

**NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation**

September 13, 2011 (Revised & Approved, 11.8.11)

Nevada State Legislative  
Building  
401 S. Carson St. Room 124  
Carson City, NV

Great Basin College  
Greenhaw Technical Arts  
Building  
Elko, NV

Grant Sawyer Building  
555 E. Washington St.  
Las Vegas, NV

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Maureen Cole  
Jane Gruner  
Robin Hall-Walker  
Kevin Hull  
Jennifer Kane  
Sheena Kaufman  
Jack Mayes  
Kate Osti  
Brian Patchett  
Christine Syverson  
Kathy Treants  
Scott Youngs

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Jimmy Begay  
Steve Chartrand  
Edina Jambor

**GUESTS:**

George McKinlay, Nevada Center for Excellence in Disabilities  
Dr. Veronica Dahir, Manager, Research Services, UNR  
Kemberlee Bonnet, M.A., Research Services, UNR  
Martha Rodriguez Salazar, M.A., Research Services, UNR  
Anita Frantz, Nevada Disability Advocacy & Law Center  
Louis Mickens  
Pearlene Mickens  
Annamarie Beasley

**STAFF:**

Robert Whitney, Attorney General  
Janice John, Deputy Administrator, Programs Services  
Mechelle Merrill, Rehabilitation Chief  
Bill Boster, Rehabilitation Manager  
Silvia Milburn, Rehabilitation Manager  
Melissa Starr, Management Analyst I  
Beth Talcott, Administrative Assistant

**EXHIBITS:**

- Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) May 10, 2011 meeting minutes
- NSRC-Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) August 10, 2011 meeting minutes
- University of Nevada Reno (UNR) Center for Research Design and Analysis (CRDA) Customer Satisfaction Survey Report
- Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) Annual Report draft
- Re-designation of the Client Assistant Program (CAP)

- Social Security Administration Ticket to Work Statistics
- Rehabilitation Performance Indicators
- Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 11 State Plan Goals Progress Report
- State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2012-13 Biennial Budget
- Possible re-designation of CAP (34CFR 370.2)
- NSRC SFY 2012 Budget

I. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Robin Hall-Walker called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. She stated public comments on some of the agenda items may be made, within reason during the course of the meeting.

II. **ROLL CALL AND CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM**

Melissa Starr called the roll and determined a quorum was present.

III. **VERIFICATION OF POSTING**

Melissa Starr verified that the posting was accomplished on time and per Open Meeting Law requirements.

IV. **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Robin thanked the Council members and those attending as members of the public for their commitment and diligence in their efforts on attending the meeting. She thanked the Council members for being prepared by reading their packets. She then asked the public to come forward and introduce themselves.

V. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION APPROVAL OF THE NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (NSRC) MAY 10, 2011, MEETING MINUTES**

Jennifer S. Kane noted a correction needed to be made on page six agenda item eleven, first paragraph, the word "she" needed to be placed between "said" and "would" to make the sentence read correctly.

Jack Mayes moved to approve the May 10, 2011 meeting minutes as amended.  
Scott Youngs seconded. Motion passed.

VI. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION APPROVAL OF THE NSRC-REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (RSA) AUGUST 10, 2011 MEETING MINUTES**

Chris Syverson moved to accept the NSRC-RSA meeting minutes.  
Jack Mayes seconded. Motion passed.

VII. **UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA RENO (UNR) CENTER FOR RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS (CRDA) CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY REPORT**

Dr. Veronica (Roni) Dahir began by introducing assistants Kemberlee Bonnet and Martha Rodriguez Salazar both graduate students and Camille Brown who have worked on the reports and statistical information.

Roni began her presentation by explaining how the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) changed the methodology in collecting the surveys. They adopted a method that was previously suggested by Council member Edina Jambor. They tried to do the data collection for the hearing impaired via the phone because of the technology that they have to assist them. They also did away with the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) mail survey and only offered the component via phone or web. Whereas the Student and General Clients received a cover letter with a phone or web invitation, OIB Customers received phone invitation.

Roni noted the change where they offered five dollars per person that completed the survey for the student population, instead of the raffle for Visa gift cards, as was done last year. She said they did keep the Visa gift cards for the OIB and the General Client surveys.

Jack Mayes asked the Chair if questions could be asked during the presentation or after. Robin Hall-Walker replied holding all questions until the end of each designation.

