

N.S.R.C. Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2024

**NEVADA STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (N.S.R.C.)
MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, November 12, 2024, at 1:00 pm
Vocational Rehabilitation
1325 Corporate Blvd., Reno, NV 89502
&
Vocational Rehabilitation
3016 West Charleston Blvd., Suite 200, Las Vegas, NV 89102

COUNCILMEMBERS' PRESENT:

Robin Kincaid
David Nuestro
Judy Swain
Jack Mayes
Jenny Casselman
Dawn Lyons
Cyndy Gustafson
Dr. Rebecca Rogers
Drazen Elez, VR Administrator – Non-Voting

COUNCILMEMBERS ABSENT:

Raquel O'Neill
Sandra Sinicrope

GUESTS/PUBLIC:

Julie Irish, DP Video Productions
Jennifer Kane, Nevada Department of Education
Summer Stephenson, NV PEP
Teresa Morros, B.R.A.I.N. Nevada
Laura Fussell
Steven Cohen
Donna Bates
Rochelle (Rose) Wilson

STAFF:

Angela M. Lee, Deputy Attorney General
Mechelle Merrill, VR Deputy Administrator of Programs
Brett Martinez, VR Deputy Administrator of Operations
Jenny Richter Livia, N.S.R.C. Liaison
Mat Dorangricchia, VR Northern District Manager
Trina Bourke, VR Southern District Manager
Marshal Hernandez, VR District Manager
Sheena Childers, Bureau Chief

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Chris Mazza, Chief Enterprise Officer
Ken Pierson, Business Services Manager
Jason Birmingham, Business Enterprise Officer
Cynthia Pate, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
Jacqueline Quintero, Administrative Assistant III
Jennifer Mynear, Administrative Assistant II

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1. CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS, AND VERIFY TIMELY POSTING OF AGENDA

Jack Mayes, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm. Jenny Richter Livia, N.S.R.C. Liaison, called the role.

Ms. Richter Livia determined a quorum was present and verified the posting was completed on time and in accordance with Open Meeting Law.

2. FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to public comments.

Angela Lee, Deputy Attorney General, stated we need to read the dial in phone number before we begin public comment.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated it's not on the agenda and asked Ms. Richter if she had it available.

Ms. Lee stated we can use the ZOOM call in number for people who want to join by phone, which is (253)205-0468.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated we will include the phone number in future meetings.

Vice-Chair Mayes again opened the floor to Public Comment.

Mechelle Merrill, VR Deputy Administrator of Programs, stated we have two client success stories to share with the Committee.

Ms. Merrill introduced Jason Birmingham, a Business Enterprise Officer, with Business Enterprises of Nevada (BEN) at the West Bay location in Las Vegas.

Mr. Birmingham stated earlier this summer, we opened a micro market, the Sunset Post Office sorting facility, which is the largest sorting facility in Las Vegas. The facility serves over 700 employees. He introduced his client, Donna Bates, who is the owner and operator of the facility.

Ms. Bates stated the Nevada Rehabilitation program exponentially changed my life in a positive direction. She was born with optic atrophy, which means the main nerve that goes from the brain to the eye is atrophied and doesn't work properly. She doesn't tend to present herself as blind, in part due to her upbringing in a family that didn't allow her to use it as a crutch. She has visual aids for looking up close and for far away, but not for walking around. She stated her vision is 20 over 200, which is 10 times worse than somebody with 20 over 20 vision. A person with 20/20 vision on a 4-lane highway will see all 4 lanes, but I see a 1 lane highway with road work and construction.

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Ms. Bates stated she went through the public school system of Nevada rather than the School for the Blind, at the insistence of her parents. Back then they had large print books that were huge and hard to carry, making it very hard to fit in or blend with everybody else. She graduated high school then went on to graduate from UNLV with a 3.0 GPA.

Ms. Bates worked in a salary position with Boyd Gaming for 6.5 years. While living in Alabama, she became involved with the Business Enterprise Program. She was an operator that ran a cafeteria with a vending route for 13 years. When she came back to Nevada last year, the BEN program made room for her and found her a spot. The partnership between the business owner and the BEN staff is a true partnership. The director, Chris Mazza, Shehan Peries, and Jason Birmingham asked for my input while putting this micro market together. There was a lot of give and take, and education on how things work in Nevada.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated we need to keep moving and it's been over 3 minutes. If Ms. Bates has final thoughts to share, we can have her back in the future.

Ms. Bates stated we set up the micro market in June and it's going very well. It's located at the Airport on Sunset and Paradise. VR provided equipment which has assisted her in successfully running and operating the micro market.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated that he considered this to be excellent.

Ms. Merrill introduced Cynthia Pate, VR Counselor, who has a client success story in the North.

Ms. Pate stated she is excited to introduce Rose Wilson, VR client. We are very excited to see where Rose is right now, due to her disability and vocational history.

Ms. Wilson stated she is 33 years old and has had epilepsy since she was very young. She has not been able to work her entire life, as she is a fall risk and has issues with fluorescent lights flickering. She is unable to drive, so it's difficult to get to interviews. Vocational Rehab was able to place me in my first job, that is best suited to my abilities, which is sewing. I work for a small business, run by a wonderful woman, Janae Kelly. Ms. Kelly allows me to work from home in a safe, seizure-free environment. She is very happy and grateful for the opportunity and thanks her sponsors, Cynthia and Teresa.

Ms. Merrill thanked Ms. Wilson very much.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked Ms. Merrill if there are any more success stories to share.

Ms. Merrill stated that's it and thank you very much for the time.

Vice-Chair Mayes thanked the 2 individuals that joined for Success Stories. He put a plug in for the Rehabilitation Council, that there may be an open slot for a

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recipient of VR services to serve on the council. Consider possibly joining us in the future.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked for comments from attendees in the Reno and Las Vegas corporate offices. He asked for public comments from on-line attendees. He introduces Steven Cohen.

Mr. Cohen stated he would defer 98% to the written remarks that were submitted. He will send staff a list of acronyms. He requests a review of the fiscal study and practical study of the community-based assessment policy. He states there is some confusion looking at the Interim Finance Committee documents from October. There is a Rehab division line indicated for April 11th, of 2024, with no dollar amount attached to it. He asked if it was a reversion line to the Feds. He hopes to get some clarification when the staff report is discussed. Mr. Cohen submitted a written statement for public comment. To read the full statement comment please refer to [Exhibit 1](#) at the end of the document.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated we receive public comments, and they may be addressed later as an agenda item. He asked for any public comments from on-line or from phone participants. No other public comments.

3. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 10, 2024, MEETING MINUTES

Vice-Chair Mayes asked the council for any corrections or clarifications to the September 10, 2024, N.S.R.C Meeting Minutes. Robin Kincaid, N.S.R.C. Council Member, stated on page 7 her name is spelled incorrectly. Kincade should be Kincaid. Vice-Chair Mayes stated it will be taken care of and asked for any other corrections.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked for a motion to approve with the technical correction. Jenny Casselman, N.S.R.C. Council Member, made a motion to approve with the technical correction. Cyndy Gustafson, N.S.R.C. Council Member, seconds the motion. All in favor, none opposed, none abstained, motion carried.

