

**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND AND  
VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
40 FOUNTAIN STREET  
FIRST FLOOR  
PROVIDENCE, RI 02903**

**MINUTES:**

**December 14, 2015**

**Members Present: Donald Deignan – Chairperson GAC; Graciela Pires – President NFB of RI / GAC Member; Elizabeth Graves – GAC Member / SRC; John Pimental – Vice President of NFB of RI / GAC Member; Barbara Walsh – GAC Member; Donna Elliott – GAC Member / NFB of RI; Ralph Ianitelli – GAC Member**

**Members Not Present: Rick Costa – SILC Member/Representative; Al Williams – GAC member; Donna Williams – GAC Member;**

**Staff Present: Laurie DiOrio –Administrator SBVI; Sandra Pritko – SS/EI Unit Supervisor; Glenn Lanoue – Rehabilitation Teacher SBVI SS Unit, Robert Pires – Rehabilitation Teacher SBVI VR Unit; Molly Faerber – Rehabilitation Teacher SBVI SS Unit;**

**Staff Not Present: Rebecca Cloutier – Case Aide SBVI**

**Guest: None**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**At 4:17 pm the quarterly meeting for the GAC was called to order.**

**Motion to approve minutes from September 14, 2015 were approved**

**with the correction to Administrator Laurie DiOrio to the minutes. Motion was made by Ralph Ianitelli to approve minutes as amended. Seconded by Grace Pires. Unanimously approved.**

#### **Social Services – Update**

- There was no report provided at this time - deferred**

#### **ORS Update – Laurie DiOrio**

- There was no update at this time – deferred**

#### **BEP Update – Laurie DiOrio**

- There was no update at this time - deferred**

#### **VR UPDATE – Melanie Sbardella**

- There was no update at this time - deferred**

#### **SBVI UPDATE – Laurie DiOrio**

- The major news/update for SBVI as an agency is the as a whole is now utilizing a Rehabilitation Teaching Unit (RT Unit)**
- Robert Pires, Glenn Lanoue & Molly Faerber make up this unit**
- Classroom environment, seminars, RT's hold classes routinely, introductory classes, keyboarding classes (pilot program), business seminar classes, labelling, notetaking**
- 2-5 people at most to come in and be introduced to these skills – peer support and instructor support**
- Several classes routinely – serve as intro to topic - can decide on individual classes or if 2-3 are at the same, clients can move together**
- After training is done, follow up will be done at the home so that the benefit is long term**
- Referral process to RT which leads to: Initial assessment for the**

**client / support staff / family member in order to obtain a perspective into the client – obtain goals for clients**

- Right now trying to identify clients for these classes – assistance is required by counselors**
- There will be a crossover between VR / IL / ILOB**
- There is a loan program through ATAP to loan out a device to see if the client likes the device and if it is feasible**
- Introductory classes have devices that clients can use to see if this is the best match**
- Focusing on all 3 RT's and their strengths to assist clients to the best of the SBVI ability**
- Regina Connor & Don Deignan did volunteer to help with pilot programs**
- Keyboarding, Organization and Labeling, Intro to Apple products (IOS), Money, Self-Care, Eating, Tablet training**
- Molly is assisting with the presenting classes and questions women may have regarding purchasing clothes, matching clothes, applying makeup etc.**
- All 3 RTs will be crossing programs, going out to homes for follow ups, training, in house aspects – meeting weekly to obtain a sense of clients**
- With the DOJ Consent Decree, it may take 2 people to assess clients**
- Gloria Stuart works with the Carroll Center for the Blind (they are fee for service vendors through SBVI) for AT Consultation she will be providing technology evaluations, training and technical support**

**SILC Report – Laurie DiOrio**

- **OSCIL North – staffing in Pawtucket**

- **704 Plan is being implemented**

### **SRC Update – Liz Graves**

- **SRC meeting for October was cancelled – next meeting November 17, 2015**
- **Chairperson Gail Lawson reported upcoming activities at the Conference**
- **Issue of SRC RI not having operating budget was raised**
- **Status of State Plan still in holding stage – awaiting finalizing of the new regulations**
- **Public Hearing is scheduled for February 4th, 2016 with a number of locations throughout the state**
- **Training for SRC newcomers and members will be held at the Sherlock Center**
- **Policy Committee has limited activity up to now – Committee requests more active role from members**

### **Status Update for Tax Exemption**

- **Barbara Walsh spoke to Sen. Erin Lynch – the Senator will draft a text for a Bill for the 2016 Session – Bill will be pre-drafted**
- **If the Bill Number can be found, it can be distributed to the GAC and support can be taken to other Senators**

### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- **Meeting dates for the next year were approved 3/14/2016, 6/13/2016, 9/12/2016 & 12/12/2016 – moved by Grace Pires, seconded by John Pimental. Approval is unanimous**
- **Term dates, updates of counsel list, membership expiration for**

**terms, term length is 5 years**

- **There are no term limits to individuals serving**
- **GAC does not have any bi-laws which list absences**
- **A roster with current dates of expiration of terms will be distributed at the next meeting**
- **Members are encouraged to think about how often they attend and if they want to maintain membership on the GAC**
- **Grace and John are appointed co-chair to a subcommittee to establish membership guidelines**
- **Don will get his wife to do a “boilerplate” set of guidelines**