

**Maine SRC-DBVI Fall Conference  
Minutes of Full Council Meeting  
Oct29 , 2014  
12:55 - 2:00  
Hampton Inn, Bath**

**Present:** Chris Boynton, Maine State Library; Nancy Moulton, Education Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Children; Scott Murray, SRC-DBVI Admin. Assistant; Jim Phipps, Iris Network Director; Cheryl Peabody, ACB Maine; Kathy Despres, C.A.R.E.S., Sue Fairfield, MPF Rep; Annette Tilsley, VR counselor; Adam Zimmerman; visually impaired lawyer--self-employed, Kelly Osborn, Executive Director Goodwill Workforce Services; John McMahon, DBVI Director; Michelle Mason, VA Healthcare System/Blinded Veterans Advocacy; Walter Woitasek, Deaf-Blind Rep, Mark Sinclair, NEBAA Director; Cindy Bernstein, DOE; Carrie Brooker, DBVI-VR counselor,

**Absent with Notice:** Lynn Merrill, PTGDU, Brad Strause, AlphOne, (on vacation)

**Guests:** Jenny Ardito, C.A.R.E.S/CAP

**I. Call to Order:** Meeting called to order at 12:54 by Kathy Despres.

**II. Public Comment:** None.

**III. Approval of Minutes.** Jim made motion to approve August minutes. Mark seconded. All in favor, motion carried unanimously.

**IV. Director's Report - Continuation of State Plan Discussion**

Kathy then opened discussion about transition portion of John's presentation and asked John about state plan and her concern about volume of proposed work. John cited plans to address this and how the interconnectedness of items amplifies impact of any one item. Also, once a new program is designed, subsequent offerings of the same program require fewer resources.

Jim asked about college-prep summer program that was offered in summer of 2013 and 2014, and how it is only going to be offered every two years, so how do we get the in the odd year. John reported struggling with that, too--options were to run it every summer for 2 or 3 people or every other for 6 or 8. Bigger group is more powerful because of increased opportunities for peer mentoring and self-discovery. Adam suggested adding sophomores but they can't take USM courses. John added that separate program before college prep could be added, but there are higher priority items needing to be done first. Nancy cited intent to focus on students who may not be college-bound during odd years and John

clarified that non-college-bound students will actually be focused on every summer as part of the center-based program. Also, college-bound students don't get a lot of IL skills instruction as part of college prep so there is an opportunity to do another avenue of programming.

Adam cited his experience with IRIS Network in the late 90s, doing law courses at USM, good disability services. John cited another benefit of center-based program is students not being able to "fake being sighted."  
[Cee and Linda depart]

John continued--looking at the second strategy "work experience by age 16" and how we have been talking about that for a long time and it ended up in WIOA. It's important to understand it's not just about DBVI, contracted partners have to be part of this effort. CRPs could be good matches for this in certain parts of the state. We have not succeeded at that yet but as of WIOA we are now required to.

*VICAP Update* (Visual Impairment Community Action Team) We have to have somebody to pull that together, 2-4 people, only happening in fits and starts. Andrea Bickford that taken this and surrounded herself with the right folks.

*Blind Rehab Specialist Position:* Thought we had a chance to get our fourth position into the DOL budget. Only able to put in for two TVIs that did go through, but fourth blindness rehab specialist position did not go through. Until we can have four people doing that job, some families will not get the benefit of those positions, which is what keeps us moving at slowly as we are. If you live in southern Maine you're not getting the full benefit. Adam asked about role, John mentioned previously was Bill Anderson, but focus now changed.

Cindy commented on schools needing better understanding of rehab specialist role and when/how to engage. John cited high turnover with special ed directors, and how schools need to educate that transition plan can't just be "refer to VR." Kathy sought clarification of channels of communication, saying Nancy has access to blind or visually impaired students, but only those with IEPs. Cindy can't just go into the database to find them, but school district knows who they are, but connection with DBVI is not necessarily being made. Kathy suggested catalog of services from DBVI that could get out to special education (SPED) directors. Adam cited his "forcing the issue" with guidance counselors and thinks it shouldn't rest solely in the hands of SPED directors. John cited ramp-up of transition work with WIOA which takes time to implement, should see more on our menu over the next 2-3 years. Transition brochure was started but work on that stopped. We need to go back to the infrastructure and design the programs then put something together and describe what paths we can offer. John very

positive about having more members like Adam who can share experience coming up through the system.

