

State Rehabilitation Council

Quarterly Meeting

June 29, 2023

Virtual Meeting

SRC Meeting 10 am



I. Call to Order/Introductions/Roll Call

Meeting called to order at 10:04am

Members:

Sarah Michaud, Chair-Present
Tracy Agiovlasis, Vice Chair-Present
Dolores Harden- Present
Bernadine Chavez-Present
Jennifer Gelhardt-Absent
TJ Chester-Present
Marlencia Chee- Present Joined at 10:08
Paula Seanez- Present
Sbicca Brodeur- Joined at 10:19
Veronica Alonzo- Absent
Lisa Jones-Absent

NMDVR STAFF:

Casey Stone-Romero, Agency Director- Absent
Jeff Levine, PR Coordinator
Angelina Payan, Executive Secretary & Admin Assistant
Nash Sisneros, RSU Deputy Director
Rudy Grano, Field Operations Director
Michelle Bowdon, NMDVR Chief Council

DDS STAFF:

Natasha Gutierrez

II. Action Items

a. Approval of Agenda

Bernadine Chavez motioned to approve the agenda

Paula Seanez seconds motion

Roll Call:

Sarah Michaud
Dolores Harden
Bernadine Chavez
TJ Chester
Marlencia "Marci" Chee
Paula Seanez

b. Approval of Minutes

Dolores Harden motions to approve the minutes

Bernadine Chavez seconds motion

Roll Call:

Sarah Michaud
Dolores Harden
Bernadine Chavez
Marlencia Chee
Paula Seanez
TJ Chester

III. 121 Report – Paula Seanez

- a. Working on reviewing budgets and complete drawdowns for expenditures with RSA
 - a. Met with RSA on May 18th
 - b. Tracking budget closely because of large carryover balances
 - c. Working to get expenditures carry over made in last quarter
- b. Annual reports
 - a. New data base developed to help with annual reports
 - b. Data ownership with the ability to amend data base as needed
 - c. Training provided
- c. 24 council men and women
 - a. Mostly women who are representing 110 chapters
- d. Experiencing staff vacancy
 - a. Rehab tech resignation July 10th
 - b. Rehab tech
 - c. Job development specialist 2
 - d. Challenges regarding background check investigations
 - I. Turnaround time
 - II. Approval for a provisional hiring policy due to delays
 - e. Navajo Nation provision hire policy
- e. CANAR Niagara Falls
 - a. Mari and Petra attended
 - b. CANAR December 2023 event possibly to be hosted in Albuquerque, NM
 - c. Having trouble finding an adequate site with enough space
 - d. Would like for Casey to do opening remarks
- f. Final MOU
 - a. Nash final review before going back to attorneys
- g. Project Search new sites
 - a. Shiprock
 - b. Central Consolidated schools
 - c. Going into 3rd year out of their 5-year Grant
- h. Jemez Update- Marci
 - a. Talking with RSA
 - I. RSA meeting 06/29 another meeting next week
 - II. Working on budget
 - 1. Large carry over
 - 2. Plan on how to spend down
 - b. Success last week
 - I. MOU was sent to Santa Ana
 - 1. Met with Governor and First Lieutenant Governor from their Pueblo
 - 2. They were willing to partner with us for another 5 years
 - II. MOU completed with NMDVR and was sent to Casey
 - c. Office space is small
 - I. Figuring out how to store files for the 5 years and then disposing them
 - II. Company called Movie will be scanning files that are being disposed of
 - III. Files will be stored in their database by date
 - IV. Active cases will be hard copies stored in office file cabinet
 - d. Vacant positions
 - I. 1 Councilor
 - II. 1 Driver for project hope
 - III. 1 Rehab Tech
 - IV. Wages have become an issue we will be meeting with HR adjust wages
 - V. Background checks have a 24-hour turnaround time
 - 1. Once employee signs on we get a complete background check within 72 hours
 - e. Project HOPE starting in August
 - I. 17 participants
 - II. Reviewing and Finalizing Policies & Procedures tomorrow
 - III. Received referrals from the state

