

## **SRC-DVR<sup>1</sup> Minutes**

**Date & Time:** May 12<sup>th</sup> 2025, 1pm – 3pm<sup>2</sup>

**Location:** Zoom Meeting

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

Council Members <sup>3</sup>					
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 14<sup>th</sup> 2025 **Minutes Approved:** **YES!**

Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
Introduction	<p>The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm.</p> <p><i>A <u>Quorum was established with 10 members in attendance.</u></i></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

<sup>1</sup> SRC-DVR: State Rehabilitation Council, Division Of Vocational Rehabilitation

<sup>2</sup> Pre-meeting Held From 1230pm – 1pm

<sup>3</sup> \*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 <b>motion passed:</b></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>	<p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p>
How VR Helped Someone	<p>Account relayed about a coastal VR Client.</p> <p>DVR and DBVI<sup>4</sup> worked collaboratively, providing the client with O&amp;M<sup>5</sup>, 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>	<p><u>Samantha/Sierra</u></p>
CAP <sup>6</sup> 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>

<sup>4</sup> DBVI -> Division For Blind And Visually Impaired.

<sup>5</sup> O&M -> Orientation and Mobility.

<sup>6</sup> CAP -> Client Assistance Program



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<b>Representative Updates</b>	<p>... developmental disabilities or autism.</p> <p>Maine Health will have two Summit tables.</p> <p>Currently experiencing staffing issues: down four CWICs<sup>9</sup>. 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 3<sup>rd</sup> in Augusta.</p> <p><b>Goodwill:</b> 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><b>121 Program:</b> 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, <a href="#">click HERE</a>.</i></p>	<p><u>Interested Parties</u></p>
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<sup>9</sup> CWIC -> Community Work Incentives Coordinator

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<b>Representative Updates</b>	<p><b>SILC<sup>10</sup>:</b> 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><b>Workforce Board:</b> 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><b>Career Center:</b> 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>
<b>Directors Report</b>	<p><b>Staff:</b> Staffing is much better now than in times past, with only three vacant VRC<sup>11</sup> positions: two in Portland and one in Lewiston.</p> <p><b>Data Report:</b> Council reviewed an updated Data</p>	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>

<sup>10</sup> SILC -> Statewide Independent Living Council

<sup>11</sup> VRC -> Vocational Rehabilitation Councilor

	report, covering things like numbers of clients served, case status numbers, regions, ...		
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<b>Directors Report</b>	<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>
<b>Priority Topics</b>	<p><b>Bylaws:</b> The Bylaws were sent, and the Executive Committee is reviewing them now.</p> <p><b>Program Assessment:</b> 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, <a href="#">click HERE</a>.</i></p> <p><i>Gather data on Informed Choice from VR Casework Supervisors to share with SRC.</i></p>	<p><u>Executive Committee</u></p> <p><u>Interested Parties</u></p> <p><u>Samantha Fenderson</u></p>

	<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><b>Membership:</b> 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><b>Collaborations:</b> 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 18<sup>th</sup> 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, <a href="#">click HERE</a>.</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><a href="#">Samantha Fenderson</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Interested Parties</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Branden Densmore</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Branden Densmore</a></u></p> <p><u><a href="#">Branden Densmore</a></u></p>

	Further discussion of the 5-council collaborative was tabled for next meeting.		
Topic	Discussion	Action	Responsible
<b>Priority Topics</b>	<p><b>Website:</b> 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, <a href="#">click HERE</a>.</i></p> <p><i>Review and edit website.</i></p>	<p><u>Interested Parties</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p>
<b>Announcements</b>	<p>Honorariums are offered to members not compensated for attendance.</p> <p>The next Regular SRC-DVR Business Meeting will be on <b>July 14th</b> 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 9<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 3pm.</p>	<p><i>Contact Branden to receive an Honorarium at <a href="mailto:srcscribe@gmail.com">srcscribe@gmail.com</a>.</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>	<p><u>Members Not Compensated</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p> <p><u>Branden Densmore</u></p>
<b>Public Comments</b>	Time was provided for public comment, but none was given.	<u>NONE</u>	<u>NONE</u>
<b>Adjournment</b>	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**