4. PRESENTATION OF THE DISABILITY INCLUSION AWARDS

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to Mechelle Merrill to discuss the presentation of the Disability Inclusion Awards.

Ms. Merrill introduced Ken Pierson, Business Services Manager, who will discuss our disability inclusion award program.

Mr. Pierson stated he will give an overview of the disability inclusion initiative and the disability partner initiative, which was discussed in the strategic planning in December of 2023. We awarded trophies to the top 2 employers. Sephora, a private sector employer, and the State of Nevada, a public sector employer.

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Mr. Pierson stated in the strategic planning meeting that the VR Disability Inclusion Partner initiative was discussed. The business services team was asked to implement a program. The program is designed to recognize our employee partners that hire and support the Nevada VR program. A trophy would be presented to one company, bi-yearly, and that would be the leader in disability inclusion. We have a plaque that's presented to partners that have hired 5 or more individuals within a 4-year period. We also have a window cling that is presented to partners that have taken into consideration hiring people with disabilities to diversify their teams.

Mr. Pierson stated the plan presentation timeline protocol is that we reach out to employers approximately 2 months prior to the scheduled presentation. The engagement specialists on our team would send a request to the chain of command. The time and dates are confirmed along with other logistics, which include location, audience, expectation, and the length of the presentation. The size of the audience can range from 5 to 50 people. BVR has asked our district managers, Tina Burke and Matt Dorangricchia; to present awards and it's been gracious of them to do so. It's a cool thing to have our team out there with employers, and they enjoy it. BVR staff encourage recipients to ask their additional guests. The plaque presentation is done by the manager's team and their HR staff. An example is the Clark County School District, which was contacted in September of 2024, due to their commitment to disability inclusion, hiring 33 of our clients in the last 4 years. The VR business team and Clark County School District engagement team work closely to develop a date and time to schedule a plaque presentation. Final date and location were finalized in early November, after 2-weeks of coordination. The presentation was at the Clark County Human Resource headquarters. Over 25 members were present along with the business account manager and the southern district manager, who delivered the presentation. This event created more opportunities and partnerships between Clark County School District and VR. They suggested VR speak at the Clark County School Board meeting in the public comment section. They extended an invitation to table a wellness event with their internal team. We will be participating in that.

Mr. Pierson stated that since December of last year, we will present to 13 companies. We have presented to 8 companies as of this time. North Bay Industries, Renown Regional Medical Center, Spacecraft Components, Smith's Food and Drug, Amazon Distribution Center, Clark County School District, Washoe County School District and Walmart. Companies to be presented in November and December are Albertsons, Starbucks Roasting Plant, Grand Sierra Resort, Whole Foods Market, Goodwill Industries and Home Goods.

Mr. Pierson stated that we also participate in the Pre-Employment Transition Services summer youth internship that presents certificates to the companies who

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house our interns in the program. Those companies are included in TAB 4 of the packet.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked the council for any questions.

Ms. Kincaid would like clarification on the list of companies that were presented and those yet to be presented.

Mr. Pierson stated those companies not yet presented will be done in November and December of this year, no later than December 31st.

Ms. Kincaid asked about the Pre-ETS companies and whether these industries are providing Pre-ETS services.

Ms. Merrill stated no, those are the businesses we coordinated with for our summer youth internship. They were sites that housed interns, and we thank them for their participation.

Ms. Kincaid stated that makes sense. She asked if there is a process to submit companies that we're aware of employing people with disabilities.

Mr. Pierson stated that there is not at this time. We will take that into consideration. We have gone back through our records of employment opportunities and past relationships. We are open to the idea.

Ms. Kincaid thanked Mr. Pierson.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if the council had more questions.

Drazen Elez, VR Administrator, stated if anyone on the Council or in the meeting has suggestions for candidates, they can be sent to Jenny Richter or Ken Pierson. We will work to get the information to Ken's team. As Ken said, it makes sense to have an official process for fulfilling these suggestions.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked for clarification about Sephora and the State of Nevada receiving awards and why they aren't on the list provided.

Mr. Pierson stated that it was 2023 in service. The awards to Sephora and the State of Nevada are where the idea of this type of inclusion initiative came from.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated the 700HR program has expanded what VR can do and appreciates them being recognized for their employment with that. He asked if there is more than one hiring center that could be recognized or if it is just a single personnel department.

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Ms. Merrill stated we give the recognition to the Department of Administration because they are the ones, along with Voc. Rehab, that administer the 700HR program. They oversee all hiring, whether it be through the 700HR program or open competitive hiring. In 2023, the administrator, Jack Robb, accepted the award. She references a photo of the event, which is displayed for the council. It was a wonderful opportunity to thank the State for working with us and hiring so many people with disabilities.

Vice-Chair Mayes thanked Ms. Merrill for the clarification.

Mr. Elez thanked Ken and his team for doing a great job in helping to roll out this important initiative for the agency. The goal of the initiative is to spread information about Voc. Rehab. being the elite workforce agency that we are in the State. A place where employers come to find a qualified workforce who's well trained and ready to work. We can recognize employers who have been working with us and raise awareness of this award throughout the disability and non-disability community. We recognize employers who are ensuring that their workplace is inclusive, and the fact that they give each Nevadan a chance based on their skills. We hope this award will keep growing and over the years will become a standard in how we recognize employers in the State of Nevada.

5. N.R.S.C. 2024 ANNUAL REPORT FINAL DRAFT

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to Julie Irish, with DP Video, to present the final draft of the N.R.S.C. 2024 Annual Report.

Ms. Irish stated there have been a few updates over the last couple of months and they will be reviewed. We updated the new address for the administration office. We've received all the stats from Sheila, so that information will be updated. We have new information on the top 2 employers, Sephora with 24 employments and the State of Nevada with 42 employments. Text changes, mentioned at the previous meeting, have been made on some pages. The success stories are exciting. There is the image of the client and a blurb about each client, and then next to them is a blurb about where they are employed or the school they went to. We will publish the stories live on the website. Once the annual report is published, you'll be able to scan the QR code and it will take you to the success stories on the website. Team spotlight still needs to be filled out. Ms. Irish scrolls through the report, as a lot of the information is the same as in the previous meeting. Rebecca has a new headshot. A page was added for the Nevada TRIP (Transitions Roadmap Innovative Partnership) program. Matt's highlight is the same. Numbers will be updated for the State. Ms. Merrill would like to see the numbers represented in their locations here, that will be changed and updated. We revised the tear out sheet on the back to be more simplified and straightforward. This is the new layout. Ms. Irish concluded by asking if there are any comments or corrections.

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Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there are any comments to share. He stated that they did a great job with the report, and it stands out with all the pictures and stories. He asked Ms. Irish if the client success stories, we heard today are in the document. If not, is it possible to include them next year.

Ms. Irish stated they are not in this publication, but it's up to the Council what we would like to share.

