

**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE  
BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
40 FOUNTAIN STREET  
THIRD FLOOR  
PROVIDENCE RHODE ISLAND 02903  
MINUTES  
March 13, 2006**

**Members Present: Chairman Don Deignan, Dick Gaffney, Ray D'Attore. Elizath Graves and Ralph Iannitelli. Quorum requirements were met.**

**Staff present: Raymond Carroll, Administrator of the Office of Rehabilitation Services, DHS.**

**Approval of Minutes:**

**The Minutes of the December 5, 2005 meeting were approved on a motion by Dick Gaffney, seconded by Ray D'Attore.**

**Introduction of Mr. Carroll and report on Agency:**

**Chairman Deignan introduced Raymond Carroll to those Members unacquainted with him, and announced that Mr. Carroll would be presenting a personal and program update of the agency in lieu of the customary order of the agenda due to the appointment of a new**

**Administrator of SBVI to replace Gary Weir and the retirement of Susan Shapiro.**

**Mr. Carroll thanked the Members of the Council for their service to the agency and to Rhode Island's visually impaired. Mr. Carroll indicated that the interview and selection process for Gary Weir's replacement was lengthy and exhaustive, inasmuch as it was the consensus of the selection panel that a new approach was needed to managing SBVI. Ultimately, the panel selected Ron Racine as Administrator, to start on March 19, 2006. Mr. Racine is currently a regional supervisor in the Vocational Rehabilitation program; Mr. Racine started in the agency as a vocational rehabilitation counselor.**

**Mr. Carroll also advised that candidates were currently being interviewed for Susan Shapiro's position, and that a new business manager will be selected as well. Andre Mayer has been reassigned from the Business Enterprise program, and Christine Marcello, a S/W II has been hired, with responsibilities for Early Intervention Services in Linda Hughes' unit. Mr. Carroll anticipates an expansion of transition services for high school students, as well as the Randolph-Shepard program, which is currently being discussed in Congress at this time.**

**Mr. Carroll noted that although the Governor's Office had suggested a \$51 million cutback for OH, ORS is not affected, principally because of the Federal component: Mr. Carroll speculated that that Rite Care**

and Medicaid are the ultimate focus of any budgetary reductions. Prior to Gary Weir's retirement, the Division was fully staffed at 37 personnel, and all positions are to be refilled, plus the Data Logic contract employees.

The Chairman reported on the pending legislation developed that through the work of the Vision Services Commission on which he served (currently House Bill H—7066) establishing a Vision Education and Services Program, most likely to be located at the Sherlock Center, and establishing an Advisory Board for the same. The Chairman will continue to advise the Council on the progress of the legislation.

Dick Gaffney noted that based upon figures supplied at the Council's 12/5/05 meeting, only 26 individuals were utilizing the Newline program, and that usage of Newline should be encouraged through the KNFB (KURZWEIL) Reader.

Elizabeth Graves reported on the activities of the Statewide Independent Living

Council and State Rehabilitation Council, by written reports submitted to the

Members, copies of which are attached to the Minutes. Of particular importance,

Elizabeth noted that the public hearing for the State Plan for Vocational

Rehabilitation Services and Supported Employment is to be held on

**March 14,**

**2006 from 9-11 A.M at the Arnold Conference Center of Slater Hospital, and urged**

**any interested Member to attend and comment on the State Plan. The Chairman announced that the next meeting of the Council would be held on Monday, June 12, 2006 at 4 P.M. at 40 Fountain Street, Third Floor, Providence.**

**The meeting was adjourned, on motion of Dick Gaffney, seconded by Ray D'Attore.**