

## Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Meeting Minutes

June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 1-3pm EST

Please note: this meeting was held virtually.

### Meeting was called to Order at 1:03pm by the Chair.

Ms. Costa read the list of attendees from the Zoom participant list and recorded the names in the minutes.

#### Attendees:

- **Statewide Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Members:** Inez Canada, Joe Bellil, Naomi Goldberg, Olympia Stroud, Katie Queally, Lusa Lo, Ellie Starr, Heather Wood, Dawn Clark, Steve LaMaster, Barbara Cipriani (2pm), Rosanna Woodmansee (2pm)
- **SRC Ex Officio Members:** Commissioner Toni Wolf, Deputy Commissioner Kate Biebel, Amanda Costa, Paula Euber (VRC), James Carnazza (VRC), Doug Mason, Kevin Goodwin
- **Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) Staff:** Bill Noone, Joseph Reale, Bill Allen, Joan Phillips, Jessica Cimini, Fabienne Renelien, John Bobrowski
- **Public:** Sarah Wiles (CAP), Cheryl Scott (WIB), Sadie Simone, MA Statewide Independent Living Council, Ronaldo Fujii, Juliet Marsala (HMA), Ellen Breslin (HMA), Michael Anderson-Nathe (HMA), Taciana Saab (HMA)

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

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

#### New Business:

The Chair recognized Commissioner Toni Wolf to provide an agency update.

#### MRC Commissioner Update- *Commissioner Wolf*

- Recognition of Dawn Clark- Commissioner Wolf thanked former SRC Chair Dawn Clark for her exceptional service. Commissioner announced that Ms. Clark will serve as a new member of the SRC Brain Injury Council to engage her voice and expertise in vocational rehabilitation into this newly developed group.
- MRC Connect-
  - Commissioner Wolf provided an overview of the MRC Connect Integrated Eligibility concept, and its primary principles to provide MRC applicants a streamlined, clear application process which would allow for staff to provide more time with applicants and less time on administrative tasks.
  - Commissioner provided an overview of MRC Connect roles and shared that MRC has received positive feedback about the application from various organizations.
  - The full online MRC Connect application will be shown in July 2021 with a supported walkthrough of the application. The application will be translated into Khmer, Haitian Creole, Traditional Chinese, Simple Chinese, Vietnamese, Cape Verdean Creole, Spanish, French, and Portuguese.
  - The full online application will be tentatively implemented statewide by the end of 2021.
- Future of Work-
  - Commissioner Wolf presented on the Future of Work efforts for state agencies including MRC. MRC will co-locate with DTA in some locations starting in July 2021.

- MRC will also be implementing a hybrid model, where employees will be asked to come to their primary work office two days a week and will work remotely up to three days a week.
- Community based work will include Meetings with consumers and stakeholders (home, library, coffee shop, etc.) or at a stakeholder's location (school, Career Center, Clubhouse, Independent Living Centers, Recovery Centers, Brain Injury Centers, Nursing Homes, etc.). Employees can do "community-based" work on both their Work from Home and In-Office days.
- Staff will report to their assigned offices beginning July 19<sup>th</sup>. Vocational Rehabilitation Staff and Community Living Divisions will begin seeing clients in person (office and community) by August 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- **Communications and Branding Update-**
  - In the past 12 months, led by Director of Communication Colleen Casey, MRC completed the following: Reviewed current systems and implemented new systems, revamped internal communication process, established baseline for external communications and process, emphasis on digital communication with COVID-19, ramped up use of social media
  - An MRC Branding strategy is beginning which will help MRC to clearly communicate with the disability community and align on future projects.
  - The scope of the rebranding will include market research, brand positioning, brand voice and tone, visual identity, style guide, and brand book

The Chair recognized the Assistant Commissioner of Vocational Rehabilitation, Joan Phillips, to provide an update on vocational rehabilitation.

