

**Montana State Rehabilitation
Council Meeting
Anaconda, MT
August 10 - 11, 2023
Meeting Minutes**



Members present: Gabrielle Broere, Celina Cline, Kathy Hampton, Chanda Hermanson, Lacey Keller, Barb Lowney, Tom Manthey, Doug McElroy, Corinne Moore, Marcy Roberts, Tommy Roberts, Emma Rooney, Jean Schroeder, Brian Tocher, and Joleen Weatherwax. On Zoom: Kendra Joyce and Mike Manhardt.

Members absent: Wes Feist, John Gorton, and Carlos Ramalho

Staff and guests: Lacey Conzelman, Anna Gibbs, Darrel Hannum, Brook Hodge, Jessica Kessler, Sarah Seltzer, two sign language interpreters. On Zoom: CART transcribers.

Ground rules reviewed. Mission Statements/Vision Statement read aloud. Introduction made around the tables. May 2023 meeting minutes approved.

Announcement:

Lacey made the announcement of how the group expresses a desire to make a bigger difference but action plans are never really made, so there was scheduled time to dive into those topics further and how we can better address them. She also mentioned wanting to spend time and focus on Anaconda since the meeting took place there.

Public Comments:

(No name announced)The Native American Representative on the board announced that they will be doing site visits in Great Falls, Northern Cheyenne, and other reservations to speak on their role as a state VR representative. They will invite all sites to provide feedback and work together to ensure best practices and most beneficial services. She also announced that they will do a March 22nd Disability awareness day in Browning and will see if others would like to participate in doing a disability awareness day. It was requested that more information on an October 8th event be shared at the November SRC meeting.

Corrine Moore shared that she will be attending an NCRC meeting and will share on that at the next SRC meeting. She asked if there was specific information that individuals would like to know following that meeting.

Welcome Message discussion, L. Keller and G. Broere:

The welcome message was pulled up and read aloud (refer to site for welcome message). Following the reading of the message, Corrine asked if the SRC has a maximum number of members that we can have. The council reported that it is 22. It was brought up to show the number of spots open on the council. Due to the need for frequent editing it was decided to add a click here button to see what spots are open on the council. It was motioned and second to approve the changes.

Reports from Committee:

- **Planning & Review Committee, Marcy Roberts**

The main focus of this committee's last meeting was the Governor's report. There was discussion to change to the cover photos to Montanans living with a disability instead of stock photos. Marcy also asked that success stories be forwarded on to her for the report to show VR impacts. Lastly, most of the time was spent to capture the achievements of SRC and the impacts on others. Marcy highlighted a few of the accomplishments including category 3 opening up, completing a Roberts Rules training, joint meetings with SILC, members participating in Olmstead committee training, finalized the SRC manual, appointed 4 new members, reviewed 6 procedures, reviewed 46 case stories, and updated the consumer satisfaction survey. Marcy also reported that they felt it was important to show that SRC consistently talks about the budget. They also included in the report some of the meetings SRC has been apart of and finalizing our logo. Chanda suggested adding the involvement of Wes and Jean on the State's Capacity Building Institute Team.

- **Education and Membership-Bylaw changes/edits, Emma Rooney**

Emma reported that the council is very close to being full. There are currently 2 positions open for advocacy seats. There was also two pending applications waiting for appointment. Emma reported that she will continue to check and make sure that appointments move forward. Emma reported that we have two positions coming up to expire; one with business and industry and one for advocacy. Emma reported that she liked the idea that Marcy brought up about creating a brochure to provide to individuals who might be interested in learning more about SRC. Chanda suggested having interested new members shadow the council so that they don't lose interest during the long appointment process. Emma reported that she would send

out an email letting anyone who is on their second term and expiring know that they are coming up on that.

