

**Approved Minutes**  
**VERMONT STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

Thursday, December 1, 2022, 1:00PM – 3:30PM  
Virtual Meeting

**Meeting called by:**

Chair Asher Edelson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

**Members Present:**

Emily Ahtúnan	Marlena Hughes
Courtney Blasius	Robin Ingenthron
Sherrie Brunelle	Helena Kehne
Nick Caputo	Sarah Launderville
Diane Dalmasse, Non-Voting	Nancy Richards
Gina D'Ambrosio	Cara Sachs
Asher Edelson	Laura Siegel
Laura Flint	Sarah Sterling
Rocko Gieselmann, Non-Voting	

**Members Absent:**

Andrea Bacchi, excused  
Bill Meirs, excused  
Cari Kelley, excused  
Ana Kolbach  
Calla Papademas

**SRC Liaison:**

- James Smith

**SRC Coordinator:**

- Janice Leonard

**Interpreters:**

- Nicole Sargent
- Denise Green

**Speakers or Presenters:**

- Elizabeth Harrington, Regional Manager for Newport
- Hib Doe, Field Services Manager (North)

**Guests:**

- Abby Rhim, interested in being on Board as the Workforce Development Board representative

### **1) Introductions** (Asher Edelson, Chair)

**Discussion:**

Those in attendance introduced themselves.

**Conclusions:**

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

None

### **2) Approval of Agenda** (Asher Edelson)

**Discussion:**

Asher asked for any proposed additions or changes to the agenda. Nick moved to accept the agenda and Sherrie seconded. No further discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 15-0-0

**Conclusions:**

Motion passes: today's agenda accepted

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

- Upload approved agenda to SRC website, **Janice Leonard**, 12/30/22

### **3) Open for Public Comment** (Asher Edelson)

**Discussion:**

There was no public comment given.

**Conclusions:**

n/a

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

None

### **4) Approval of Minutes for June 2, 2022, and Retreat on October 13, 2022**

(Asher Edelson)

**Discussion:**

**June 2, 2022**

Asher asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the June 2, 2022, minutes. There were none. Nick moved to approve the minutes and Sherrie seconded. No discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 15-0-0

**Annual Retreat, October 13, 2022**

Asher asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the Annual Retreat, October 13, 2022 minutes. There were none. Robin moved to approve the minutes and Helena seconded. No discussion. All approved. Vote unanimous 15-0-0

**Conclusions:**

Minutes from June 2, 2022 were approved

Minutes from October 13, 2022 Annual Retreat were approved

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

- Upload approved minutes to SRC website, **Janice Leonard**, 12/30/2022

**5) Consent Agenda** (Asher Edelson)

**Discussion:**

Asher asked for any proposed changes or amendments to the following consent agenda items:

- AOE Committee, November 3, 2022
- Performance Review Committee, October 6, 2022
- Policy & Procedures Committee, November 3, 2022
- Steering Committee, November 10, 2022

Sherrie moved to approve, and it was seconded by Nick. No further discussion. Vote unanimous 15-0-0

**Conclusions:**

Consent agenda items approved

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

- Upload to SRC website, **Janice Leonard**, 12/30/2022

**6) Director's Report** (Diane Dalmasse)

**Discussion:**

Diane shared the following:

**RSA Monitoring Review:** We have received the draft report. We are digesting and preparing to respond by January 13<sup>th</sup> with any factual inaccuracies or additional information needed. We will then receive the final report and will need to develop a Plan of Corrective Action Plan.

**VT Career Advancement Project (VCAP):** We are fully operational with our six Career Pathway Navigators (CPNs). We have begun enrollments and are pleased with the uptake thus far. The CCV Student Advisor has been hired and joined the team. The CPNs have been getting lots of great training. The Governance Team is meeting on a

regular basis and is an engaged committed group. We have begun to plan for the addition of 6 additional CPNs next Fall.

**VTWorks 2.0:** We have just reviewed mid-point data and it very promising. Of 142 enrollees. 68 are working, 26 are engaged in education and training and 15 have fully worked their way off benefits. We have a year to go and continue our positive trends.

**Opioid Employment Projects:** We are almost fully staffed in the two pilot areas. We have hired two counselors with lots of experience in serving people in recovery. We are optimistic about potential candidates for EAP clinicians. The Substance Use Disorder Programs (formerly ADAP) from the Department of Health provided the entire team with very practical training on the Hub and Spoke Model in Vermont and provided local contacts for our staff. We continue to be very excited about doing this work and believe we will learn a tremendous amount about to effectively serve people in recovery. Employment is a social determinant of health for this population.