- **MRC Vocational Rehabilitation Update-** *Joan Phillips, Bill Allen, Jessica Cimini, Joseph Reale* (See, **VR Presentation June 17.21 PPT** for specific details)
- Assistant Commissioner Joan Phillips shared a video on the MRC hiring event (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SsRosJFK0x0>) and
- Vocational Rehabilitation Operations Director Jessica Cimini covered a set of lessons learned in Vocational rehabilitation as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic including:
  - Increased access- use of teleconferencing for consumer meetings, trainings and event, decreases consumers need to come into an office
  - Expedited processes- electronic signatures and use of electronic forms for emailing
  - Access to technology for consumer services- expanded our practice of how we allocated technology and the scope of tech items
- Bill Allen shared updates from the MRC Job Placement unit, including providing job driven trainings, working to provide labor market information, and hosting a virtual hiring event that resulted in 55 employers and 169 employees meeting together for virtual job interviews.
- Jessica Cimini provided some brief overviews of MRC Connect and shared resources on how to apply through [www.mass.gov/MRC-Connect](http://www.mass.gov/MRC-Connect). Ms. Cimini also shared the introduction of MRC Kiosks to allow for consumers to visit MRC Offices and apply for services on site if they do not have access to computers and/or internet.
- Joe Reale, Financial Wellness Director provided an overview of the vision for financial wellness (Earn more, save more, live more) and covered some initiatives such as learn to earn, Accenture and mobile and agile benefits counseling.

Ms. Canada asked Ms. Phillips to table “The Future of Work” section of the PPT to accommodate the schedule of the diversity consultants. The update was tabled.

The Chair recognized Ellen Breslin of Health Management Associates for the DEI Engagement and Plan overview.

- **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Engagement and Plan Overview-** *Ellen Breslin, Juliet Marsala, Michael Anderson-Nathe, Taciana Saab* (See, **HMA\_MRC SRC\_Project Launch\_Full Board\_June 17 2021 Meeting PPT** for specific details.)
- Ellen Breslin and the Health Management Associates (HMA) provided an overview and introduction to themselves.
- The HMA team presented three primary deliverables they will focus on helping the SRC to develop:
  - Board training and education materials
  - Recruitment plan for diverse membership
  - A roadmap infused with Diversity, equity and inclusion principles
- The HMA team also shared the primary tasks they will take on in coming months:
  - Task 1. Conduct baseline assessment
    - Timeline: May-June
    - Your Role: to engage in interviews and surveys
  - Task 2 & 3. Develop and provide board trainings (workshops)
    - Timeline: July-September
    - Your Role: to engage in workshops
  - Tasks 4 & 5. Hold strategic planning sessions and develop roadmap
    - Timeline: October-December
    - Your Role: to engage in planning sessions
- Ms. Breslin provided an update on the HMA team’s current progress:
  - HMA met with the SRC Executive Board to introduce the project, and how they define DEI.
  - HMA is working with the Chair and MRC to launch this project and to establish a DEI Working Group.
  - Current work focuses on Task 1 to assess knowledge/capacity of SRC with respect to the practice of DEI as it applies to SRC’s structure and work.
- An activity was conducted where the SRC members were asked to answer in the call chat how they would respond to the following scenario: *“It is 2022 and you are at a community event. You run into Governor Charlie Baker. He says he heard the SRC was working on infusing DEI into its efforts. He asks how that went and what accomplishment are you are most proud of. What do you say?”* Comments provided in the chat are as follows:
  - Getting Juneteenth as an Official State Holiday (*SRC Member*)
  - Having a diverse representative SRC membership (*MRC Staff*)
  - We made sure people with disabilities from underserved communities learned about and came to benefit from MRC’s services (*SRC Member*)
  - Membership includes more diverse MRC consumers (*SRC Member*)
  - Everyone feels welcome, heard, seen, and respected. Points of view are one of open-mindedness and empathy (*Public*)
  - MRS Services have reached a greater number of people from underserved populations
  - We fully understand the needs of the population we serve and its diverse characteristics, we know their needs and we have been able to identify underserved communities (*SRC Ex-Officio*)
  - Our staff reflect the people we serve (*MRC Staff*)

- Strategic plan integrates a DEI lens on the SRC's goals and objectives. We are making progress on implementing the plan. *(SRC Member)*
- We have all our board positions filled and they reflect the community we serve, and we host meetings in another language *(SRC Member)*
- All SRC members feel belonging and heard, the SRC priorities targets all have diversity equity and inclusion metrics embedded within. *(MRC Staff)*
- There are more consumers on the SRC overall, especially those who are BIPOC *(Public)*
- We bring these ideas to our own workplace and serve on consumers with the same agenda *(SRC Member)*

The Chair asked and was granted consent to reorder the agenda to review and vote on the FY22 Recommendations. The Chair recognized Mr. Bellil to present the recommendations.

