**SRC-DBVI[[1]](#footnote-1) Minutes**

**Date & Time:** February 21st 2024 (10am – 12pm)

**Location:** Virtual Meeting

**Attendance Key: P = Present, E = Absent (Excused), A = Absent (Unexcused), TEL = Telephone**

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|  **Council Members:** |
| **P** | Andrew Maclean, *Chair* | **E** | Sherry Belka |  |  |
| **P** | Cheryl Peabody, *Vice* | **P** | David Emberley |  |  |
| **P** | Allen Kropp, *Treasurer* | **P** | Roger Fuller |  |  |
| **P** | Amber White | **P** | Nathanael Batson |  |  |
| **P** | \* Elissa Rowe[[2]](#footnote-2) | **E** | Kathy Despres |  |  |
| **E** | Darcy Gentle | **P** | \* Isaac Gingras |  |  |
| **P** | Nancy Moulton |  |  |  |  |

**Members of Public:** Jessica Cavanaugh, Peter Diplock, Kathrina Ringrose, Kelly Chadbourne, and Jessi Wright.

**Recorder:** Branden Densmore **Next Meeting:** May 1st 2024 **Minutes Approved: YES**

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| **Topic** | **Discussion** | **Action** | **Responsible** |
| **Introduction** | SRC-DBVI meeting was *called to order at 10:01: introductions were provided.*The meeting agenda was presented, and no additions were forthcoming. | NONE | NONE |
| **Chair Report** | Chair reports that executive committee hasn’t had meeting since October due to inclement weather. However, they’ve been working behind the curtain on State Plan. | NONE | NONE |
| **Public Comment** | Time given for public comment, but none were given. | NONE | NONE |
| **Topic** | **Discussion** | **Action** | **Responsible** |
| **Minutes** | The SRC-DBVI discussed the October 2023 minutes. No corrections identified, and the minutes were accepted as presented. | *Send October minutes to webmaster for posting.**Create February draft minutes and send to Cheryl.**Distribute February draft to council members.* | Branden DensmoreBranden DensmoreCheryl Peabody |
| **Committee Reports**  | ***Business***: Person found to serve on this committee.Problem mentioned about filling committees… Members leaving, members joining.***Executive***: Haven’t had meeting since October.  | *Review council membership list, update, and share with members.* | Executive Committee Members |
| **Priority Topics** | **New Director**: The new Division Director Elissa Rowe was introduced to the council. She only spent 4 days with Brenda before she left, and has been learning the ropes since she started 3 months ago. Rowe has much experience, working in government for many years. Her specialty is overseeing grants. | NONE | NONE |
| **Director’s Report** | **Apprenticeship**: Federal project happening in Dover New Hampshire building a bridge. There will be many apprentices needed for this project. Currently developing an apprentice business bus tour for students – still early in process. | NONE | NONE |
| **Topic** | **Discussion** | **Action** | **Responsible** |
| **Director’s Report** | **Staff**: Good news; hired two Blindness Rehab Specialists, one for Bangor the other for Augusta.Bad news; facing unprecedented staffing challenges in general. Many vacancies and current staff is feeling the pressure.**State Plan**: Working on the four year plan now.Last fall started joint sessions looking at past plans, strategies, and actions. What happened, and what did they learn?Held 7 listening sessions to gather feedback. Also looked at Comprehensive Needs Assessment, and got 47 responses on a staff survey for more data. Wrapping up the plan, and then it goes out for public comment in March.1) Transition Age: getting them the skills needed for workforce.2) Apprentice: getting blind or low vision folks into apprenticeships.3) Staffing: retention and attraction. 4) Employers: Outreach, increasing awareness, understanding their needs.A one month extension was granted for State Plan. | *Finalize, post, and send State Plan link to council members for review.**Send State Plan questions and comments to Elissa Rowe.**Contact Sharisse about getting on Employer Engagement Committee.**Invite Sharisse to next council meeting.**Look into possibility of having anonymous comments for State Plan.*  | Elissa RoweCouncil MembersElissa RoweJessica CavanaughIsaac Gingras |
| **Topic** | **Discussion** | **Action** | **Responsible** |
| **Other Topics** | Annual Report: The SRC Annual Report was submitted, covering Federal Fiscal year. Haven’t heard back from feds yet.SRC-DVR: The SRC-DVR is struggling with membership. Executive committee thinking of ways to collaborate with them to build capacity. | *Review Annual Report and give Andrew feedback.* | Any Member |
| **Announcements** | Honorariums are offered to members not otherwise compensated for attendance.The next SRC-DBVI meeting was rescheduled for May 1st.  | *Contact Cheryl to receive honorarium.**Adjust meeting Zoom link and send to members.* | Members Not CompensatedCheryl Peabody |
| **Adjournment** | Meeting was adjourned at 11:25am. | NA | NA |

**People & Organizations Represented**

**Elissa Rowe – Division For Blind & Visually Impaired (DBVI)**

**Peter Diplock – Division For Blind & Visually Impaired (DBVI)**

**Allen Kropp – Drummond Woodsum**

**Nancy Moulton – Catholic Charities Maine**

**Sherry Belka – Disability Advocacy Seat**

**Kathy Despres – Goodwill Industries**

**Andrew MacLean – Maine Medical Association**

**David Emberley – Department Of Education**

**Amber White – Iris Network**

**Kathrina Ringrose – Disability Rights Maine, Client Assistance Program (CAP)**

**Darcy Gentle – Wabanaki Vocational Rehabilitation Program**

**Roger Fuller – Disability Advocate**

**Nathanael Batson – Disability Advocate**

**Isaac Gingras – Maine State Workforce Board**

1. State Rehabilitation Council - Division For The Blind And Visually Impaired [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. \*Indicates Ex Officio, Non-voting member [↑](#footnote-ref-2)