# State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind

# Semi-Monthly Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 3, 2023

## I. Call to order

Chairperson Corbb O’Connor called the regular meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind to order at 5:40 PM on Thursday, August 3, 2023, in person with some members attending via Zoom.

## II. Roll call

Corbb O’Connor conducted a roll call, and the following people were present:

**SRCB Members:** Corbb O’Connor, Chairperson; Judy Sanders, Vice Chair; Frank Eller; Samantha Flax; Ryan Haenze; Tom Heinl; Michael O’Day; Judy Sanders; Ryan Strunk; and Kyle Van Acker.

**SSB Staff:** Natasha Jerde, SSB Director; Susan Kusz, SRC-B Staff Liaison; Jon Benson, SSB Deputy Director; Brianna Holeman, Deputy Director; Dave Andrews; Jennifer Beilke; Joe Niffen; and Alana Strickler.

**Members of the Audience:** Jennifer Dunnam; Steve Jacobson; Rocky Hart; Briley O’Connor; Sue Fager; Theresa Gfroerer; and Jan Bailey.

## III. Approval of minutes from last meeting

A motion to approve the minutes from June 1, 2023, was made by Judy Sanders and seconded by Ryan Strunk. The motion passed unanimously.

## IV. Open issues

Following a brief public hearing at which there was unanimous support, it was announced that SSB would swiftly end the order-of-selection process.

A motion to approve the new committee appointments was made by Samantha Flax and seconded by Frank Eller. The motion passed unanimously.

The Council unanimously voted to send the recommendations from the DEI committee to Jessica Burke (MAD Consultant for SSB).

An update from the Comprehensive State Needs Assessment Task Force was given by Samantha Flax.

Report from the Budget Task Force was given by Ryan Strunk. A motion to approve the proposed Council budget was made by Ryan Strunk and seconded by Frank Eller. The motion passed unanimously.

The Council discussed the pros and cons of joining the National Coalition of State Rehabilitation Councils (NCSRC). After the discussion, a motion from Ryan Strunk to join NCSRC failed for the absence of a second. It was decided that the council would gather more information before reconsidering joining the coalition.

V. New business

* 1. Chair’s report
     + No report was given at this meeting.
  2. Director’s Report- *full report included in transcript*
     + A pilot program for a reasonable accommodation fund for employers will begin on September 1.
     + The order of selection process will end by the end of the summer.
     + A meeting was held with community partners on July 11.
     + Update on Evolve: VR
     + This summer, 22 students attended STP, and many other transition-age students attended a variety of other programs.

**VI. Committee Reports**

1. State Rehabilitation Council: no report was received.
2. State Independent Living Council: Report was received by the Council.
3. Communication Center Committee: Report was received by the Council.
4. Customer Satisfaction Goals and Priorities Committee: no report was received.
5. Deafblind Committee: no report was received.
6. Employment Committee: no report was received.
7. Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee: a report was received by the Council.
8. Senior Services Committee: a report was received by the council.
9. Transition Committee Report: a report was received by the Council.
10. Vendor Outcomes & Measures Committee: no report was received.
11. Professional Development Task Force: A survey will be sent to council members about potential topics for professional development.

## VII. Public Comment

1. The National Federation of the Blind will be having a state convention November 3rd through 5th in Rochester, MN.

## VIII. Adjournment

Chairperson Corbb O’Connor adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

1. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Frank Eller and seconded by Judy Sanders. The motion passed unanimously.

Minutes submitted by: Susan Kusz

Minutes approved by: Corbb O’Connor