#### **SRC Recommendations & Vote of Acceptance- Joe Bellil**

- Mr. Bellil walked through the proposed SRC Annual Fiscal Year 2022 recommendations.
- Ms. Canada called for a motion to accept the recommendations. Mr. Bellil made a motion to accept the Fiscal Year 2022 recommendations. Rosanna Woodmansee seconded. There was no discussion. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- The recommendations will be sent to MRC for response by July 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

The Chair recognized Ms. Goldberg, Ms. Stroud, and Mr. LaMaster, respectively, for their committee reports.

#### **Committee Reports & Vote of Acceptance-**

- **Policy Committee: Ms. Goldberg**
  - Ms. Goldberg walked through the purpose of the committee and the focus on recommendations regarding improvements to procurement to ensure there are sufficient services available to consumers and enough varieties to meet the need of consumers. Ensuring cultural and linguistic needs are considered as part of procurement. The group will provide a written recommendation of information they need answered to move forward.
- **Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment Committee: Ms. Stroud & Ms. Costa**
  - Ms. Stroud walked through the purpose of the committee and discussed how the committee is partnering with an ongoing MRC effort with Synergy Consulting group to improve the consumer satisfaction survey, developing workgroups to address this work, and identify barriers to overcome. The group split into two workgroups, and workgroup 1 is focused on underrepresented and underserved populations and how to move forward, and workgroup 2 is working on methodologies and best practices to develop data collection tools.
  - The consumer satisfaction committee met in May to provide feedback to the Synergy Consulting group on what consumers think need to be added into the survey, and how to collect that information. Consumers at the meeting expressed an interest in more open-ended questions to better understand people's experiences, including survey information about transportation needs/experiences, and an interest in better capturing ongoing experiences of consumers. Ms. Stroud emphasized the importance of the consumer voice and thanked the attendees of the May meeting.
- **The Business & Employment Opportunity (BEO) Committee: Mr. LaMaster**
  - Mr. LaMaster provided a recap on the first priority to gather 3 years of baseline data for all state agencies to get a better understanding of state employees with disabilities to increase the number of state employees with disabilities.

- Within the Baker administration there is an updated push to increase the diversity of people with disabilities in the workforce. Due to a conversation with Bill Allen from the MRC Job Placement team, Mr. LaMaster was able to host a meeting with a diversity and recruitment manager who works for the Commonwealth as well as the Director of Diversity and Equal Opportunity. The meeting will help the BEO Committee get a baseline on diversity in staffing and think about ways to collaborate in the Fiscal Year 2022 period.
- The second state plan priority the group is working on focuses on partnering with Communications at MRC to develop a more robust marketing and branding strategy for MRC and the SRC. A follow up meeting is scheduled on June 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Priority three that the BEO is working on independent of MRC involves updating the self-employment curricula. A subcommittee was formed for this effort. Mr. LaMaster is scheduling a meeting to determine the structure of this work now that Ms. Canada is Chair of the Council.

The Chair recognized Ms. Joan Phillips, to resume the update on vocational rehabilitation – Future of Work.

#### **Cyber Security Job Driven Training Video – Joan Phillips**

- Ms. Phillips shared a video regarding the MRC/CISCO Security training video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfcWaLQgz7w>

Ms. Canada called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Stroud motioned to adjourn. Ms. Starr seconded.  
**Meeting adjourned at 3:04pm.**

#### **Next Full SRC Meeting**

- September 16th, 12-2pm
- Please note this will be a virtual meeting