Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2018

Attendees
Council Members: Christopher Paslay, Chair; David Maples, Co-Chair; Craig Reinhardt; Lisa Tyler; Keith Vire; Alex Scott; Wesley Eddington; Robert Fagan; Alan McClain, Commissioner.

ARS Staff: Deputy Commissioner Joe Baxter; Carl Daughtery; Ashley Cross; Dustin Barnes; Robert Trevino; Nathan Winter; Jim Moreland; Rodney Chandler; Judy Smith; Yvonne Murphy; Lynn Franquemont; Freddie Harshaw; Bernice Gunter

Guest(s): Sha’ Anderson-ARSILC; Brodie Callicoxx; Dr. Dawn Hamby; Debbie Eddington; Jon Taylor; Lily Kersh; Morgan Aldridge.

Call to Order:
State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Chair, Christopher Paslay, declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Paslay welcomed all present.

Approval of Minutes
At the request of Mr. Paslay, council members reviewed the minutes of the most recent meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Comments from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Commissioner – Alan McClain:
Commissioner McClain also welcomed Council members and thanked them for their commitment to assist ARS in addressing the needs of those the agency serves. As part of his comments the Commissioner indicated that ARS had successfully completed and submitted its part of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) State Plan update. He also distributed a pamphlet from the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation (CSAVR) entitled “Vision 2020 Investing in America” for the Council’s review also stating he would email the pamphlet to members as well.

Needs Assessment – Robert Trevino:
Associate Commissioner Trevino provided the Council information regarding need for ARS to complete a Needs Assessment. He discussed the objectives of Needs Assessment and anticipated timelines. Commissioner McClain informed the Council that it would be updated regularly in regards to the Needs Assessment as the Council’s involvement is not only needed but outlined as a requirement in current federal regulations.

Agency Updates:
Business Engagement-Rodney Chandler:
Mr. Chandler introduced Jon Taylor who is employed by TJ Maxx. Mr. Taylor spoke to the Council regarding his partnership with ARS and the hiring of ARS clients. As part of his
presentation a video was provided showing ARS clients working in different jobs at the North Little Rock TJ Maxx store. There were many questions and much discussion as part of Mr. Taylor’s presentation.

Field Services-Carl Daughtery:
Chief of Field Services Daughtery informed the Council that the Field program was currently serving approximately 16,000 clients with an average counselor caseload being around 170 clients. He informed the Council of a new program entitled “Transition for Life and Career” that will be starting in July in Northwestern Arkansas. The program will have 60 hours of classroom and 15 hours in a clinical setting. He indicated him being very excited about the new program and its expected expansion into Northeast Arkansas at a later date. Mr. Daughtery also updated the Council on the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF), a conference for youth and young adults with disabilities held annually on the campus of the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). He indicated this year the conference would be July 8-13, 2018. He related YLF participants build leadership skills and leave better prepared for future employment, higher education, and independent living. He reported participants take part in both small and large group discussions and workshops on such topics as self-advocacy, disability awareness, assistive technology, independent living, employment skills, career exploration, higher education, legislative advocacy, and community participation. An agenda for the Leadership Forum was provided for Council member review. Mr. Daughtery informed the Council that ARS would be again partnering with Inclusion film Camp. He indicated that as many as 50 campers from across the state would be attending are taught skills related to film production and editing. He stated that campers are divided into three teams with each team being responsible for completing a short 7-minute film as well as a public service announcement (PSA). Mr. Daughtery related that each year Samsung offers the opportunity for high school students to compete in the Bentonville film festival by creating and developing a 90 second film with three students from the NWA area participating in the Samsung Challenge. A video was provided for the Council’s review.

TEP & PROMISE Grant-Judy Smith:
Ms. Smith began her presentation by introducing Brodie Callicoxx, a 2017 graduate of the TEP program. Mr. Callicoxx stated he had completed 100 hours of paid work experience through Man Power. He stated he was currently employed by Maples Insurance Agency. He indicated that Mr. Maples frequently allowed him to attend when calling on clients to allow him to get a better feel for his job. He reported he will be attending Henderson State University in hopes of obtaining a degree in Business Administration. Ms. Smith updated the Council on the status of the TEP program. Ms. Smith indicated that the TEP program has grown since its pilot year of 2014. She reported that from 2014 to 2017 there have been a total of 206 graduates from 75 high schools. She stated that 40% of the 2017 TEP class has indicated that they would be applying to go back to ACTI after graduation. She stated that 194 applications were received this year representing approximately 69 Arkansas high schools. She indicated that only 144 have been approved to participate. Ms. Smith next provided the Council an update on the PROMISE Grant. She informed the Council that during the life of the grant the state had received 38 million dollars for PROMISE. She indicated the grant would be ending September 30th with approximately 3 million dollars left as carry over to partially fund activities this next year.

Access & Accommodations-Lynn Franquemont & Nathan Winter:
Ms. Franquemont updated the Council on the Community Service Program component of Access and Accommodations. She indicated the Community Service programs consist of Telecommunication Access Program (TAP), Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN), the
Governor’s Commission on People with Disabilities, the Alternative Financing Program (AFP) and the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC). She shared a success story from the TAP program. She reported that 827 Arkansans were provided equipment through ICAN. She indicated ICAN would be purchasing a mobile assisted technology van to serve clients around the State. Mr. Winter updated the Council on the AT@Work and Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work programs. He indicated that AT@ Work assist VR clients with assisted technology. He indicated that there has been a growth in the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work which serves individuals currently employed who are having trouble on the job because of a disability or those attempting to return to work because of disability. He informed the Council that 25 individuals were closed after an evaluation for assisted technology that allowed them to remain at work or return to work. Mr. Winter concluded his presentation by informing the Council of a U.S. Department of Labor grant. The grant is entitled “RETAIN” meaning retaining employment and talent after an injury or illness. He reported that the grant’s focus is consistent with activities currently provided by ARS’s Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work program. He indicated that ARS was working with the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services regarding this grant opportunity. The grant deadline is July 23, 2018.

Election of Officers:
Dr. Vire made a motion that Christopher Paslay, Chair and David Maples Co-Chair remain in their positions for another year, Mr. Fagan seconded and the Council concurred.

Announcements
Commissioner McClain introduced Mr. Charles Lyford, General Counsel for the agency.

Chairman Christopher Paslay informed the Council that the next scheduled meeting would be September 20, 2018.

Adjournment
With no additional business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.