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

**September 18, 2012**
(Amended 11/27/2012)

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

Great Basin College
Greenhaw Technical Arts Bldg.
Room 124
Elko, NV

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

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**
Steve Chartrand
Robin Hall-Walker
Kevin Hull
Sheena Kaufman
Kate Osti
Kathy Treants

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**
Maureen Cole
Virginia Howard
Jennifer S. Kane
Brian Patchett

**GUESTS:**
Marsha Ferrell, Transcriber
Delynn Saunders, Certified Deaf Interpreter
Branton Stewart, Certified Deaf Interpreter
Caroline Preston-Bass, Certified Hearing Interpreter
Daniel Dickson, Certified Hearing Interpreter
Brook Paulson
Pedro Gonzalez
Jack Mayes, Executive Director Nevada Disability & Advocacy Center (NDALC)

**STAFF:**
Robert Whitney, Deputy Attorney General
Melaine Mason, Deputy Administrator, Operations
Janice John, Deputy Administrator, Program Services
Mechelle Merrill, Rehabilitation Chief
Sylvia Milburn, VR District Manager
Kara Lang, Quality Control Specialist II
Jan McFall, Quality Control Specialist I
Melissa Starr, Management Analyst II
Beth Talcott, Administrative Assistant

**EXHIBITS:**
- Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) May 15, 2012 meeting minutes
- NSRC July 16, 2012 Tele-conference meeting minutes
- University of Nevada, Reno, Center for Research Design and Analysis (CRDA) Customer Satisfaction Survey Report
- Social Security Administration Ticket to Work Statistics
- Vocational Rehabilitation Re-allotment Update
- Rehabilitation Performance Indicators
- Vocational Rehabilitation Hearings
- NSRC SFY 2012 Budget

I. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**
Robin Hall-Walker called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

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 Hall-Walker thanked the Council members for being prepared by reading their packets and for taking the time to attend this Nevada State Rehabilitation Council meeting. She said we have individuals in the audience who will be participating, hearing, and also presenting, both north and south.

Chair Hall-Walker continued there is a possibility we may differ slightly from the order of the agenda depending on people's ability to maintain their presence. We only have a couple of action items the rest are presentations and trainings, so we will try and respect the time of all participants accordingly.

V. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION APPROVAL OF THE NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (NSRC) MAY 15, 2012 MEETING MINUTES**
Robin Hall-Walker, Chair of the NSRC requested comments and/or changes to the meeting minutes as presented in the members packets. Receiving none she entertained a motion to accept the minutes as presented. At first no one made a motion so Chair Hall-Walker moved forward.

** Second call for approval at 9:45a.m.
Kate Osti moved to approve the May 15, 2012 meeting minutes
Kevin Hull seconded.
Kathy Treants abstained as she missed most of the May meeting, departing at 9:55 a.m.
Motion passed

VI. **DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION APPROVAL OF THE NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (NSRC)JULY 16, 2012 MEETING MINUTES**
Robin Hall-Walker, Chair of the NSRC requested comments and/or changes to the meeting minutes as presented in the members packets. Receiving none she entertained a motion to accept the minutes as presented.

Steve Chartrand moved to approve the minutes as presented.
Kathy Treants seconded. Motion passed.

VII. **DISCUSSION/REPORT UNIVERSTIY OF NEVADA RENO (UNR), CENTER FOR RESEARCH DESIGN AND ANALYSIS (CRDA) CUSTOMER STAISFACTION SURVEY REPORT**

Dr. Veronica Dahir introduced Michael Doane who was sitting to the right of her. He is one of the graduate students, and he helped put all the reports together. She also thanked all her other staff members; including Martha Rodriguez Salazar, who is my assistant serving manager, Zeb Gibb, Camille Lalasz, and Barbara Larsen who are also graduate students. I'd like to thank Dr. Wei Yang who works for the Nevada Center for Health Statistics and Informatics. And Fannie Zhang who did the statistics for this project. As well as I'd like to recognize Chris Sanchez who is my survey manager, and David Shirley who is the IT manager" and all of my interviewers and supervisors who worked on this project on all the satisfaction surveys

and have worked on them over the last few years. She acknowledged all of their hard work that went into all of these reports and this project.

Dr. Dahir read through the pages of her University of Nevada, Reno, survey Power Point presentation (See attached.)

