



Louisiana Rehabilitation Council

P.O. Box 94094
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 8:15AM CT

Louisiana State Office Building
900 Murray Street
Alexandria, LA 71301

Members Present: Donna Reno, Lynn Stevens

Members Absent: Brian Patchett

Guests in Attendance: Megan Thompson, Courtney Ryland (Liaison)

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 8:15 AM. Donna Reno motions to pass the April 2024 Executive Committee minutes. Lynn Stevens seconded the motion.

Old Business: The Consumer Satisfaction Survey was sent out yesterday. The link was created and it has been sent out to 3,000 people. She will send it out to 20,000 more. Public Relations will create flyers and QR codes to share out. The survey will be active until Sept. 30. This will also be sent out to Pre-ETS students. LSUS-INAR will use our survey results to create a needs assessment/report for the LRC.

Comments have not been made on the WIOA Combined State Plan that concern LRS. We need to ask Melissa Bayham to let us know when our State Plan has been received/approved.

New Business: Ethics Training is due by the end of the year. Courtney will send out an email with the link to all who need to complete it.

Many names were submitted to Boards and Commissions for recommended membership appointments. They have not heard back at this time. LWC Legal has been involved regarding the LRC Membership. They are trying to help us get appointments made. Officers have been impacted. Committee Chairs have been impacted. We will wait until we have more people to discuss a new Nomination Committee for officers. Donna suggested outreach to the Chamber of Commerce, owners of franchises, Walgreens, Rouses, Albertsons, etc., to let them know LRS reimburses some costs. We would like LRS information embedded within the conversations of things provided through LRS in meetings that the Commerce has. Courtney listed those who were un-appointed and who has been recommended as new appointment suggestions.

Executive Session: Donna Reno motioned to approve Cody Rabalais' application for reappointment recommendation and to keep other applications on file for consideration. Lynn Stevens seconded the motion.

Adjourn: The Executive Committee meeting was unanimously adjourned at 9:01AM.



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General Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, July 25, 2024 at 9:00AM CT

Louisiana State Office Building
900 Murray Street
Alexandria, LA 71301

Members Present: Melissa Bayham, Stephen Carrier, Rikki David, Donna Reno, Lynn Stevens (Chair), Megan Thompson

Members Absent: Warren Chauvin, Michelle Ned, Brian Patchett, Nicole Poiencot

Guests in Attendance: Jeannie Doiron, Lynsey Hebert (Captionist), Audra Muslow, Courtney Ryland (LRC Liaison), Lauren Womack (virtually via ZOOM)

Call to Order

Quorum is met at 9:01am. Rikki David moved to approve the April 2024 General Committee minutes. Steven Carrier seconded the motion.

Old Business

The LRS Consumer Satisfaction Survey was sent out yesterday. The link was created and it has been sent out to 3,000 people and will be sent out to 20,000 more, including PreETS students, vendors, LA Developmental Disabilities Council, Governor's Office on Disability Affairs, Office for Citizens for Development Disabilities and their vendors, and all Colleges and Universities within the State. Public Relations will create flyers and QR codes to share. The survey will be active until Sept. 30. LSUS-INAR will use our survey results to create a needs assessment/report for the LRC.

Melissa said LRS did not receive any comments for the WIOA Combined State Plan. It was provisionally approved because of the status of the LRC. Melissa thinks the portal will let her know once it has been approved.

LRS Director's Report

Contract with Southern University has finally ended and will be closed out. There were only about 22 participants in that DIF Grant. The grant services were not very different from what they could receive from other services available in the area. They are closing out the resolution process with the Office of Civil Rights regarding the website. It is very much needed and a priority for the Secretary. VR Journey Trainings will be hosted. It will be like a Counselor Academy to help with staying consistent with services and people are confident in their work. They are working on Third-Party Cooperative Agreements with Inspire NOLA and Morehouse Schools. Blind Services Business Enterprise Journal will be updated. LRS is struggling due to being understaffed. They have restructured. Position descriptions are being looked at and some may need to change to cover the actual work needs. Caseloads will be reviewed to see which are active and inactive. Inactive cases should be closed. LRS rates may drop because of the caseload file clean-up. LRS may need to close some of the categories due to staffing. Melissa is doing Stay interviews. She thinks the staff appreciates that she is listening and makes it clear they are valued. They are also making an effort to ensure caseloads are evenly distributed. Melissa will look into what is



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happening with all of the closures to share with LRC next time. Melissa was very thankful that Civil Service helped her with the many updates to several job descriptions.

New Business

Membership: Since the last meeting, the Governor un-appointed several people and eliminated the seat for a Representative in the area of Assistive Technology. RSA has been made aware. We now have 25 official seats for the LRC. Officially, there are only 10 members currently appointed to the LRC at this time.

Ethics Training Requirement: Ethics Training is due by the end of the year. Courtney will send out an email with the link to all who need to complete it. Ethics.la.gov is the website where the training is located.

Bylaw Committee: Lynn would like Donna to look into testing virtual meetings. Donna will Chair that committee. Rikki and Megan volunteered to serve on this committee. Lauren Womack also volunteered to serve as a member of the public on this committee.

Seattle Conference: LRC would like someone to attend the CSAVR Conference. It is October 19 - October 25. Megan and Donna are interested in attending as it is supposed to target recruitment and retention as well as best practices.

Standing Committee Meetings/ Reports

On November 7th, in Baton Rouge, we will hopefully have people to form new Standing Committees. The Bylaw and Nomination Committees are considered ad-hoc committees.

Chair Report: Nothing additional to share.

Vendor Coalition: People are worried they are getting paid less due to the new milestones. It may look like that, but some jobs are now hourly because if it takes an employee 1 hour to get someone a job, they get paid for that hour.

State ADA Coordinator: Opportunities for the Council include options for virtual meetings and rules for meeting accommodations. A link is included in her report (Directory of Act 393 Rules by Agency). It is easy to change procedures, but not rules. Rules need to be general enough, so that they do not have to be redone over and over. If a meeting is going to be a true electronic meeting, there still has to be an anchor location. Rikki put this document together to make things clear for people who want to attend any of these meetings. The aim is to get LRC on the list.

Each agency will have a SAME Plan that includes goals related to the recruitment and retention of employees with disabilities.

Share ideas with Rikki regarding ideas to reduce spending in areas that are not statutorily required or a duplication of work being done elsewhere.



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Client Assistance Program (CAP): Jeannie went to a National Disability Conference and went to sessions about Rehabilitation Councils. They wrote a customized employment grant to target education. Darren did a webinar that covered DDSnaps. Jeannie gave a national presentation to CAP employees, "Too Disabled to Work? Not Today!" There are 3 new cases in the NOLA Region. There are 6 new cases in Baton Rouge. Jeannie gave praise for the new Exceptions process implemented by LRS.

IDEA: The LDOE's SpEd Team is implementing activities within their federal grant focused on improving transition services and post-school outcomes for our students with disabilities. The SpEd Team is currently putting together a workgroup for transition, planning for a transition website (which will include LRS services and information), and working in 4 pilot districts on grant activities. The 2023 LEAP Results are out. There were 531 School Choice Program scholarships awarded during 2024 - 2025.

Adjourn: By unanimous consent, the General Committee meeting adjourned at 11:25 AM.