

WSRC QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, November 4, 2020

9:00 am to 11:00 am

Present:

Jen Cole, Parent Advocate, Everett.
Lesa Dunphy – DVR Counselor Representative, Colville.
Peggy Frisk, Community Rehabilitation Provider, Lake Stevens
Jerry Johnsen, Client Assistance Program, Seattle.
Laurae MacClain, Tribal VR Representative, Nespelam.
Tania May, OSPI Representative, Olympia.
Justin Poole, Council Vice-Chair, DVR Customer Representative, Yakima.
Ivanova Smith, Disability Advocacy Representative, Tacoma.
Michele Stelovich, Labor Representative, Bellingham.
Erin Williams, Business Representative, Seattle.

Members

Absent:

Rob Hines, DVR Director, Lacey.
Erica Wollen, Workforce Training Representative, Olympia.

Council Staff:

Shelby Satko, WSRC Executive Director, Lacey.
Mari Heusman, WSRC Executive Lead, Lacey.

Visitors:

Alveshere, Don – DVR Planning & Evaluation Program Manager
Bauer, Rachel – DVR Office
Bean, Jennifer – DVR Regional Training Specialist
Chen, Rhonda – DVR Office
Christensen, Helen – DVR Office
Fickes, Andrew – DVR State Office
Forte, Catherine – DVR Region 3 Deputy Director
Foster Corley, Camala – DVR Office
Goard, Allesandria – DVR Chief of Field Services
Harris, Major W Jr. – DVR Office
Jansson, Rebecca – Mainstay/SAILS
Kennedy, Kay – DVR Office
Mom-Hing, Thavy D – DVR Office
Mulhern, Michele – DVR, Vancouver Office
Peterson, Lauren – DVR Office
Redmon, Terry – DVR State Office
St. Lawrence, Robb – DVR State Office
Stelmakh, Eric – DVR Office
Villegas, Cassi – DVR Community Program Manager
Magnuson, Lori – DVR Office
Walsworth, Shawn – DVR Region 2 Manager Interim
Bournes, Mercedes – Exceptional Foresters
Conner, Kim – State Independent Living Council
Gordon, Elizabeth – Governor’s Council on Disability in Employment

Mecko, Kris – Village Community Services
Nguyen, Kristin – Cascade Connections
Totten, Lan – Cascade Connections
Reyes, Vanessa –
Wegner, Nikki – Trillium Employment Services
ASL Interpreter Aaron Medlock
ASL Interpreter Abel Cosentino
Captioner - Dianne

Call to Order Housekeeping, review agendas, introductions – Chair – 45 people attending day 2, 62 day 1

- Meeting called to order by Justin Poole – Chair
- Members not available today: Erica Wollen, Business Representative. Rob Hines, DVR Director, Lacey.

Executive Director & Executive Committee Report – Shelby Satko – refer to WSRC Master PowerPoint

- General updates
 - New Leadership – Justin Poole (Chair) and Jerry Johnsen (Vice Chair)
 - Transition Collaborative Summative report: working with stakeholders
 - DVR’s Electronic Document Management System (EDMS)– WSRC to help effort of going paperless with Shelby as a Project Lead.
 - WSRC Annual Report – writing it now – good opportunity to reflect on the achievements Council made over the last year.
 - All of these things happened because of council participation and focus on the mission to improve DVR services for customers. Thank you to members for your time and dedication.
 - Legislative Reception will be virtual this year.
 - WSRC 1st Quarter 2021 Council meeting has been moved to February and will also be virtual.
 - Ivanova expressed disappointment in everything being virtual affecting behavioral health and immune system impacts of the restrictions.
- 2021 Meeting Schedule – council members survey in September outlined local offices/areas to focus on and topics of interest.
 - February 2-3, 2021: Olympia (virtual)
 - May: 4-5, 2021: Wenatchee (virtual)
 - August 3-4, 2021: Port Townsend/Port Angeles
 - November 2-3, 2021: Bellingham/Mount Vernon
- Jerry verbalized appreciation in his partnership with Shelby and staying in touch with what is going on at DVR. It has been invaluable in his work at CAP.

Customer Satisfaction Subcommittee – Peggy Frisk and Shelby Satko – refer to WSRC Master PowerPoint

- Transition Collaborative Interviews – Shelby
 - Reached out to 4 parents who participated in Pre-ETS
 - Key takeaways
 - Parent’s dedicated advocacy efforts are what ensured child had access to available programs.
 - Pre-ETS services and opportunities weren’t easy to find. Accessing community resources to link together services for their child – no one place to get all the information
 - High level of concern that child will fall through post school gaps without continued advocacy – “benefits cliff” after school, where to go from here, and who can help
 - Program supported construction, meal prep, transportation, grocery shop and other independent living opportunities
 - Access to internet/hotspots – virtual opportunities and expansion of in-person based programs were more easily accessible statewide, especially in rural areas where they were not available in the past.
 - Work-based learning opportunities paid students for their time and encouraged skill development and consumer self-advocacy/power.
 - Making an impact on students who access services