At this time Robin Hall-Walker re-visited the opportunity to accept a motion to accept the May 16, 2012 Nevada State Rehabilitation Council (NSRC) meeting minutes.
**(Motion noted above)

## VIII. NSRC MEMBER TRAINING EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION & SECTION 504 PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION

Kara Lang introduced herself and Jan McFall as the Quality Control Specialists for the Nevada Rehabilitation Division. She began the training with the requirements for effective communication in the Americans Disability Act (ADA) and in the Rehabilitation Act. Kara Lang reminded us to keep in mind both the ADA and the rehab act have a lot of different provisions for a lot of different situations, in today's presentation we are focusing primarily on the parcel on effective communication as they apply to the Rehabilitation Council.

The Rehab Act of 1973 as amended Section 504 is nondiscrimination under federal grants and programs, and it is designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability in any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. A qualified individual shall not by reason of his or her disability, be excluded from participation or subject to discrimination in any program that receives federal financial assistance. The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), because the council meetings are open to the public, your individuals who attend meetings and participate in them would be any member of the public who would normally otherwise be able to attend.

To effectuate Section 504 of the Rehab Act, there was a Code of Federal Regulations developed, that is 34 CFR 104, sections 104.4 and 104.52 basically say an agency receiving federal financial assistance cannot directly contractually or any other instance make other arranged exclusion from services on the basis of a disability. If an individual who would otherwise qualified to participate in those services, there would be no aiding other agencies, organizations or persons that discriminate based on disability.

They also indicate the qualified individuals must be provided the opportunity to participate in and benefit from services equal to what has been offered and effective to other people; but effective means an equal opportunity to participate in services, and for the same level of benefit, but not necessarily the same result. Also the manner and provision of services must not serve to limit the participation of individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary aids must be provided when it is necessary to afford equal opportunity to benefit for individuals with impaired sensory skills, manual skills, or speaking skills.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title 2, Subtitle A: Title 2 applies to public entities and subtitle A applies specifically to state and local government they protect qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination in the state and local government. Section 504: of the Rehabilitation Act protects individuals from discrimination in agencies that receive federal financial assistance, the ADA protects individuals from discrimination at state and local governments, whether or not those agencies receive federal financial assistance.

The ADA portion of this basically extends Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, it is based on the wording in the Rehabilitation Act, however it does include additional wording that is not in the Rehabilitation Act. Both the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA have provisions against anti-retaliation. Specifically, the ADA indicates that no state or local government, and no public or private entity, shall coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere

with any individual in the exercise of his or her rights under this part or because that individual aided or encouraged any other individual in the exercise or enjoyment of any right granted or protected by the act or this part. The ADA, as well as the Rehabilitation Act, provides for equal opportunity but does not guarantee equal results. Subpart E: specifically pertains to communications, which relates directly to the topic of today.

Kara Lang summarized, in general the Act says that communications with individuals with disabilities needs to be as effective as communications with other people. That the state and local governments need to furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services when it is necessary to afford an equal opportunity to participate in the program. The primary consideration of what auxiliary aid and service to provide is given to the request of individual with disability. The way the auxiliary aids and services must be provided in accessible formats, timely manners, respecting an individual's privacy and independence.

Individuals are not required to bring their own interpreters to interpret for them. It is the responsibility of the state or local government to provide the interpreters. An adult accompanying an individual can only be used as an interpreter in limited circumstances. Basically those are if there is an emergency involving an imminent threat, and an interpreter is not available; or if there is a specific request by the person who needs the interpreter that the adult accompanying them interpret, that adult agrees to interpret, and it is appropriate for the situation.

In the 2010 amendments to the ADA, added a section on video remote interpreting services. Video conferencing, communication by video has become really popular and is really useful, and interpreting can be done by video remote interpreting services, this is useful for areas where an interpreter is needed and not found, but needed immediately and cannot find one. In rural areas that do not have interpreters video conferencing may be useful. There are rules for when using video remote interpreting services they must be provided in real-time, full motion, high quality, with no lags in communication. There needs to be sharply delineated images; a clear, audible transmission of voices; adequate training in the use of technology so you do not run into technology snags like we almost did.

When it comes to telecommunications, the text telephone is still being used, many people prefer to use video relay the ADA states text telephone or equally effective systems should be used. Kara Lang said many individuals consider video relay, if not equally effective, more effective than text telephone.

