

SRC-DVR¹ Minutes

Date & Time: May 12th 2025, 1pm – 3pm²

Location: Zoom Meeting

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

Council Members³					
P	Allison Wiest	P	Jennifer Kimble		
P	Issac Gingras	P	Megan Marquis		
P	Samantha Fenderson *	P	Jenny Ardito		
P	Joshua Weidemann	E	Dylan Sullivan		
P	Darcy Gentle	P	Andrew Smith		
P	Patty Ngara	P	Lynn Feely		
E	Sierra Wood *				

Guests: None

Scribe: Branden Densmore **Next Business Meeting:** July 14th 2025 **Minutes Approved:** YES!

Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Introduction	<p>The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm.</p> <p><u>A Quorum was established with 10 members in attendance.</u></p> <p>Members/guests were welcomed and participated in an ice breaker activity.</p> <p>The chair reviewed the Agenda, and there were no additions.</p>	NA	NA

¹ SRC-DVR: State Rehabilitation Council, Division Of Vocational Rehabilitation

² Pre-meeting Held From 1230pm – 1pm

³ *Indicates an Ex Officio non-voting member

Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Minutes	<p>The council discussed the March 2025 Draft minutes.</p> <p><u>A motion was made and seconded to accept the minutes as presented.</u></p> <p>The motion passed:</p> <p>In Favor: 8</p> <p>Abstention: 2</p> <p>Opposed: 0</p>	<p><i>Prepare the March 2025 draft minutes and post on website.</i></p> <p><i>Create draft May minutes and send them to council members for review.</i></p>	<u>Branden Densmore</u> <u>Branden Densmore</u>
How VR Helped Someone	<p>Account relayed about a coastal VR Client.</p> <p>DVR and DBVI⁴ worked collaboratively, providing the client with O&M⁵, Job coaching, pre-employment, and readiness skills services.</p> <p>DVR, DBVI, and client worked as an effective team.</p> <p>Currently the client happily holds a retail position, and their case is about to be closed successfully.</p>	<p><i>Gather more "How VR Helped Someone" stories to share with council.</i></p>	<u>Samantha/Sierra</u>
CAP⁶ Update	<p>CAP has finished outreach to all 6 clubhouses, and Psychiatric Hospitals in Augusta and Bangor.</p>	<p><u>NONE</u></p>	<p><u>NONE</u></p>

⁴ DBVI -> Division For Blind And Visually Impaired.

⁵ O&M -> Orientation and Mobility.

⁶ CAP -> Client Assistance Program

Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
CAP Update	<p>CAP is also presenting on May 14th at the HOPE conference about Employment Rights, Rewards and Realities. This training also shares information about the Maine Human Rights Act and the American's with Disabilities act in relation to Substance Use Disorder as a disability.</p>	<p><i>For more information about the HOPE conference, Click HERE.</i></p>	<u>Interested Parties</u>
	<p>Further outreach efforts are planned in Aroostook County and Southern Maine.</p>		
	<p>DRM⁷ also created a CAP Due Process rights flyer, Employment Rights Guide, a CAP Brochure, and Rack Cards which are available on the website for public use, addressing a range of topics like “What Kind Of Questions Can Employers Ask Me”...</p>	<p><i>For DRM Information resources, Click HERE.</i></p>	<u>Interested Parties</u>
Representative Updates	<p>MPF⁸: Focused on Youth Transition services, going into Schools, attending resource fairs, and sharing information about VR Summer Programs like the collage bus tour.</p>		
	<p>Maine Health: Innovation Summit in Portland May 19th and 20th, showcasing innovations in services for people with intellectual or ...</p>	<p><i>To register for the summit, or to get more information, click HERE.</i></p>	

⁷ DRM -> Disability Rights Maine

⁸ MPF -> Maine Parent Federation

Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Representative Updates	<p>... developmental disabilities or autism.</p> <p>Maine Health will have two Summit tables.</p> <p>Currently experiencing staffing issues: down four CWICs⁹. Clients looking for that service may experience delays. They are reviewing 3 offers today, but then the new hires need to be trained.</p> <p>In-person Benefits Navigator training is happening June 3rd in Augusta.</p> <p>Goodwill: Now closing out their bootcamp curriculum. Goodwill has the goal of helping 10 thousand people over a 10-year period to achieve more life stability, and they are only 300 away from achieving their goal.</p> <p>121 Program: They were recently refunded for another 5-year period and are on track to producing their 6-month report. Currently serving 53 individuals. 5 Tribes are working on planning health fairs. Also recently held a Youth Summit in Calais.</p>	<p><i>To register for the Benefits Navigator Training or to get more information, click HERE.</i></p>	<u>Interested Parties</u>