Ms. Childers stated to Vice-Chair Mayes that we can invite and get the stories from the 2 clients here today, to potentially make our deadline for inclusion in this year's report.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated his agreement with this course of action.

Ms. Irish stated she believes we've shared the one story on social media and it's on the website.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked the council for questions or comments.

Mr. Elez wanted to take a moment and appreciate DP Video and Ms. Irish, who is presenting, for all the hard work put into the current and past years' reports. Each year it gets better and better. We appreciate your creativity and dedication to VR and our mission. As a company you've taken to heart our mission, and it reflects in the work you're producing. We've seen it in the last few reports, but this year's is the best one yet. It includes things we are proud to share, and which we do share with legislators and stakeholders that are interested. If one wishes to share the report, let us know and we will send however many copies needed. Thank you.

Ms. Irish thanked Mr. Elez for his comments.

Ms. Casselman stated she reviewed the printed version and wants to commend the fact that it looks as crisp in the pdf as it does in the print version, which is important. Well done from that perspective.

Ms. Irish thanked Ms. Casselman.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there were any further comments. He asked Mr. Elez if this is the final draft and if the action is for adoption of the final draft.

Mr. Elez stated yes, this is the adoption of the final draft, obviously with the corrections to the statistics we couldn't get prior to this meeting. Any other nuanced things will be added, but the report is about 95% complete. It will be the adoption of the final draft.

Vice-Chair Mayes entertains a motion to adopt the final draft of the Nevada State Rehabilitation Council 2024 Annual Report. The final draft will include updated statistics and one story. Ms. Lyons concurred. Vice-Chair Mayes asked for a

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second. Ms. Rogers seconded the motion. Vice-Chair Mayes asked for a vote. All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. Motion Passes.

6. OPEN MEETING LAW TRAINING

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to Angela Lee, Deputy Attorney General, for Open Meeting Law (OML) training. Welcome Angela.

Ms. Lee stated good afternoon and thanked the council. Ms. Lee stated she is a Deputy Attorney General at the Nevada Attorney General's office. She will be discussing Nevada Open Meeting Law and covering 5 topics. Ask questions when you feel comfortable. We will discuss what the OML is, when does it apply, how do we comply, what happens if we accidentally violate it, and when do we need to disclose or abstain prior to voting.

Ms. Lee stated the Open Meeting Law is found in chapter 241 of the NRS. It exists to help public bodies ensure that the public knows what is going on with these public bodies. A staple of Nevada's government is that we are open and transparent.

The Open Meeting Law applies to public bodies, such as the N.S.R.C, and includes subcommittees as well. Any time a quorum of members meets to deliberate and take action, the OML applies. There are exceptions, but they are very narrow, so always err on the side of following the OML.

Ms. Lee stated a quorum must be present for the Open Meeting Law to apply. A quorum is a simple majority of the total body. The N.S.R.C. has 16 members, so a quorum is 9 members. Vacancies require deliberation or action. This is where the board is talking together, deliberating on an issue, discussing how they want to vote on something, and then taking action, which is the vote. Deliberate means to collectively examine, weigh, and reflect on reasons for or against an action. Those items are agendaized, and then take a vote, which is action. OML only applies when there is a quorum that is taking action. If the N.S.R.C. meets for lunch to hang out and talk about their daily lives, that is fine. The issue arises of violating OML when there is action or deliberation. If the quorum of members meets for lunch and starts talking about board business, then there would be a violation of OML. It's important to avoid work talk outside of board meetings. An exception to this is if the board is ever sued, we would need to have an attorney client conversation with the board and myself, or another attorney general.

Ms. Lee stated a common pitfall with OML is when an email is sent to the entire board, and somebody replies to all. A better way would be to blind copy each member and when replying, only reply to the sender. The telephone game counts as a quorum. If Member A calls Member B and they deliberate on an upcoming agenda item, then Member B calls Member C, and so on. Be careful of playing telephone games.

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Ms. Lee stated to be in compliance with OML, we must make sure the agenda is properly noticed and includes the necessary information. An agenda must include the time, place, and location, or this board meets remotely. Remote meetings must include remote technology information. For the N.S.R.C. it's a Zoom meeting. Meetings held remotely must have a physical location, and the name, contact and address for that physical location must be included. Clear and complete statement of topics, which are items to be agendized. Items to be voted on must include the phrase, "for possible action." Parts of the OML require specific language be included, such as "for possible action." The agenda must also include an opportunity for public comments and note if there are any restrictions, such as a 3-minute time restriction. For questions refer to NRS241.020 or contact Ms. Lee or somebody else at the attorney general's office.

Ms. Lee stated regarding the notice, the agenda needs to be posted in 3 places. The office of the public body, where N.S.R.C. is located, the N.S.R.C. website, and the State of Nevada public meetings website. Ms. Lee thanked Jenny Richter, N.S.R.C. Liaison, for properly posting the meetings. The agenda needs to be posted no later than the 3rd working day before the meeting. If the meeting is on Tuesday, the agenda must be posted no later than 9am on the prior Thursday. Weekend days aren't counted. N.S.R.C. meets on Tuesdays, so it's very important the agendas are posted timely. If a member of the public specifically requests the notices be sent to them, we must send them the notice and the agenda.

Ms. Lee stated it's very important that the N.S.R.C. make reasonable efforts to accommodate any person that's differently abled and wants to attend the meeting. For any members of the public that are listening now, we ask that we are given enough time to make those accommodations.

Ms. Lee stated that if the board were to discuss a person's character, misconduct, or competence, the board would need to send a notice specifically to that person instructing them that the board will be discussing their behavior. There are additional requirements for those notices, but the N.S.R.C. most likely will never experience this.

Ms. Lee stated the meetings must be recorded or transcribed and we vote on the meeting minutes in conformance with requirements under the OML. We are doing a great job at this. Supporting material must be included in the agenda, and at least one copy needs to be available to the public at each physical location. We need to make sure we're including supporting materials online and that they are available to the public at the same time they're made available to the board. As soon as it's decided there will be an OML meeting and it is sent to the board, it should also be available for the public to see.

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Ms. Lee stated we will most likely never have emergency meetings, and it would have to be to act upon a matter that is truly unforeseen, and the circumstances need to dictate that immediate action is required. If we ever get to that point, consult with the DAG, me, or somebody else at the AG's office to ensure that we're not going to violate the OML by holding an emergency meeting that is not properly agendized.

Ms. Lee stated that public comments are very important and can be done in two ways. The N.S.R.C. calls for public comment at the beginning and end of the meeting. There can also be public comments after, or during, each agenda item. It's up to the board to determine when and how public comments are made. If there is an item that is of big interest for public concern, there may be quite a few people that want to speak on the item. That might be a better way to do that. There are a few restrictions for public comment, which are reasonable time, place, and manner. If someone is acting unprofessionally or disrupting the meeting, they can be removed. Ms. Lee doesn't foresee us having that problem.

Ms. Lee stated if we are using remote technology, we must ensure that we are providing a telephone number for the public to call in. We need to make that available at the beginning of public comment. It's best practice to provide it at the beginning of the meeting but can be done prior to public comment.