Telecommunications must be an effective real-time communications, sometimes there are agencies that have automated systems that say, if you want so-and-so push one, if you want this choice push 2, and the ADA requires plenty of time given, so a relay operator can give the choices and an individual can respond before the automated system hangs up on them. Responses must be in the same manner as responses to other telephone calls.

The ADA requires posting of information and signage as to the existence and location of accessible services, activities and facilities. Our State Rehabilitation Council sends out their public notice of meeting, with a statement as to the availability of the auxiliary aids and services, and who to contact if a person needs an auxiliary aid and service.

The ADA does not require a specific auxiliary aid or service be provided if it fundamentally alters the services being provided by that agency or creates an undue financial or administrative burden on that agency. However, the proof of burden is on the agency. The head of the entity or their designee is the only one who can decide whether it creates an undue burden or alters the services. After considering all resources available the agency will need to provide a written statement on how it alters services or creates an undue financial or administrative burden. The agency is still required to provide any other auxiliary aid or services needed for effective communication that will not alter services or create an undue burden.

The ADA has a Technical Assistance manual defines some of the terms that the ADA discusses. This is where the definition of primary consideration is found, where we provide auxiliary aids and services to an individual. And the Technical Assistance manual informs us that we must honor the choice of an individual unless another equally effective means of communication is available; or if the request requires fundamental alteration or undue burden. It is very important to consult with the individual, if an auxiliary aid or service is needed it is the individual requesting the auxiliary aid or service who knows if it will be effective or not.

The Technical Assistance manual provides several samples. For example, you may have someone who is blind who uses Braille, and that may be an effective form of communication. You may have another individual who is blind who has never learned Braille, and providing them with Braille is not an effective form of communication. You may have two individuals, who are deaf, and maybe one was born deaf, American Sign Language is their primary language, English is a second language, and in that case an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter may be an appropriate and effective means of communication. You may have someone else who became deaf later in life, did not learn ASL or did not learn ASL well, and an ASL interpreter may not be an effective form of communication for that individual, they may benefit more from a written form of English, because English is their primary form of language.

The Technical Assistance manual also gives us a definition of a qualified interpreter. A qualified interpreter needs to be someone who can communicate the information effectively, accurately, and impartially. They need to possess and use specialized vocabulary, required for that setting. The ADA Technical Assistance manual states signing and interpreting are not the same thing. You may have someone who signs on your staff-- that does not make them qualified to interpret and to be able to communicate the information being exchanged effectively and accurately.

The ADA also tells us an individual does not have to necessarily be certified to be a qualified interpreter. You may have two interpreters in a setting that uses some very technical language, and you may have someone who is not certified, who knows that technical language being used in that particular setting. In that setting, they may be more qualified than a person who is certified, but may not know that technical language.

Kara Lang turned over the remainder of their presentation to Jan McFall.

Jan McFall started off by saying that effective communication does not always have to be high tech or expensive in order to be effective. In some cases a simple handwritten note passed back and forth can serve as an effective means of communication for a quick face-to-face exchange of information; for example when a deaf person requests a copy of a form from their local library.

Talking about the sign language interpreters American Sign Language (ASL) is its own language. True ASL is usually for those who have been deaf since birth and have never learned English. Although many people who learned to sign later in life, after hearing and using spoken English, they do not sign strictly in ASL. Instead they usually use a mixture of ASL and English that s known as Pidgin signed English.

For lip-readers who do not sign, cued speech uses eight different hand shapes and four different positions around the mouth to provide a visual contrast for sounds that look just alike on the lips, for example, B and P, oral interpreters are trained to articulate speech silently and clearly, and they may use facial expressions, natural body language, and gestures

Certified deaf interpreting is a new and growing profession. The interpreter is usually deaf or hard of hearing, therefore, they have a knowledge and understanding of deaf culture, and they understand the finer nuances of ASL and nonverbal communication. In addition to general interpreter training, they also have specialized training or experience in the use of mimes, props, drawings and gestures. The certified deaf interpreter (CDI) will work as a team with the hearing interpreters. For example, at our Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office if

a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor has a meeting with a deaf participant, there will actually be four people in that room. The Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) counselor will speak, the hearing interpreter will sign to the Certified Deaf Interpreter (CDI), who will then communicate with the deaf participant. And then the communication flows back in the opposite direction. The CDI's are especially helpful for difficult and sensitive interpreting situations, for example; in a medical emergency or courtroom proceedings or when the deaf individual's mode of communication is unique, perhaps they use mostly a lot of family signs or home signs, or maybe they know a foreign sign language.