⁹ CWIC -> Community Work Incentives Coordinator

Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Representative Updates	<p>SILC¹⁰: Currently in a rebuilding phase with old people leaving and new people coming in.</p> <p>They are drafting a letter to Outdoor Recreations to see how they can collaborate and increase awareness on what's available to the community, increasing accessibility, etc.</p> <p>Workforce Board: In the process of designing an online portal for mapping out career pathways. Portal serves as a tool for career exploration, and what trainings are available across the State.</p> <p>Career Center: Serving many youths currently and continue to make referrals to VR based on age and barriers to employment.</p>	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>
Directors Report	<p>Staff: Staffing is much better now than in times past, with only three vacant VRC¹¹ positions: two in Portland and one in Lewiston.</p> <p>Data Report: Council reviewed an updated Data</p>	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>

¹⁰ SILC -> Statewide Independent Living Council

¹¹ VRC -> Vocational Rehabilitation Councilor

	report, covering things like numbers of clients served, case status numbers, regions, ...		
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Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Directors Report	<p>... types of employment procured, etc.</p> <p>During the presentation there was much discussion about the meaning of the report, Federal vs. State funding, long-term support, communication, informed choice, etc. Many topics were touched on, and many questions were asked and answered.</p>	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>
Priority Topics	<p>Bylaws: The Bylaws were sent, and the Executive Committee is reviewing them now.</p> <p>Program Assessment: Discussion mainly around VR practices and informed choice. It was mentioned that the principle of informed choice guides VR employment goals.</p> <p>VR tries to let everyone know about available services, providers, and they have a VR Consumer handbook. However, much of the work people choose is dependent on the Job Market, cost</p>	<p><i>Review Bylaws and generate updates with an eye for clarity and using WIOA language.</i></p> <p><i>For more on how Informed Choice is supposed to be implemented by VR, click HERE.</i></p> <p><i>Gather data on Informed Choice from VR Casework Supervisors to share with SRC.</i></p>	<u>Executive Committee</u> <u>Interested Parties</u> <u>Samantha Fenderson</u>

	<p>effectiveness, skills possessed, etc.</p> <p>The director shared that Informed Choice is evaluated by VR Case work Supervisors.</p>		
Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Priority Topics	<p>Membership: It was noted that SRC-DVR needs members from Business, Industry, and Labor.</p> <p>There are a couple leads in the works, and it was noted that we need to find out what they need to make their membership on SRC-DVR worthwhile.</p> <p>Collaborations: There were several networking events discussed to get the word out about SRC-DVR activities. A table was purchased for Disability Pride Day on July 18th where SRC-DVR will share a table with SRC-DBVI and SILC.</p> <p>SRC-DVR was invited to have a table for the Portland PRIDE festival, but no definite decision was made to attend.</p> <p>There was also a discussion about resurrecting the 5 Council Collaborative and possibly the Empowerment Forum which ceased in 2018.</p>	<p><i>Follow up with Business, Industry, and Labor leads.</i></p> <p><i>For more information on Disability Pride Day, click HERE.</i></p> <p><i>Follow up with DRM for the Disability Pride Day Table.</i></p> <p><i>Follow up with Brendan Williams from SILC about possible Table Activities.</i></p> <p><i>Send out email to council about Portland PRIDE festival to solicit volunteers to table.</i></p>	<p><u>Samantha Fenderson</u></p> <p><u>Interested Parties</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p>

	Further discussion of the 5-council collaborative was tabled for next meeting.		
Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Priority Topics	<p>Website: The new SRC-DVR website is up and running.</p> <p>Branden meet with Roger (Webmaster) and got some training on how to edit the website.</p>	<p><i>To check out the new website, click HERE.</i></p> <p><i>Review and edit website.</i></p>	<u>Interested Parties</u> <u>Branden Densmore</u>
Announcements	<p>Honorariums are offered to members not compensated for attendance.</p> <p>The next Regular SRC-DVR Business Meeting will be on July 14th from 1pm to 3pm. There will be a premeeting that same day from 1230pm to 1pm.</p> <p>The next Focus Work Group meeting is on June 9th from 1pm to 3pm.</p>	<p><i>Contact Branden to receive an Honorarium at srcscribe@gmail.com.</i></p> <p><i>Send group email with Zoom link, agenda, minutes, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Prep for Focus Work Group meeting and send meeting reminder with Zoom Link to council members.</i></p>	<u>Members Not Compensated</u> <u>Branden Densmore</u> <u>Branden Densmore</u>
Public Comments	Time was provided for public comment, but none was given.	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>
Adjournment	The meeting was adjourned at 3:04 pm.	<u>NA</u>	<u>NA</u>

People & Organizations Represented

SRC-DVR Council Members:

Isaac Gingras – State Workforce Board

Allison Wiest – Maine Parent Federation

Jennifer Kimble – Maine Health (Vocational Services)

Samantha Fenderson – Director Of Division Of Vocational Rehabilitation

Jenny Ardito – Goodwill Industries

Dylan Sullivan – Disability Advocate, University Of Maine Liaison

Lynn Feely – Disability Advocate

Sierra Wood – Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

Megan Marquis – Disability Rights, Client Assistance Program

Andrew Smith – Statewide Independent Living Council

Joshua Weidemann – Disability Advocate

Darcy Gentle – 121 Program Director

Patty Ngara – Disability Advocate, Career Center

Staff:

Branden Densmore – SRC Administrator