

Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
February 3rd, 2022
1:00-3:00pm EST

Attendees:

- Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Members: Joe Bellil, Inez Canada, Naomi Goldberg, Steve LaMaster, Olympia Stroud, Ronaldo Fujii; Cheryl Scott
- Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Staff: Amanda Costa, Bill Noone, Graham Porell
- Public: None

Please Note: This meeting was held remotely.

Meeting was called to order at 1:04 by the Chair.

Introductions:

- Executive Committee meeting attendees introduced themselves and conducted an icebreaker discussing how everyone plans to celebrate Black History Month. Some examples included:
 - Reading:
 - Kamala Harris's new book
 - James Baldwin literature
 - The article "Highlighting African Americans with Disabilities in Honor of Black History Month": <https://www.respectability.org/2021/02/black-history-month-2021/>
 - Events:
 - Vinfen is inviting in a speaker for a Black History Month presentation
 - Assisting city of Worcester with DEI initiatives, including recognition of William Taylor, a famous cyclist
 - Easter Seals will be sharing social media posts
 - DESE is hosting a February 16th Black History Month event
 - MRC is hosting multiple events including Jeopardy, a panel on the intersection of race and the criminal justice system
 - Learning More about:
 - Black Trans community members and their legacy with regard to the Stonewall Movement
 - Machado de Assis- author and pioneer of black culture in Brazil
 - The Lives Worth Living Movie

Minutes Approval – tabled until March meeting

Old Business:

- **SRC 5 Year DEI Roadmap-** Due to a delayed receipt of the final draft of Roadmap, Chair Canada will share the drafted Roadmap once received with the DEI Working Group and Executive Committee. A discussion in the March SRC meeting regarding the Roadmap

will occur with MRC Commissioner Wolf and MRC Assistant Commissioner of VR Joan Phillips.

New Business:

- **Committee Reports**

- **The Business & Employment Opportunity (BEO) Committee: Mr. LaMaster**

- Increasing employment of individuals with disabilities in the Commonwealth: Mr. LaMaster met with Ms. Costa/Commissioner Wolf/Bill Allen/Joan Phillips/Bill Noone to discuss MRC continued efforts in this arena and how SRC can support those efforts. Bill Allen provided an update regarding the Disability Employment Action Committee which kicked off a speed recruiting event occurring February 2nd. At the event, 15-20 individuals with disabilities were given the opportunity to share their skills and resumes in a speed recruiting format. Additionally, MRC offered to provide data on current disability employment rates in the Commonwealth.
- Branding Efforts for MRC: Colleen Casey (MRC Director of Communications) will attend upcoming Committee meetings to collaborate SRC branding efforts and MRC branding efforts.
- Self-Employment: Chair Canada met with Ellie Starr, member of the BEO Committee and Jessica Cimini (MRC VR Director of Operations) to discuss MRC's FY22 Self Employment Goal. Paula Euber (MRC VR Area Director) will help build out self-employment resources for VR Counselors and Consumers. Paula will build a team and involve SRC for ideas such as a self-employment resource club. Another meeting will occur in early February to continue this work.

- **Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee: Ms. Stroud & Ms. Costa**

- The team is still in the process of identifying the vendor for the consumer satisfaction RFR. They are hoping to have the vendor chosen by March, pending contract negotiations that are currently taking place.
- Committee Chair Olympia Stroud, Chair Canada, and MRC staff (Bill Noone, Graham Porell, Kate Biebel) met together to ensure continued partnership in moving this work forward and clarify expectations for each team member.
- Olympia shared data from MRC based on the Needs Assessment and Consumer Satisfaction surveys. The committee will review the data and put together recommendations for MRC based on the themes they review and discuss in their March 10, 2022 meeting.

- **Policy Committee: Ms. Goldberg**

- The group met on February 3rd. They are still focused on learning about procurement. The meeting invited Jessica Cimini (VR Director of Operations) and Jack Houkner (MRC Business Improvement Partners) to share more information about Procurement. Discussions surrounded the

