

Maryland State Rehabilitation Council
Annapolis, Maryland
February 6, 2013

Members – Present

Michael Bullis
Charles Crawford
Laurie Elinoff
Dan Frye, Chair
Tom Lavery
Sue Page
Barry Shaw
Al Sonnenstrahl
Michael Whitehill
Zosia Zaks

Members Unable to Attend

Tim Daly
Paulette Epps
Tom Barkley
Mary Manzoni
Mary O'Connor
Josie Thomas

Support Staff Present

Polly Huston
Donna Lippa

Guests

Megan Glaze-Keller, DORS CAP Program
Yvonne Kranitz, DORS Regional Director
Jeff Moran, candidate for membership on the Council
John Stem, DORS Staff Specialist

DORS Liaisons

Donna Lettow
Kimberlee Schultz
Susan Schaffer

Thanks to everyone who participated in the MSRC Legislative Event on February 6, 2013. Your work is very important and effective.

Recognitions and Approval of Minutes

Chair Dan Frye welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked that members and guests introduce themselves. Dan thanked Council members for taking the time to come to Annapolis today to meet with their legislators and stated that this exercise is one of the most important for the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council. Minutes from the September 12, 2012 meeting were approved as written. Due to the forecast of inclement weather, the November 2012 full Council meeting was cancelled.

Discussion on Visits with Legislators and Legislative Issues

The Maryland State Rehabilitation Council met today in the Thomas V. Mike Miller Senate Office Building, President's Conference Center West II in Annapolis, Maryland. Members met to receive materials and proceeded to their prearranged meetings with their legislators. After the meetings with legislators, members met for lunch followed by a full Council meeting. There were 45

scheduled visits with Senators and Delegates for the Maryland State Rehabilitation Council members. The message to legislators was as follows:

- Thank you for your support of DORS budget in the past.
- DORS is a jobs program – we help people with disabilities go to work and reduce reliance on public benefits.
- Please support the MSDE/DORS budget for 2014 – any reductions may result in DORS losing federal funds.
- DORS currently has a year long waiting list of over 3,000 individuals with significant disabilities who want to go to work.
- DORS services lead to employment and economic self-sufficiency for persons with significant disabilities; 2,506 persons with significant disabilities became employed last year as a result of DORS services.

Members of the Council felt that staff appeared receptive to their perspectives. Legislative staff felt confident that the issues discussed were not controversial and affirmed that legislative representatives would be supportive. Legislators were all very concerned about the budget and stated that there are a lot of hard decisions to make. Legislators also expressed concern about the DORS waiting list.

Members commented that the materials prepared by DORS staff for legislators today were very well done and wanted to thank the DORS staff.

Ms. Page and Chair Dan Frye thanked the members of the Council for coming to Annapolis for the day and their support of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the public VR services.

Chairperson's Report (Dan Frye)

- Voting on Proposed Amendments to the MSRC Bylaws - Below are the specific proposals for change that the MSRC Governance Subcommittee recommends for approval at the February 6, 2013 full Council meeting.

ACTION: The Council voted and approved the adoption of these recommendations to the bylaws at this meeting. Changes will be made to the existing Bylaws and distributed to the members.

The recommended changes to the bylaws follow:

1. The subcommittee recommends lengthening the terms of the chair and vice-chair of the council from one year to two years. The chair and vice-chair

would continue to be subject to a two-term limit on their service, with the exception that the current officers would be allowed to serve one additional two-year term at the conclusion of their two one-year terms. The language of the bylaws should be modified as follows:

The word "annually" in the second sentence of Section III 6-A should be removed. The phrase "every two years" should be inserted after the words "shall elect." This simple modification of the second sentence in Section III 6-A will make it clear that the terms of the officers are to be two years in length.

Finally, one additional sentence should be added at the end of this paragraph. It should read:

"The officers serving, as of the date of this amendment to the bylaws, may be re-elected to one additional two-year term of service."

2. The subcommittee recommends lowering the requirement for a council quorum from a majority to one-third of the council membership. This change may be achieved by striking the words "A majority" and replacing them with "one third" at the beginning of the first sentence in Section VII-1.

- 2013 Spring CSAVR/NCSAB Conference, April 19-26, 2013, Bethesda, MD – Dan Frye will be attending these conferences representing the MD State Rehabilitation Council and will report out at the May 2013 meeting. The Maryland MSRC will also participate in the meetings of the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Council (NCSRC) which will take place during this conference.
- Dr. Lowery Visit to Future Council Meeting – Dr. Lowery will be invited to attend a future meeting.
- Administrative Law Judge Training, December 7, 2012 – Chair Dan Frye joined with DORS staff to present in-service training to the Administrative Law Judges (ALJ) in the State of MD about the VR Program.
- Charlie Crawford thanked Dan for all the working he has been doing for the Council and for his leadership. He also thanked Sue Page for the CASAVR Business Week that is sent to members of the Council on a weekly basis.