**HireAbility Marketing:** We plan to continue our work with the Place Creative in the upcoming year. We have established three priorities. Outreach to people with chronic health conditions. Often people with chronic health conditions do not see themselves as having a disability but they are potentially eligible for our services. We will launch this outreach plan in March of 2023. Recruitment of qualified rehabilitation counselors. Given the tight labor market, we need to intensify our recruitment strategies. We will develop a video and materials we will share broadly with post-secondary institutions that offer a master's degree in rehabilitation counseling. Even our broader marketing efforts have resulted in applicants for our counselor openings. We have built some strong internship pipelines and we want to nurture and build new ones. Our third priority is to market our "earn and learn" opportunities for Vermonters including apprenticeships, internships and more. As long as resources allow, we anticipate continuing our work to keep HireAbility visible and accessible.

**Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Access:** Our DEIA work has become real. Social Contract has almost completed the assessment phase of their four-phase blueprint. We will be reviewing the results and working with SC staff to make recommendations for change. We are committing our next All Staff Meeting 1/13 to this initiative and plan to engage all staff in the effort.

**Rapid Rehousing Initiative:** We have dedicated time to discuss this effort in more detail this afternoon.

**Centralized Intake:** We are very excited about prospect of contracting with University of Wisconsin Stout to conduct eligibility workups for our vocational counselors including intake interviews, gathering medical information, and summarizing for the counselor to make the eligibility determination. They have been doing this work for Wisconsin and just started for New Hampshire and are in discussion with several other states. This would allow the counselor to focus on career pathways and the development of the Individualized Plan for Employment. We are interested in doing a pilot.

**Associates for Training and Development:** A decision has been made to cancel the grant agreement with A4TD to provide the Senior Community Services Employment. We manage this grant. We will be assuring that participants are held harmless and issuing an RFP for a new provider.

**Employee Engagement Survey:** A statewide survey done by the Department of Human Resources of all state employees on an annual basis. The division results were released by AHS yesterday. HireAbility staff rated their satisfaction with their employer and working conditions highly and were especially welcoming of our DEIA work.

**Conclusions:**

Thank you, Diane, for the update!

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

n/a

**7) Committee Chair Updates (Asher Edelson)**

**Discussion:**

**A. Advocacy, Outreach, & Education Committee**

- See meeting notes.
- Card Day
- Legislator Visit

**B. Policies & Procedures Committee**

- See meeting notes.
- Updated Policies per RSA
  - Supportive Policy
  - Post - Employment
  - Part of Group working together to support states with Self

Employment. Griffin & Hammis consulting group is spearheading this, we are happy to be a part of it.

**C. Performance Review Committee**

- See meeting notes.
- Employer survey
- Future Agendas & Priorities

**D. Steering Committee**

- See meeting notes.

**Conclusions:**

Thank you to the committee chairs for the updates and Emily stepping in for Cara!

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

n/a

**8) HA Regional Manager Updates** (Elizabeth Harrington, Regional Manager for Newport Region (Newport & St. Albans))

**Discussion:**

- Data for the top of the state, between August – November 26, 38 rehabs.
- Rehousing Initiative in Newport has started
- St. Albans will share some parts
- New Hire – 2 additional HA SAD counselors, one VABIR counselor as well as an EAP counselor
- Two successful stories were shared. Awesome!

**Conclusions:**

Thank you, Elizabeth!

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

None

**9) Rapid Rehousing Initiative** (Hib Doe)

**Discussion:**

- 1500 households living in hotels through the VT rental assistance program. Was supposed to end in September but got funded through this coming March. Needed some interventions to help them to have a successful transition in March. This group is a strain on the system.
- HA involved from Employment side, several other programs team together.

- Screenings have started. Next is out who's interested in what services. They'll then see the program/ service. The numbers vary by region. (Rutland has over 350 living in hotels)
- We'll end up having a stronger relationship with the housing programs.

**Conclusions:**

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

None

**10) Round Table (Group)**

**Discussion:**

- There's a lot of exciting things happening in HA, good work
- Thanks everyone and happy holidays and happy New Year.

**Conclusions:**

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

**11) Other Business (Asher Edelson)**

**A. Agenda Setting for February 2, 2022, meeting**

- No other business
- February meeting will be on zoom. Continue zoom through the winter. Let's have an in person in the spring. Attendance has been better on zoom.
- If/when we go in person do Hybrid so that we don't lose the zoom option.

**Conclusions:**

**Action Items, Person Responsible, Deadline:**

Upload draft Agenda to the SRC website, **Janice Leonard, 12/30/2022**

**12) Adjournment (Asher Edelson)**

Laura moved to adjourn, and it was seconded by Emily. Vote was unanimous. Asher called the meeting adjourned at 3:14 p.m.

**Meeting Action Items, Person Responsible and Deadlines:**

- Finalize agenda and upload to SRC Website, **Janice Leonard, 12/30/22**
- Draft minutes for this meeting, send to Committee members for comment then upload to SRC website, **Janice Leonard, 12/30/22**

- Finalize approved minutes for last meeting and upload to SRC website **Janice Leonard, 12/30/22**