

State Rehabilitation Council

Executive Meeting

Office of Rehabilitation Services

October 20, 2004

Minutes

Present from State Rehabilitation Council: William Anderson, Joseph Ferreira, J. David Sienko

Present from Agency staff: Stephen Brunero, Gary Wier

1. Call to Order: The meeting came to order at 4 PM.

B. Anderson: informed the members that P. Choquette had resigned his position on the Council due to time constraints. His letter of resignation would be sent to the Governor's office by staff. This leaves the Council without a Chair for the Legislative/Advocacy Sub-committee and it will need to be addressed at the November 15th, meeting. Also, there is a new representative from RIPIN, Susan Donovan, who will be attending the meeting.

Sub-committee structure: There will be a short meeting of all Sub-committees to elect a Vice-chair and set their schedules for 2005.

This information will be directed to staff for notation in the Council minutes.

2. The Agenda for the Annual meeting

Old Business

Review and approval of Minutes from October 4, 2004 meeting

New Business:

Chairperson's Report

- Report on Membership changes.**
- Sub-Committee's status (There will be a short meeting (10 minutes) of all Sub-committees to elect a Chair, Vice-chair and finalize 2005 schedules. (this information will be directed to staff for notation in the Council minutes)**
- Members voting status**
- Nominating & Leadership Development – J. Belasco**

Presentation of members for Reappointment

Vote for slate of officers (ballot vote)

- Vote on By-laws changes to thirty (30) day time frame between nomination of officers and Council elections.**
- Annual Report (remind the Chairs of Sub-committees of deadlines for reports/Council input on Report material)**
- Discussion and vote on the 2005 SRC schedule (list of proposed**

dates attached to this notice)

Discussion on members voting status

J. Ferreira: asked what the status is for the members who will be waiting for reappointment letters.

N. Baker: reported that according to the Governor's office, members who are seated and waiting for reappointment can vote.

B. Anderson: agreed saying the practice for most other Councils is if an appointment is up the member actively continues unless there has been a break in the appointment. However the rules for membership came up last March at the Full Council meeting and therefore further clarification is needed.

J. Ferreira: stated that he and the others waiting for reappointment would be invisible, not having a say in votes on motions and this was unjust.

B. Anderson: said the concern seems to be that you are not technically on the Council until you receive your letter of reappointment. Clarification from the Appointments Office of the Governor is needed. We need to address the question of voting. I would open it up to R. Carroll to get clarification. Can S. Brunero let him know?

S. Brunero: said that would not be a problem.

Noted: N. Baker would also contact the Municipal Affairs and Appointments office and get clarification for the Council.

B. Anderson: the Nominating Committee needs to report next on the agenda. That would consist of a vote to send appointments and reappointments to the Governor and the vote on a slate of officers.

Noted: N. Baker will have the appointment letter ready and distribute a copy of it to all members to assure contact information is correct.

B. Anderson: we need to set a possible schedule for next year's meetings. Last year we projected that having more meetings would get more work done. But in reality this has not happened. The real work needs to occur in the Sub-committees.

D. Sienko: said that the restructuring a year ago was in part to allow the Sub-committees to have time to work at some of the meetings. This would give them a chance to confer with each other. The agendas have not allowed this. It seems to be a time restriction.

B. Anderson: agreed and added that we are not getting enough people at the meetings of the Sub-committees. There simply may be too many meetings between the Full Council and the Sub-committees

for members to attend them all. My inclination is to go back to the four (4) meetings a year.

G. Wier: agreed that it made sense to just have the four (4) meetings. The Full Council meetings take time away from the Sub-committee efforts.

B. Anderson: remarked that whoever the next Chair is she or he may want to focus the Council's efforts back to the Sub-committees. Additionally, the Sub-committees need to prepare schedules for N. Baker to post. This should help them focus on the work and look ahead for the year.

D. Sienko: recalled that the main reason for more meetings was the Council wanted the Sub-committee Chairs to talk about what was going on in their committees at the Full Council meetings. Additionally, we wanted to do some training, and work with other co-committees, and other systems that we need to be looking at. We might need to hold a harder line on the Sub-committee Chairs. I think the Nominations and Leadership Sub-committee has been a great example for the others.

Note: Based on the schedules of Sub-committees and their expectations; at each Full Council meeting the Sub-committee Chairs will present written or oral reports.

B. Anderson: asked what the Leadership thought about having four (4) meetings a year for the Full Council.

D. Sienko: said the State Transition Council meets five (5) times starting in October and running through the spring, leaving the summer off. This seems to work well.

