

Rehabilitation Council of Texas (RCT) December 2-3, 2021 Zoom Virtual Meeting

Present:

Michael A. Ebbeler Jr., Chair, Houston
Lisa Cowart, Vice Chair, Sour Lake
Mark Baird, San Angelo
Glenda Born, Austin
Michele Dobbins, LaPorte
Cheryl A Fuller, Austin
Lindsey Geeslin, Lorena
Gennadiy Goldenshteyn, Dallas
Elizabeth Kendell, San Antonio
April Pollreisz, Amarillo
Joe Powell, Irving
April Pollreisz, Amarillo
Rodrick Robinson, McKinney
Karen Stanfill, Houston
Abdi Warsame, Wylie
Dr. James Williams, Leander

Absent:

Amanda Bowdoin, Forney
Jennifer Clouse, Temple
Bobbie Hodges, Fort Worth
Lisa Maciejewski-West, Horseshoe Bay
Emily Robinson, Pflugerville

TWC Reps:

Commissioner Julian Alvarez III, Juanita Barker, Matt Berend,
Kimberly Berry, Emily Boncek, Shelly Caillouet, Rae Champagne,
Chairman Bryan Daniel, Hugh Daniel, Tracy Darjean, Kandace
Decker, Jeanette Dela Cruz, Lisa Godwin, Cindy Geisman, Carey
Hajovsky, Tasheara Jennings Gobert, Deb Jones, Dennis Kutach,
Laura LaCour, Christy Lerche, Anna Lee, Susan Lindsey, Tammy
Martin, Scott McCune, Cassandra Medrano, Bonnie Martin-

Hudson, Molly Meyer, Geoffrey Miller, Brian Owens, Melinda Paninski, Claudia Peden, Romania Roberts, Belinda Salazar, Aissa Salazar, Jonas Schwartz, Ed Serna, Chris Speckhard, Melissa Stirling, Laike Todd, Les Trobman, Jason Vaden, Rikka Weintraub, Diane Yoder

Guest:

D'Lynn Beck-Provost, Celeste Bickham, Sandra Breitengross Bitter SILC, Christina Bryant, Lisa Burrell, Edwin Castillo Disability Rights TX, Adrienne Chavis, Nolan Davis, Rachel Dove, Nidia Escobar, Hameeda Esmail, Belinda Espree, Tabitha Fadeley, Sandra Farias Henrickson, Monique Flores-Navarrete, Roni Jo Frazier, Caroline Goddard, Mitzi Gray, Dina Habib-Agahi, Jeanie Hanzal, Crosby Hebert, Tiffany Higginbotham, Mary Elizabeth Hodges, Loubbertha Hubbard, Taneshia Jones, Jim Kelly, Sonya Kelly, Robin Kuntz, Chevella Layne, Kaki Leyens, Miguel Martinez, Alice Mayfield, Christopher McCormack, Jeff Miller, Steve Miller ASL Interpreter, Monica Mishaw, Brian Moore, Loubbertha Nalls, Berechi Onyejiako, Rolanda Parsons, Dr. Sheila Pope, Tommy Provost, Sherman Rhodes, Patricia Rincon, Karen Rodriguez, Joseph Rogers, Brenda Roland, CC Rowe ASL Interpreter, Keisha Rowe, Karissa Sanchez, Sophia Sparks, TCC Captioner Kacie, Claudia Torres, Imelda Trevino, Tiffany Tubb, Sonia White, Beanca Williams,

Welcome

- The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Michael A. Ebbeler, Jr., Chair.
- Announcement of newly appointed RCT members.

Chairman Bryan Daniel, TWC Chair and Commissioner Representing Public

- Addressed the council.

Brian Owens on behalf of Aaron Demerson, TWC Commissioner Representing Employers

- Addressed the council.

ED Serna, TWC Executive Director

- Addressed the council.

VR Division Report and Performance Update Cheryl A. Fuller, TWC VR Division Director and Geoffrey Miller, Manager of VR Program Reporting and Analysis

- Provided their reports together in a new format for better understanding and connection to the data. The reports were provided in the council meeting binder.

Public Comment

- Jim Kelly provided public comment

Michael Ebbeler, Jr., RCT Chair

- Lisa Coward stepped down as chair of the Customer Satisfaction and Needs Assessment Committee and Gennadiy Goldenshteyn has accepted to Chair this committee
- Abdi Warsame is moving from the Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development Committee to the Education and Membership Committee

RCT WIOA Combined State Plan (CSP) Modification, Matt Berend, Program Specialist for VR

- The RCT has reviewed and provided feedback to the modifications.
- The RCT feedback is currently being reviewed and incorporated.
- The final master draft should be ready next week and be sent back to RCT for final review.
- TWC VR will brief with TWC Executive Management.
- The plan will be delivered to TWC Commission in January.
- In February a 30 day public comment session will be held.

