**SCPD Employment first**

**October 13, 2015**

**SMYRNA REST AREA CONFERENCE ROOM, SMYRNA**

**Present:** Dan Madrid, Co-Chair/DHSS-DVI; Paul Beane, DelARF; Janet Berry, Blind Sight Delaware; Ellen Coulston, Parent; Marissa Catalon, DHSS/DDDS; Nick Fina, SCPD; Andrea Guest, DVR; Pat Maichle, DDC; Dale Matusevich, DOE; Ron Sarg, Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs; Lloyd Schmitz, Advocate; Cindy Sterling, DelARF (ServiceSource); Laura Strmel, St. John’s Community Services and Kyle Hodges, Staff.

**Absent:** Dan McGannon, Co-Chair/DOL; Deb Bradl, DOL/DVR; Jocelyn Langrehr, DVI; Jae Chul Lee, CDS-U/D; Melissa Martin, Autism Delaware; Sandy Reyes, OMB/HRM; Wendy Strauss, GACEC.

**Guests:** Bonnie Hitch, DART

**Call to Order/Welcome/introductions/Approval of the August 11, 2015 Minutes**

Dan called the meeting to order at 9:40 am. Everyone introduced themselves. The August 11, 2015 minutes were approved as submitted.

**Additions or Deletions to the Agenda**

None

**Business**

DART Hiring of People with Disabilities Initiative

Bonnie announced that as of September, she is the Director of Civil Rights. She spoke about one of the first initiatives, which is how DART could improve its employment of persons with disabilities. Bonnie is reviewing job descriptions and essential functions. Most of their workforce are drivers and operators. She said that have opportunities in the administrative area and reach out to the community. Some of the work involves scanning documents in the files and reducing paperwork. The durational positions for this will be ongoing. Bonnie explained that DART employees are not under the Merit system. They are looking at internships and/or job shadowing. She added that they are not part of the Selective Placement process. Bonnie asked for feedback on sending out job postings. Lloyd asked about fixed route driver positions. Bonnie explained that they would have to get out of their chairs to assist people in wheelchairs and would also have to be able to evacuate the bus in an emergency.

Laura spoke about job carving and job customization that fills a need and gives a person who has specific talents a job, particularly for those on the autism spectrum. Nick commented that the State has done training on this in the last five years. Laura stated that her agency promotes customized employment. Bonnie commented that they have a more flexibility than Merit jobs. Dan suggested having a plan in place similar to Selective Placement. Paul spoke about the “Ride Check” program which involves the State Use Law and has been very successful. Lloyd suggested that would be a good success story for the website. There was discussion about people who serve as travel trainers (direct people on negotiating the DART bus system). Bonnie said that they want to have people ready to take on jobs needed and build skills so they would consider travel trainers as a program. She added that this program is on the priority list. Suggestion was made about having a mentoring talent program or internship/job shadowing. Nick spoke about shifting the thinking from job openings to skill openings. Kyle suggested working with Marissa and DOE and DVR in the Transitioning Programs. He also suggested about working with veterans. Ron spoke about an Emergency Assistance Aid Program and how they do a comprehensive review of the veteran’s situation, including looking at employment and training. Kyle offered to post Bonnie’s initiatives on the SCPD/Employment First website.

Paul spoke about changing the culture of business from the inside. Bonnie said that she is putting together a training program together for all hiring managers and supervisors. She said that there is a learning benefit on hiring people with disabilities as we serve people with disabilities. Pat commented that most Merit System positions previously required a Delaware State license. Bonnie stated that Driver’s Licenses are required for bus drivers and mechanics. Kyle suggested contacting Tracy Connolly (OMB) regarding recent training materials that would be beneficial. Laura offered to assist with presentation or training materials regarding customized employment. Kyle will like to have Bonnie speak about her new position at the November SCPD (State Council for Persons with Disabilities) meeting. She will remain as a member of SCPD. Nick also recommended reaching out to the State Rehabilitation Council. Lloyd asked if Bonnie would be working with Michelle Morin (Office of Supplier Diversity). Nick congratulated Bonnie on her new position. Dan thanked her for presenting today.

Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Project Update

Dan spoke about the last several months which have been busy with the consultants. There was some discussion about stumbling blocks, including Medicaid Buy-Ins. Kyle will follow-up with Steve Groff. Dan commented about meetings and trainings held recently; Lloyd, Cindy, Marissa and Janet attended training a few weeks ago, including braided blended funding and customized employment concepts. Dan said that the training was overwhelmingly positive. Cindy suggested additional training on specific topics. Dan said that Nancy Gurney and Virginia Selleck have provided reports. DSAMH has submitted a report on the use of the PROMISE waiver. Dan will provide a copy of Cory’s presentation. Dan said that all this work will continue and we have submitted an extension into 2016. Cindy commented that braided funding needs upfront planning and ongoing follow-up by the team. Suggestion was made that roles need to be defined across the board. Suggestion was made that Pathways could be used as a vehicle.

Dan spoke about where we will be headed in 2016, including alignment of systems, internal alignment with less administration burden to providers, which will free them up. He said we will be asking for consultation from Nancy Gurney. There will be continued phase out of the sheltered workshops in DHSS. Jennifer White (SME) will be asked to help with consumers in sheltered workshops and helping them to succeed. Jennifer will also be available to provide training on customized employment. Dan commented that ODEP has been supportive of assisting us. There was some discussion about the cultural differences between education and business. There will be upcoming conferences on transitioning from sheltered workshops to competitive integrated work. The phase out of the two State sheltered workshops should be completed by end of 2016. Another area that will be the continuation of a small workgroup on social determinants of health and how to market and better articulate, including a research project around the connection of poverty, people with disabilities, being unemployed, and health outcomes. Dan commented that many of these are studied in isolation of one another, but rarely integrated into a single research project, although very interconnected. They have been in talks with Division of Public Health, Libraries, and U/D-Center for Disability Studies. Dan said that the Center for Health Innovation has a project underway with a Healthy Neighborhood Project; they are looking at demographic factors. He hopes to integrate all this work together in submitting some funding applications.

