

Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT) May 6-7, 2021 Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present:

Michael A. Ebbeler Jr., Chair, Austin
Lisa Maciejewski-West, Vice Chair, Horseshoe Bay
Amanda Bowdoin, Forney
Matt Berend, Wichita Falls
Jennifer Clouse, Temple
Lisa Cowart, Beaumont
Cheryl A Fuller, Austin
Lindsey Geeslin, Lorena
Gennadiy Goldenshteyn, Dallas
Paul Hunt, Austin
Elizabeth Kendell, San Antonio
Joe Powell, Irving
Emily Robinson, Austin
Rodrick Robinson, McKinney
Karen Stanfill, Houston
Crystal Stark, College Station
Abdi Warsame, Irving

Absent:

JoAnne Fluke, Abilene
April Pollreisz, Amarillo
Bobbie Hodges, Fort Worth

TWC Reps:

Commissioner Julian Alvarez III, Gary Benner, Karen Brajcki, Shelly Caillouet, Rae Champagne, Heather Cooke, Chair Bryan Daniel, Kandace Decker, Commissioner Aaron Demerson, Cindy Geisman, Lisa Godwin, Dennis Kutach, Laura LaCour, Adam Leonard, Christy Lerche, Susan Lindsey, Tammy Martin, Bonnie Martin-Hudson, Scott McCune, Cassandra Medrano, Geoffrey Miller, Kevin Miller, Sylvia Miller, Brian Owens, Claudia Peden, Elsa Y. Perez, Andrew Ramirez, Roberto Ramirez, Romania Roberts, Aissa Salazar, Belinda Salazar, Jonas Schwartz, Ed Serna, Lisa Sharp, Chris Speckhard, Melissa Stirling, Laike Todd, Jason Vaden, Rikka Weintraub, Sue- Ellen Woodlief,

Guest:

May Adams, Luis Alvarado, Gabriela Arvizu, Valerie Blackmon, Sandra Breitengross Bitter SILC, Robert Blocker, Christina Bryant, Anthony Buchanan, Edwin Castillo Disability Rights TX, Center For Based, Nedra Cheatham, Liana Davis, Bill Dean, Diana Diaz, Nidia Escobar, Roni Frazier, Lucy Gafford, Norine Jaloway Gill, Ira Herrera, Jeanie Hanzal Disability Rights Texas, Jeanie Hanzal, Mary, Hodge, Michelle Howard-Herbein, Aubrey Jones, Robin Kuntz Education, Kaki Leyens, Britni Miles, Monica Mishaw, Joseph Muniz, Alena Newberry, Chelsea Nguyen, Sandra Pierce, Raquel Puertas-Ramos, Brenda Roland, CC Rowe, Suzanne Saenz, Rose Salinas, Eva Salazar, Jason Shaw, Russell Shanks, Connie Simon TJJD, Meredith Skogman, Kathy Sunshine, Kwee Lan Teo, Jerold Terry, Claudia Torres, Sonia White Education, James Williams, Beverly Young

Welcome and Introductions

- The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Michael A. Ebbeler, Jr., Chair.

Julian Alvarez III, TWC Commissioner Representing Labor

- Addressed the council and gave an update.

ED Serna, TWC Executive Director

- Addressed the council.

Aaron Demerson, TWC Commissioner Representing Employers

- Addressed the council.

VR Division Director's Report Cheryl A. Fuller, TWC VR Division Director

- General Updates
 - Federal Legislature

- April 2020 Secretary DeVos submitted a request for Congress to grant additional time for VR agencies to spend their grants.
- 87th Regular Session of Texas Legislature
 - As of April 12th, the House and Senate have filed 8019 bills
 - The agency as a whole is tracking 640 of these bills
 - VR has assigned 20 bills to analyze and track with an additional 217 on a watch list and nine have been scheduled for a public hearing.
 - A couple to highlight because they specifically mention VR is HB3635 vehicle modification, HB4571 statewide intellectual and developmental disabilities coordinating council, HB4572 statewide interagency aging services coordinating council, SB50 competitive and integrated employment initiative for certain Medicaid recipients.
 - New rider called Apprenticeship and Internship Opportunities for People with Disabilities. VR would be responsible for creating a report of inventory of all current apprenticeship and internship opportunities for people with disabilities. There are specific items that must be included in the report. The report would be made available to the RCT and Texas Legislature by October 1, 2022.
- RSA Monitoring Report provided to RCT
 - The Corrective Action Plan (CAP) will run through January 2022 or until all findings have been resolved.
 - RSA has been provided with the revised one stop infrastructure funding agreement and the 2021 case review guide called MOSAIC with attachments. Our data integrity and data validation policies and procedures have also been provided to RSA. All deadlines in CAP will be met.
- Priority Project Updates

- Service Delivery Strategies to Support COVID-19 Recovery
 - Provide a hybrid service to meet the needs of the customer both in person and remote.
 - Provide employees the same options to work onsite and remotely. Keeping customer priority first.
 - VR will implement Start my VR later this month. A customer can click on a link and refer themselves to VR and have it routed to the right office.
- Summer Earn and Learn program
- Nine colleges and universities are going to run STEM camps for the summer.
- The Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment identified the top three area that need work, providers, administrative complexity, and retention/staff turnover.
- TWC VR Provider Engagement Jason Vaden, TWC Deputy Division Director of VR PPS
 - Areas identified for improvement
 - Reduce vendor requirements
 - Strengthen VR recruiting efforts
 - Ensure that VR payment rates are competitive and a process to periodically review to ensure rates are kept up with market rates
 - Enhance provider support and training
 - Examine VR internal systems for provider identification to insure the systems are useful and accurate.
- The full VR Division Director's Report was provided in the meeting binder.