Kathy mentioned that Walter and Dot celebrating 61st anniversary. Congratulations from group.

**V. Work Plan:** Need to be ready to discuss at Nov meeting. Walter made motion to move meetings as has been suggested (referencing previous discussion about moving the next meeting to November 19 and move meetings to third Wednesday of odd-numbered months.) Nancy seconded. No discussion. All in favor, motion carried unanimously. Kathy will get a list of dates and locations out to everyone.

Kathy suggested that prior to 11/19 everyone to meet with their group and figure out chairperson, look at tasks and dates, add or subtract as needed. Workplan is "living document;" if there are changes get those to Kathy by 11/14. When chairpersons identified, Kathy will send out phone code for chairs to conduct phone conferences with their committees. We have one phone number so hopefully meetings won't overlap.

Group then decided it would be better to select chairs now to expedite committee work, after committee updates. Kathy will send out committee list from Cee to group.

**VI. Committee Updates:** No updates except web site committee met today, will show web site at next meeting. Chris reported that National Library Service will distribute i-Bill currency readers. Simplest way to get one is to register as a talking book patron, or can fill separate application.

**VII. Committee Chair Selection/Identification:**

*a. Section 121:* Kelly and Darcy. Kelly nominated Darcy as chair and will let her know.

*b. Steering committee:* Kathy.

*c. Policy, Rules Legislative:* John, Karen, Kathy, and Jim Phipps. (Jim is not a member, but willing to chair)

*d. Data Committee:* Kathy is Cindy Cheryl Kathy and Brenda Drummond. Cheryl willing to chair after duties outlined.

*e. Transition Committee:* Cindy, Nancy, Adam, Sue, and Carrie. Cindy willing to chair.

*f. Membership Committee:* Kathy, Jenn, Walter, and Adam. Kathy willing to chair.

*g. State Plan Committee:* Kathy, Brenda, Paul, Kelly, Nancy. Kelly will chair.

*h. Technology and Braille:* Chris willing to be chair if council membership not required. According to bylaws you do not have to be a member of the council to chair a committee

*i. Consumer Satisfaction:* Michelle, Jenn, Kathy. Jenn will chair.

*j. Business Committee:* Adam, Jim McManus, Valerie Oswald. Adam will chair.

Kathy will send phone code to chairs to coordinate meetings. The charge will be just to look over the work plan, see if there's anything you want to add and put some tentative dates that coordinate with a full council meeting.

**VII. Miscellaneous:** Walter then made appeal for donation from SRC/DBVI of funds to support the continuation of NewsLine for the blind, a program sponsored by NFB which is functioning here in Maine. Grant-writing efforts ongoing but fell short and donations needed. Walter then gave detailed description of the service, serves ~400 people, over 375 newspapers, local publications, accessible by phone, could be good way to get SRC meeting schedule out to folks. Perhaps between the VR and SRC budgets, \$5,000 could be tapped for program to continue. Steven King Foundation funded year 1 with \$30,000 donation. We can approach them again but not until year 3. Group not prepared for a vote but Kathy will put on agenda for the 11/19 meeting.

Further discussion about meeting dates then ensued, some need to coincide with public forums. Consumer satisfaction survey committee will determine best fit. November meeting to be held in usual location: Frances Perkins CR at DOL. Walter suggested title for upcoming forums: "show up, speak up, you count." Membership committee to send out 4 or 5 packets to new and prospective members, check withy Kathy about who is coming on. Mileage reimbursement requests for conference should go to Kelly.

**VIII. Adjournment:** Mark made motion to adjourn, Walter seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:55.