

SRC-DBVI¹ Minutes

Date & Time: February 19th 2025 (10am – 12pm)

Location: Zoom Meeting

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

| Council Members: | | | | | |
|------------------|------------------------------|----------|------------------|--|--|
| P | Andrew Maclean, <i>Chair</i> | A | Sherry Belka | | |
| P | Allen Kropp, <i>Vice</i> | P | David Emberley | | |
| P | *Jessica Cavanaugh | A | Roger Fuller | | |
| P | Amber White | P | Nathanael Batson | | |
| P | *Elissa Rowe ² | E | Kathy Despres | | |
| A | Darcy Gentle | P | Isaac Gingras | | |
| E | Nancy Moulton | | | | |

Guests: Kelly Chadbourne & Megan Marquis

Recorder: Branden Densmore **Next Meeting:** April 2025, TBA **Minutes Approved:** **YES!**

| Topic | Discussion | Action | Responsible |
|---------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------|
| Introduction | <p>SRC-DBVI meeting was <i>called to order at 10:05</i>: introductions were provided.</p> <p>There was an addition to the Agenda about the difficulty of attracting O&M³ specialists.</p> <p>A Quorum was established with 8 members in attendance.</p> <p>The chair provided a quick report about the Executive committee meeting last week, where they had prepared the Agenda, discussed the Annual Report, and worked on membership issues.</p> | <u>NONE</u> | <u>NONE</u> |

¹ State Rehabilitation Council - Division For The Blind And Visually Impaired

² *Indicates Ex Officio and/or Non-voting member

³ O&M -> Orientation & Mobility

| Topic | Discussion | Action | Responsible |
|-------------------|---|---|--|
| Minutes | <p>SRC-DBVI discussed the December 2024 draft minutes.</p> <p>No corrections were identified, and the minutes were accepted as presented.</p> | <p><i>Send December minutes to webmaster for posting on website.</i></p> <p><i>Create February draft minutes.</i></p> <p><i>Distribute February draft minutes to council members.</i></p> | <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> |
| Director's Report | <p>Staffing: Elissa Rowe addressed concerns about attracting and retaining O&M specialists.</p> <p>There is a national shortage of O&M professionals, but Maine is doing well currently.</p> <p>There are 11 O&M positions available, 10 are filled.</p> <p>While Maine isn't competitive nationally for salary, O&M specialists did a video about being in the field while living in Maine which has helped.</p> <p>The good news is people want to live and work in Maine.</p> <p>Increasing salary is challenging. The pay range is between 49K and 61K, and there is a 9-step system in place, giving O&M yearly raises with satisfactory performance reviews.</p> <p>DBVI has someone doing a paid O&M internship, and this individual may fill the last open position in the fall.</p> | <p><u>NONE</u></p> | <p><u>NONE</u></p> |

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| Directors Report | <p>DBVI has been working on the retention of O&M Specialists.</p> <p>The specialists need continuing education credits to keep their certification.</p> <p>DBVI asked to be able to support them with the costs of their continuing education as well as the \$500 yearly payment to renew their certification.</p> <p>There are 6 VRC⁴ positions with DBVI in total. 2 are vacant, and 2 are new hires.</p> <p>The two vacant positions are posted, and trainings re underway for the new staff.</p> <p>However, the vacancies still present challenges, and staff work with each other to fill the gaps.</p> <p>Technical Assistance: There was a three-day national training course around technical assistance.</p> <p>VR, O&M, and Catholic Charities were in attendance for a full day, which covered all the basics of pre-employment transition services.</p> | <u>NONE</u> | <u>NONE</u> |

⁴ VRC -> Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

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|-------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| Directors Report | <p>During the training, participants also delved into the RSA⁵ dashboard.</p> <p>They understood more about what to record (report) in the dashboard, with a goal of fiscal forecasting.</p> <p>Governor Budget: DBVI has two initiatives in the Governor's Budget.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 200K in additional funding for DBVI Independent Living Program • 3 new DBVI positions for Assistive Technology <p>Currently DBVI contracts out for Assistive Technology professionals, but DBVI has asked for the authority to develop their own in-house team hoping to hire individuals with blindness – specific AT certification: "Certified Assistive Technology Instructional Specialist".</p> <p>BEP⁶ Update: The Commissioner has asked for a BEP Strategic plan and they are in discussions now to bring in a national facilitator to work out this strategy.</p> <p>Unfortunately, the probationary manager at Cross Café left the position.</p> | <u>NONE</u> | <u>NONE</u> |

