a Council suggestion, and there was input at that meeting regarding the need for driver's education statewide because of the lack of provision of reasonable accommodations in the driving schools. The Council has been advocating for a number of year focusing on this area. Congratulations to the efforts of the Council.

Charlie Crawford stated that, when he ran the Agency for the Blind in Massachusetts, there was a deafness agency as well (Commission for the Deaf and Commission for the Blind). We always had concerns between the two agencies as to people who had dual disabilities of deafness and blindness which agency would best serve which type of client. We came up with our own resolution of that and would be interested to know if that issue has come up here and how it was resolved.

Sue Schaffer stated the way it is handled that when the referral arrives to the agency, if the consumer uses sign to communicate, the case is assigned to a counselor for the deaf and they work in tandem with a counselor for the blind for any technical assistance they may need. If they communicate through voice then they are assigned a counselor in OBVS and we use the counselors of the deaf for technical assistance. Sometimes once

the case is being worked on the consumer's needs become clear, cases have been transferred because of identification of the needs.

Josie Thomas, Parents Place of Maryland, has access to some resources to get information out to parents. Ms. Thomas would like to work together with DORS and send out a series of articles that could be added to their newsletter which is sent out to about 2,500 people, mostly parents, to explain some of the services offered at WTC as well as advertising this transitioning youth initiative for the deaf that WTC is doing.

DORS 2011-2012 Budget – Impact and Implications (Sue Page)

Federal Funding for FY 2011 – MD DORS is in relatively good shape with the budget for FY 2011. The state fiscal year 2011 started July 1, 2010 and is comparable to last year. General fund is about 14.2 million dollars and the federal appropriation for basic support is about 41 million dollars. We are in line with last year and in addition to that, we are in our second year of ARRA money. The original allotment was about 5 million dollars and in fiscal year 2011 we have about \$900,000 remaining. About half of this is going to case services and the other half is going to the rest of the grants that have been awarded.

State General Revenue Funding FY 2011 – DORS staff are currently under a salary reduction and furloughs for the third year in a row.

Chairperson/Vice Chairperson Reports (Kali Mallik)

CSAVR Conference, November 7-10, 2010, San Diego, California – Vice Chair Dan Frye will be attending the CSAVR and NCSAB Conferences in San Diego, California in November. Dan will also be attending the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils which will be held in San Diego on Sunday, November 7th. Thank you Dan.

MRA/DORS Conference, November 9-10, 2010 – Members are invited to attend the MRA.DORS Conference. Please let Donna Lippa know if you would like to attend.

SRC Regional Meeting, November 19, 2010 – Kali Mallik, Sue Page and Dan Frye will be attending the first Region III SRC Regional Meeting being held in Arlington, Virginia on Friday, November 19th. The Council will be briefed after this meeting

Summary of SRC Executive Retreat held in August 2010 – The MSRC Executive Committee met in August 2010 at the Columbia Sheraton Hotel. A summary of this meeting will be sent with a future mailing.

National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC) Resolution – The NCSRC is a national membership coalition that advocates for and works in partnership with the national public vocational rehabilitation system's continual quest for excellence. The vision of NCSRC is to be the premiere national organization of the consumer voice to enhance the employment opportunities of persons with disabilities through the public vocational rehabilitation system.

Charlie Crawford stated that at the May 2010 meeting there was a concern raised by Dan Frye regarding Council approval of the Resolution. Mr. Crawford further stated that the Resolution allows for participation of NCSRC activities from Council members of staff of Council members. The intention of the Maryland Council should be that we will participate, but we will participate with the Governor Appointed members of the Council only.

Mike Bullis stated that it looks like in signing this Resolution; the Maryland SRC will be committed to sending individuals to national meetings. Beth Lash stated that there is no minimum participation requirement when you sign the Resolution. There is nothing requiring the Maryland SRC in going to the national meetings or participating on any minimum number of national teleconferences. Beth stated also that Dan wanted to assure that the Council be represented by only members, not staff, at these meetings. Mike Bullis stated that the Council will decide among itself, that it is the Maryland SRC policy to send Council members as opposed to staff to national meetings.

Action: The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council will sign the resolution to become an official member of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils.

Action: Josie Thomas suggested that a one page brief report be sent ahead of time for any meeting summaries that are discussed at the Council meetings.

Director's Report (Suzanne Page)

GAO Study – Sue Page announced that the GAO Study is not currently moving forward. With the upcoming November elections and the political climate, they do not see any point in pushing forward at this point if there is going to be a change in Congress. On a more local level, in Maryland, Senator Mikulski's Office had been contacted by Bob Burns before he left. As a next step, we can continue to take a look at this issue in Maryland because the distribution of funds is based on a per capita income and Maryland's per capita income is relatively high, which is why have a negative impact on that formula. The GAO proposes three options:

1. Look at the state's disability population;
2. Take into account the cost of providing services in a state, and
3. State resources beyond the per capita income.

Sue Page further stated that looking at any of these three items, Maryland would gain anywhere from 13% to 22% additional money in federal funds. Sue has suggested that we do further research and see what other states are doing in our position. At the local level, she suggested that we visit with Senator Mikulski's Office.

Charlie Crawford stated that his concern is that to the extent we can balance the interest of Maryland with the whole notion of anticipating the changes in government so that Maryland ultimately succeeds in a reasonable period of time. He stated that he is not against studying something because you need data, but

against studying for the sake of spending a few more years waiting for something to happen.