- Then back to TWC Commission, then to the Texas Workforce Investment Council and then off to the Texas Governor for approval.
- Final step the plan will be sent to the federal partners.

Conferences attended by RCT Members Report

- CSAVR
 - Karen Stanfill reported that she would recommend members to attend as you learn a lot about how other states tackle issues. This is valuable to bring back and see if it will work in our state.
 - Michael Ebbeler agreed with Mrs. Stanfill and added that he really like the talk about inclusion in reference to VR.
- TWC Annual Conference
 - Lisa Cowart reported for Jennifer Clouse.
 - Joe Powell unavailable
 - Michael Ebbeler mentioned a topic that was discussed about TWC unspent funds and asked for input. Mrs. Fuller responded to his inquire.
 - Rodrick Robinson unavailable

Julian Alvarez, TWC Commissioner Representing Labor

- Addressed the council.

VR Grant Presentation 101, Cheryl Fuller VR Director

- Mrs. Fuller provided a PowerPoint presentation on the VR Grant process and updates followed by discussion.

RCT Committee Reports

- Customer Satisfaction and Needs Assessment, Gennadiy Goldenshteyn, Chair
 - Customer Satisfaction Report for Q4 was reviewed by the committee. The report covered data from June through August 2021. An area that continues to struggle is choice of provider.
 - VR Performance Update was reviewed by the committee. This includes employment outcomes.

- The survey is lacking in responses from closed case responses. So, committee is recommending adding further survey channels not just phone calls but add email, texts, web-based surveys.
- Chris Speckhard provided compared earnings data and the committee requested a comparison of this report versus the state average. The requested information was provided to the committee.
- Remote access was another topic discussed. Further education and support for the customer is needed in this area. The committee highly recommended to continue to provide a mix of in-person and remote services moving forward.
- Education and Membership, Michael Ebbeler presented on behalf of Bobbie Hodges, Chair
 - Membership Update
 - The council received appointments and reappointments in October. The membership is in compliance.
 - Training for future RCT meetings
 - RCT Member Mentorship program is close to implementation.
 - New Member Orientation was held via Zoom on December 1.
- Policy, Procedure & Personnel Development, Karen Stanfill, Chair
 - New members to the committee were introduced and provided with an overview of the committee duties.
 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development
 - VR Counselors (VRC) positions, 429 of these meet the CSPD requirements and 200 plus are in the process of obtaining a master's degree. A discussion was held about the new process that a counselor one cannot be promoted to a counselor two until they have at least applied and been accepted into a master's program

- Discussion was held about the VRC positions that have been vacant for over five months. TWC will be working with a recruiter. There is a salary increase which should help. The committee recommended that TWC recognize the VRCs maybe at the conference.
- Policies
 - The committee request TWC VR provide them with a copy of any guidance memos that affect policy.
- Training
 - Tammy Shaw from TWC VR has been hired as the Training Manager.
 - Counselor training is being updated.
- IHO there were 2 IHOs to review. Due to time limitations these were not reviewed at this meeting but will be reviewed as a later time.

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

- Client Assistance Program (CAP), Karen Stanfill
- Community Rehabilitation Provider (CRP), Bobbie Hodges
- Partners Resource Network (PRN), Lisa Cowart
- State Independent Living Council (SILC), April Poillreis
- Texas Education Agency (TEA), Emily Robinson No report was provided
- Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC), Lindsey Geeslin

Council Business

- New Council Business
 - Approve August minutes, Karen Stanfill made a motion to approve the August minutes as recorded. All approved, August Minutes approved.

- Budget Report FY21 Budget \$58,350.00 with a current balance \$50,882.50. FY22 Budget \$58,350. Pending expenses are conference expenses and SRCVR Partnership under WIOA books for members.
- ASL Services for the RCT meetings are being paid by TWC VR budget.
- Karen Stanfill made a motion to add a topic to the standing agenda, discussion of the budget and how to spend the current funds and innovative ideas for grants. Glenda Born seconded the motion. Glenda Born submitted an amendment to the original motion to add the word available. Amended motion by Karen Stanfill, to add a topic to the standing agenda, discussion of the budget and how to spend the current available funds and innovative ideas for grants. Gennady Goldenshteyn seconded. All approved amendment passed. Final wording for the motion, to add a topic to the standing agenda, discussion of the current funds and available funds for increased spending and for innovative ideas for the VR grants. Glenda Born seconded. All approved motion passed.
- Unfinished Council Business:
 - Ad Hoc Committee Hybrid RCT Meetings
 - Cheryl Fuller provided an update that TWC is in the process of procuring funds across the agency for equipment to support hybrid meeting space. It is hopeful that the process will be completed in February.
 - Rodrick Robinson will continue to work with TWC VR staff and provide an update in February.

Adjourn