He hopes to be able to better respond to these at-risk communities. Pat commented to include oral health and added that data collected typically are directed at mental or physical health. Dan commented that this has been discussed and will include all health indicators across the board, including how poverty, disability status and unemployment status interconnect. Kyle commented about the great job Dan has done in coordinating this initiative and the good information derived from the SMEs. Dan stated that this group will be involved in the upcoming year. Pat requested that DDC be included as invitees to this initiative; she added that they are developing their five-year State plan and that it is a federal requirement that they address the needs of the and unserved and underserved. Bonnie spoke about including transportation; she added that there was some federal transportation grant money available to connect transportation and health outcomes together. She is looking at ways to help people get back on their feet and get to work initially. Kyle suggested adding Bonnie to the Commission Member list.

Dan commented that he plans to get involved with the Healthy Neighborhood group on November 12. He plans to bring in stakeholders from other groups so we can accomplish smart economic development and plan together to work on a similar topic--which is poverty. He hopes to come up with shared outcomes. Nick suggested developing a graphical representation of how all these programs fit together and how we can work together. He added that this could be put on the website. Nick offered to work with Dan. Dan commented that he is looking at ways to demonstrate to these groups that we can interconnect. Lloyd suggested calling it braided funding and support. Laura spoke about getting nonprofits also talking together and offered to make a connection. Nick commented that the leadership that Dan is providing is a way to bring the groups together. Dan commented that the recommendations of the report will support the work we are doing in 2016. Kyle spoke about a video that has been developed featuring success stories on people with disabilities. He asked how the video would be marketed. Dan stated that the Governor will initially issue a press release and there will be a kick-off event. Then we will access to the video and will be choosing how we want to market it. Kyle or Dan will get more information on the release of the video and the kick-off event and forward to the group.

Ideas for Annual Report Recommendations

Kyle spoke about putting together a draft Annual Report by looking at future plans and reviewing previously submitted progress reports, including the reports from the SMEs. He said this would help determine some of the recommendations regarding braided funding, etc. He added that he has a report from Nancy Gurney. Dan suggested including topics that support the 2016 recommendations. Kyle said that Ellen was going to provide some parent perspective. Kyle asked for other ideas on how to approach this. He added that the he hoped to have the Annual Report completed by the end of the year. The Annual Report will be sent to the State Legislature. Pat recommended that Representative Heffernan include a statement in the Report. Kyle will get a draft Annual Report together for review at the next meeting. Cindy recommended having an Executive Summary. Ron spoke about the Veterans Commission interactive website and how they added a list of agencies that provide services and included hyperlinks to the agency’s websites. He said that it takes constant monitoring and communication to keep it updated. Nick commented that the Employment First webpage is adding a list of Delaware resources. He noted that more could be added.

Ron asked about work with Department of Correction. Kyle explained that they were considered, but a decision was made to initially start with the seven agencies, with the intent to include them at a later date. Ron commented about the cost of incarceration and a better return on investment by creating opportunities to have them back into society. He added that most barely have a GED. He spoke about the need for people to be trained to clean instruments in the health care industry. This would be an example of customized employment.

Advocacy & Education Committee Report

Nick stated that Cindy, Lloyd and Kyle met in mid-July and developed a list of recommendations for the website. He spoke about enhancements to the website, including a Welcome Page which would have a growing list of success stories. There will be eleven success stories on the new page. They are waiting for some of the release forms to be signed by those featured. Kyle forwarded the layout that Nick developed to DTI, but has not heard back from them. He will follow-up with them in another week or so. Nick hopes to have all areas covered in the next round. He would also like to work with Dan on a graphical representation; Dan will follow-up with Nick. Ron spoke about a veteran (Sam Cannon) who is developing a much needed watchmaker school for disabled veterans to become certified watchmakers; it is called the Watchmaker Initiative. This program will be located in Middletown and should be operational in about one year.

**Announcements**

There is a Transition Conference on November 27th at Dover Downs. Kyle spoke about a National LEAD Center Webinar: Disability, Employment & Lane v. Brown on Thursday, October 22, 2015 at 3:00 pm (handout). He also spoke about a National Disability Employment Awareness Month Expo on Tuesday, October 20, 2015 (handout).

Laura spoke about bringing the CESP Exam to Delaware on March 9th. This is part of APSE (The Association of People Supporting Employment First). She distributed a flyer. This is a joint training plan with DVR, DDDS and St. John’s Community Services. This is the only nationally recognized certification for Employment Support Professionals. Additional information can be found on the APSE website: <http://apse.org/>.

Nick asked about the establishment of an APSE Chapter in Delaware. Laura said that they are not fully implemented. Eight people are required and currently they have five people. She is looking for a diverse group. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Bonnie spoke about DART not being obligated to utilize the State contracts. They have the ability to issue their own contracts. More information will be forthcoming on the DART website.

Cindy spoke of ServiceSource’s Annual Dinner next week at the Weston Hotel in Wilmington (Riverfront).

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at11:40 am. The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 10, 2015 at a location to be determined.

Respectfully submitted,

Jo Singles

SCPD Administrative Assistant

Employment First/minutes 10-13-15