Arkansas State Rehabilitation Council
Quarterly Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2018

Attendees
Council Members: Christopher Paslay, Chair; David Maples, Co-Chair; Craig Reinhardt; Matt Sewell; Dr. Keith Vire; Caroline Boch; Robert Fagan; Addie Edwards-Conference; Frances Johnson-Conference; Alan McClain, Commissioner.

ARS Staff: Deputy Commissioner, Joe Baxter; Dr. Charisse Childers, Director (DCE); Carl Daughtery; Ashley Cross; Chip McAfee; Robert Trevino; Nathan Winter; Jim Moreland; Rodney Chandler; Judy Smith; Lynn Franquemont; Christy Lamas; Dr. Adrienne Robinson; Freddie Harshaw; Bernice Gunter.

Guest(s): Ashley Hurst; Eric Treat.

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 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 the meeting’s agenda would be full addressing the upcoming Needs Assessment, changes to the agency’s Client Services policy and procedures manual, as well as program updates.

Needs Assessment Update – Robert Trevino: Mr. Trevino provided council members information regarding the need for ARS and the SRC to complete the Needs Assessment. He informed the Council that every three years Rehabilitation Services Administration, our federal partner, requires the Needs Assessment to be updated as outlined by the Rehabilitation Act. He stated that this is the first Needs Assessment that will be conducted since the enactment of the Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA). He provided information regarding some of the different components of the Needs Assessment. Mr. Trevino informed the Council that ARS has contracted with the University of Arkansas-Fayetteville to complete the Needs Assessment as the group our agency had worked with in the past had retired. He stated that Dr. Brent Williams of the University of Arkansas was principal investigator and Dr. Keith Vire project director. He expressed the opinion that the Needs Assessment would be completed in a timely fashion and be of high quality. Dr. Vire indicated that he and Dr. Williams were excited about the project.
Update-Client Services Policy Manual – Carl Daughtery & Adrienne Robinson: Mr. Daughtery and Dr. Robinson provided council members an overview of proposed changes to the Client Services Policy Manual. The presentation included needed changes to existing policy and the necessary addition of new policy. Mr. Daughtery reminded the SRC that an electronic copy of the Policy Manual had been provided to council members prior to the meeting for their review. After discussion, a motion to approve the review of the Client Services Policy Manual as presented was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Transition for Life Career Program- Ashley Hurst: Ms. Hurst presented a video to start her presentation. She then provided council members an overview of the Transition for Career (TLC) program. She indicated the program is specifically developed for people with intellectual or developmental disabilities to learn to become direct care professionals. She indicated TLC is a six-week program that meets four hours each morning with an instructor and a paraprofessional in each classroom. She reported that class size was limited to a maximum of 10 students. She indicated that TLC students are ARS clients. She reported classes are up and running in Blytheville and Springdale with other potential sites on the horizon. She indicated the program is a culmination of the dream of Mary Broadaway related to the inclusion of individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities in Higher Education. She also indicated that TLC came about with the insight of Dr. Keith Vire. Council members showed much interest in the TLC program with a lot of discussion taking place.

Agency Updates:

Field Services Update – Carl Daughtery: Mr. Daughtery provided council members a list of events that would be happening across Field Services in the near future and encouraged members to review the list and try to attend an event in their area. He informed the Council that Field Services was currently serving approximately 15,000 clients with about 2,200 cases in status 26 (closed working), 676 cases in status 20 (searching for work), 900 clients in status 22 (currently working). He informed the Council that Field Services has an excellent relationship with the National Technical Assistant for Centers of Transition (NTACT) and was partnering with Blind Services, Career & Technical Education, and the Department of Workforce Services in this effort. He provided information about the 140 JAG students that were interviewed at Joe T. Robinson. He also informed the Council that the Jonesboro and North Little Rock Offices were hosting GED classes.

