

## Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

January 6th, 2022, 1-3pm EST

Please note: this meeting was held virtually.

### Meeting was called to Order at 1:00pm by the Chair.

#### Attendees:

- **Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Executive Committee Members:** Inez Canada, Joe Bellil, Steve LaMaster, & Naomi Goldberg
- **Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Members:** Cheryl Scott & Ronaldo Fujii
- **SRC Ex Officio Members:** Deputy Commissioner Kate Biebel, Amanda Costa
- **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Staff:** Jacqueline Ryan, Bill Noone & Graham Porrell

#### Minutes Approval- *Ms. Canada*

- Ms. Canada called for a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Ms. Goldberg motioned for approval of the minutes. Mr. LaMaster seconded. Minutes were approved with no corrections.

#### Old Business:

##### SRC Five Year DEI Roadmap– *Chair Inez Canada*

- The Chair flagged that the 5-year DEI Roadmap created by the DEIA Working Group & Health Management Associates has been sent out to the Executive Committee for review. The Chair asks that all Committee members review the document and provide any comments/edits directly to said document by January 13<sup>th</sup>. The Chair requests that reviewers provide comments with “track changes” in case there is a need for clarification. Any questions/concerns can be sent to the Chair.

##### SRC Idea Brainstorm– *Chair Inez Canada*

- The Chair shared that many topics come up at SRC meetings that may not be under the SRC’s purview. The Chair is looking for other ways to discuss these items in a community gathering that is not a SRC meeting. Chair Canada asked the participants to share their ideas.
  - Ronaldo Fujii shared that for some SRC members/participants, larger meetings with many topics can cause triggers and result with participants being unable to speak. Mr. Fujii would like to look at ways to accommodate that such as an additional smaller meeting. Mr. Fujii flagged that this additional meeting would not violate open law but would be able to address those with certain disabilities.
  - Amanda Costa shared that at the MRC Head Injury Group, they do not follow Roberts Rule. At this group, they debrief in smaller groups to ask questions and review the information. Ms. Costa flagged that it is very effective for individuals.
  - Naomi Goldberg shared that everyone agrees to make accommodations for how individuals communicate. Ms. Goldberg flagged that the SRC needs to do a better job in preparing individuals for what the SRC does/doesn’t do.
  - Cheryl Scott shared that she is endorsing the idea of a separate forum but also would like to continue to discuss how to structure the meetings to meet different needs.
  - Bill Noone suggested that the SRC Executive Committee members speak to participants to see how they work best.
  - Ronaldo Fujii shared that making these accommodations may help to resolve the issues around scheduling and attendance.

- Steve LaMaster flagged that during SRC meetings, it is imperative to follow the agenda and get through all of the items.
- Cheryl Scott shared that she didn't want to lose sight of Mr. Fujii's comments about supporting those with disabilities in SRC meetings.
- Amanda Costa flagged that her feedback is from working with advisory councils over the last 10 years. Ms. Costa shared that there is no point in having an agenda and focusing on efficiency if those who we need to have at the table are not there. Ms. Costa suggested getting away from the rigidity of Roberts Rules as those are the types of meetings where individuals tend to struggle the most.
- Joe Bellil flagged that if anyone needs an accommodation, that needs to be addressed first. Mr. Bellil shared that there are concerns about efficiency and time during meetings and suggested the idea of "open mic" time.
- The Chair thanked everyone for their comments. Chair Canada shared that SRC will provide any accommodations need, but the discussion around those needs is confidential. The Council should not assume that these conversations are not happening just because they are not discussed in meetings. Reasonable accommodation needs are being met. If someone needs a reasonable accommodation, please reach out to her to discuss further.

#### **New Business:**

#### **Committee Reports – Joe Bellil, Naomi Goldberg, Olympia Stroud & Steve LaMaster**

- State Plan & Interagency Committee – Joe Bellil
  - Mr. Bellil shared that he will be meeting with Graham Porell to discuss the workplan and latest recommendations. Chair Canada and Bill Noone will also be participating in the meeting.
- Policy Committee – Naomi Goldberg
  - Ms. Goldberg reported that the Policy Committee will continue to work on procurement in addition to a number of other projects. Ms. Goldberg shared that the Policy Committee is deciding how to request Fair Hearing decisions from MRC as they are obligated to provide these decisions to the SRC.
- Business & Employment Opportunities Committee – Steve LaMaster
  - Mr. LaMaster reported that the Business & Employment Opportunities Committee met on December 9, 2021. Mr. LaMaster met with Joan Phillips and Commissioner Wolf in December to discuss cross-agency committee that is looking to increase participation of individuals with disabilities in the state government workforce. During the meeting, it was shared that MRC has a small scope in this initiative and MRC doesn't have access to the data from different agencies. Mr. LaMaster flagged that if the goal of the cross-divisional committee is to increase jobs, it would be great if that data showing the number of individuals with disabilities working for the state could be shared with the SRC.
  - Amanda Costa shared that Bill Allen will be attending the next Business & Employment Opportunities Committee meeting to discuss the "speed dating for interviewing" initiative.
  - Mr. LaMaster flagged that Colleen Casey will also be attending the next meeting to provide an update on the SRC rebranding.
- Needs Assessment Committee – Olympia Stroud/Amanda Costa
  - The Chair flagged that Ms. Stroud was unable to attend today's meeting. The Chair asked Ms. Costa to provide an update on the RFR for the survey tool.