Roni began by reading through her power point presentation; she began with the General Client portion.

Once she was finished with the General Client portion, the floor was opened for questions. Chris Syverson said from being a member of the Council for a while, she wondered if Roni saw any trends in the data collected. Roni responded we saw higher scores than in the past. Higher scores in the Assistive Technology and post-employment, positive trends that everyone has been working for, UNR has done a longitudinal analysis where they actually looked at three years at a time. This year the longitudinal analysis was not in the contract.

Jack Mayes referred to slide four and asked what the other mental impairments were referring to. Roni stated that the same question comes up every year. She explained that when we do the phone survey we only bring up the primary disability, just because there are three columns they have primary, secondary, and tertiary, disability, and we just bring up the one. But yes, there are definitely other areas, and then the other mental impairments are not necessarily broken down. I will work with Heather Johnson who over sees the Rehabilitation Automated Information system of Nevada (RAISON) to check on the codes in question.

Kate Osti referred to slide nine, (question 10a-interpreter services include things like providing sign language interpretation and brailing. Have you ever received any interpreter services from the Vocational Rehabilitation Program?), identifying what the interpreter concerns are.

Roni replied this question was closed ended, open ended questions as how could the Division improve the program may include this concern or question in the future. There are also several questions that refer to the word "other" there are no specifics with those questions at this time.

Roni then read through the Transition Student Satisfaction Survey portion of the presentation.

Once she was finished with the Transition Student portion, the floor was opened for questions. Kevin Hull asked if the reference to "getting around" pertained to cane training or mobility training. Roni replied to the affirmative.

Kathy Treants said looking back to slide 20 figure 3 B, you commented that this was high school students with a degree, so are we talking about a standard diploma or an adjusted diploma. Roni answered it is for all diplomas except General Educational Development (G.E.D.)'s.

Scott said in reference to slide 20, Satisfaction with Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) staff, it is my understanding VR has third party contractors, like with JobCorps and Easter Seals. It seems the questions are only pertaining to VR. Roni said they could change the question beginning with the October 1, 2011 quarterly sample, which would be collected come January 2012.

Scott asked Roni how they would define competitive employment. He thought it would be interesting hearing from respondents to see if they feel like they're in inclusive employment setting, whether that is competitive, a sheltered workshop type placement or community placement.

Roni answered we could definitely add that question as long as the participants understand what that means. If they don't, we definitely have to define what that means for them. We do ask them a set of questions here that will be in the report that we had added from last time, which we asked did you get any job as a result of services received from the Vocational Rehabilitation program, and then we asked them after that when your case was closed were you in a job the Vocational Rehabilitation program helped place you in, and then are you currently employed in that same job, and we also ask, are you currently employed in the same career field as the job you were in when your case was closed. So we added that series of questions last time, this pattern was so small it did not merit a slide in the presentation.

Scott asked about the types of Assistive Technology that rated poorly in slide 32. Roni said she could ask that in the next survey; however she noted only two of the respondents answered poorly.

Roni began the presentation regarding Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB). After this portion of the presentation a correction was noted on slide 21, the bar that bares 55.5 percent, should read as 80.0 percent. She asked if there were any technical or trade schools in the rural areas. Kevin responded by saying Great Basin College (GBC) has several trade classes like diesel mechanics and such.

Chris said it looks like it's a direct flip from the north to the south. There are trade schools in the south there is on-the-job training in the north.

Robin thanked Dr. Veronica (Roni) Dahir for her presentation and time.

III. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE 2011 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (NSRC)**

Melissa Starr explained the drafted copy of the NSRC's Annual Report is incomplete. She said more input from the Council would be helpful as in content down to simple ideas such as font and

colors. There are two more success stories to be added as well as focusing on the State Plan goals as has been seen in other state's annual reports.

Scott Youngs said he likes the goal format in the larger print and the layout. However he wasn't sure he liked how the information was graphed out, although he wasn't sure there was another alternative. Scott suggested we look at using some different types of charts.

Jane Gruner commented on the make a difference section she would like to see more of the collaborations on the transition age students, as wonderful things took place last year that should be noted.

Kathy Treants pointed out her organizations true identification name Nevada PEP rather than P.E.P.

Jennifer Kane noted when writing in capital letters the computer spell checker will not work. Strategic Goals was not spelled correctly. Jennifer was curious about the "X" all over the Nevada map. Melissa replied the "X" would represent the number of employed Vocational Rehabilitation clients. These numbers were not yet available, but would hopefully be in place for the final draft approval at the November meeting.