Ms. Lee stated that closed sessions happen when we need to consider a person's character misconduct, professional competence and things like that. There is an opportunity to have a closed session which is not open to the public. The person whose character or misconduct is being considered may request a closed session. They're able to be present in that session, as well as their attorney. Hearings held regarding one of the board members' conduct or character must be held in an open session. Hiring and firing can be done in a closed session. Closed session is where the board would deliberate, and then the vote would occur during the open portion of the meeting.

Ms. Lee stated attendance can be virtual, if there is a physical location. We have two physical locations, so we're in super compliance. It's also important to ensure that members of the public can hear and see us. Many times, the internet will go out and we need to stop if there is a problem with the connection or sound. Once we are sure members of the public can hear and see, we can proceed.

Ms. Lee talked about what happens if the OML is violated. Sometimes we accidentally violate the OML, especially when the law is ever changing. We had changes in 2023. The law states that when an action taken is in violation of the OML, the action is void. Not that the board would go back and void, it's an automatic void and doesn't count. If the board goes out to lunch and decides they're going to take a vote on agenda item 6 from the next meeting, that action is void because it wasn't properly noticed and doesn't comply with OML. No action

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needs to be taken, but it is a voided vote. The vote will need to recur. If a violation of the OML occurs, the Attorney General's office may investigate this violation and can ultimately fine the board. Corrective action can be taken, and it doesn't eliminate the violation, but can help mitigate the circumstances. If we're in a meeting and we realize we've violated OML, the best practice is to fix it before the meeting ends. If that can't occur, it needs to be fixed as soon as possible, probably hold another meeting to fix the violation.

Ms. Lee discusses when a board member needs to disclose a relationship or abstain from voting prior to voting. Disclosure is mandatory for any interest created by a gift or a loan. A Starbucks gift card probably isn't going to sway a vote, but it's best practice to disclose that you've received the gift card. If a board member has any subsequent pecuniary interest, they must disclose their interest in it. For example, the Board may be promoting a specific school or vocation and if a board member has a financial interest, they must disclose their interest in it. Commitment in a private capacity means you don't own the workplace, but you are an employee, so that relationship must be disclosed. Or possibly you have a best friend that is up for discussion, you need to disclose the relationship. Representation of a private client is when a doctor, lawyer, or anyone who works with a client, and that client becomes an agendized item, one must disclose that relationship. The disclosure must be made at the time the agenda item is occurring and before any discussion occurs. The disclosure must be sufficient to inform the public of the nature and scope of the relationship to the item that's being discussed. Best practice is to always disclose. If a best friend is coming in front of the board, you'd want to make sure to say, this is my best friend and give a summary of the relationship which is causing the disclosure.

Ms. Lee states that just because you disclose something, it doesn't mean you will have to abstain from voting. If the relationship is so close with an agendized item and you feel your judgement could be impacted, or that someone else could view the relationship to that agenda item as impacted by it, then one should abstain from voting. If any board members have a question about whether to abstain or not, please contact the Attorney General's Office to discuss the relationship with the agendized item. There is nothing wrong with abstaining from voting. Ms. Lee stated always to be cautionary and abstain if there is any view that your vote could be prejudiced by your relationship with that agendized item. The test is whether the judgement of a reasonable person in the public officer's situation would be materially affected. A \$25 gift card isn't going to materially affect your judgement, but your best friend Miranda probably will affect your judgement. One requires a disclosure and the other requires both a disclosure and abstention. This determination needs to be done prior to the discussion and needs to be explained on the record. It is okay to disclose and vote if you feel your judgement or a reasonable third party would not view that your judgement has been materially affected by your relationship to the agendized item.

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Ms. Lee stated that if a person decides to abstain, the quorum is reduced. If a quorum is 5 members, the quorum would then be reduced to 4 members. Something to be aware of.

Ms. Lee stated the definition of quorum was updated in 2023. The quorum is only voting members, and if a board member abstains it reduces the quorum. On a 7 person board, you need 4 people for a quorum, so the quorum goes down to 6.

Ms. Lee stated there are 4 vacancies on the N.S.R.C. board and would like to know if anyone is interested in joining the board. Because the N.S.R.C. has 4 vacant positions, 7 members is quorum rather than the necessary 11.

Ms. Lee stated the meeting definition has changed. Any kind of litigation would be an exception to an Open Meeting Law. That could be held in a closed meeting and doesn't have to be disclosed to the public and falls under attorney client privilege. Administrative action against the person is unique to the person and includes the potential for a negative change in circumstance. To take specific action against a person, you must notify the person by personal service, or process servers, 7 days prior to the meeting. These dates include weekends and holidays. Certified mail with the green card they must sign. If the person has an attorney, you can serve the attorney within 7 days of the meeting. If there's an emergency, there are exceptions.

Ms. Lee stated if the N.S.R.C. meetings ever go to multi days, we must make sure that public comment opportunities happen both at the beginning and end of each day. The private investigators licensing board meets 2 days in a row, therefore they are required to have at least 4 public comment sessions.

Ms. Lee stated certain places don't have a physical location for a meeting, so post the agenda where the meeting is going to be.

Ms. Lee stated if the board wants to make regulation changes, or has a contested case, there must be a physical location for the public to attend. This is if the board is going to take Administrative Action for character misconduct.

Ms. Lee stated if a meeting is held entirely virtually, there must be clear instructions on the agenda for how the public can call in. If offering virtual public comment, you must read the instructions for the public comment prior to the public comment period. The public must have the ability to call in. With the telephonic public comment, we must be sure to read the telephone. The Chair, or whoever runs the meeting, will ask for any telephonic public comment.

Ms. Lee referenced informational links from the presentation to be used as a resource. One can also Google Nevada Open Meeting Law and documents will

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come up that summarize everything covered here today. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked the council for any questions.

Ms. Lyons has a question regarding meeting materials and when they should be provided to the public body. We used to have 24 hours to post those materials if they were or weren't in accessible format. Ms. Lyons asked if this is still the case.

Ms. Lee stated the best practice is to make sure the agenda and all supporting documents are in an accessible format before posting. If an item is posted and is not accessible, it needs to be corrected as quickly as possible.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked for more questions. He has a couple. Last year, the Developmental Disabilities Council told him they do not have to have a physical location, but he disagreed based on the OML training. I looked bad when I called them out on it, so please clarify.

Ms. Lee stated under the law there must be at least one physical location. It's best practice to have a physical location in the North and South, but only one physical location is required. Ms. Lee can provide the specific NRS.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked for the specific NRS in a follow-up, so he can share it with the council.

Ms. Lyons stated she was under the same impression. The Governor's Council for Developmental Disabilities has practiced having virtual meetings since the COVID emergency. We did not understand things had changed.

Ms. Lee stated if a meeting is going to be held virtual, there must be one location for people to go to provide public comment if they wish to do so. It's an N.R.S.C. requirement.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated the issue is that people with disabilities have more of a need for a physical location, because of struggles with technology.