- Michele asked if WSRC/DVR were aware of the changes of the home and community based service waivers in DDA?
 - These are major service changes, which affect access to certain things.
 - Services are coming in line with Medicare and Medicaid that can be purchased through medical coupon vs what DDA can provide, called “habilitation services.”
 - Goals of empowerment, health and safety, looking at ability to develop cooking, budgeting, personal care and how to change services.
 - Did parents talk about the road shows from the county and DDA?
 - They’ve been going on for years – most communities also do job fair with community programs, colleges, job fair, recreation programs, individual interviews, etc. Sometimes Assistive Technology is available.
 - How can communication be better across these programs and coordination across the state?
 - Ivanova – There is no recreation. Taking that away!
 - Shelby – WSRC will keep an eye on this to identify opportunities for partnership across agencies.
- Jen – More information will be made available from the State Independent Living Council/Centers for Independent Living. They’re currently conducting a youth survey, set to end on 12/31/2020.
- Customer Satisfaction Survey (CSS)
 - During the WSRC August Quarterly Meeting, members participated in customer listening sessions, but opted out for this meeting due to DVR’s Remote Services Survey and not wanting to over-survey customers.
 - Reviewed trends, current satisfaction rate is at 67% - including the midpoint response.
- Further discussion from DVR’s Remote Services Survey
 - Jen expressed interest in having data on demographic information of respondents and how the survey aligned with DVR’s values of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
 - Are there disproportionate impacts to people of color in this area of services, keeping in mind access needs and language? Looking at data, what is changing?
 - Jerry – once the data results are analyzed, will there be a plan to integrate the feedback in the way that DVR provides services? Need to make the outcome of the survey something that has meaning and produces change and results.
 - Laurae – just completed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Tribal VR and the state, talking about putting a better referral process in place for tribal members on the waitlist.
 - More than giving the customer a pamphlet, maybe call TVR or email the referral information to get services to tribal customers right away.
 - Hoping to make changes next year and have a better warm handoff.
 - Ivanovna – Ending the restrictions, letting people be with others, stop this isolation and segregating. It’s hurting people and needs to end.
 - How can the council nudge things in the right direction and how can the council impact those areas in a positive way with our partnership with DVR?

Policy and Planning Subcommittee – Jerry Johnsen – refer to WSRC Master PowerPoint

- The goal is to make communication from DVR accessible by reducing 5 pages to a paragraph and using simple language.
- DVR is currently addressing issues with training, so this topic has moved lower as a priority for the council.
- Eligibility Determination/ Priority of Service
 - This project is currently stagnated at DVR right now. The project has taken too long.
 - From a historical perspective, DVR should have conducted a more serious introduction or training on the Eligibility Determination process for DVR staff when DVR went into Order of Selection.
 - Concern with lack of movement forward on resolving key issues in the current COVID environment.
 - Trainers have been waiting for direction.
 - Customers didn’t feel like they’ve been fully or fairly assessed.
 - Robb – one of the things DVR was trying to target in the Eligibility Value Stream Mapping (VSM) exercise in March of 2019 was framework for eligibility decision – there are standing recommendations resulting from it. The hope is the recommendations get adopted.

- Minimizing variable outcomes and creating consistency for equity.
 - There are structural hurdles organizationally to making changes leading to outcome wanted, and to ensure complete equity in decision-making
 - These are the same hurdles for many eligibility programs operating within same structure – intervention is possible.
 - There was a lot of initial momentum and it's getting picked up again. Expect change from training standpoint and communication and messaging from leadership.
 - Jen – as a partner, how to approach this differently and work differently in order to result in different processes happening? How to tie it to DVR's values?
 - Allesandria (DVR Chief of Field Services) – Leadership has been talking a lot about consistency and being transparent about what DVR is doing differently.
 - She has been making effort to pull leadership from various regions, looking at definitions, looking at forms, and finding the bottleneck in the regions to have a clear understanding at definition phase of Eligibility Determinations, when checking boxes.
 - It takes time and a lot of work, but it's a priority of leadership at the agency. Would like to see changes in statistics and less variation of how staff determine eligibilities.
 - Meeting soon with internal stakeholders to bring together the pieces – next step is going to leadership and making a decision and moving with it.
 - Ivanova – I've been helping a client who feels bureaucracy seems to be getting in the way. Her supports, they feel they shouldn't have keep re-showing medical documents.
- Equipment
 - Bulk Equipment
 - Shifting policy and procedure language to reduce barriers and get equipment out to customers.
 - 2 big phases moving right now to make getting equipment simpler.
 - Equipment Module Reconstruction Project
 - Trying to clean up policy to allow equipment loaning processes to make more sense
 - Redefining how to loan and track equipment.
- Customer Service Handbook – started giving feedback a while ago and will take this back up.
 - Too long and too hard to understand.