Chris Syverson moved to approve the layout and contents of the report as presented with the comments by the Council.

Brian Patchett seconded. Motion passed.

IX **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION RE-DESIGNATION OF CLIENT ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

Robin Hall-Walker, Chair relinquishes her Chair duties to Vice Chair Scott Youngs for this discussion item.

Scott Youngs stated we as a Council are required to review and make inquiries, provide input and possibly vote on a possible recommendation. So the background, the Client Assistant Program (CAP) is designed to advise persons with disabilities with the rights and responsibilities under the federal rehab act. And the employment section of the ADA, Americans with Disabilities Act, and to assist in the resolution of challenges experienced with any of Nevada's federally funded Title 1 rehab programs such as independent living, bureau of services for the blind and visually impaired, and bureau of vocational rehabilitation. The program is the liaison to help ensure that all eligible Nevadans with disabilities receive services as provided under the federal rehab act, and the employment section of the Americans with disabilities act.

The CAP also helps individuals appeal decisions, define rehab services, and refers individuals who are ineligible for rehab services to other public or private agencies that may be of assistance. The

CAP is responsible for informing individuals with disabilities of the rehab programs services and benefits available in Nevada the responsibility extends to ensure information about rehab programs

reaching individuals with disabilities who have traditionally been un-served or underserved by rehab programs.

Robin said for the record, my name is Robin Hall-Walker, and I'm an employee of the State of Nevada, and I'm also a Certified Rehab Counselor. My background includes working in the rehabilitation environment, and also I am a former client. The most information I can give, I need to give a disclosure, in that I am the current chair of the Nevada State Rehab Council, but I'm also a professional staff assigned to the Client Assistance Program, so a re-designation would affect me.

With that in mind, we did have conversations with the Nevada Council on Ethics, and also sought legal counsel, assigned to the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council and have been advised to abstain from any vote that might be yielded from the body regarding this issue.

Robin said she could answer any questions and give any factual information at the behest of the council, under any due diligence she might have done as chair or as an employee. And at this time, that's really the only statement I can make, and if anyone has any questions of me, I can answer those.

Scott asked if this possible re-designation was directed by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Robin responded "no." She continued factually, there are internal CAPs and external CAPs within the nation, and there are some that are yet functioning as per the RSA, and there are statements that they have no concern with that, however there is the desire to have the re-designation if so needed, but the actual ultimate decision of that rests with the state. That is their right, that is totally within their right, and within the regulations those actions can be appropriate, and is a state-by-state decision. Currently no new CAPs are made internal; however, if they were existing at a certain time, it is a grandfathering in process and they can continue to exist that way. Changes can be made, and that is at the discretion of each state, they are beholden to make their own changes and that is totally within their discretion and right.

Maureen Cole added this topic came up for discussion as we met with RSA folks, and talked to our Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) people in San Diego. Robin is absolutely right, and I want to make clear there is absolutely no problem whatsoever with the CAP as it stands now in Nevada. Robin has done just an extraordinary job, she is an extraordinary advocate and mediator, and she has served her function in a way that's just above reproach. It is a problem within the public perception. Individuals look at the CAP, see where it is located, within the rehab division, and they say how can this operate independently and without concern for their own jobs and without pressure from the folks who run the rehab programs.

Maureen pointed out, that while many states were grandfathered in, and allowed to keep their CAPs within their VR programs divisions or departments, however they're set up, any new programs coming on any re-designations must be by authority of the Rehabilitation Act as it was amended, must be located outside the VR programming, you do have that arm's length distance and have that autonomy and independence that was envisioned when the CAP program was put into the law. Maureen continued we really would serve the public better and our participants would be better

served, if we had an arm's length distance between the CAP director and the program, in which that conflict or those questions or those controversies arise.

We have some alternatives that we've been looking at. At the Department of Health and Human Services they have an office of computer -- excuse me -- Consumer Health Assistance, I believe it's called. They have an advocacy and protection type of history and they deal with a number of different programs, and those folks have been talking to Robin, learning more about the program that she runs, getting to know her a little better, and so that's certainly an option that we have.

The other option would be Jack's program, the Nevada Disability Advocacy and Law center, which as you know of course does a number of services to other programs in terms of advocacy and protection. So we will present both of those to the Governor's Office. This is a designation or re-designation that is made by the Governor's Office with the recommendations from the public and the agencies involved.