- **Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment, Celina Cline**

Celina reported that responses still remain low for the survey. Lacey stated responses could be low due to the busy time of the statewide needs assessment being completed. Celina reported that they thought of some ideas to improve this and thought maybe follow-up emails or phone calls would be a good place to start but with the confidentiality of the survey now that would be difficult. The statewide needs assessment survey had a much better response rate. Celina reported that the committee talked about the potential to contract out the surveying due to VR staff being too limited to put enough energy into getting a good response rate. Anna reported that this is not a new problem but has been a challenge for years. Anna stated that she thinks it is a good idea to contract to avoid that same problem continuing to occur. Chanda reported that she has consulted with the directors office and they are okay with contracting this out. Chanda reported that the process to get a contractor would be through an RFP application. Jean made a motion to move forward with finding a contractor for the survey. It was second and approved with all in favor. Chanda said that the first step is developing the RFP and stated that it would be good to have SRCs voice in the entire process of finding a contractor.

- **Policy, Procedure, & Personnel Development, Brook Hodge**

Brook reported that she sent out 3 of our published policies since meeting back in May. Brook reported that we finally have a published college and training procedure. This gives direction to counselors on helping clients with tuition, fees, books, supplies, and internet. This also gives direction on how to write those into the client's plan for employment. The second procedure that was published was the VRBS Field Services leave procedure. This is guidance to the staff on how and when to request time off. The third one mailed was the zoom captioning procedure. This gives staff guidance on how to use that service through zoom. There was also a training held on this for VR staff. The next three procedures being worked on are the electronic case management, electronic referrals, and how/when/why assisting a client with dental needs.

A break and group photo followed this report.

Rural Barriers Discussion, L. Keller and G. Broere:

Lacey opened this conversation explaining the need to look at rural barriers and see how we can do a better job to meet the need. Kendra Brown introduced herself. She is a specialist for Ability Montana. Lacey reminded the group that what triggered this conversation was the barriers specifically in transportation. The three touchpoints for the conversation were transportation, outreach, and collaboration. Marcy talked about cultural barriers in Anaconda and the changes that are occurring in the community in

the recent years. Marcy talked about the lack of resources for individuals across the lifespan living with a disability. She gave some real-life examples. Kendra Brown reported that in rural communities we have to be more creative in our solutions. Kendra Brown also talked about a lack of knowledge about disabilities in the community and a need to continue to advocate throughout the community. She talked about the culture of the community and how they have each other's backs. She also stated that there is a desire to have resources in Anaconda that they don't have to drive to Butte to receive. Lacey brought up 6 areas to talk more in depth when it comes to serving our rural communities. The 6 areas were transportation, collaboration with community partners, underserved populations, youth, and PreETS, and rural pride.

Pre-ETS:

Lacey talked about how getting into rural schools is challenging. There is a sense of a lack of trust with smaller communities having strangers coming in, she reported. Jona is the pre-ETS specialist for the area of Anaconda. She is new and when she started she went to every classroom and talked about pre-ETS and what it can do to help students. She stated that there is a misconception that pre-ETS helps pay for college. One of the difficulties in rural areas for pre-ETS is finding workplace learning experiences. Those are limited in rural areas. They are working to figure out creative ways to navigate these struggles. She finds that students are getting what they need from VR services. Lacey asked what pre-ETS thinks causes the misconceptions. Jona replied that a lot of it came from the teachers introducing them that way. Lacey asked about utilizing virtual workplace learning experiences. They are doing virtual job shadowing.

Transportation/Housing:

Kathy brought up that there are a lot of challenges getting people into new communities throughout the state due to a lack of housing. Barb brought up ride share. This is a service that is becoming popular in Missoula where individuals can ride share to work. It was also brought up that ride share is being used in Anaconda and Glacier. Doug asked about the North Central Montana transit and what the rates are for that. Darrel responded that it is a free service as far as he knows. It was reported that although this system is free, it is limited in stops. It was brought up that Anaconda's Senior Center has a bus and will give people rides around Anaconda but will also go to Butte as needed too. Kendra Brown also mentioned that Wyatt Falls public transportation will bring a bus to Walmart and then individuals can take the public bus from there where they need to go. Lacey suggested setting up a committee or joining in on a transportation committee that exists to make a bigger difference with this topic.

