

Michigan Council for Rehabilitation Services (MCRS)



QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES – Approved

FEBRUARY 13, 2020, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

MRS State Offices, 1048 Pierpont, Lansing, Michigan

Participation

Council Members Present

Carol Bergquist, Aaron Andres, Elham Jahshan, Janet Timbs, Travar Pettway, Kimberly Kennedy Barrington, Elizabeth Kamm Abdour, Karen Schulz

Council Members Present by Phone

David Szydlowski, Lisa Cook-Gordon, Myrtel Brown, Mikyia Aaron

Council Members Excused

Jackie Tahtinen, Todd Culver, Tiffany Guthrie

Ex-Officio Members Present

Bill Robinson – BSBP and Tina Fullerton- MRS

DSU Liaisons Present

Lisa Kisiell – BSBP

DSU Staff Members Present

Bill Columbo, Sigrid Adams and Nichole Lepley – MRS

Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) Guest

Stephanie Beckhorn, Deputy Director of LEO Employment and Training

9:30 - 3:30 p.m. Business Meeting

Minutes

Chairperson, Carol Bergquist, called the Business Meeting to order at 9:45 due to the late arrival by several people due to winter snow storm conditions.

Carol welcomed 11 new members to the meeting who had been appointed since our 11-14-2019 meeting. Seven new members were participating in-person, three by phone and one new member was excused.

Nichole Lepley read the roll call. A quorum was present.

Approved Minutes 02/13/2020

New Members provided a brief introduction about themselves, talked about why they applied to serve on the Council, and identified their special interests related to people with disabilities. Other members, partners and guests in the room also introduced themselves following the same format.

A motion to accept the proposed agenda for the meeting was made, supported and the Agenda was approved.

A motion to accept the proposed minutes from the 11/14/2019 Business meeting was made, supported and the Minutes were approved.

New Business

MCRS FY 2019 Annual Report: The MCRS FY2019 Annual report had been completed and submitted to Rehabilitations Services Administration(RSA) by the 12/30/2019 deadline. A copy had been sent to all MCRS members prior to the 02/13/2020 meeting for their review and to prepare for a discussion at the meeting. Although the majority of members were new to MCRS, Carol asked members to review and approve the FY2019 MCRS Annual Report before it was posted to the website and sent to Governor Whitmer. A motion to accept the MCRS FY2019 Annual report was made, supported and the report was approved.

Michigan's Unified State Plan (USP) - MCRS Response: The Council is required to write a response to the Vocational Rehabilitation Section of Michigan's 2020-23 Unified State Plan (USP). BSBP and MRS each write a Vocational Rehabilitation Section to be included in the USP. MCRS needs to review and then write a separate response to the BSBP and the MRS VR sections of the USP. Once MRS and BSBP receive the MCRS response, they need to write an answer to the MCRS response. All USP documents need be completed and posted to RSA by 03/02/2020.

Due to the tight timeline for the Unified State Plan, Carol asked for a motion to postpone the remaining agenda items to the Council's next Business Meeting, so that the remainder of the meeting could be spent on the four presentations that would provide the background and context information members would need to review and write a response to the USP. This was particularly important due to the high number of new MCRS members (11 new members and 4 continuing members). A motion was made, supported and moving the items was approved.

Approved Minutes 02/13/2020

11:00 a.m. Public Comment: No public comment was given.

Interactive Presentations

Four presentations by DSU expert staff provided information about Michigan's Vocational Rehabilitation system. Each presenter provided a Power Point document, which were given to members. Although, Sigrid was not available to stay the full day, Bill Robinson, Tina Fullerton, Bill Columbo and Lisa Kisiell, offered an interactive discussion involving members during each presentation.

Sigrid Adams, MRS Division Director of Staff Development and Policy:

“Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS)”

Bill Robinson, Director Bureau of for Blind Persons:

“Bureau of Services for Blind Persons (BSBP)”

Bill Columbo, MRS Division Director of Aware and Innovation:

“MRS Strategic Plan” and “Performance Accountability – Let's break this down”

Wrap Up

Jackie Tahtinen, Vice Chair of the Council, had offered to Chair an Ad Hoc Work Group to prepare the MRCs responses to the VR Sections of the USP. She is currently on vacation. Carol will talk to her and they will organize a plan to write a response. Several members offered to assist.

A motion was made, supported and approved to adjourn the meeting early due to poor driving conditions.

Meeting Adjourned 2:30p.m.

“To-Do” list from Today's Meeting

1. Post Business Meeting Minutes 02/13/2020 on Website
2. MCRS Ad hoc Work Group to prepare MCRS response to VR Sections of the Unified State Plan
3. Conduct Zoom Meeting to provide training to MCRS members on the SIGMA reimbursement system
4. Plan meeting to provide training on the Council's communication “Microsoft 365 Teams”, with Council specific emails for members and shared documents.
5. Send the MCRS FY2019 Annual Report to Governor Whitmer.