Partnership Subcommittee – Shelby – refer to WSRC Master PowerPoint

- Developmental Disabilities Council (DDC) – Ivanova
 - Released their 2021 Legislative Priorities with a theme to protect the budget
 - Eliminate subminimum wage
 - Close institutions and support community based settings
 - Update state definition of Developmental Disability to match the federal definition
 - No gaps in residential services
 - Working on CAC notebook – all digital this year. No physical copies.
- Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC) – Jen
 - The council had a meeting last week
 - Intersectionality of all OSPI information is a concern for SEAC. Interconnected and overlapping systems discriminate or work against equity.
 - Focus areas: mental health equity and other priority areas.
 - Continue to be highly interested in Pre-ETS services and how to transition from Part C (early intervention) to Part B (school system).
 - Washington ranks 44th for inclusion in the nation. For students of color this drops further and for those with intellectual disabilities, plummets even further.
 - OSPI has an inclusionary practices professional development project opportunity and the SEAC is highly interested in this and how to reduce the pattern of exclusion throughout the education system.
- Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) – Tania
 - Dual pandemics: COVID impacts, and ongoing impact of structural racism
 - Looking at services across reopening models and equity, progress monitoring, leaning to state partners and educational benefits

- Ivanova – We shouldn't let bureaucracy get in the way of people's services. Bureaucracy seems to support racism, too. Some people can't access all their documents all the time and how to make this easier. With the school, it's not right that daycares can be open but not public schools. Public schools should be open for students who are poor, live in single parent homes, or can't afford daycare.
 - Thinking differently about how we think about community and how to leverage community partners.
 - Parent survey conducted and tools created at OSPI looking at how to reduce racism.
 - Thinking about expanding transition services to expand age to 22 or 24 – now and legislatively in the future. Tania connected with DVR and DDA to think through any unintended consequences.
 - Transition collaborative, School to Work, and potential ways to provide family navigation resources to reduce services cliff moving from school to having to navigate the adult system.
- State Independent Living Council (SILC) – Kim Conner, SILC Executive Director
 - Providing free emergency preparedness conference – full day 17th and half day on 18th
 - Once registered, can go into any session
 - Administration of community living: RSA, VA, and housing working together to develop programs for people with disabilities around employment and housing. This is work being done at federal level.
 - Kim will work with Shelby to see how this might look in Washington State. It's a great partnership opportunity.
- Workforce Board – Update available in the Meeting packet.
- Tribal VR Update - Laurae
 - Finished MOU with the state – working a warm handoff with referrals for indigenous people on the DVR waitlist.
 - RSA extended grants 1 more year using the amount prior. Laurae's Vocational Rehabilitation Program ins on the 11th year with same allocation of funds.
 - Got notice on annual reports and will begin working on this. Didn't make success rates due to COVID.
 - Some of tribes are still closed – Yakima is having hard time getting referrals and communicating with customers.
 - Internet is an issue in her community. Trying to give phones with hotspots to customers as much as possible.
 - Tribes are closed unless they have a Doctor's appointment.
 - Ivanova – Lack of wifi is a big issue.
 - Laurae – It sure is, Ivanova. Some areas don't even have cell service.
- WA Assistive Tech Act Program – Erin
 - Works with Shelby to provide updates.
 - New assistive tech webinars under their contract that's also available to CRPs
 - Laurae – will these trainings from WATAP also be offered to Tribes?
 - Cassi (DVR Community Programs Manager) – Yes, Tribes will receive notices of trainings
- Behavioral Health Advisory Council – update available in the Meeting Packet

Presentation Feedback and Discussion – Justin – refer to WSRC Master PowerPoint

- What went well
 - Tania would like dedicated council member time to debrief and reflect
 - Jerry would like to thank all that joined, especially VR staff. Council meetings educates statewide VR staff about current issues at DVR, how they're being addressed, and an opportunity to hear directly from the DVR Director. Jerry encouraged people to continue by joining future SRC meetings.
- Takeaways or themes to add to the task list or assignments to circle back with
 - Jen - When DVR comes and speaks with us, can they speak in alignment with the values?
 - Partnerships – collaboration that produces results – some partner updates are really important – if we should have consideration of time to talk at length about updates they have – maybe there will be ideas that come out of that based on what other partners are doing.
 - Jen – great concern about Pre-ETS money being sent back and the level of funds. When the discussion in the community is about resources, it's not good to have to send back 4-5 million dollars.

- Shelby – what information would be helpful to hear from the council? Where would the council like to dig in? Peggy would like to know what efforts are being made to spend the money. To help inform the council so we can make suggestions on how to use the money.
- Michele – did some joint partnerships stop or continue? What about some people being home schooled? How to reach them? What information is being sent? Follow-ups and criteria for best practices to introduce this information and timing for customers receiving it. There is a gap between services being available.
- Allesandria – takeaways– more than happy to present Pre-ETS and. Hear eligibility as important too
- Justin – thank you to everyone for everything you do. We try to get as much in the meetings as possible. Hard to put 2 days’ worth of stuff into a couple hours.

ADJOURN 11:00am

- Please hold February 2-3, 2021 for our next meeting, which will be virtual and cover the Olympia area.