Outreach: Kendra Brown reported that in Anaconda they try to do as much outreach as possible. Showing up and having people start to know who you are and what you do is important. Kendra expressed thinking that word of mouth is best for rural outreach. They spend quite a bit of time in the doctor's offices and trying to reach rural schools. Lacey talked about trying to match your outreach to what the places really need and trying to help in as many ways as you can when you make your stops. She talked about co-presenting with a community partner and the benefits of that. Kendra Brown stated that she tries to involve as many services as she can.

Kendra Lewis talked about how hard everyone is working on outreach but everyone is working separately so clinics and organizations are overwhelmed with resources and none of them make it to the clients. Kendra Lewis wondered about having a clearing house where outreach individually could still occur but then all the resources were listed in one place so if the client got one, they got them all. Celina wondered if VR has a resource page for referrals. Kendra Brown mentioned having a resource page but challenges being with updating it so frequently with turnover. Montana 211 was brought up and was recommended to remind clients of this. Darrel recommended that staff education on resources throughout the state is critical and always having updated training on what is out there. Montana 211 was brought up again and individuals in the group did some simple searching. They found it to be helpful for larger towns in the state but lacking some rural resources.

Underserved Populations: Kiddy shared her experiences working with a group of high functioning adults with autism who are a part of underserved populations. She talked about how parents state that once high school is over there are a total lack of services for these individuals. She also talked about how there is a much larger homeless population than people realize. There are a lot of individuals living out of their cars. Especially now that the market has gone up. She reported that the mental health challenges are also going up but thankfully there are new providers coming into the community to practice mental health. Barb asked about matching services for money and Chanda replied that if people are getting cost services supporting things financially there are quite a few responsibilities that person needs to follow. Brook reported that Darrel and her have been working together to target efforts working with the state hospital. They are working to transition individuals out of the hospital into employment. They are already seeing great success with that. Kendra Brown talked about the struggles individuals face with housing in Anaconda and how there is a relatively high poverty threshold. She also stated that there are likely only three accessible units in the whole town.

Lacey closed this section with action items like targeting our outreach efforts and doing more co-outreaching and working together. She also talked about ways that we can target organizations and individuals needing services while they are young to make sure they start with a strong foundation.

Federal Plan Discussion, Chanda Hermanson, Lacey Conzelman, & Anna Gibbs:

Chanda stated that they would be covering a little information on processing for our federal state plan. The statewide needs assessment was consulted with Bloom and they are doing a lot of analytics across the state. The results should be in a portal and published by the end of the year. This will guide the state plan that is due in March. The plan changed this year. The reporting of what we have to include in that has changed. By the next meeting Chanda stated that they will have this ready to articulate for the group. There are a lot of mechanical changes that are being sorted through.

Lacey stated that the conference of statewide assessment, CSNA will wrap up the end of the year. She proposed that we do a strategic planning meeting at the beginning of next year. This would involve other partners being at the table for input as well. Chanda agreed on doing a planning meeting at the beginning of the year. Marcy reported that Kristen Smith invited them to do a statewide needs assessment focus group on September 13th.

Strategic Plan Discussion; Lacey Conzelman:

Side Note: Lacey brought up the next SRC meeting. The Holiday Inn in West Yellowstone is under construction and won't be open until next spring. Gabrielle stated that we have time set aside tomorrow to decide on the next meeting.

Lacey reported that they began the strategic plan in May or June of 2020 and it was written for 5 years. There was a new vision, mission, and values written at that time for the agency. SRC was involved in this process. When the strategic plan is developed it is based off of the statewide needs assessment and that determines the areas of that the program needs to improve in terms of underserved areas/populations. From that process 5 overarching goals were developed that VR needed to work on with input from all the stakeholders. From those goals the strategies to accomplish them were decided upon and further broken down. All of them meet monthly and talk about what they are working on in terms of the work plan. The 5 goal areas are youth services, coordination, organizational stability, equity,

and inclusion. Chanda reported that at monthly meeting they go through objectives that feed the strategies and tasks that they are working to meet. Chanda gave examples including the objective fiscal stability and then strategies to achieve that. Lacey sent an email of objective examples, refer to this for more specific examples.

