

# **Montana State Rehabilitation Council**

## **October 23-24, 2025**

### **Hamilton, MT**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Corinne Moore, Heidi Gibson, Joleen Weatherwax. **Online:** Lacey Keller, Doug McElroy, June Hermanson, Gabrielle Broere, Eva Belatski, Brian Tocher

**Staff and Guests:** Tammy Hogan, Julie Ochoa, Dorothy Young, Curtis Sivak, Allyson Talaska, Desiree Dean, Andrew Lowney. **Online:** Anna Gibbs, Lacey Conzelman, Nur McRae, Kurt Mayne, Hannah Stokes, and Brenda (captioner). **Roundtable:** Marty Noland, Jen Whits, Gary Mitchell, Jessie Fitzpatrick, Nicole Emmery, Darcy Curry.

**10/23 10:00 AM--Welcome, Ground Rules, Mission Statements, and Introductions.**

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

August 2025 Minutes with corrections--Motion to approve made by: Heidi Gibson, Second by: Joleen Weatherwax, Approved Unanimously.

#### **Announcements and Public Comments:**

Heidi Gibson shared updates on RSA funding for transition services and stated that the regional center did not receive any RSA funding this time. She also shared that their “Road Ahead-Transition to Adulthood” handbook has gone to the printer and will be rolling out soon. June Hermanson reminded everyone that the Youth Transition Conference is coming up on November 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> and they are still taking registrations for it.

There were no public comments.

**Budget Report:** Anna Gibbs reported on the budget with her usual slides and pie charts. The full report is available upon request. Additionally, she shared that they usually know the federal grant by January or February and that due to the current government shutdown, the Federal funding for the next FFY is unknown. The shutdown does not have any impact on the current Order of Selection status.

**VRBS Report:** Allyson Talaska gave her report using a video and PowerPoint presentation to share the staff vacancies and current openings across the state. Her presentation showed caseload sizes, the client waitlists, and a local client employment success story. This presentation is available upon request.

**11:10 AM - BLVS Report:** Tammy Hogan presented the BLVS Report. In her report she shared that they have received some funding for adjustments to program. Tammy spoke briefly about students participating in the Disability Mentoring program and shared a success story with one of those students. Julie Ochoa spoke about the Association for Rehabilitation and Education

program which includes Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming and some new opportunities this has for the BLV program.

**11:20 AM - Pre-ETS Report:** Both Tammy Hogan and Andrew Lowney reported. Tammy shared they are working with schools across the state doing new contracts for those who have not been in Pre-ETS before. They reported one of the newest requirements is for schools to utilize the Transition Readiness Toolkit. Andrew reported that one major focus this year is on mentoring. They have created employer/student zoom opportunities for employment exploration. He explained the new focus on contracts with both schools and providers for the upcoming year. He also shared the upcoming conferences that will have presentations for

**3:30 PM –**

chair. Corinne did share that the new Orientation and Welcome packet is now available for new SRC members.

- Consumer Satisfaction & Needs Assessment: Committee chair, Celina Cline was not present. No meeting was held due to Marketing Decisions Research being scheduled for a presentation at this meeting.
- Policy, Procedure, & Personal Development: Reported by Allyson Talaska. Allyson shared it had been some time since they met and that they talked about the committee's purpose and vision. Some recently updated procedures are the Expended and Encumbered procedure, the Registration procedure, the Business Practices with Providers procedure, the Voter Registration procedure, and the Sign Language Interpreter procedure. There was also an update to an old MOU with the University of Montana.
- Legislative: Reported by June Hermanson. Corinne Moore began by reintroducing the question on whether or not the committee should become a permanent one. This committee was formed as an ad hoc committee prior to the 2025 Legislative session. It was decided that there may always be a need for council members to be educated on upcoming government policies as well as being prepared for providing testimony as needed, and that this could be a helpful committee for understanding various bills regarding VR services. After lengthy conversation, a motion came from Joleen Weatherwax to make the Legislative Committee permanent. Heidi Gibson seconded the motion. Passed Unanimously. June Hermanson will stay on as the committee chair for now. Chanda Hermanson joined this committee as did Leah Zins and Heidi Gibson.

### **9:30 AM – Future Meeting planning-Tentative Dates/Locations**

January 29-30, 2025 in Helena

Joint SILC/SRC April 29-May1, 2025 in Helena

July 30-31 or August 6-7, 2025 in Browning

October 22-23, 2025 Virtual/TBD based on budget

### **9:55-10:20 AM Break**

**10:20 AM – Presentation:** Consumer Satisfaction and Needs Survey by Market Decisions Research, presenters Alison Cyr, Kelly Cooper, and Candace Walsch

**10/24 meeting concluded at 11:05 AM** Motion to adjourn by Heidi Gibson, seconded by Joleen Weatherwax, approved unanimously