Pre-Employment Transition Update – Christy Lamas: Ms. Lamas provided the Council information as to some of Field Services activities related to pre-employment transition. She indicated that there are 12 vendor programs going into schools serving students after school and on the weekend. She stated that five of those programs were providing students with job experiences. Ms. Lamas also informed the Council that a total of 81 School Districts were covered under MOUs providing Pre-ETS services throughout the State. She also informed the Council that as of September 1, 2018 a total of 16 new contracts has been approved bringing the number up to 33. She informed the Council of the Opportunity for Work Base Learning (OWL) program. Ms. Lamas also updated the Council on other programs including the Youth Leadership Form, Conway Juvenile Court WIN! Program, Restoring Hope and the Alexander Youth Center. There was much discussion.
Jonathan Bibb – ACTI: Mr. Bibb provided council members an update regarding some of the happenings at ACTI. He informed the Council that the Transitional Employment Program (TEP) had finished up this summer. He provided information regarding the growth of the program with there being 14 participants in 2014 and having 101 students this year. Chair Paslay, stated that he had attended a TEP graduation along with Co-Chair David Maples and others indicating it was an exciting event and invited other council members who have never attended a TEP graduation to do so as well. Mr. Bibb indicated that a new program have been added at ACTI, Pre-apprenticeship Training, offered in conjunction with National Pre-Apprenticeship Training Foundation. He stated that students who went through the training got an hour-for-hour credit with them receiving the majority of their training at ACTI. Mr. Bibb stated that the Pre-Apprenticeship program started in September 2016. He updated the Council on student progress in the different programs. Mr. Bibb indicated that staff had found that more people were in need the program and were partnering with the Department of Workforce Services. He indicated that ACTI was continually reviewing its programing and has been able to bring in partners such as the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Sidney Moncrieff and National Park Community College. He informed the Council that the Arlington Hotel was also interested in partnering with ACTI and also UA Currents with additional training nights and weekends. He indicated that there were a lot of resources at ACTI to help students be successful.

Project Search – Judy Smith: Ms. Smith indicated that they are doing great things with Project Search. She reported there being Project Search sites at Washington Regional in Fayetteville, UAMS and Children Hospital in Little Rock as well as sites in Jonesboro and Ft. Smith. She reported that University of Arkansas – Pine Bluff was in the process of developing a Project Search site, the first non-hospital partner here in Arkansas. She also informed the Council of the development of a Project Search site at Embassy Suite in Rogers. Ms. Smith indicated a meeting with Walmart corporate offices had recently occurred with them showing an interest in Project Search. Ms. Smith also updated the Council on the PROMISE grant informing the Council that the grant was scheduled to end September 30th with the state receiving a new cost extension year which will end June 30, 2019.

Business Engagement- Rodney Chandler & Ashley Cross: Mr. Chandler and Ms. Cross provided the Council an update regarding some of the various Business Engagement activities. Ms. Cross provided the Council information regarding the upcoming Arkansas Business Employment Summit to be held in Little Rock, AR at the Capitol Hotel on October 17, 2018. She distributed a brochure developed for the Summit. She indicated the Summit is sponsored by the Arkansas Business Leadership Network in partnership with Arkansas Rehabilitation Services. She informed the Council that to date a total $7,500 had been received to sponsor the event. Ms. Cross discussed the primary purposes of the Business Summit to include engaging business by providing awareness and training to business partners, acknowledging leadership within the business community as it related to the employment of individuals of disabilities, and outreach and diversity inclusion from business partners across the state. Mr. Chandler and Ms. Cross thanked the Council for its continued support.

Access & Accommodations – Nathan Winter: Mr. Winter provided the Council information regarding some of the different programs within Access & Accommodations. He reported that the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) program had closed 34 cases, AT@Work had closed 52 cases, and 8 cases had been closed in Independent Living. Mr. Winter informed the Council that the SAW/RTW program will be initiating a new evaluation for ARS Counselors and clients that will be called the Arkansas Rehabilitation Occupational Abilities Determination (AROAD)
Assessment. He discussed in detail what areas the evaluation would address and its purpose. Mr. Winter indicated that the Telecommunication Access Program (TAP) had processed 33 applications of which 13 were ARS clients. He stated that the Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN) program has been doing some amazing work as evidenced by last month taking in 66 items for reuse and loaning out 130 devices. He indicated that last quarter reuse items and loans lead to a savings of $405,802.29 for Arkansans. He informed the Council that ICAN was looking to expand into Northwest Arkansas potentially setting up a satellite site. He informed the Council that the Alternative Finance Program (AFP) and the Governor’s Commission on People with Disabilities programs were in the process of being combined administratively and having one (1) Program Manager responsible for both programs.

**Announcements**
Commissioner McClain informed the Council that October was Disability Employment Awareness Month. He presented this year’s poster, “America’s Workforce: Empowering ALL”. He informed council members that the poster was being displayed throughout the agency.

Commissioner McClain introduced Mr. Fred Norman, the owner of “FLAVOURS” restaurant who would be providing lunch for Council members and staff.

Mr. Bibb invited Council members to attend the ACTI graduation to be held at 10:00a.m on October 12, 2018.

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

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