Ms. Lee stated we want to make sure everybody has access to the meeting. Some people may not have computers or phones, so it's important to have at least one physical space.

Ms. Merrill stated that in the chat, Mr. Cullen noted it is NRS 241.0201.

Ms. Lee stated that it is one of the statutes which requires that all people must be permitted to attend any meeting of these public bodies at a physical location, or by

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means of a remote technology system. NRS 241.023 discusses the requirement to have a physical location.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated we will share that with our sister groups.

Ms. Lee stated yes, absolutely, and I'm available for any questions.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked the council for any questions.

Ms. Lee stated NRS 241.023, subsection 1b, says that members of the public are permitted to attend and participate at a physical location designated for the meeting.

Vice-Chair Mayes thanked Ms. Lee for the presentation.

7. OTHER REPORTS

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to the Client Assistance Program, but there was no one in attendance.

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to Ms. Lyons, with the Nevada State Independent Living program.

Ms. Lyons stated she didn't submit any materials, but it's simple because the meeting was last week. The Federal Agency Administration for community living approved our spill, so fiscal years 25 through 27 State Plan for Independent Living are now on the website with the approved version. The budget revision for the Nevada TRIP program as a partner in that effort has been approved and is ready for the following fiscal year. Our council is in the process of becoming a 501C3, or nonprofit organization. We revised and updated the policy/procedure manual and bylaws, to reflect changes that will be occurring because of that change along with the brand-new State Plan for Independent Living and the new objectives. All of this is on the website.

Ms. Lyons stated we have our maximum number of ex officios on our council, which we can only have 4 according to the bylaws. Several of the regular voting members have turned out of the council. We are down to 8 voting members, and we can have up to 19. Ms. Lyons asked the council to refer anyone with a disability who is interested in participating in the Statewide Independent Living Council as a member. They can reach out to me, and I'll put my email in the chat. The website also has instructions on how to become a member. We would like to have a wide variety of people who represent different disabilities in the community so we can have a range of perspectives for our initiatives.

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Ms. Lyons mentioned that the Centers for Independent Living, both Northern and Southern, are going to present at our next meeting on emergency preparedness. They have worked on an initiative in that regard and have quite an extensive presentation, along with a video. If anyone is interested in viewing the presentation, the next meeting is January 8th and 9th and will likely be given on January 8th at 1pm. The information is on the website, and I will put the website and my email in the chat. Ms. Lyon concludes.

Vice-Chair Mayes thanked Ms. Lyons and asked to have information, for the year, on their meetings to share with staff and council.

Ms. Lyons stated it's on the website and will send that.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked the council for questions.

8. DISABILITY INNOVATION FUND (DIF) GRANT UPDATE

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to Ms. Merrill to discuss the Disability Innovation Fund grant update.

Ms. Merrill stated that last year the State of Nevada was awarded a 10-million dollar grant called the Disability Innovation Fund and it required an unprecedented partnership. It requires the Centers for Independent Living, the Department of Education and Vocational Rehabilitation to work together, to move the needle for the transition in the State of Nevada. We put together a proposal and have 10 partners. The Department of Education, both Northern and Southern Nevada Centers for Independent Living, the Carson City School District, the Humboldt County School District, the White Pine County School District, the Nevada Statewide Independent Living Council, the Nevada PEP Parent Training and Information Center, and the University of Nevada Reno Center for Excellence in Disability. The grant requires that there is a website and there must be a hands-on project that the State would collaborate on to move the needle and transition. Nevada has implemented this plan by working with 3 pilot school districts, Humboldt, White Pine and Carson City. These school districts collaborate with Vocational Rehabilitation, and some funding through the grant itself, to provide transition coordinators in these communities to make sure students are aware of transition services. Community based services students need to make quality decisions for their lives and have the best transition outcomes, making that connection to Vocational Rehabilitation. After the pilot period, it will roll out to all school districts.

Ms. Merrill stated the other requirement of the Grant is that there is a website. The tools in your packet, as well as what is being shown on the screen, are preliminary.

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The website is a big initiative that DP Video, creators of the VR Nevada website, is working on and will be a hands-on tool for students. There will be two versions of the website, one for students ages 10-13 and one for students ages 14 and older, because their transition is different at that age-appropriate milestone.

Ms. Merrill stated the TRIP (Transitions Roadmap through Innovative Partnerships) program takes students through all the stops they need to become a person who understands their transition options, the services that are available to them and the partners that can help them. In the packet and on screen are the stops on the TRIP, the definitions of these stops and what they will learn at each stop. We can have visitors to the TRIP, such as students' parents, to help them understand it better. Students will identify an avatar for the TRIP, which will be in the form of a car. There are many different versions of cars they can choose from. Like the game of Life, students will go through different steps of life and learn things along the way, and at the end we don't say they are finished, but that they are ready to take the next step in their Life.

Ms. Merrill stated there is a lot of information about the different types of diplomas and the consequences of them. There are connections to different partners, such as ASD and regional centers, Vocational Rehabilitation, PEP and many other partners located on the TRIP. There will be a place on the website where all the videos from our community partners are housed, so we can share the videos that all the different entities have put together. There will be a post office where students can communicate with each other or passengers on their TRIP. There will be links to their schools so they can talk to the administration of their school or their transition coordinator, along with links to Vocational Rehabilitation. The screen is showing the VR Road to Success, which TRIP is a part of. Ms. Merrill asked Ms. Richter Livia if she could show the landing page that is currently up for the website, because it won't go live until April 1, 2025. That would be for the 3 pilot districts. As of now, the website shows who the partners are, there's an Advisory Work Group and information about TRIP. This will be updated to the website when we go live April 1. We will be presenting the status of the website on December 9th to the Advisory Work Group. Ms. Merrill has had a big hand in working with DP, representing Vocational Rehabilitation. VR has put together interim products for the benefit of the work group, such as a flyer for the partners to use, a brand guide, and a style guide, which is in development. There are a lot of resources available now, but it's not complete.

Ms. Merrill stated there were 10 total grants that were awarded for this work, and Nevada is just one. Every state chose to implement their opportunity a bit differently, and Nevada has gone far and above the work of the other states. Nevada TRIP has the deepest online presence, which fits Nevada because of our big geography & windshield time. Travel time getting to rural communities, and

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even within urban communities, such as Las Vegas, can be long. An online presence is important, and we've done a good job of bringing that forward and I'll continue to bring updates as it evolves. Ms. Merrill thanked Jennifer Kane and Ashley Price, who have been great partners in this, as well as others. Ms. Merrill stated she's open to questions.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there were any questions for Ms. Merrill.

Ms. Casselman asked Ms. Merrill to share with the council what the pilot program looks like.

Ms. Merrill stated that the pilot school districts will have access to the TRIP website and all students in those districts will be given the registration login to the website. Students will have support from their district to use the website. These districts have transition coordinators, which have been funded by the grant, and they are currently doing community-based work. After the pilot program it will be rolled out to the rest of the State.

Ms. Casselman thanked Ms. Merrill.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there were any questions.