- needs of ESL learners. They are looking to identify a mechanism to pay for extra services to support these consumers, and reviewed steps to address that in the beginning of the state fiscal year in July.
 - The group also learned more about the status of tutors and how MRC is supporting this endeavor. The group learned a lot and is still working to put together their final recommendations.
 - **State Planning Committee: Mr. Bellil**
 - The group met in January. Chair Bellil provided a summary of work on the recommendations. This update was included in the January 26th meeting where folks were invited to provide feedback, led by Bill Noone and Graham Porell of MRC.
 - The team will meet again next week (2/9/2022) to review issues member are having concerning the FY22 recommendations, discuss workplan activities on addressing the recommendations.
 - Mr. Bellil has put together a draft schedule for the state plan and future reports to review with the Committee. The team will also discuss the upcoming FY23 recommendations process and SRC DEI efforts and how to infuse that into the recommendation process.
- **SRC Posting Process- Inez Canada**
 - Alison Scher, webmaster at MRC, manages the SRC webpage. To help organize the group, she documented the process for Chairs submitting minutes and agenda items moving forward.
 - The group reviewed the document and the expectation that meeting notices with agendas must be posted within 48 hours to comply within open meeting law. In addition, Chair Canada reviewed a protocol for sharing and posting meeting minutes. As documented, a draft of committee minutes should be posted with a week following Committee meetings and within 30days for full SRC meetings.
 - A question came up whether there will be any staffing provided for taking Committee minutes which was held to review during the agenda item “Creating an SRC budget”. Chair Canada responded that this is in process. However, it is the responsibilities of chairs to do it or find get a volunteer until a permanent solution exists.
 - A question came up regarding the formality of minutes approval if there are low number of attendees in the meeting- we are operating as all attendees of the meeting are considered official and can vote the meeting minutes. Quorum is only applicable with full SRC meetings, so for now, Chairs can judge the comfort level they have with approving meeting minutes based on attendance. If Chairs are unsure, then minutes should be tabled until the next meeting.
- **Creating an SRC Budget**
 - History of SRC Budget: In the past, SRC has not had a formal budget but has periodically asked MRC for support. Chair Canada proposed that the SRC develop an annual budget and formalize the process to ensure MRC Vocational Rehabilitation can review, approve, and set aside the dollars annually as required

by federal regulations. [See, [34 CFR 361.17\(i\)](#)] If there is a conflict, the conflict resolution would go to the Governor for review.

- Member budget suggestions included the following:
 - Administrative support
 - Conduct minutes for SRC Full meeting, Executive Committee Meetings and Committee meetings
 - Coordinate meeting invites
 - Manage the SRC membership database and Committee membership
 - Management of the SRC website and posting of minutes
 - Responds to inquiries for SRC membership
 - Development of training and procedural documents and templates (altering the National Coalition of SRC materials)
 - CSAVR Conference Registration
 - Funding for attendance at National Conferences that are VR/SRC related, or other related leadership development events
 - Standing ASL Interpreters and CART Translation Services for Quarterly meetings
 - Future trainings- continued DEI work for example
 - Tentative fees for any meeting spaces (future if in person?)
 - Funding to host an in-person SRC retreat
 - Consideration to include this in MRC Consumer Conference, as a breakout session for SRC members to build community among each other
 - Also discussed partnerships with the committees (Example: BEO and getting information to individuals with disabilities about applying for commonwealth jobs)
 - Feedback surrounding the Conference for Consumers
 - included prioritizing diversity equity and inclusion,
 - workshops surrounding how to support individuals with disabilities who want to apply for Commonwealth employment opportunities
 - SRC recruitment opportunity
 - Amanda requested that committee email her or Manel to share ideas of members are interested in helping with planning
- Deadline to get feedback about budget to Chair would be February 17th
- **SRC March Meeting Agenda**
 - For our March Full SRC meeting, Chair Canada proposed taking a step back to talk about the basic purpose of the SRC, how SRC collaborates with Vocational Rehabilitation, and provide space for members to ask questions. The purpose of this is to help newer members get a better understanding of the function of an advisory council and how they can support continued activities and priorities.

- Members liked the idea of taking a moment to step back and ensure everyone understands the role and mining all the members for their expertise, perspective, and thoughts. Questions came up regarding how to structure the time and what the key objectives are.
 - Suggestions came up regarding attending an orientation for a VR Consumer and having SRC members attend a VR Council Orientation
 - Suggestions came up regarding discussion how to build comfort around sitting in an advisory role and recognizing that all recommendations may not be accepted by the Agency, but it doesn't negate the importance of the SRC voice.
 - The group agreed that priority items for the agenda will be Committee Reports, Commissioner Update, and this open discussion regarding SRC overview.
- **Process Documentation- Committee and Annual Reports**
 - Chair Canada reviewed a goal to create process documentation for each Committee, to ensure we have written processes for future membership.
 - A recent meeting occurred with Needs Assessment team and MRC staff regarding collaboration and reporting. One of the discussions surrounded when writing committee reports, to use prior monthly reports or updates to guide the development of the Annual report. Reports should also always include the next meeting dates. Points of discussion, questions, and feedback they want to get from the broader SRC
 - Chair Canada will take the document from the Needs Assessment meeting and generalize it and share it with all Chairs for feedback and notes. Chair offered to facilitate a meeting with MRC liaisons for each Committee chair, if the chair feels I could be helpful. Committee chairs should reach out to Chair Canada if they would like to set this up w/ their Committee's MRC liaison.
 - Members suggested formalizing ongoing updates from MRC on monthly agenda for SRC Executive Committee. Creating a general reporting structure for MRC, major changes in programs, operations, and policies. Sharing the numbers, regular report/key metrics from MRC.
 - A suggestion came up to require that MRC liaisons attend all Committee meetings is imperative. Each Committee MRC Liaison should be in attendance at the meetings. Liaisons are always on standing meeting invitations, but Chair Canada will leave it up to Committee Chairs to determine if they would like to require their MRC Liaisons to attend every committee meeting.

Open Mic:

- Registration for Pre-ETS Event from MRC was discussed and a flyer will be shared

Adjournment: The Chair called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Fujii made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bellil. **The meeting adjourned at 3:01pm.**