A discussion took place and the Executive Leadership and ORS Administrators worked out a draft of the 2005 SRC schedule for presentation to the Full Council for their input at the Annual Meeting.

Draft of 2005 SRC schedule

Executive Meetings

Day: Wednesdays

Time: 4:15 - 6 PM

Location: Office of Rehabilitation Services

40 Fountain Street

Providence, RI 02903

5th floor conference Rm.

September 14

November 2

January 5

March 2

June 1

Full Council Meetings

Day: Mondays

Time: 4 - 6 PM

Location: RI Department of Labor and Training

Center General Complex

1511 Pontiac Avenue

Cranston, RI 02920

Building 73 - Main conference Rm.

September 19

November 7

January 10

March 7

June (TBD) - contingent on date of Public Hearing of ORS Annual update to the State Plan typically slated for the first week of June.

D. Sienko: asked if the Council might want to have a Welcoming Committee to assist new members.

B. Anderson: I think we need to have a separate meeting for training. We (the leadership) do a presentation for the Council.

D. Sienko: agreed and added that a mentorship partner program would be helpful. A Council member would take on a new member to train them and familiarize them with the Council's work.

B. Anderson: agreed saying that once the new people have had their interview we should be inviting them to the meetings, and assigning them a mentor. And even though they may have to wait for the appointment from the Governor we can do better at making them feel like part of the process. That way after they have been active with the Council if they make a decision whether they wish to continue or not, then the letter can be pulled or left there.

Note: D. Sienko will follow up with the Leadership regarding establishing guidelines for the mentorship process. N. Baker will add to the membership list what Sub-committees Council Members are on, and if they Chair or Vice-chair a Sub-committee as well as current vacancies on Sub-committees.

G. Wier: suggested to structure meetings so that things being voted

on go towards the top of the agenda allowing more business to be done in case of early departures and a loss of the quorum.

Additionally, several years ago the Council went towards a more spartan view of themselves, in other areas besides having just meetings. There are other resources available and some spots could be utilized that are perhaps less spartan. The Annual Meeting for example, perhaps include a dinner, or a breakfast, a less onerous meeting making it more enjoyable for everyone.

D. Sienko: I think there is a perception of being involved with public work. I like the fact that we use public buildings and have snacks. I think that extra money could be used to send, as an example, two or three people to a training meeting and then have them come back and have a training meeting for the Full Council at the Radisson perhaps.

G. Wier: I did not mean all meetings, but an occasional meeting one that certainly involves training or a milestone for the Council.

B. Anderson: remarked the two people in the room who have done the most training you (D. Sienko) and I, are not going to get a lot out of it. Honestly we spend more time playing games, and we need to get beyond this.

D. Sienko: I think this Leadership training is an excellent opportunity to develop new leadership.

B. Anderson: I agree and we should be looking towards the future. I look at the people we have brought on, and if we do not get to them, these people are not going to stay. The positive things are not getting brought out. I think that has stopped, but now we need to look on to see what we are going to be doing for the future. That has to happen at the Sub-committee level. These are the people that need to go out and do outreach.

J. Ferreira: I agree it comes down to the right person for the job. I recall joining this Council back then and they interviewed me. I was an ORS client for years and something is missing now. What is missing is support. The clients seem like the weak link, but it is the clients that hold the chain together. It is up to us, the Council, to make sure that services are properly provided to them. The bickering needs to stop. Let's agree to disagree so we can move on. But many times we do not move on, the remnants of the last meeting just get carried over to the next meeting. People do not move on.

I have all the good things in life because people cared. I made it because people cared. The members on the Council care and are good at what they do however, when people start talking about Robert's Rule and start throwing unknown legislative laws in the way, I feel ignorant. I am certain I am not alone in that feeling. I don't care about Robert's Rules as much as I care about getting things done.

B. Anderson: and that is part of the problem, when we spend time playing games over how to utilize time.

G. Wier: it is hard to get people involved when the meetings are meta-meetings. I think people are frustrated at not being able to get more done.

D. Sienko: agreed and added, we need to refocus.

J. Ferreira: I think we have a wonderful group; unfortunately we are not all on the same page.

B. Anderson: we get lost in the foolishness, why we get things done at certain times. And it seems the battles are continuous.

D. Sienko: remarked to J. Ferreira that it is okay to say these things at a Full Council meeting.

J. Ferreira: it is hard to say things at times. But I feel I am not alone and others have the same concerns about members throwing up roadblocks at every opportunity. Perhaps at the next meeting something will be said.

B. Anderson: that is anyone's choice. Members have a right to speak their minds.

3. Adjournment: the meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Baker, Staff

State Rehabilitation Council