Brian Patchett asked about the funding for the program when moving from one agency to another.

Robin responded from her part of running the program CAP receives full federal grant dollars, the grant dollars pass through the state to the agency, some Social Security Administration reimbursement funds which the agency has been gracious to include in our budget. These funds will not transfer to the Department of Health and Human Services.

Brian asked if Robin would be moving along with program.

Maureen replied as the continued employment of the folks who currently work in the CAP, certainly that would be the division's hope, and in consultation with Robin and Linda, our recommendation would be if CAP does move to another state agency that the other state agency take them both and continue the program as it has been set up, it has been very successful in that regard.

Chris Syverson, Jack Mayes & Brian Patchett voiced opinions that they would be in favor of the move. Saying it is really about avoiding conflict between the Rehabilitation Division and serving their clients.

Kate Osti asked about the amount of Social Security funding that would be in question.

Maureen stated the Division allocates about \$75,000, which typically is not totally spent.

Annamarie Beasley a visitor asked how are the clients like her-self included as a client of the Vocational Rehabilitation programs going to be addressed. She also wondered about pulling advocates out of the program and giving lists of names and contact information to the public.

Maureen said to clarify that there is no intent to remove the advocacy of the Client Assistance Program. It is simply just putting that desk in another office. The services will remain available to all Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent Living, clients, as needed. The Division will

simply change the information sheets that are provided to each client, and it will have a new telephone number, fax number, e-mail address, and physical location. She reiterated the services will remain exactly the same. Under the rehabilitation act of 1973, we are required to have a Client Assistance Program, and we really do support that concept. Our thinking, in moving it out of the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) and out of the Rehabilitation Division, is to give it more autonomy and independence, as it is supposed to have.

Chris Syverson moved that the agency look into some other options to be placed on the next meeting agenda.

Jane Gruner seconded.

Robin Hall-Walker and Jack Mayes abstained  
Motion passed.

X. **OTHER REPORTS**

Kate Osti reported the Independent Living Council has begun a couple of different projects, new memberships in particular for consumers, to have past clients. In October reviewing their three-year State Plan, Edina Jambor has been working with the Independent Living in the North to develop trainings to bring more interpreters into the community.

XI **ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT**

Maureen reported the visit by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), which took place August 8<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> went very well. They focused on three areas; organizational structure, fiscal and transition. In the Transition arena they would like to see a specific procedure manual and the Division needs to make sure Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE)'s are written before the students graduate. The RSA has encouraged us to do more internal monitoring and tracking of contracts, of programs and of expenditures. The exit conference took place on August 29<sup>th</sup> and took 37 minutes. Their final observations and findings will be forth coming.

XII. **REPORT ON THE COUNCIL'S STATE FISCAL YEAR 2012 BUDGET AND SUGGESTED ADJUSTMENTS**

Melissa Starr presented the printed budget materials. Scott Youngs asked about the difference between contracts with the Captions Unlimited, interpreters, and professional services interpreters.

Melissa replied the Rehabilitation Division has a contract with Preston-Bass, we use those contracted services in Southern Nevada. In the north we have been able to use professional services from the CART list through the Department of Health and Human Services. So basically it becomes a professional service when the Division doesn't have a contract with that particular vendor. However due to new legislation the Division is moving towards having a contract for everything including interpreters in the North and Rural areas.

Jack Mayes asked about the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) travel, how many conferences there are per year and how many NSRC members attend.

Melissa replied that there are two conferences per year. One is held in the spring and one in the

fall, however the Chair only attends one conference per year.

Jack stated that he would like to see flexibility for other members of the Council to attend. He added that often training is hard to come by in the state and if that could be looked at for future budget developments, he feels that there may be other Council Members that might be interested in attending.

Melissa clarified that we have a designated budget that we do need to follow as closely as possible, however if a member of the Council is interested in attending to bring it to her attention or the attention of the Administration and they can certainly take a look at what is available.

### XIII. COMMENTS

Ms. Annamarie Beasley came to the microphone expressing gratitude for the chance to express some issues.

Ms. Beasley said she has been one of the Bureau Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI) clients with some very particular and serious concerns. In reference to the Client Services Survey and communications she said she has had situations of back and forth with even

just the college tuition for three separate events. She wants to help make sure these issues can be resolved for others as well as her-self with clear-cut guidelines and requirements for registering for college classes.