Video remote interpreting, is used when an in-person, on-site interpreter is not immediately available. It uses video conferencing equipment, technology, and high-speed internet to provide a qualified interpreter. They are usually located from a call center they are provide interpreters to individuals at different locations. Video remote interpreting services must conform to those ADA requirements.

Some speech to text options are Communication Access Real-time Translation or called Computer Assisted Real-time Translation (CART). A stenographer types what is being spoken, and then the deaf or hard of hearing individual can read text on a computer, a TV monitor, or a projected screen. It is word for word transcription it is often used in a live event like sporting events or maybe a graduation ceremony.

There are automatic speech recognition programs, like Dragon. They were originally developed for helping with dictation. The speaker uses a microphone and a computer, then the deaf or hard of hearing individual reads text on the monitor or screen. The program has to be trained to recognize the speaker's voice, so it is not possible to change speakers and then maintain the accuracy of the transcription. It is increasingly used for one-on-one meetings and tutoring sessions, where the speaker can actually monitor the output that appears on the screen. It is a voice to text system, it is almost word for word, for example the speaker might say <u>let us</u> start with the Civil War, what might pop up on screen might be <u>lettuce</u> start with the Civil War. But then again, the speaker could see that and correct it right there on the spot.

All assisted listening systems consistent of a microphone, a transmitter, a receiver, and some kind of a coupling device. It could be earphones, ear-buds, a neck loop, or silhouettes that are worn behind the ear. There are three different types in the way the sound is transmitted. FM uses radio waves to transmit the sound. Infrared uses infrared light to transmit the sound then the induction loop uses electromagnetic waves to transmit sound. They all work alike by amplifying speech while at the same time cutting out background noise and reverberation with the appropriate coupling device they can all be used with and without hearing aids.
So an entire room can be set up for an assistive listening system, like a big conference room or a movie theater.

Video relay provides a video interpreter for a telephone call that is placed between an American Sign Language interpreter (ASL) or sign language user and a hearing person. Then again text telephones the operator behind the scenes reads a typed message from a deaf or hard of hearing individual, and then voices to the other party. Also available are CapTel phones, or captioned telephones those are for people with hearing loss, but they still want to be able to use their own voice when they talk on the phone. Then the other party's spoken conversation comes up on the displayed in a window, and it is almost simultaneously.

The UbiDuo allows face-to-face communication in real-time. It consists of a pair of keyboards with screens, and they can be set up either right across from each other or right next to each other giving two individuals a face-to-face real-time communication. You can actually put two sets together, hook them together, and four people can sit down and have a real-time communication.

There is also open and closed captioning, like what you see on your TV or on internet videos. Open captioning is always visible whenever the program is up and running. Closed captioning is usually embedded within the program and it has to be selected in order to become visible. There are some options for blind and low vision. An effective communication can be just as simple as helping somebody complete a form or reading a sign that

is posted on the wall.

Qualified readers currently there is no certification requirements that exists to become a reader. Like interpreters, the reader may need to know specialized vocabulary in order to be qualified to read certain materials to ensure that the communication is accurate and effective. Providing material in audio format is another way to provide communication for blind and low vision. There is a website that provides free text to speech conversion, it is www.abc2mp3.com. Go on that website, a sighted individual types in a text and provides the recipient's email address, and then the recipient receives an email with an audio file attached. Besides for helping with people with blind and low vision, this is also a good tool for people who have difficulty reading to get that file in audio format.

Braille is a tactile writing system used by the blind and the visually impaired. The braille format is for those who can read Braille. Providing materials in a large print format.

Now-a-days a lot of materials are in an electronic format. Emails, CDs, flash drives with plain text format that can be used in conjunction with screen-reading or magnification software. Job Access With Speech (JAWS) is an example of screen-reading software, Zoomtext for magnification software.

Auxiliary aids or options for the deaf-blind. Tactile signing, it is sometimes referred to as hand-over-hand. We have probably at one time seen the movie "The Miracle Worker", at the end of the movie Annie Sullivan is teaching Helen Keller the word "water," she is using tactile signing.