Statewide Skills2Compete Initiative - Governor O'Malley has instituted an initiative called Skills2Compete which is to support job growth and competition in a global economy for Marylanders. The goal is to increase the number of Marylanders who are prepared to enter careers in mid and high skill jobs. This would be done by increasing the number of Marylanders who receive skills training through the State's workforce. This is a collaborative effort with many state agencies. DORS part is to increase the number of persons with disabilities in post secondary education and career technology programs and the number of persons with significant disabilities obtaining a degree, certificate after completing a post-secondary education or career technology program. DORS is tracking the number of consumers who go through the Workforce & Technology training programs. DORS is also tracking the number of consumers who we sponsor for post-secondary education and we will be providing that data to the Council as it we move forward.

DORS Regional Director for Region VI - Sue Page announced that Council member Beth Lash, and former Client Assistance Program Director, has been named as the Regional Director for Region VI. This is a terrific move for Beth and the Agency. Congratulations Beth!

New Disability Determination Services (DDS) Director – Dayle Smith has been selected as the new Director of the DDS. Dayle has a very strong leadership background and has been with the DDS for over 30 years.

DORS Waiting List/DORS Staff Capacity – The DORS waiting list is currently 1,700 and has been increasing throughout the year. DORS is in the position where there is funding available for case services, but our staff resources are limited. We need more people to work with consumers to purchase those goods. We are currently working with the State to try to increase our positions. There are some counselors that have 200 open case loads.

CSAVR Update - As the Council is aware there was an embezzlement problem that has been addressed. The individual involved will be sentenced in November. There will be a prison term and restitution of funds. CSAVR has taken actions to prevent a repeat of this type of situation in the future. A bookkeeping firm has been hired, new payroll services, internal functions have been separated and eliminated signature stamps, requiring secondary approval for non-payroll purchases over \$5,000 and an audit committee has been established. CSAVR will be under new leadership as of November 1, 2010. Maryland DORS has not paid their CSAVR dues to date. The Division has requested the audit report which has not been sent to date. Josie Thomas stated that the Council needs to say in order for Maryland to continue as paying members, the Board of Directors of CSAVR needs to receive some kind of training about their fiduciary responsibility.

New Centers for Independent Living (CIL) in Maryland - Sue Page announced that there will be two (2) new centers for independent living in Maryland. Michael Bullis stated that the center “Independent Marylanders Achieving Growth through Empowerment (the Image Center) will serve Baltimore City, Baltimore and Harford Counties. The center “Accessible Resources for Independence will serve Anne Arundel and Howard Counties.

Collaborative Programming with the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped – Sue Schaffer stated that DORS has had a collaborative agreement with Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped for several months. DORS is paying them to provide services for our consumers in terms of running a Job Club (job searching and job seeking skills, resume preparation, interview preparation) and because of the assistive technology involved and special kind of skills needed to do job seeking skills for blind individuals, we created this collaborative. The Job Club is held three days a week at the Workforce & Technology Center. This program was designed for individuals with high level computer skills looking for fairly high level jobs. We currently need to develop a program for individuals looking for entry level jobs that do not require a lot of computer skills.

Committee Report

- Policy and Planning Committee, Beth Lash
Committee Chair, Beth Lash, met before the full Council meeting today. The VR State Plan has been approved by RSA and the tri-annual Needs Assessment was accepted by RSA.
- Public Relations and Quality Assurance Committee, Mary Manzoni
Committee Chair Mary Manzoni’s, stated that she and Donna Lettow met to begin working on the 2010 Annual Report. The committee chairs has been contacted to obtain information for the report. This information is due by October 10th.
- Membership and Resource Committee, Dan Frye
Michael Shaw and Ross Edwards are completing two full terms on the Council as of today’s meeting. Michael Shaw served on the Policy and Planning Committee; Ross Edwards was on the Employment and Careers Committee. We are grateful for their dedicated service to the Council and people with disabilities in Maryland.

Three candidates for membership are joining us this evening: Earl Cooper, Rashid Reyazuddin, and Barry Shaw.

We will be submitting the name of the new DORS Director, Suzanne R. Page, to the governor’s appointments office for appointment to the Council.

Tom Laverty will be attending SRC meetings as an ad hoc representative of the Client Assistance Program pending the naming of a new CAP Director.

The Membership and Resources Committee is reaching out to an individual who would represent the Autism community and hope to receive her application for

membership soon.

Eric Selzenow, representing the Governor's Workforce Investment Board on the Council, has left his position with the GWIB. The Membership and Resources Committee will be requesting a replacement.

The following members have been recommended for reappointment:

- Josie Thomas
- Mary Manzoni
- Tom Barkley
- Jennifer Whitcomb

- Employment/Career Development Committee, Sue Page

Sue Page announced that Employment/Career Development Committee will resume meetings in the very near future.

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Blindness and Vision Services Committee, Mike Bullis

Mike Bullis, Committee Chair, reported that the committee met last month and took a tour of the Workforce & Technology Center and the programs that relate to individuals with blindness or visual impairment. The committee is currently planning for next year's activities.

Update on Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (Laurie Elinoff)

Laurie Elinoff, SRC Council member and Vice Chairperson of the Maryland Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) stated that the independent living partners in the state are: the Statewide Independent Living Council, Centers for Independent Living (CILS) and the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Laurie stated that the SILC has invited representatives of CILS to SILC meetings to find out how we can work together and be supportive.

The State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) has been completed and we are waiting for approval from RSA of the SPIL.

Several members of the SILC attended the National Conference on Independent Living in Washington, DC in July 2010. Since this year is the 20th Anniversary of the ADA, this conference was very special. The conference participants, about 900 people, marched to Capitol Hill.

New Council Business & Adjournment

Charlie Crawford announced that he has been appointed the new Chair of the American Council of the Blind, Rehabilitation Issues Committee. Congratulations Charlie!

The MSRC meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council will be Wednesday, November 17, 2010 at the Workforce & Technology Center in Baltimore, Maryland.

Respectfully submitted.

Donna M. Lippa

MSRC Staff Support