Job Corps Presentation & Community Partner Development, Carrie Wolfe:

Carie introduced herself. She has been a Job Corps for five years. There are 125 Job Corps in the nation and 24 of them are forest services Job Corps. Their Jobs Corps are vocational, 100% free, federally funded, vocational training facilities. It has eight different trades. They service students 16 to 24 years old. Their students need to fit and be fit to come to Job Corps. They can't have a criminal background or any felonies. One of the centers is all about workplace employment, and they help people become as employable as possible. They can earn their high school diploma or GED on a center. They also participate in work-based learning. She talked about having 3 carpentry students in New Mexico. She also has 20 up at Seely working on camp crews. These programs are all volunteer and students can leave any time if they are over 18 years of age. She teaches financial literacy and a lot of holistic programs. Anaconda specifically has culinary, painting, welding, and advanced welding as well as heavy equipment operators, heavy equipment mechanics, brick laying, and carpentry. If they enter into forestry they will get a trade and Job Corps officially has a direct placement into forest service. She talked about how there are many different ways that they give back to their communities. Not every job pays them but some do. To learn more about Job Corps they have Council meetings that people can come in and they can go through their trades. They do tours and love to show people around. There are four dorms, three male dorms and one female dorm. A typical day they will get up at 6:00 AM, they will clean up their area, they go to breakfast. After that they can finish things up and have to be to trade at 8:00 AM. They go to trade or education depending on where their wee falls and they will be in full time at 8:00 and lunch at 11:00 AM of 12:00 PM. Then back to trade until 4:00 PM and dinner at 6:00 PM. Trades last 9 months to 2 years. Carrie ended by offering a tour if anyone is interested.

Member Moment, Tommy Roberts:

Tommy introduced himself and thanked everyone for this opportunity. He stated that he stated working "really real" jobs around 1997 for a wage. He moved to Montana from North Carolina in 2008. He took a job at Stillwater and worked there for 13 years. In 2019 he started getting involved in human rights. He started his own side business as a business consultant. He really

enjoyed coaching. He went through the electrical apprenticeship at Stillwater mine and became an electrician. He really liked that job. While working as an electrician he was shocked by an electric transformer and about 7500 volts went through him. When he left the hospital he used a wheelchair and then progressed to a cane and is now walking on his own. Because of a lack of services in Montana he went to Chicago Electrical Trauma Rehab Institution. He had to advocate to get workman's comp to go to this program. That was a moment that really stood out how much you have to advocate when you have a disability. His experiences have made him a passionate advocate for himself and others. He also talked about his family and what an impact they have made being by his side through it all. He just started a new career as onboarding recruiting supervisor for a company called, Diverse Transfer and Storage. His main focus is to hire people with disabilities or not as long as they are qualified, that's all that matters.

NCSRC Update, L. Keller and G. Broere:

Federal & State Report, Chanda Hermanson:

Chanda started with the state report. There is a new Deputy Director, his name is Charlie Burton. He has been onboarding for about 4 months. The department is also now going through a rebranding process. They have a new logo, so Chanda said to expect to see a lot of new things. Sarah will continue to do quality program evaluation, quality assurance, and personal development. She just has a lot more jobs now. DDS is going through a "facelift" Chanda reported. They have a great new team and are open and willing to do outreach. The business enterprise program has been contracted out for years. They have decided they no longer need to contract this out. There are 3 blind vendors across the state that the contracting was supporting. It will be less expensive to take that in house. Chanda also reported there is no RSA commissioner yet. She stated they are funded and managed through RSA department of education at the federal level. Without the appointed commissioner it does impact what they do. Glenna Gallo is the Secretary of Education for Special Education and rehab services. She will be the boss of the commissioner. Chanda to email Lacey.