There is also Print on Palm, also referred to as Tracing, where the sighted individual can actually trace the outline of a letter or maybe a simple picture onto the palm of the deaf-blind individuals hand or forearm.

As of today there is a lot of technology either developed or being developed. One example is the screen Braille communicator. Which makes it possible for deaf-blind people to communicate with those who can see it works in both directions. The sited individual types in a text, and then the deaf-blind person actually can read that in Braille on the Braille screen, and then respond back using a Braille keyboard. This allows a deaf-blind person to be able to communicate with a stranger without having to have that direct physical contact.

Robin Hall-Walker thanked both Kara Lang and Jan McFall for their presentation, noting the transcriber has captured the presentation/training. Offering copies to anyone who would like a copy.

## IX. DISCUSSION/REPORT STATUS UPDATE ON THE OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS VOLUNTARY RESOLUTION AGREEMENT

Robin Hall-Walker reported this is an update on the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) voluntary resolution agreement. What is anticipated is that we will cycle through with the training so that individuals who missed the training today will be able to get the training, so at some point. There's no action item here, but at some point we'll have to establish a meeting, proposal or a training piece, where this information can be shared until all council members and support staff have been trained. This training will be attended on a yearly basis.

The Nevada State Rehabilitation Council did receive comments from Office of Civil Rights (OCR) regarding our recently approved policies and procedures regarding the accommodations, and they had some comments, which we can take under advisement not at this meeting it is not an action item again sometime within the next 30 days we probably need to have support staff contact and have a situation set up where we might have another phone teleconference to approve the OCR revisions we will need to respond to them.

## X. OTHER REPORTS

Kate Osti reported currently the Independent Living Council is undergoing some changes, we have had some individuals come to the end of their council terms, so we currently have six individuals who have applied to the

council to become new members, and we are simply waiting on the Governor's office to give us an update and/or appoint them so we can schedule our next meeting.
Kate announced a couple of upcoming events, on Saturday, October 13th is the southern Center for Independent Living center's Disability Awareness Day. She encouraged everyone to come and participate. She suggested interested individuals call the center for more information.

## XI. ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Melaine Mason said we will begin with the recent events listed on our agenda;

- The Client Assistance Program
  The re-designation hearing will be held on Monday, Sept. 24th from 1:30p to 4:30p. Video conferenced between the Legislative Bureau in Carson City, Grant Sawyer Bldg. in Las Vegas and Great Basin College in Elko.
- Pathways to Work Program, has been implemented
  It is collaboration between High Sierra Industries regional center and Vocational Rehabilitation. This is an assessment program for our most significantly disabled consumers who have been working in supported settings. An opportunity for work assessments in different areas to discover career interests, and new skills, highlights that program.
- The division has posted the new Policy and Procedure manual.
- The division has been working on new protocols and resource links, a new fee schedule for job developers. We are actively reviewing this program to improve and create enhancements as well as address some issues of we haven't had any issues, but to make sure we don't, with liability and make sure there's proper insurance and -- in place. Those cover us, as well as the job developer.
- The division also had the in-service training in Reno last week, there were approximately 75 to 80 in attendance including some council members, agency partners, and the Rehabilitation specialists. Director Woodbeck gave the opening remarks, and he is very positive and supportive of the rehabilitation division, he's very proud of the work that the division continues to go forward with.
  - Presentations one from Scott Youngs on the many assistive technology avenues for our clients.
  - Mental health issues,
  - Customized employment,
  - Staff self-care by our region TAIS-9 partner,
  - Motivational interviewing,
  - Positive outcomes when working with ex-offenders.

A new theme was developed by Mechelle Merrill, our bureau Chief she took it from a thought to reality. Our new symbol is the rehabilitation heart. Melaine said the Division personnel will be handing out the lapel pins to all the council members when they see them.

- The Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) has ensued on their radio and media campaign for about three months now. Melaine said she hoped the Council members had heard at least one of them. They are on public broadcasting type stations, six stations statewide.

  Each month we will include the NSRC member sin the radio spot memos, these radio spots are very impressive they highlight an aspect of Vocational Rehabilitation. This will be continued with this through June as the Division has funding and a contract for those spots. The upcoming month will be disability awareness month, so that topic will highlighted.