- Ms. Costa shared that the RFR applications are due from vendors and will be reviewed by a panel. The panel will include representatives from MRC, SRC and Consumers. The panel will meet at the end of the week and plan to have an update by February 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **Census Data Project Proposal – Ronaldo Fujii**

- The Chair introduced Ronaldo Fujii who will be presenting on the Census Data Project to the Executive Committee.
- Mr. Fujii shared his PowerPoint presentation with the group. (See, *Finding Inequity in MA Disabilities community eligible for VR\_revised* PPT)
  - Mr. Fujii shared that this is a research proposal. The proposal is focused on looking into the data that we currently have to try to find out about inequities when it comes to communities that are underrepresented.
- Why do formal Research?
  - Mr. Fujii reviewed the “Why do Formal Research slide with the group. Mr. Fujii shared that formal research will allow the results to be shared to other states/agencies and can open the door for other agencies to do research for us in future years. Additionally, formal research would allow other states/agencies to replicate this process.
- Applied Research
  - While reviewing the “Applied Research” slide, Mr. Fujii shared that in applied research, you start with the problem and then build the research & research questions around the problem.
- Addressing the Research Questions
  - Mr. Fujii reviewed the two “Addressing the Research Questions” slide with the committee.
  - Mr. Fujii flagged that the first step would be looking at the data to see what information we do have and what we need to gather. He went on to stress the importance of finding out where these consumers are located to ensure that we are advertising and reaching out to the right communities/locations.
- Steps to Make it Happen
  - Mr. Fujii reviewed the 5 steps and sub steps for implementation. Mr. Fujii shared that the goal would be to publish this work to share with other SRC agencies throughout the country as a model for analyze these data points in their states.
- Timelines
  - Mr. Fujii shared his proposed project timeline with the committee members. The final report would be completed in September. Mr. Fujii flagged that if there is no funding for this project, the timeline would be extended.
  - Mr. Fujii estimates the project cost at \$20,000-\$30,000.
- Questions/Feedback
  - Mr. Fujii asked if any participants had any questions and/or feedback.
  - Kate Biebel asked if the cost is just for the analysis and who will be doing the work.
    - Mr. Fujii shared that the literature review, review publication and scientific outreach would be done by SRC members. For the additional items, it would be useful to have a statistician. Mr. Fujii shared that if there is no funding, it can be done internally but additional help would be ideal.

- Bill Noone asked if this project could be aligned with a local university to assist in the work?
  - Mr. Fujii agreed that would be a good idea and something to look into.
- Kate Biebel shared the importance of being clear about how this project ties into the work of MRC – VR division & SRC. Ms. Biebel expressed that the MRC Analytics and Quality Assurance (AQA) team is doing similar work and suggested a meeting with Ronaldo and AQA to discuss.
- Steve LaMaster shared that there is cross-agency interest in this topic. Mr. LaMaster offered to put Ronaldo in contact with Mr. Delman at Dept. of Mental Health
- The Chair suggested that Mr. Fujii table the project until he connects with MRC staff and other agencies on pre-existing project.
- Kate Biebel will follow-up on meeting with Mr. Fujii, Ms. Costa & Mr. Noone to discuss the current MRC data projects.

The Chair thanked Mr. Fujii for his presentation.

### **SRC Process Documentation – Inez Canada & Kate Biebel**

- The Chair shared that she would like to start spending 15 minutes of every Executive Meeting to discuss the documentation of SRC processes.
- The Chair proposed that today’s meeting would focus on how to get items on the SRC meeting agenda. The Chair shared that historically if a member has an agenda item for an upcoming meeting, the member would reach out to Chair to discuss.
  - Cheryl Scott asked if this was the process for Executive Committee only?
    - The Chair shared that this would be the process for all SRC meetings including committee meetings.
- The Chair asked for any ideas/suggestions for how this process should work going forward.
  - Joe Bellil shared that for Executive Committee, the agenda items should be coming out of the committee meetings.
  - Cheryl Scott asked Mr. Bellil if agenda items should be approved by committees?
    - Mr. Bellil confirmed that he believes that agenda items that are related to the work of the committees should be vetted by said committees. All agenda items that are on an executive level should go through Chair Canada.
  - The Chair did flag that anything related to funding or the need for funding should come from the executive level.
  - Amanda Costa suggested that once the 5yr DEI roadmap/strategic plan for SRC is finalized, it would make sense for the future agenda items to be tied to the goals of that plan. Amanda also mentioned the idea of having an additional “open agenda” space during meetings for other items.
    - Kate Biebel seconded the idea of having the agenda items tied to the goals.
  - Cheryl Scott agreed with Ms. Costa & Ms. Biebel regarding the agenda items but also flagged that it needs to be owned by someone and could be incorporated into the committee structure. This would be the time to develop a process and protocol. Ms. Scott went on to share that she feels that although there needs to be a buy-in on projects/ideas from the Executive Committee, there also needs to be an opportunity for ideas to come through the Committees first.
- The Chair stated that based on the comments at today’s meeting, for items/projects that are already in a committee’s purview and don’t have a monetary component, the discussion should start within the committees and it is up to the committee chair to decide if the item/project needs to go to the

Executive Committee for further discussion. Regarding projects that do have a monetary component, those projects need to be directed to the Executive Committee Chair for review and discussion with the Executive Team members.

- Kate Biebel reminded the group that any project that include a monetary component need to have a longer lead time. Ms. Biebel suggests 6 months of lead time for projects that require any type of payment.
- The Chair suggested discussing Open Meeting Law at next month's Executive meeting.

**Meeting was adjourned at 3:05pm**