Director's Report (Sue Page)

- State Legislative Update –
DORS is monitoring activity of the follow bills:

HB 365	Income Tax Credit - Web Site Modifications - Accessibility for the Blind
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HB 516	Fiscal/Compliance Audits - Blind Industries and Services of Maryland
HB 761	State Highway Administration - Privatization of Rest Areas and Welcome Centers on State Highways
HB 1023	Blind Industries and Services of Maryland
SB 124	Income Tax Credits for Qualifying Employees - Sunset Repeal and Expansion
SB 246	Protective Headgear Requirement for Motorcycle Riders - Exception
SB 353	Tax Credits for Qualifying Employees with Disabilities - Sunset Repeal
SB 632	State Brain Injury Trust Fund
SB 691	Due Process Hearings for Children with Disabilities - Burden of Proof

- FY 2014 DORS Funding, Waiting List, Resource and Hiring Issues – The Governor’s Budget for FY 2014 is positive and will need to go before the General Assembly. Waiting to hear information about the Federal Sequestration regarding the federal budget. DORS lost three positions last year which was the result of the Governor’s initiative to reduce the state workforce.
- DORS Fiscal Year 2012 Performance Summary – This report was shared with the Council.
- Deaf/Blind Staff Specialist Position - Sue Schaffer reported that the deaf/blind specialist (Christine Telford) has been hired and will begin on May 20, 2013. Ms. Telford is very involved with deaf/blind activities throughout the State and is a graduate of the Towson Deaf Program. This position will not be case managing the entire deaf/blind case load, but providing technical assistance throughout the State. Al Sonnenstrahl asked if there was representation from the deaf community on the interview panel of which there was.
- RRTC Visit – VR Effective Practices (Michigan State University) - The Rehabilitation Research and Training Center (RRTC) out of Michigan State University had a federal grant studying effective VR practices. Maryland, along with three other states, were selected for this study. The report on this study will be shared with the Council when received.
- Hawaii VR and Services for the Blind Visit – Kim Schultz stated that DORS had a visit from the staff of the Hawaii VR in December 2012. For this visit they were given a tour of the Workforce & Technology Center. Hawaii VR is interested in doing some expansion and were looking for ideas and suggestions.

- DORS Quality Assurance Project – Sue Page reported that DORS has made a commitment to look at their system for quality assurance for providing quality vocational rehabilitation services. Are taking a look at existing system and seeing what the strengths are to improve to make sure it is broad enough to capture everything that we need to capture. DORS Regional Director, Eastern Shore, E.C. Townsend has taken the lead in this project. We have asked the TACE Center for assistance in this project.
- DDS/VR Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) - A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Disability Determination Services (DDS) regarding the disclosure of DDS case documents to DORS' Office of Field Services and Office for Blindness and Vision Services has been signed. A workgroup will be formed to establish policies and procedures to facilitate the disclosure of case records and protect the confidentiality of person information. The MOA will help us eliminate the purchase of duplicate evaluations and assessments.
- MD Adult Learning Advisory Council (GED testing in MD) - Sue Page attended a meeting of the Maryland Adult Learning Advisory Council on December 20, 2012. The meeting's agenda focused on upcoming revisions to GED testing in Maryland. The current version of the GED test will expire at the end of 2013 and will be replaced with a new GED test on January 2, 2014. The 2014 test will be entirely computer based. Individuals who have taken the current test, but have not passed all five parts, will have until the end of 2013 to pass, or they will need to start over again in 2014 with the new GED test in order to receive their high school credentials.

Additionally, WTC is currently a GED testing site. A thorough analysis of the costs and benefits of the new testing requirements will be conducted to assist in determining whether or not WTC will continue to be a GED testing site into 2014. Additional information will be disseminated as it becomes available.

Client Appeals Report (Polly Huston, Director, Office of Program and Community Support)

Polly reported the following information on the DORS 2012 Client Appeals Report:

- There were no carry-over appeals from the prior year;
- 30 requests received for impartial hearings.
- 29 resolved without a hearing officer;
- 1 hearing with administrative law judge in favor of the State Agency.
- No formal mediations;

- Nature of issues: 4-eligibility or order-of-selection; 10-nature and service of Individualized plan for employment (IPE), and 16-termination of services.

DORS/MSRC 2013 Public Meetings (Kim Schultz)

Kim Schultz, DORS Public Affairs Officer announced the meeting schedule of the DORS/MSRC 2013 spring public meetings. Members were asked to consider attending one/or more of these meetings. They are:

Southern Maryland

Tuesday, April 2, 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Beco Conference Center
4425 Forbes Blvd, Suite D
Lanham

Statewide Teleconference

Thursday, April 4, 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Western Maryland

Friday, April 5, 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Frederick County Business and Employment Center
5340 Spectrum Drive, Suite A
Frederick

Baltimore City

Tuesday, April 9, 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
VSP/Sinai Hospital of Baltimore
5607 Metro Drive
Baltimore

Eastern Shore

Wednesday, April 10, 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Lower Shore Workforce Alliance
One Stop Job Market
31901 Tri-County Way, Suite 117, Room # 025
Salisbury

New Council Business & Adjournment

The next full Council meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 8, 2013, 4:00 – 7:00 p.m., Workforce & Technology Center, Room T-130.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna M. Lippa, MSRC Staff Support