- The Division has been having great success with our Business Development Manager, Ken Pearson. Mechelle Merrill and Ken work together in reaching out to the community to increase our employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. To provide assistance to employers, and education to employers regarding persons with disabilities. Ken Pierson has become a very integral partner in the workforce development efforts of DETR, as

well as the state and has been instrumental in moving Vocational Rehabilitation into the arena where it really belongs.

- Every year there is a re-allotment process and a relinquishment process. The relinquishment process the Division relinquishes funds back to the federal government. To reallot or reissue to states that have the opportunity to match additional funds. In July, the States go through a projection process to determine what availability of matching funds they have, and then the States relinquish the unused or unmatched portion.

  In Nevada, as discussed in the past, we relinquished $9.7 million of our $22 million allotment, and total nationally, $143,552,000 was relinquished nationally from many other States. That includes combined agencies, general agencies, and blind agencies. The States that could come up with additional match over and above their standard allotment totaled $89,328,000. So there was, well over $50 million allocated for Vocational Rehabilitation programs that states were unable to match. Melaine said the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) works with the Office of Management Budget, (OMB) that looks for additional uses of those funds.

- The discussion the Division has been having about the federal fiscal year 11 funds that were pre-matched, totaling $8.1 million. The division, with enormous support from our director, in going forward to prevail, and being able to maintain these funds, and then spend them in a manner that enhances the program. Approximately half of those funds were spent in client services, and the other half are being spent, on improvements to the program. Two projects are completed are the:

  - The Division has completed the refurnishing of the Reno Corporate office that had not been updated for 20 years. We had failing desks and non-compliant type furniture for most of the staff.
  - The furnishings at the Las Vegas West Bay office the Division created a space for the deputy Administrator of Program Services and some of her staff as they were relocated a few years ago from the St. Louis building.

- The Division will be purchasing two orientation kiosks, one will be at West Bay, and one will be at Reno Corporate, where prospective participants can come in and go through the orientation process to get more information prior to spending time during the physical orientation, where at that point afterwards we start processing an application.

- The Division received approval from the Board of Examiners (BOE) on our Rehabilitation Automated Information System Of Nevada (RAISON) paperless project, is underway and is expected to be completed by the end of March. This will allow us to:
  - Eliminate the need for paper files,
  - Everything will be scanned in and indexed and,
  - Then stored in the Client Service System.
  - Ease the sharing of the information, it will
  - Improve the audit abilities of the client files,
  - Reduce the travel needs when files need to be audited, etc.
  - Reducing the time it takes to file, to archive files, to find files, to manage paper.

  And so that will streamline that process. Most importantly, this saves our staff time so we can attend to the business of serving clients. We are very excited about this program.

- The last and final item presented was the vendor rating system. The Division will start developing the business practices in November. It is a little more complex than just printing out a report and saying you are a good vendor or you are not a good vendor. The system went live in July, the vendor alliance

that we partnered with was phenomenal, very supportive, and now the hard work for our staff begins, in developing the business practice. Developing the communication around that set of data and information. The information very powerful and it is not as simple and straightforward as just running reports and giving out the results. We will be reporting throughout the coming year on how the tool enhances the Divisions' Business Practices and how it improves our performance with our vendors.

- Melaine Mason noted the changes in Rehabilitation Administration staff. Division staff changes are:
  - Michele Killian, Program Officer I
  - Michelle Mellow, AAIV
  - Kathy Yonkers, ASO II had retired
  - Business Officer II, in Las Vegas will be retiring at the end of October

  The Division will be aggressively filing those vacancies. Currently, there are 14 counselor vacancies, north, south, and the rural offices are fully staffed. Unfortunately, that represents a 30 percent vacancy at this point. The division is aggressively pursuing those recruitments, and working with state personnel to get the lists and fill those positions.

  The Division has formed a work group of division staff to come up with some recruitment ideas to help recruit candidates and ideas to fill positions that maybe are not the standard way that we fill positions. When we go to national events, many of the states have the same issues whether they have a college for training, vocational rehabilitation counselors are not retentioned and getting people in the door is a national issue that is being worked on.