IV. DVR Directors Reports

A. Agency Director – DVR Staff for Casey Stone-Romero: Jeff Levine and Rudy Grano on behalf of Casey Stone-Romero

- a. Update on State Plan Kick Off Meeting
 - I. Regional planning session, 4 scheduled in July 2023
 1. July 12th in Ruidoso, NM
 2. July 10th in Las Cruces
 3. Week of July 30th in Albuquerque, NM, specific date being determined
 4. Week of July 30th in Espanola, NM, specific date being determine
- b. Manual of Operating Procedures (MOP)
 - I. MOP approved, fully implemented, and takes effective July 1st, 2023
 1. All field staff were trained on updates
- c. Update on social media
 - I. 180 LinkedIn followers
 - II. 116 Searches
 - III. 797 Impressions
 - IV. 149 Facebook followers
 - V. Reach 702 people
 - VI. 108 Engagements
 - VII. 97 Instagram followers
- d. Update on Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) Contract
 - I. Developed a team and currently moving forward with a contract to collaborate with San Diego State University
 - II. Casey signed contract for 2nd time, routing internally and externally through SDSU
 - III. Project expected to initiate July 1, 2023
 - IV. Collecting data for SDSU visit in August and September
 1. Conducting in person interviews
 2. An electronic survey will be sent out to multiple partners to assess NMDVR strength and weaknesses
 3. SDSU looking to interview up to 124 people a week
 - V. Send Sarah your list of partners that need to be invited to these events
 - VI. SDSU is aware of the time overlap
 - VII. Department of Workforce Solutions has also been advised we won't have our portion of the CSNA submitted until later in the year
- e. Update on RSA Monitoring
 - I. Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration has notified us that they have no further comments on any of the documents we have submitted
 - II. We will be submitting a quarterly corrective action plan response by July 30, 2023
 - III. We have resolved several items
 - IV. Final findings will be resolved when we can prove that they have been implemented in our Policies & Procedures
- f. Update on Background Check Legislation
 - I. Working with the assistance of PED to submit a background check legislation for all staff that who will be working with participants, including contractors and vendors
 - II. Language is currently being worked
 - III. This will also have to be submitted to the Department of Public Safety as well as the FBI for review
- g. PreETS audit finding
 - I. PreETS audit finding
 1. Still no response from RSA
- h. CSAVR/NCSRC Fall (October 27-November 2 in Savannah, GA) – 2 SRC members
 - I. CSAVR and NCSRC attendance for those conference
 - II. SRC should choose two members to attend those two conferences

- i. NMAC Updates to begin in Fall
 - b. ASU Deputy Director – David Soveranez
 - c. RSU Deputy Director – Nash Sisneros
 - a. Update on Vacancy Rate for VRCs and VRTs
 - I. Vacancy's
 - 1. 21% DVR Overall
 - 2. 18% ASU
 - 3. 16% RSU
 - 4. 29% DDS
 - 5. 44 positions actively being recruited
 - 6. 2 pending approvals
 - 7. 12 reclass
 - 8. 18 new hires in the month of June
 - b. Update on Gibson office move
 - I. Lease at NMDVR Gibson office has been terminated
 - II. New lease has been executed for another office on Research drive off I-40 and Eubank
 - III. Office currently being renovated and will house our RSU Field staff, administrative staff, and training Staff
 - IV. Move anticipated to be November 2023 but no later than the end of the calendar year
 - d. DDS Administrator – Natasha Gutierrez for Alan Hamlin
 - a. DDS continues to fill positions as they are available
 - I. 11 new adjudicators trainees began formal training on June 12th
 - II. New medical consultant, Megan Pignato
 - III. New Fiscal Supervisors, Kristopher Murrey
 - IV. Looking to fill 35 position including disability adjudicators and support staff
 - b. Public Service as of June 26th
 - I. 10,539 processed initial claims
 - II. 2,316 reconsideration claims
 - III. 3,825 continuing disability reviews
 - c. DDS Culture
 - I. DDS Leadership, with support from DVR, continues to prioritize staff retention efforts along with individual accountability issues as needed to ensure the best public service we can
 - II. Internal staff development and training remain an administrative focus
 - e. NADE Convention in August in Montana
 - a. Adjudicator Emily Savoie will be attending
 - f. Update on Fair Hearings – Michelle Bowden
 - a. January 24th received a request for a fair hearing
 - b. March 20th a hearing was scheduled
 - I. Rescheduled for May 22, 2023, waited 30 minutes for participant to arrive
 - II. NMDVR Nathan Adams motioned an oral motion to dismiss for failing to appear
 - III. Oral motion to dismiss with prejudice on a lawsuit the participant filed against NMDVR Fair Hearing Officer Johnson
 - IV. Dismissal issued as of May 20, 2023.
 - c. 2 requests for Fair Hearing in FY23
 - I. 1 solved through mediation
- V. SRC Chairperson's Report – Sarah Michaud
- VII. Old Business
 - A. Involved in the State Plan and CSNA
 - a. Meeting every Monday
 - b. CSNA should inform how that state plan applies to Vocational services
 - c. Identify a date when we will meet with those doing the Statewide Needs Assessment, TBD
 - d. Send list of Stakeholders and Partners to Sarah by the end of next week
- VIII. New Business
 - A. CSNA – Sarah Michaud