Drazen Elez, VR Administrator, stated this is a huge portion of our vision for the future of VR and what we consider to be part of our work. VR unites all the organizations, different nonprofits and for profits, to work on issues related to individuals with disabilities. The Department of Education applied for the grant with the required partners of Vocational Rehabilitation and a few other partners. The goal is to grow the program and add more and more organizations in one place, so Nevadans will be able to quickly find services available in their areas and different parts of the State. Currently, the information is discarded by a few individuals who know the system well, or who have gone through the system and learned it. There isn't one place where all the information is easily laid out, and our hope is to do that and make services across the State more accessible, whether VR or others provide the services. Mr. Elez stated Jennifer Kane, with the Department of Education, is here and may have thoughts on the project.

Ms. Kane stated she is waiting for the Governor to officially appoint her to the N.R.S.C., so I will be with the council for the foreseeable future. Ms. Kane termed out, took a cooling period, and is happy to be back. She is happy to answer questions and is looking forward to sharing more as things develop.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked Ms. Merrill what the grant period is and if we are on track with the timeline that was submitted.

Ms. Merrill stated it's a 5-year grant and after the recent meeting with our partners from Mathematica and RSA found that we are more than on track.

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Vice Chair Mayes stated excellent and keep up the good work. He asked if there were any more comments.

Ms. Merrill stated that Ms. Kane points out that the grant started October 1, 2023, and it will conclude September 30, 2028.

Mr. Mayes stated excellent and thank you.

9. DIVISION REPORTS

Vice-Chair Mayes opened the floor to Drazen Elez, VR Administrator, to discuss division reports.

Mr. Elez opened the floor to Sheena Childers, VR Bureau Chief, to discuss division reports.

Ms. Childers stated on tab 9.1 there is a PowerPoint presentation titled Division Reports. She thanks Jenny for the report template she created. It will be helpful moving forward, so everyone has ready access to information about the program. Page 2 talks about VR staffing updates and the VR vacancy rate, which covers both Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation, as well as the Bureau of Services to the Blind and Visually Impaired (BSBVI). As of last month, the vacancy rate was 9.4%. This is up from the previous N.S.R.C. meeting, due to a few counselors and other staff leaving the agency. Vacancies on the BSB side are stable, with 2 positions currently vacant. Ongoing recruitment efforts have been made for the BSB staff. One position is for an orientation and mobility instructor and one position for a Rehab Counselor. Ms. Childers is happy to report that vacancies are below 10%.

Ms. Childers stated the next page talks about VR caseload size and days open updates. There is a visual depiction of the Take the Road to Success graphic on the screen, but it's a bit small. There is a graphic of the Road to Success in your binder. The most accurate information is on the right, which is the average length of days. Average cases take about 756 days from the date of opening to the date of closure, and that is for any closure reason, either obtaining a job or closing for other reasons.

Ms. Childers stated the information on average caseload size has been updated on the screen, but not in the packet. The average caseload size for VR is 77 and for BSB it's 68, which is accurate.

Ms. Childers stated she will review the N.S.R.C. Performance Indicators.

FFY24: 10/1/2023 – 9/30/24

Fourth Quarter N.S.R.C. Goals and Indicators: 7/1/2024 – 9/30/2024

Goal #1: Increase Number of Competitive Integrated Employment Outcomes.
The table looks at Federal Fiscal year 2024, reporting the period of 7/1/2024 to

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9/30/2024. Clients closed with an employment outcome of 481, so we were short of our goal of 550. This has not changed since our last meeting.

Goal #2: Increase Participation of Students with a Disability in Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS). Federal Fiscal Year 2024 there were a total of 1,958 participants. This includes potentially eligible and eligible transition students, within that age range, who have received a pre-employment transition service during the time frame. We more than doubled what we had the previous year, which is fantastic.

Goal #3: Increase Participation of Potentially Eligible Students with a Disability in VR Services. This looks at the number of students in the age range that are applying for VR services. The goal was 250 for FFY24, and we more than doubled, tripled that number of 905 applications for VR services.

Goal #4: Increase Participation of Supported Employment (SE) Consumers in VR. The table stratifies clients that have an open case and looks at the number of clients who have achieved employment. FFY 24 the total number of open supported employment consumers was 614, which is the number our goal relates to. The goal was 475 and we met and exceeded that goal. Ms. Childers noted we have successfully helped 112 clients, who receive supported employment services, go to work.

Goal #5: Increase Participation of Targeted Disability Groups in VR Services. This looks at employment outcomes across 3 different disability groups. We have reporting information for clients with a mental health disability closing with an employment outcome year over year. Last year we added the middle column, which is those clients that are blind or visually impaired. The far-right column is those clients that are deaf or hard of hearing. We don't have goals for those columns yet. Clients with a mental health disability closing with an employment outcome was 144. Clients who are blind or visually impaired closing with an employment outcome was 26. Clients who are deaf or hard of hearing closing with an employment outcome was 77.

Indicator #1: Average Caseload Size by Bureau

VR has an average open caseload size of 77, and BSBVI has an average open caseload size of 68.

Indicator #2: 700 Hour Program

In FFY24 there are 15 active participants, and these individuals have not yet been placed into a 700 Hour job. The total number of participants who have completed the 700 Hour program and have attained competitive, integrated employment is 53.

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Ms. Childers stated for the FFY24 we had a total of 4 Fair Hearing cases, out of all open VR cases. The total participants served was 3,858. This represents less than 1% of cases or clients who have experienced a challenge with our program and have found it necessary to request a fair hearing. I'm happy to report that information.

Ms. Childers stated in the month of September we received a total of 349 applications for VR services, which include both VR and BSBVI. This is on track with our average in the last 18 months, well over 300 new applications for services per month.

Mr. Elez thanked Ms. Childers and asked Ms. Merrill if she had any updates.

Ms. Merrill stated Sheena covered it perfectly.

Mr. Elez stated Cyndy Gustafson, N.S.R.C. council member, has a question.

Ms. Gustafson thanked Ms. Childers for the report. She has a question about the road graphic shown earlier. It's noted that the average length of cases is 756 days. She states she is not a statistician and asked to be corrected if she was mistaken. She suggested that it would be interesting to know what the median or mode number would be. That is right in the middle, or the mode being the most common amount of time clients take. She guesses that the average might be pulled out longer by cases that have not been closed for a long time. She wonders if the data looks different when using the different ways of representing cases. She asked if anyone from VR can confirm or deny.

Mr. Elez stated it is a very good point. He doesn't know if we have looked at this data element with those different lenses in mind, but we will look at it and share the information next meeting. He agrees it would be interesting to see the correlation.

Ms. Childers stated historically, our supported employment cases, on average, take longer than general VR cases and some BSBVI cases go quicker on average. There is some correlation between the number of disability related impairments and barriers to employment with the length of time it might take for VR services, or for a client to obtain and maintain employment. We can look at it and provide information if we're able to.

Ms. Gustafson stated thank you.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there were any more questions for Ms. Childers or Mr. Elez.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated he understands the budget was posted on October 1 and would like Mr. Elez to share highlights.