- Ticket To Work: the cost reimbursement the Division has submitted funds go into the Vocational Rehabilitation and other programs to help fund services.
- The Division Performance Indicators provide reports on how the Division is doing with employment outcomes.
- Notice of Hearings and dismissals –self explanatory
- The State Performance Goals:
  - *Goal One*: increase our student participation program. An increase in their becoming closed, working through the program and a slight decrease in student population that received services
  - *Goal Two*: to extend outreach efforts to diverse disability populations has seen an increase.
  - *Goal Three*: to extend outreach efforts toward ethnically diverse populations has increased.
  - *Goal Four*: Work together and share resources with state, private and non-profit agencies to leverage resources. The report showed a slight decrease, however the Division continues to partner with other resources.
  - *Goal Five*: emphasizes the employment potential of applicants and eligible persons receiving services and supported employment.

Robin Hall-Walker asked Melaine Mason with the partnering activities coming forward, would the Division be able to project a lessening of some of the gift back for the lack of match and see if any of the utilization of partnerships would allow the Division to keep more money. Melaine Mason responded Madam Chair, most definitely. The Division expects to see it financially on the books next year. Some of the larger partnerships, in the best interest of all parties to achieve the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) blessings on any collaboration, as nationally that is the key to success. The Division does not want the RSA to come back after a monitoring visit to say this is not allowed. Additionally, we aggressively submitted a budget requesting support for the funding that we do receive. So as the Division can become public within the coming months, we will again ask for support from the council to participate in those discussions at the legislative level, which would help further match our grant.

In the last four years have had a lot of influx of funds where our Business Enterprise Network (BEN) match is

growing, our ARRA funds required us to create this balance forward to grow and then recently the determination that it needed to be spent and used. With that determination, we are going to have more stability in projecting and managing our money, and growing the funds that we have available through those partnerships.

Robin Hall-Walker continued Melaine you spoke of the person with workforce that is working together with the department in a stellar manner, the Council has a requirement for workforce representation which has been vacant for some time. Do you think we now have an avenue to reach out to get a member from that pool of individuals to fulfill requirement.

Melaine Mason responded Madam Chair, most definitely. I believe it will need to be a council member rather than the workforce. The Governor's initiative to look at combining the workforce development groups, the boards. There will be a little bit of the delay in Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) being included in that process. Our administrator, Maureen Cole, and the director continue to work that avenue and those angles to make that happen, through their efforts, and the evolution of what the workforce boards look like for Nevada.

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

Melissa Starr presented to the Council their new State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2013 budget. She pointed out an increase in projected expenditures, explaining that is partially due to this year's comprehensive statewide Needs Assessment which will be conducted every three years. Melissa Starr said we have recently received a fully executed contract with San Diego State University (SDSU) to perform the needs assessment again.
The Council does have some increase in expenditures again for some professional services, and our printing and mailing of the annual report. However, even with the increase in expenditures, it does appear that the existing budget will cover all of the anticipated expenses.

## XIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brook Paulson asked about the Vocational Rehabilitation's public relations radio spots. Ms. Paulson asked how the Division advertises to the deaf community, as they do not listen to the radio.

Mechelle Merrill responded the advertisements that are run on the radio are also being placed on our website. We could also talk about a transcription of the content a script of the content, if that would be seen as beneficial.

Ms. Paulson replied a script is difficult for many deaf people who are not fluent readers of English. She asked if the Division could provide a signed rendition or something creative that could help in this regard. Ms. Paulson suggested Mechelle Merrill and the Division contact the Deaf Community Leaders who may have ideas on how to publicize the information to the deaf community.

Mechelle Merrill agreed that would be a wonderful idea.

Mr. Pedro Gonzalez thanked the Council for providing the necessary accommodations to allow him to participate in the meeting. He said and it has been interesting to hear the different presentations. He had learned a lot about all the different aspects of the Divisions services. Mr. Gonzalez asked how would the Council handle retaliation issues, how would they be resolved.

Robin Hall-Walker responded any individual would be able to contact support staff the Chair of the Council and /or the Administrator of the Division. The individual would also have the legal right of contacting the Office of Civil Rights or Department of Justice, which, as hoped, would be a last resort, if that were your perception, that there was retaliation.

Mr. Gonzalez stated he attends the meetings to listen to the process, to share and support what is effective communication. He wants a better quality of services for the deaf community throughout the state of Nevada.

XIV. **ADJOURNMENT**

Robin entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Steve Chartrand moved to adjourn.
Kate Osti seconded. Motion passed.
Meeting adjourned at 11: 09 a.m.

**Edited By:**

Melissa Starr, Management Analyst, NSRC Support Staff

**Approved By:**

Scott Youngs, Vice-Chair