Budget Report, Anna Gibbs:

Anna reviewed and referred to the following shared documents below for this report.

| State Fiscal Year 2022 | | | | | | | | | | State Fiscal Year 2023 | | | | | | | | | | State Fiscal Year 2024 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| FFY 22 Grant \$11,084,507 | | | | | | | | | | FFY 23 Grant \$13,168,208 | | | | | | | | | | FFY 24 Grant (unknown) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| State Share \$3,000,000 | | | | | | | | | | State Share \$3,563,950 | | | | | | | | | | State Share estimate unknown | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oct 21 | Nov 21 | Dec 21 | Jan 22 | Feb 22 | Mar 22 | Apr 22 | May 22 | Jun 22 | Jul 22 | Aug 22 | Sept 22 | Oct 22 | Nov 22 | Dec 22 | Jan 23 | Feb 23 | Mar 23 | Apr 23 | May 23 | Jun 23 | Jul 23 | Aug 23 | Sept 23 | Oct 23 | Nov 23 | Dec 23 | Jan 24 | Feb 24 | Mar 24 | Apr 24 | May 24 | Jun 24 | Jul 24 | Aug 24 | Sept 24 |
| | | | | | | | | | | Carryforward of FFY22 Grant | | | | | | | | | | Carryforward of FFY23 Grant | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Chart showing Federal fiscal years purple, pink and yellow

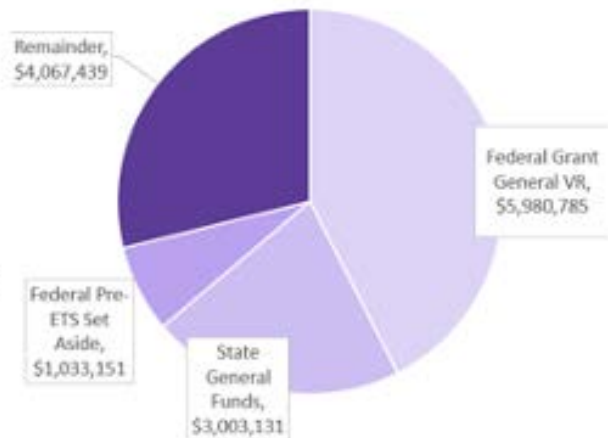
FFY 2022 Award

Our **FFY22** award was originally \$6,003,734. In August 2022, we applied for and received Reallotment* in the amount of \$5,080,773. Together, this brings our total federal award to \$11,084,507. This results in a Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) set-aside requirement of \$1,662,676 which leaves \$9,421,830 for General VR. The required State Share is \$3,000,000.

The breakdown looks like this:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| \$ 9,421,830 | Federal Grant Funds (for General VR) |
| \$ 3,000,000 | State General Funds |
| <u>\$ 1,662,676</u> | <u>Federal Pre-ETS Set-Aside</u> |
| \$ 14,084,506 | Total Budget |

FFY22 Grant Award plus State Share Expenditures out of \$14,084,506



The VRBS program expended \$10,017,067 of the **FFY22** grant as of April 30, 2023 as follows:

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| \$ 5,980,785 | Federal Grant Funds (for General VR) |
| \$ 3,003,131 | State General Funds |
| <u>\$ 1,033,151</u> | <u>Federal Pre-ETS Set-Aside</u> |
| \$ 10,017,067 | Total Expenses |