My Counselor gave me her business card to pass for payment to take to the registrar, I did that, they laughed at me and it was very humiliating. At that point, the Counselors, the Rehabilitation Counselor, was supposed to get the authorization, or other method of payment, it was conveyed to me by the Counselor that this had been taken care of. Two, three weeks into the class I was pulled out by the Instructor, being told that I had to leave the class, because the class was not paid for.

I went through this time registering for school just this past August and gave written information, I gave phone numbers, contact people, I gave the information, I submitted it in written form, and for some reason my -- the payment for the books again were -- went to the wrong campus.

I am sure; these counselors have no idea that once you get put out of a class, how the rest of your day is going. My whole case was canceled and I am still to this day not very clear as to how that happened. Upon reopening my case I am going through the same communication issues, if not worse than before. I have tried to get everything in writing, because if you verbalize it a lot of times the counselors don't remember that you even had the conversation. I implore the Council to take seriously the communication, and when information is given people with disabilities, please, by all means, follow it up. Make sure that this information is correct. I fortunately am one of the higher functioning clients of BSBVI, I could just imagine if I had a brain trauma to go and try and register and then try to have communication back with the counselors, and them not remembering.

There are a lot of good things involved in this process; it would be a good idea for the counselors to

put themselves in the same position that they would put us in, like giving us a business card, maybe they themselves should go down and experience the same tragic direction that they've given me, and who knows how many others that don't remember. And another thing, I was even given the wrong information to apply for a fair hearing, and even for contact information for the Client Assistance Program (CAP) advocate. So there's communication, there's things out there, and I've learned quite a bit by working with my advocate trying to get clear-cut direction. The state has some really good programs, but it is not going to help if you cannot access them.

Ms. Beasley also mentioned problems with her computer broadband connection. She went through a major ordeal about receiving my broadband for my classes. I specifically stated please make sure that my broadband on my account gets paid. Well, it was three weeks into my classes – when Vocational Rehabilitation said they could not pay my bill, and it went three weeks in the whole circle, and they ended up paying my bill. I was told that the bill was paid, and then on the fourth or the fifth of the month my broadband services were disconnected.

Jack Mayes asked if there were still teams. In the past, there were teams so that when Counselors were not available to assist clients there was a Technician possibly available to assist the clients.

Sheena Kaufman replied that the team model was still in existence and Technicians are available to assist clients when the Counselor is not.

Maureen said communication really is the bedrock of everything we do and we can learn from situation such as Ms. Beasley has described. Maureen also sincerely apologized for the difficulties she has encountered.

Ms. Beasley added she remembered the survey asked questions about meeting with Counselors, she has had meetings scheduled for 12 a.m. or midnight. Her Counselor has also documented meetings that she was never made aware of, and this poses a negative light onto her.

#### XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Robin commented it is a privilege to serve the community. She said as the Client Assistance Program Director, she only hears the bad. Robin shared her personal story on being a Vocational Rehabilitation client, to Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor; she said her heart is with Rehabilitation. She said she would like everyone that works for Rehabilitation to have the passion one needs for their job and to know with their passion they have changed somebody's life for the good.

Maureen state the Division had copies of the State Rehabilitation Council Vocational Rehabilitation partnership handbook for everyone who had not received one as of yet.

George McKinley announced the upcoming Assistive Technology (AT) for Employment Summit. He said it was being held in Las Vegas on October 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. It is not a vendor's type of summit, it is a focus on collaborative efforts, understanding needs on exploring innovative solutions, on entrepreneurial and reaching out to employers. You can find more information at <http://nced.info/natrc/> .

Kate Osti announced the Centers for Independent Living -- Disability Awareness Day October 8, 2011 at Lorenzi Park in Las Vegas, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Jennifer Kane mentioned the University of Nevada Disability Resource Center was putting on an Assistive Technology and Accommodations fair in collaboration with the Nevada Student Leadership Transition Summit. It will be the first time the two will be happening on the same day, so the high school students with disabilities, counselors and teachers can also attend the Assistive Technology and Accommodations fair which take place on November 10, 2011 at the University of Nevada Reno, Joe Crowley Student Union.

XV. **ADJOURNMENT**

Robin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Brian Patchett moved to adjourn.

Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 11:39 a.m.

**Edited By:**



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Melissa Starr, MA I, ODEP

**Approved By:**



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Robin Hall-Walker, Chair