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Mr. Elez stated we do have our agency budget submissions which have been published. He will start with what isn't included in the budget because it is more interesting than what is included. Not included in the budget are items for special consideration, which are items that the Governors' administration will consider depending on how much taxes are available to divide up to various projects, initiatives, or needs for the State of Nevada. VR conversations with the Governor's office are regarding the current state of VR, and the rising number of applicants applying for services and the services needed. They are open to working with us and finding a solution that is necessary. Those will be items for special consideration. They won't be published until the Governor's State of the State in January. The Governor and his office have been very supportive of VR and are looking at what they can do to drastically improve the agency's ability to provide more services, which also includes additional positions for the agency to be able to serve more clients. VR budget requests revolve around adding more dollars to client services, funding for the pre-employment transition services and adding more positions. All of these are items for special consideration. There is nothing new in the budget currently.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated its basic budget stuff.

Mr. Elez stated yes.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated he hopes we get some special considerations through the process.

Mr. Elez mentioned that we participate in the Governor's Board of Examiners meeting every month, where state contracts are reviewed for approval, and state agencies requesting contingency funds are also discussed. He noted that the VR budget was significantly underfunded this year for several reasons. The budget was initially based on projections from the COVID years, but there has been a marked increase in the demand for our services, along with rising inflation. Over the past three years, inflationary pressures have significantly impacted our services. Mr. Elez indicated that VR is likely to exhaust its funds by February or March at the latest, based on the original budget and the current available funding.

Mr. Elez announced that the Governor and the Board of Examiners have approved our request for 1.2 million dollars in contingency funds. The next step will be to testify before the Interim Finance Committee in December to request that these additional funds be added. The 1.2 million dollars in state funds, when combined with our federal match grant, will total about 6 million dollars. This should provide enough funding to cover our needs for the year.

Vice-Chair Mayes was pleased, and noted that Robin Kincaid had her hand up.

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Ms. Kincaid stated in previous meetings we've discussed priorities and asked Mr. Elez if he has a list of priorities or is that something the Governor is considering. She recognizes it's not part of the budget considerations.

Mr. Elez stated in working with the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) Director and his office, we came up with a list of priorities for DETR. The VR budget was not submitted individually, but as a part of the DETR budget. In DETR's ranking VR's request was one of the top three. VR has sent requests to the Governor's office and are prioritizing what type of positions we need the most so we can negotiate and have a plan.

Ms. Kincaid thanked Mr. Elez and asked if there is a summary of the Town Hall meetings available.

Mr. Elez stated VR held Town Hall meetings on October 9th and 16th. Tab 9.2 has a summary of the Town Hall series, and it's also posted on the VR website.

Ms. Kincaid asked Mr. Elez if there would be follow-ups occurring for the topics in the summary.

Mr. Elez stated our plan is to have Town Hall meetings during October, and feedback from those meetings will be included in our Strategic Plan that we publish at the end of the year. The quarterly N.S.R.C. meetings are considered as the follow-up, because they are open to the public. He isn't sure about the benefit of having additional follow-up meetings, but it can be discussed. We don't oppose open dialogue and discussion of what VR is doing.

Ms. Kincaid thanked Mr. Elez.

Vice-Chair Mayes referred to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) and the plan to get a higher budget. He asked Mr. Elez if the new budget that's going through the budgeting process will be that higher number so that you don't have to come back.

Mr. Elez stated that what VR is asking for in the December IFC meeting is an adjustment to this year's budget to have sufficient funds to serve all clients coming through our doors. There are two parts to the way the budget is built. We go off a base year, selected by the Governor's Finance office, and that is our initial year. Then we add additional expectations that we have as to what's going to happen in the future, such as the increased number of clients. Those would be two different line items. VR has considered that increase and it's also part of our budget submission, as well as the need for additional client service dollars.

Vice-Chair Mayes requests that Mr. Elez keep the Council informed about when he will be giving his presentation to the Legislative Subcommittees, so they can listen.

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Mr. Elez stated absolutely, and we will send those dates out as they're scheduled.

Vice-Chair Mayes stated they aren't scheduled yet. He asked for any other questions for Mr. Elez or other staff.

Ms. Kincaid referred to Goal #4 and asked Mr. Elez if there is anything we can do to increase the numbers in supported employment. It's an area we've struggled with over the years and it's concerning after so many years.

Mr. Elez stated Ms. Kincaid is correct and the agency shares her opinion. He opened the floor to Ms. Childers to discuss.

Ms. Childers stated Ms. Kincaid's point is well made and it's a continued focus for the VR program. There are a few things we have tried over the last few years to try to help programming specific individuals with the most significant disabilities who are receiving Supported Employment (SE) services. VR has developed work readiness programs tailored specifically to our clients that are receiving SE services. This year marks the 10th year of Pathway to Work, which is a SE training program in conjunction with Opportunity Village. We continue to operate Pathway to Work and celebrate successes there. We have many collaborative efforts. We developed another work readiness program, Tapestry, which Ken could talk about. Tapestry is a program that has a lot of skills training and soft skills training, which is like the Sephora Work Readiness Program. These programs lead to verifiable, almost guaranteed placements. We continue our work readiness programs which have been very successful. We are looking at partnerships with other agencies for consumers that are receiving SE services. We have been in conversation with Nevada Medicaid to try to bring the IPS delivery to individuals with serious mental illness in our program, which we have many consumers to be able to provide SE services that way. We encourage the development and reinstitution of Project Search in Northern Nevada, which is a SE program. We continue to increase our efforts when it comes to individuals that are seeking and receiving SE services.

Ms. Merrill asked Ms. Childers to speak about the work VR has done with Crystal Hintz.

Ms. Childers stated that VR has a partnership and an intensive technical assistance plan with VR tech, QE, which is the Vocational Rehabilitation Technical Assistance Center on Quality Employment. We have worked with the technical assistance center through Virginia Commonwealth University to work on our SE policies. We have worked to provide SE training to staff, to better understand how to implement SE services. That work has been ongoing over the past 2 years. As part of that intensive technical assistance, SE is one of the areas. Customized employment is another content area as well as limitations on the use of sub minimum wage. We are making sure that our staff are trained and understand how

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to implement these services, plus the development of additional services Statewide.

Ms. Kincaid thanked Ms. Childers.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there were any further questions. There were no additional questions.

10. COMMENTS BY THE COUNCIL

Vice-Chair Mayes opens the floor to the Council to share any events, comments, or thoughts. There were none.

Vice-Chair Mayes gave a shout out to Veterans for Veterans Day. He reminds us that veterans ultimately led to the development of VR, as a program for disabled veterans.

11. PUBLIC COMMENT

Vice-Chair Mayes invited the public to give comments. No action may be taken on a matter during public comments until the matter itself has been included on an agenda item for possible action and proper notification. Due to time constraints, comments are limited to 3 minutes. Clearly state your name and spell your full name. Members of the public attending in person at a location will be giving comments first, followed by members of the public on the public telephone. The phone number is (253)205-0468. He opened the floor for public comment at the physical locations, either in Las Vegas or Reno, none. Any comments from participants, none. Any comments on the phone, none.