| State Fiscal Year 2022 | | | | | | | | | | State Fiscal Year 2023 | | | | | | | | | | State Fiscal Year 2024 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------------------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| FFY 22 Grant \$11,084,507 | | | | | | | | | | FFY 23 Grant \$13,168,208 | | | | | | | | | | FFY 24 Grant (unknown) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| State Share \$3,000,000 | | | | | | | | | | State Share \$3,563,950 | | | | | | | | | | State Share estimate unknown | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oct 21 | Nov 21 | Dec 21 | Jan 22 | Feb 22 | Mar 22 | Apr 22 | May 22 | Jun 22 | Jul 22 | Aug 22 | Sept 22 | Oct 22 | Nov 22 | Dec 22 | Jan 23 | Feb 23 | Mar 23 | Apr 23 | May 23 | Jun 23 | Jul 23 | Aug 23 | Sept 23 | Oct 23 | Nov 23 | Dec 23 | Jan 24 | Feb 24 | Mar 24 | Apr 24 | May 24 | Jun 24 | Jul 24 | Aug 24 | Sept 24 |
| | | | | | | | | | | Carryforward of FFY22 Grant | | | | | | | | | | Carryforward of FFY23 Grant | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

FFY 2023 Award

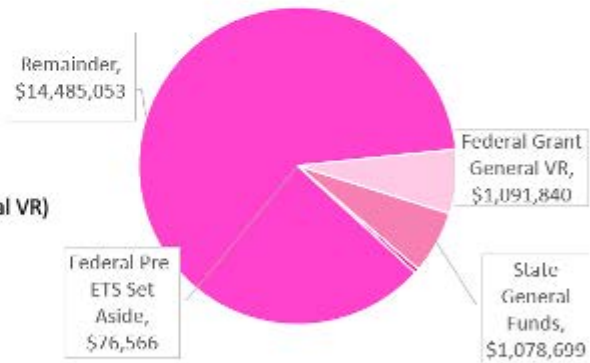
Our **FFY23** federal award is \$13,168,208. This results in a Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) set-aside requirement of \$1,975,231 which leaves \$11,192,977 for General VR. The required State Share is \$3,563,950.

The breakdown looks like this:

| | | |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| \$ 11,192,977 | Federal Grant Funds (for General VR) | FFY23 Grant Award plus State Share Expenditures out of \$16,732,158 |
| \$ 3,563,950 | State General Funds | |
| \$ 1,975,231 | Federal Pre-ETS Set-Aside | |
| \$ 16,732,158 | Total Budget | |

The VRBS program expended \$2,247,105 of the **FFY23** grant as of April 30, 2023 as follows:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|
| \$ 1,091,840 | Federal Grant Funds (for General VR) |
| \$ 1,078,699 | State General Funds |
| \$ 76,566 | Federal Pre-ETS Set-Aside |
| \$ 2,247,105 | Total Expenses |



Ticket to Work:

The VRBS program receives program income for reimbursement of VRBS services provided to clients that are SSI and SSDI recipients under the Ticket to Work program. The Ticket to Work reimbursements we collected in Federal Fiscal Year 2021 from 10-1-20 to 9-30-21 totaled **\$1,024,175**. The Ticket to Work reimbursements we collected in Federal Fiscal Year 2022, from 10-1-21 to 9-30-22 totaled **\$951,136**. The Ticket to Work Reimbursements we collected in Federal Fiscal Year 2023 10-1-22 to 1-31-23 so far totaled **\$1,214,101**.

| State Fiscal Year 2022 | | | | | | | | | | | | State Fiscal Year 2023 | | | | | | | | | | | | State Fiscal Year 2024 | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|-----------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------|
| FFY 22 Grant \$11,084,507 | | | | | | | | | | | | FFY 23 Grant \$13,168,208 | | | | | | | | | | | | FFY 24 Grant (unknown) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| State Share \$3,000,000 | | | | | | | | | | | | State Share \$3,563,950 | | | | | | | | | | | | State Share estimate unknown | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept |
| 21 | 21 | 21 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 24 | 24 | 24 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 26 | 26 | 26 |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | Carryforward of FFY22 Grant | | | | | | | | | | | | Carryforward of FFY23 Grant | | | | | | | | | | | |

What is Carryforward?