⁵ RSA -> Rehabilitation Services Administration

⁶ BEP -> Business Enterprise Program

| Topic | Discussion | Action | Responsible |
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| Director Report | They have brought in a temporary 3 rd party vendor for the micro market and are working on getting hot food available. | <u>NONE</u> | <u>NONE</u> |
| CAP⁷ Update | <p>Currently collaborating with the Iris network regarding a new learning software. CAP is supporting DBVI client with short term, non-technical accommodations for the semester, like a reader for printed texts, while the Iris Network worked on increasing online access to Brightspace.</p> <p>2 self-referred clients have recently reported trouble around accessibility of online DBVI applications.</p> <p>There was also another recent issue with timeliness of payment for a student which resulted in their inability to enroll in classes.</p> | <u>NONE</u> | <u>NONE</u> |
| Priority Topics | <p>Joint Training: There was no joint training in 2024 and the council discussed holding one in 2025. The Executive Committee will discuss this further.</p> <p>SRC-DVR Orientation: Allen Kropp is doing a new member orientation for SRC-DVR on March 10th.</p> | <p><i>Discuss and organize joint training for both SRC-DVR & SRC-DBVI.</i></p> <p><i>Send group email to both SRCs, letting them know about the membership orientation. All are welcome to attend.</i></p> | <p><u>Executive Committee</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> |

⁷ CAP -> Client Assistance Program

| Topic | Discussion | Action | Responsible |
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| Priority Topics | <p>Annual Report: The council discussed the SRC-DBVI Annual Report for ffy 2024. Questions and comments were solicited, but none were forthcoming.</p> <p><i>A motion was made (and seconded) to accept the report as written.</i></p> <p><u>The motion passed</u> with all in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.</p> <p>Budget: Council discussed the proposed SRC-DBVI budget for ffy 2025.</p> <p>The budget differed slightly from the 2024 budget to reflect changes in spending.</p> <p><i>A motion was made (and seconded) to accept the budget as presented. The motion passed</i> with all in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.</p> <p>Website: Council discussed Roger Fuller creating a new and improved SRC-DBVI website.</p> <p>It was agreed to have Roger create the site and archive any files that are older than 3 years to save money.</p> <p>It was also agreed to have the SRC-DBVI website cross reference the new SRC-DVR website.</p> | <p><i>Look over report, ad submission date, and create PDF document. Email to Andrew.</i></p> <p><i>Submit report to RSA contact.</i></p> <p><i>Update budget excel spreadsheet to reflect new budget for ffy 2025.</i></p> <p><i>Email Roger Fuller, giving him the green light on creating a new SRC-DBVI website.</i></p> | <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Andrew Maclean</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> |

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| Priority Topics | <p>Membership: A report was provided regarding SRC-DBVI membership. The council needs a SILC⁸ representative, more disability representatives, and 2 folks from Business, Industry, and Labor.</p> <p>Issac Gingras provided a definition regarding what Business, Industry, and Labor is.</p> | <i>Email Jenn Williams about potential SILC members who want to become SRC_DBVI members.</i> | <u>Branden Densmore</u> |
| Announcements | <p>Honorariums are offered to members in attendance who are not otherwise compensated for attendance.</p> <p>The next SRC-DBVI meeting will be in April with a date TBA.</p> | <i>Contact Branden to receive honorarium at srcscribe@gmail.com</i> | <u>Members Not Compensated</u> |
| Adjournment | Meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am. | NA | NA |

⁸ SILC -> Statewide Independent Living Council

People & Organizations Represented

Andrew MacLean (Chair) – Maine Medical Association

Allen Kropp (Vice Chair) – Drummond Woodsum

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

Nancy Moulton – Catholic Charities Maine

Kathy Despres – Goodwill Industries

David Emberley – Department Of Education (DOE)

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

Jessica Cavanaugh – Division For Blind & Visually Impaired (DBVI)

Megan Marquis – Disability Rights Maine (DRM), Client Assistance Program (CAP)

Isabelle Bailey – Division For Blind & Visually Impaired (DBVI)

Jessi Wright – Maine CITE

Kelly Chadbourne – Maine Parent Federation (MPF)

Branden Densmore – SRC Administrator