Vocational Rehabilitation Advisory Council
Smyrna Rest Stop
5500 DuPont Highway
Smyrna, DE 19977
August 12, 2019
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Members present: Suzanne Howell, Vice Chair; Blake Roberts, CAP; William McCafferty, Member; Sonya Lawrence, Member; Kevin McAllister, Member

Division for the Visually Impaired: Sandi Miller, Deputy Director; Shirley Bryson, District Administrator; Jill Morrison, Constituent Relations; Patricia Burrell, Member; Lisa Edmondson, Administrative Specialist

Teleconference: Lloyd Schmitz, Public

Public: Xavier Lawrence, Public

Call to Order: Suzanne Howell, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

The June 10, 2019 minutes were read aloud.

Approval of June 10, 2019 minutes: William McCafferty moved that the minutes be approved. Blake Roberts seconded the motion. Motion carried. June 10, 2019 minutes are approved.

Old Business:

Previous request for data was discussed. Kevin McAllister has seen the preliminary data that was requested and will coordinate with Sandi Miller on this data.

Member of the public Lloyd Schmitz commented that the previous month's minutes were not posted per state regulations. DVI will look into this. Sonya Lawrence then suggested that the VRAC should have an opportunity to review the minutes before the draft is posted on the Public Meeting Calendar. This will enable councilmembers to ensure comments attributed to them are accurate.

William McCafferty had questions about Orientation and Mobility: how many complaints have been received, how many instructors statewide, what is the average caseload, what is the waitlist, and why aren't the O&M specialists using GPS for training or training at night. Deputy Director Miller responded that there have been no complaints, 6 instructors statewide, no waitlist, O&M specialists do train using GPS, and if someone wants night training DVI will accommodate them.

Mr. McCafferty then posed the following about the Business Enterprise Program: All equipment, sites and licensing belongs to the State Licensing Agency. The blind vendor is in charge of the site. So if the site is not accessible to blind or visually impaired people then who would be held responsible? SLA licenses blind vendors. If SLA is totally responsible then they should make them accessible for blind and visually impaired people. Who is responsible for making sites accessible to blind and visually impaired individuals? Deputy Director Miller encouraged Mr. McCafferty to attend a Blind Vendors Committee meeting so that he directly ask the business owners.

The Retreat was discussed. Kevin McAllister will schedule meeting with DVI to look at facilities for the Retreat.

Regarding VRAC membership, Sonya Lawrence will reach out to the VA for recruiting purposes. Darryl Garner had been reaching out to Andrea Guest from General VR to ask for a representative to come to a VRAC meeting for a training. It is not known if Ms. Guest has responded.

Vocational Rehabilitation Administrators Report:

Shirley Bryson delivered the VR Administrator's report:

Current caseload as of 8/1/19:

Current caseload: 250
Total individuals employed: 39
11 are employed more than 90 days.
28 are employed less than 90 days.
Individuals Ready to Work: 38
Transition students age 14-21: 77
Education and training: 53

On July 19, 2019 a graduation celebration was held for middle school, high school, post-secondary education and Summer Academy. Keynote speakers were Jazmine Castaneda, Goldey Beacom honors graduate and Carol King-Ries, Wilmington University honors graduate. Deanah Sargeant, honors graduate provided words of encouragement via video.

In July a Business Enterprise Open House was held. 3 individuals were interested in the program.

Ms. Bryson also discussed consumer satisfaction survey results. Mr. McAllister suggested that questions need to be finetuned.

Directors Report:

On July 18, 2019 the Healthy Vending team from the Division of Public Health, the Blind Vendors Committee and Canteen along with the Division for the Visually Impaired had a meeting to discuss the Healthy Vending analysis since implementation, healthy vending expansion, marketing and healthy vending white paper. Also resuming quarterly meetings.

Mission Transition was held for students again this summer on the campus of Delaware State University. Participating students engaged in various skill building activities and experienced college life. In addition, there were some work-based learning opportunities

Level Up: The Division supported 5 high school students to attend Level Up which takes place on the campus of Wichita State University. It is a week long experience that took place June 23rd through June 28th. It is specifically for blind and visually impaired students and focuses on enhancing skills that support transition to college or careers.

Summer Skills Academy was held July 8th through July 19th. The purpose of the academy was to increase exposure to independent living skills, technology, orientation and mobility and career exploration. In addition, The DVI team provided lessons aligned with the expanded core curriculum including assistive

technology, personal hygiene, clothing management, gardening, a tour of the instructional materials center and food preparation skills. The Academy culminated in a graduation celebration.

Orientation and Mobility: The Orientation and Mobility team have been asked to accompany Dr. Fabiana Perla. The DVI team shared their work with various Delaware law enforcement agencies. The goal is to join forces to create and implement a sensitivity training within the correctional facilities and first responder organizations to be modeled and incorporated into other states.

Camp Abilities: 20 students participated in this year's Delaware Camp Abilities program on July 21st. Camp Abilities focused on all areas of the expanded core curriculum with emphasis on goal-setting, mindfulness, health and wellness.

Outreach: The Division is collaborating with The Siegel Jewish Community Center to develop a water safety course for the visually impaired to provide survival skills if they should fall into a body of water. In addition, they are interested in hosting a presentation by Division staff for their senior members to increase awareness of the services that the Division provides.

The Delaware Art Museum is partnering with the Division to obtain guidance on how to make their exhibits accessible to visitors who are visually impaired.

Ms. Lawrence suggested that Camp Abilities and the Summer Skills Academy might be more effective if they joined together. Deputy Director Miller agreed that it was worth discussion.

Ms. Lawrence also suggested that DVI's Debbie Briddell award winner should be submitted to NFB for consideration of their Teacher of the Year award. Jill Morrison suggested the name should also be submitted to the Delaware Department of Education for their Teacher of the Year award as well.

Suzanne Howell announced that she was working with Debbie Talley for White Cane Day.

Mr. McCafferty made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Blake Roberts seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.

Suzanne Howell, Vice Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Edmondson

Administrative Specialist I