In some circumstances, a state can carry forward funds from one federal grant year to another, if it has fully expended its state share. So for example, consider a State's Share to contribute in 2019 was \$2 million with a \$9 million Federal Share, but the program only expended \$6 million total that year. The program would have to show \$2 million was fully spent from state money and \$4 million of the federal money in order to carry forward the remaining \$5 million of federal dollars into 2020.

| | | FFY22 | | |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| | | Federal Fund | State Share | TOTAL |
| AWARD | | \$ 11,084,507 | \$ 3,000,000 | \$ 14,084,507 |
| | Personnel Services | \$ 1,951,087 | \$ 1,994,294 | \$ 3,945,381 |
| | Operations | \$ 2,888,313 | \$ 706,703 | \$ 3,595,016 |
| | Client Services | \$ 2,174,537 | \$ 302,134 | \$ 2,476,671 |
| | Total Expenses | \$ 7,013,936 | \$ 3,003,131 | \$ 10,017,067 |
| | Remainder | \$ 4,070,571 | \$ (3,131) | \$ 4,067,440 |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | FFY23 | | |
| | | Federal Fund | State Share | TOTAL |
| AWARD | | \$ 13,168,208 | \$ 3,563,950 | \$ 16,732,158 |
| | Personnel Services | \$ 165,920 | \$ 589,349 | \$ 755,269 |
| | Operations | \$ 560,268 | \$ 322,747 | \$ 883,015 |
| | Client Services | \$ 442,218 | \$ 166,603 | \$ 608,821 |
| | Total Expenses | \$ 1,168,406 | \$ 1,078,699 | \$ 2,247,105 |
| | Remainder | \$ 11,999,802 | \$ 2,485,251 | \$ 14,485,053 |

Billings. In Bozeman they have a BLBF admin support and VR counselor supervisor position open. In Great Falls they have a VR counselor and a VR counselor supervisor position. In Helena they have a counselor/rehab tech position vacant and in Miles City they have an admin support position open. Brook requested assistance with recruitment efforts and stated it is greatly appreciated. They are trying to expand recruitment efforts through websites. They are also working on a relationship partnership with SUB, sending positions there on a regular basis. They are beginning to explore LinkedIn. Sarah reported that RSA has developed a recruiting portal as well. Brook reported that with their selection and all categories being open, caseloads continue to increase across the state. VR is serving about 1,000 more clients than they were at this time last year. About 3,500 individuals. Caseloads in Billings are about 113. Brook reminded SRC that VR continues to do their monthly staff meeting on the third Thursday from 10:00 to 12:00. SRC members are invited to attend if they would like. There will be a MTAP training and lastly Darrel and Brook will host a supervisor training. Joleen asked if tribal voc rehab can attend and Brook said yes.

BLVS Report, Darrel Hannum:

Darrel reports that much of their outreach has been participating in the WIOA patron meetings all across the state, mainly focused on job services and then voc rehab as part of that and re-engaging those core partners. Darrel reports that they have a few new contracts. They contracted with NFB for their news line, which is audion news service for everyone who is blind and low vision. This included emergency alerts and job postings. That was housed in MSU Library but they did not want to continue. They also contracted with Montana Association for the Blind with their summer orientation program. 23 participants completed the program this summer. It was a three-week training at Rocky Mountain College, They received instruction and orientation, activities for daily, and meeting. They also had general environment training. This year they added workforce readiness training such as computer skills and Braille. They also did some contracting with Billings for benefits training. 15 referrals thought that program towards community work incentive coordinator and she is almost finished with her training. Legislature approved \$100,000 per year over the next two years to go toward equipment purchases. They had a successful meeting with North Western Energy. North Western Energy is really focused on trying to hire people with disabilities, work with people with disabilities. They took them through their call center. Windmills continue to be a requested program to present employers and staff. The welding training is partnered with job service and College of Great Falls. It is a six-week program resulting in certification and employment at ADF or other places. Starting wage at ADF is \$22 per hour.