Mr. Elez appreciates Vice-Chair Mayes for recognizing Veterans Day. He stated veterans have been the key segment in helping Vocational Rehabilitation laws get passed, not only the Rehabilitation Act, but also the Business Enterprise program or Randall Shepherd Act. This act was passed as a sunset of World War I, as soldiers were coming back with no vision due to the mines and various other activities.

Mr. Elez announced the retirement of a long-term employee, Faith Wilson, who will be leaving at the end of the year. She is the supervisor of the quality control unit and has been with DETR/VR for about 21 years, maybe longer, as some timelines we didn't catch. Ms. Wilson spent her whole life in the Vocational Rehabilitation world and is an amazing individual and a great asset to the organization and Nevadans. He had the privilege of working with her when he was in the BP program and at one point, she was a counselor at BSB. She has grown and done amazing things with the agency. Ms. Wilson is a hard worker, brilliant and detail oriented. She helped VR reimagine our quality control unit and create a standard in Nevada.

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She created new processes that put those standards in place. She helped put a process in place, 2 years ago, of evaluating every single state, every single agency within Vocational Rehabilitation, helping us ensure that our processes are in line and removing things that shouldn't be there, to help expedite services for clients. She has created a great quality control team and trained her team to be great leaders as well. Ms. Wilson will be greatly missed and appreciated for all she's done for Nevada.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if Ms. Wilson was in attendance.

Mr. Elez stated she is not, but we will give her the recording.

Vice-Chair Mayes seconds Mr. Elez comments. Ms. Wilson has always been a resource for those of us in the community that have had questions about VR. She helped us understand from the VR perspective how things work. He compliments her, will miss her and welcomes her to retirement.

Vice-Chair Mayes noticed a hand raised from a phone. He asked the individual to introduce themselves and welcomed them to speak.

Steven Cohen, member of the public, commenting by phone (732)567-4048. Mr. Cohen asked how the Council had identified, a couple years ago in the last strategic planning process, or the July process, the 700 Hour Indicator and whether it stops once the person transitions to the rest of their probation period. Or, whether it's the full probationary period inclusive of that 700 Hours. Also, the data surrounding the program outcomes.

Vice-Chair Mayes thanked Mr. Cohen and stated that it is a technical question that staff can get back to you on.

Vice-Chair Mayes asked if there were any other public comments. There were none.

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12. ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Mayes asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Casselman stated motion to adjourn. Vice-Chair Mayes asked for a second. Ms. Lyons seconded. Vice-Chair Mayes asked for a vote. All members in favor, none opposed. Vice Chair Mayes adjourned the meeting at 3:06 pm.

Minutes submitted by: Jennifer Mynear
Edited By: Jenny Richter Livia

Jenny Richter Livia

02/07/2025

Jenny Richter Livia, N.S.R.C. Liaison

Approved By:

Raquel O'Neill

02/09/2025

Raquel O'Neill, Chair

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EXHIBIT 1



Steven Cohen
Steven.Cohen@Alumni.UNLV.edu

October 22, 2024

Via E-mail

To Jenny Richter Livia, Council Liaison
For the attention of:
Nevada State Rehabilitation Council

Re: Public Comment

Hi All,

The following documents/information sources were used/considered to create the below list of opportunities for improvement, concurrent with potential solutions.

- 1) The September ('24) MDR report*
- 2) The P&P from the antiquated Department (DETR) Website*
- 3) The '23 Plan (electronic)*
- 4) The Hub documents from the lobby (West Bay, dated unknown)*
- 5) Supplemental Hub communications from community partners (e.g., SILC)*
- 6) Common sense/logic (for the solutions)*

MDR:

- 1) The demographic results are unclear, as presented.*

Additional metric requested: % of cumulative caseload (Statewide) for current ('23 Legislative Session) resulting biennium, inclusive of all types of closures, as well as

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pending cases (e.g., intake, eligibility, etc. expectation flowchart statuses). Basically, how well does the sample size reflect the existing infrastructure capacity, both human (e.g., Agency Staff) as well as infrastructural (e.g., PRN/as needed outreach sites in rural areas, virtual/hybrid model mitigation strategies, etc.)?

2) Existing metrics:

Formal statement of MDR qualifications, including the states being used for comparative analysis. For example, NV would likely be an inappropriate comparison to NJ, as the latter has a tax base sufficient to have stronger community relationship infrastructural developments available.

Completely objective metric development desired. In other words, only extreme cases would provide yes/no/maybe response options, whereas comment oriented metrics would be likely to highlight systemic opportunities for improvement.

3) P&P (10/1/22 version; I believe (emphasis added) this may be outdated):

Effective communication:

See cumulative Agency Staff notes. 😊

Informed choice:

Person served should self direct case development flowchart from beginning to end. See NJ and CA service delivery models (which appear to be focused upon "Regional Center" Agencies) for technical assistance.

Referrals:

Establishment of cross functional State infrastructural "human services" outreach teams.

Benefits planning:

See cumulative Agency Staff notes.

Flowchart/expectation management:

Coordination with ADSD relative to a cumulative, collaborative No Wrong Door, Olmstead focused project and/or strategy. Single point of entry infrastructure in development (may not yet be public knowledge).

Additional infrastructural development not requiring a formalized pending/open case. For example, interviewing skills was brought up by another speaker. IJDT

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should be able to provide this service in their sleep, or even a Service Agreement provider. In other words, meet folks where they are, with a big picture, self directed, supported decision, AVRN analysis. Prioritization of large spend items (e.g., paying for college, AT, etc.), given potential State bureaucracies relative to these.

Ease of OOS fears relative extended service gaps. In other words, communication to the effect that the status quo will remain in place, with technical assistance sought to avoid the need for OOS designation and/or mitigation.

Reduction of infrastructure relative IPE pro forma items (e.g., G & C). Move them to the disclosures sections of the template instead. Offer plain language as standing accommodation.

Scope of services:

Retool scopes relative to co occurring diagnoses (e.g., ASD + anxiety +/- depression relative to same person served/potentially served).

Leverage CE opportunities to meet people where they are, and where they are aspiring to be.

Leverage TPCA opportunities relative to transportation and G&C training (e.g., assistance with RTC certification, scheduling skill review, "crisis" alternative management).

Leverage population demographics relative to reduction of paperwork reductions through enhanced digitization. For example, a dictation capable VR app would be a wonderful tool relative to existing, yet Purchasing stalled project (whose name is escaping me at nearly 3 AM).

YIT: Redefinition of transition activities to include career transitions > age 18 +/- 21/22. Development relative to G & C activities regarding alternative diploma and overall disclosure, ATS management, etc.

I can't find my September document on my laptop. I've asked Jenny if I sent it to her in Word format, or if I sent it already converted. Please accept these talking points relative to the Agency report November SRC agenda item.

Thank you for your consideration, and I look forward to hearing from you soon. Please do not hesitate to contact me at my below contact info with any questions.