- a. CSNA Update – Sarah Michaud
 - I. Combining the Satisfaction and Comprehensiveness needs
 - II. Paula and Marlencia have joined the group to ensure that our Tribal Communities and Partners are included
 - III. Paula requested to join
- b. SRC Committee recommendations – Sarah Michaud
 - I. SRC Representation at Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR)
 - II. Paula interested in attending
- c. Committees
 - Employment and Community Partnership’s Committee:
 - I. TJ Chester
 - II. Jennifer Gelhardt
 - III. Dolores Harden
 - IV. Jeff Levine (Awards)
 - V. Angelina Payan (Admin support)
 - Program Review Committee
 - I. Tracy Agiovlasitis
 - II. Lisa Jones
 - III. Bernadine Chavez
 - IV. Nash Sisneros
 - V. Marlencia Chee
 - VI. Sarah Michaud
 - VII. Paula Seanez
 - VIII. Angelina Payan (Admin support)
- d. The Employment and Community Partnership Committee one of their responsibilities will be to set up the Awards program again for the SRC
- e. Program Review Committee will be focused on the State Plan
- f. Executive Committee
 - I. Chair, Vice Chair, and Sergeant of Arms
- g. Asking that each Committee meets before our next meeting to develop a plan
 - I. Start having regular meetings to move forward with some of our objectives
 - II. Executive Committee- Annual Report
- B. Membership Updates –vacancies, terms, and appointments – Tracy Agiovlasitis
 - a. Sarah, second term and due to expire August 2024
 - b. Dolores Harden, term is through June 2024
 - c. Bernadine, term through 2024
 - d. Jennifer, term is good as well
 - e. Tara’s term has expired today, she has also moved out go state and will need to find a replacement for her
- C. SRC Satisfaction Survey – Sarah Michaud
 - a. Group- Bernadine, Nash, Paula, Lisa, Delores, Sbicca, and Sarah
 - b. Contracting out with Bryan Sanders
 - I. Nash agrees
- D. Strategic Planning for SRC – Sarah Michaud
 - a. Goal setting
 - I. Where are we headed and what are we planning
 - II. Helpful to look at NMDVR plan to align with some of the relevant information we advise on
 - b. New committee structure
 - c. Previously, priorities with NMDVR due to change of leadership of agency
 - I. Build better relationships
 - II. Stabilizing SRC and new leadership
 - III. Look at how to make Council affective
 - d. Next meeting talk about Strategic Planning
- E. Approval of Bylaws Updates – Bernadine Chavez and Paula Seanez
 - a. Specific changes made are in Red

- b. Federal regulations read that there needs to be a break in service
- c. Section A Article 6: Terms of Appointment
 - I. Expired terms can still attend the meeting but will be considered a non-voting member
 - II. Agency cannot provide reimbursements for travel to anyone on an expired term who chooses to attend the meeting
 - III. Council member may reapply for appointment of term after (3) months, with a renewal of a 2-year term
 - IV. Written resignation provided to the Chair and the Governor's office so that we can appoint any other member to take over

TJ Chester motions to approve any modifications of typos throughout the Bylaws to be corrected as needed

Paula Seanez Seconds

Roll Call:

Sarah Michaud

Dolores Harden- left meeting

Bernadine Chavez

Marlencia Chee

Paula Seanez

Sbicca Brodeur

TJ Chester

Once completed will be sent to Angelina and Casey to post to NMDVR website

F. Next Meeting

- a. Thursday September 21st, 9:00am – 2:00pm at Santa Fe State Office

IX. Comments from Audience

A. PED update: Sbicca

- a. Some legislation presented for Office of Special Education that did not pass in Legislation
- b. There was then an Executive order by the Governor that we would become the office of special education
- c. Currently looking through all our 189 districts charter schools and applications
 - I. Almost complete at this point so that schools will have their funding come in Fall
- d. Interviews for a new Deputy
 - I. We expect an announcement in 2 or 3 weeks since interviews are being held right now

X. Adjournment

TJ Chester motions adjourned at 12:46pm

Paula Seanez Seconds

If you need a language translator or you are an individual with a disability who is in need of a reader, amplifier or any other form of auxiliary aid or service to participate in this meeting, please contact NM DVR at the telephone number(s) listed below. Public documents, including the agenda or minutes can be provided in various accessible forms. For additional information, contact NM DVR. Telephone numbers: 1-800-224-7005 or 505-954-8500.

(Note: the SRC attempts to follow the order of items listed on the agenda; however, it should be noted that the order of specific items is tentative and may vary from the date of the printed agenda.)