Pre-ETS Report, Jessica Kessler (subbing for Tammy Hogan):

Jessica showed the new logo. She reports that Pre-ETS has been busy as a bureau working throughout the summer. Some of the Pre-ETS specialists have participated in or put on job clubs in Kalispell and Missoula. They had a good turnout. They also had a family outreach in Helena. She reports that are getting ready for school contracts. She is specifically working to one at White Sulphur Springs, Augusta, and Lincoln. Those three do not currently have a Pre-ETS contract yet. Jessica also talked about STARBASE. The STEMS camps, and Montana Youth LEadership Forum. STARBASE Montana is federally funded and put on by the DOD. Since 2011 they have brought over \$1 million of federal funding just for the STEM For Montana students. Normally its fifth grade students during the school year throughout. This is the first year that they have done Pre_ETS Stem Camp. It was for all high school ages 14 to 21. It was in Great Falls and there was 9 students. (Refer to photos for activities) They partnered with several organizations throughout the community and did site visits and more. They toured C130 and emergency services. They did a bunch of chemistry experiments. At the Fort Harrison Camp they did some 3D printing and virtual reality. The other camp the Pre-ETS bureau was able to participate in was a powwow. Jessica to share video with group sharing their Pre-ETS story.

Extended/Customized Employment, Lacey Conzelman:

Lacey gave a little background on the report to begin and working with Marc Gold & Associates. She emphasized that the wording in this report is important that it fit something that a client would read. It was meant to be strengths-based and not focused on deficits. The majority of their referrals go to core enterprises in Billings because they do have multiple individuals certified in both pieces of the process. Another person that does a lot of customized employment Lacey reported on is Health Aher and then Theresa Baldry out of Miles City. Only having a few people across the state giving these services it makes things hard, Lacey reports. Lacey reports that Sherry has been extensively involved in community of practice meetings around customized employment and learning about what other states do. The barriers we face seem to be common. Sherry has gotten the curriculum from Minnesota to add some changes and updates to align with Montana and what we do here to create an in-house training for ACRE. The next step in that process is to get the adaptive curriculum from Montana ACRE certified and then that will allow any attendees to become certified customized employment providers. The in-house VR staff can go through the training and external providers can as well. The certification requires 40 hours of in the room learning presentation type learning and additional homework. They also need to work with clients outside to learn and demonstrate skills. Lacey reported that as they transition away from Marc Gold and Associates they

will still refer to certified providers and then when their recertification comes up they can decide what they would like to do.

Lacey next touched on extended employment, a program within disability employment and transitions division. It isn't VR. Lacey described it as a supplemental program to VR. All funding for this program is funded through the state. This is for individuals who need long-term employment supports or supported employment to maintain their job after their voc rehab case is closed. The requirement is that the individuals does not have another source of funding that could pay for those long-term supports. This program currently serves about 2060 clients. There are 25 extended employment providers across the state. They hired a temp employee who was formerly a VR counselor supervisor at the Great Falls office and continues to maintain CRC certification. Providers of extended employment to access the case management system VR uses, Madison.

Election: Elections were up for functionary. Kendra Lewis is currently the functionary. She reported that when she was put in this position it was supposed to be temporary but has turned more permanent with Denise leaving. She would really like to be out of this position if someone wants to do it but if there is no one to fill the role, she can continue for now. Tommy Roberts and Kendra will split the minutes rotating each meeting who will complete them. This was motioned, second, and all in favor.

Gabrielle is the current vice chair. She explained her role of supporting the chair. Lacey is the chair. She explained her role in leading the meetings. Both Lacey and Gabrielle were nominated by Marcy to return in their roles. The nomination was accepted by both. All were in favor.

Wrap Up:

To wrap up the meetings SRC members made sure everyone was on a committee and that the committees had about equal members. Each committee established when they will meet and what their action steps need to be.

- **Next SRC meeting: Next meeting in Butte on November 8th & 9th**