Performance Update, Adam Leonard, Director of Operational Insight and Geoffrey Miller, Manager of VR Program Reporting & Analysis

- Adam presented a PowerPoint presentation that was included in the meeting binder.

Chair Bryan Daniel, TWC Commissioner Representing Public

- Addressed the council.

Public Comment

- James Williams provided public comment
- Jason Shaw provided public comment

TX APSE Presentation on Employment First, Britni Miles, CESP and Norine Gill

RCT Member Training – Lucy Gafford, M.S., CRC Director, University of North Texas (UNT) WISE

- Presented training on informed choice. The PowerPoint presentation is included in the meeting binder. You can view the full one-hour presentation at UNT WISE website.

RCT Committee Reports

- Customer Satisfaction and Needs Assessment, Lisa Cowart, Chair
 - Reviewed the Customer Satisfaction report. Summary was provided by Gary Benner.
 - VR is looking at adding a couple of question to the survey for the purpose of gauging the customer preferences and ability to participate in services remotely or virtually.
 - Reviewed 2020 CSNA. Summary was provided by Chris Speckhard. The full report will be available once it is approved.

- Education and Membership, Bobbie Hodges, Chair
 - Joe Powell presented on behalf of Mrs. Hodges.
 - Membership Update
 - Reappointments upcoming Oct 2021, Joe Powell, Lisa Cowart, April Pollreisz.
 - Member that will term out in Oct 2021 JoAnn Fluke, Paul Hunt, Matt Berend and Crystal Stark.
 - Mrs. Fuller has identified replacements for VR Counselors. Both have submitted their application.
 - Have identified replacements for the other two positions. We are waiting to verify they have applied.
 - RCT Chair Michael Ebbeler will follow up with the Governor's office to insure they have received all applications.
 - Training for future RCT meetings
 - Karen Stanfill will be leading quarterly RCT education and training.
 - Lindsey Geeslin and Emily Robinson both agreed to give a training presentation regarding their membership representation.
 - RCT Member Mentorship program
 - Outline pending review from RCT Chair.
- Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development, Karen Stanfill, Chair
 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
 - TWC VR is looking into applicants for VR Counselors that have a master's degree and experience to be hired in at a higher level.
 - Policies
 - Home and job modifications policy were discussed
 - Out of state training

- Research will be done on a possible new service brain training or brain tutoring.
- Training
 - The TWC VR trainer has retired. So, the committee questions regarding training will be sent to the new person once hired. Question the committee has is in training and retention of counselors.
- IHO there were no IHOs to review.
- Committee focuses for the year
 - Approvals process
 - Training for both counselors and rehab assistance, retention, and mentorship of these positions.

Liaison Reports The full reports are included in the binders. Each representative will give an update.

- CAP, Karen Stanfill
- CRP, Bobbie Hodges
- PRN, Lisa Cowart
- SILC, April Poillreisz, Sandra Breitengross Bitter presented on behalf of April
- TEA, Emily Robinson
- TWIC, Lindsey Geeslin

Council Business

- Approve February minutes, Karen Stanfill made a motion to approve the February Minutes, Gennadiy Goldenshteyn seconded. All approved, February Minutes approved.
- Budget Report
 - FY21 Budget \$58,350.00 with a current balance \$53,788.75. There is an open PO for CART Services \$10,000. Tab two is the TWC report for RCT budget.
 - ASL Services for the RCT meetings are being paid by TWC VR budget.

- Unfinished Council Business:
 - Rodrick provided an update on the Ad Hoc Committee for virtual public comment. He provided a PowerPoint presentation that explained the benefits, cost and equipment needed.
 - Cheryl Fuller is going to take this to TWC VR IT department for further discussion.
 - ASL interpreters we will need to insure we have one for the Zoom and one for onsite.
 - Rodrick Robinson has made a motion to table the amendment to form an ad hoc committee so that we can move forward with making a new motion to move this forward. Gennadiy Goldenshteyn seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous in favor of tabling the amendment to the original motion.
 - Rodrick Robinson made a motion to move forward and create a platform of all-encompassing virtual presentation of our quarterly meetings in an electronic manner that would include remote public comment as well. Discussion noted to insure ASL accessibility is included both virtually and onsite. Gennadiy Goldenshteyn seconded the motion. Motion passed with majority approved.
 - Cheryl Fuller will contact TWC VR IT and work with the Ad Hoc committee on obtaining equipment.
 - Motion to adjourn was given by Paul Hunt and seconded by Rodrick Robinson. All approved.
 - Adjourn