

Commissioners Meeting Minutes  
January 21, 2015

Commissioners

Jacqueline Romer-Sensky, Chair  
Jack Licate, Ph.D., Vice-Chair  
Jermaine Brown

David Daugherty  
S. Blake Haxton  
Cynthia Rees

Staff

Kevin Miller, Executive Director, Bill Bishilany, Assistant Executive Director, Therese Dyer, Chief Financial Officer, Aneesa Locke-Hines, Assistant Deputy Director, BSVI, Jon Hackathorn, Business Relations Manager, Rhonda Tanner, Assistant Deputy Director, DDD, Susan Pugh, BVR Deputy Director, Mindy Duncan, BSVI Deputy Director, Kevin Holtsberry, Office of Communications Director, Shirley Marchi, Community Relations Liaison, Maria Seaman, Budget Manager, Raivo Murnieks, Deputy Director, Performance and Innovation

Teleconference:

William Puckett, Disability Rights Ohio, Mark Seifarth, former Commissioner and member of the Developmental Disabilities Council; Kelly Manns, Cincinnati Goodwill Industries

Guests: Brian White, Ohio Vendors Representative Committee

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Brown moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Haxton. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Haxton moved to approve the December 17, 2014 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Daugherty. Motion carried.

Business Enterprise Program Update

In 1936 the Federal Rehabilitation Act enacted the Randolph Sheppard Vending Stand Act which made vending facilities for people who are blind on federal and other property. In 1980 State Legislation enacted the "Mini" Randolph Sheppard Act and made it a priority for business opportunity on state property. The Business Enterprise Program (BE) is a statewide program. There is approximately three million dollars in its annual budget. There is no General Revenue Funds used and is 100% operator supported. The Operator funds match the VR grant in a ratio of \$1 for every \$3.67 in federal dollars. The Ohio Vendors Representative Committee (OVRC) provides representation of blind vendors through active participation with OOD. There are several regional areas and members are appointed every two years.

BE's mission is to be the premier business opportunity for individuals who are blind and to be the service provider of choice. There are 95 operators, five trainees, and 102

facilities. Sixteen OOD staff assist in managing the program. Currently, BE has vending

operations in federal and state facilities. In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 there were over \$16.5 thousand in total sales; over \$7 thousand in merchandise purchased. The median income for BE operators is \$33,315. There are no health insurance benefits for BE Operators. Future goals of the BE Program include establishing new vending business opportunities, increase Operator median income, and modernizing business opportunities.

#### Program Planning Committee Report

The Program Planning Committee reported on the Workforce Integration Task Force report that was due to Governor Kasich on January 1, 2015. There are ten recommendations.

OOD is waiting to hear from RSA and DOL about the WIOA regulations. The VR State Plan will be part of Ohio's Unified State Plan. VR State Plan forums are held every year and are only required if there are major policy changes. OOD is focusing on the Unified State Plan. The federal government has delayed the WIOA regulations until spring. Commissioners invited representatives from the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation to present at the March 4 Commissioners Meeting on the Unified State Plan. Deputy Director Mindy Duncan will secure the presenters.

The 2015 VR Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment will include information from the WIT report, OSU's information including methodology, penetration and success rates. OOD is partnering with ODJFS to get analytical data from the state and pull data and create an integrated process. A focus will be on transition youth and employment using mathematics to send surveys to individuals served from August through November. A draft report should be ready by March, or April, 2015 with a targeted completion date of June 30, 2015.

#### Budget and Audit Committee Report

Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2014 ended September 30. The FFY 2014 fiscal books will close the end of January. The monthly budget reports were presented.

#### Executive Director's Report

The waiting list was eliminated for all individuals needing vocational rehabilitation services. The waiting list for individuals with Significant Disabilities was eliminated in June, 2014. VR began serving individuals with a Disability (D) for the first time since 1991. The D waiting list was eliminated in February, 2015.

VR increased successful outcomes by 36 percent and new job plans by 86 percent. OOD implemented a focused business engagement model which has resulted in tripling the number of employer members of the Ohio Business Leadership Network.

In FFY 2014, more than 39,000 Ohioans with disabilities worked toward their employment goal and 4,580 individuals secured employment through OOD's vocational rehabilitation programs.

The Executive Budget positions OOD to build on this success and effectively serve even more Ohioans. The 2016-2017 Executive Budget includes Employment First, Transition Services partnership with the Ohio Department of Education, a Vocational Rehabilitation Self Service Portal and Capital Improvements for the Business Enterprise Program.

#### Legislative Update

Ryan Ayers is OOD's new Legislative Liaison. Due to a new General Assembly, Committees are currently being organized.

#### Business Relations Report

The Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN) has 57 companies, which is an increase of four new members since the December, 2014 Commissioners' Meeting. The OHBLN held its annual Board Retreat on January 16, 2015 at OOD. The retreat focused on the Central Ohio Workforce Initiative (COWI) expansion and the Workforce Integration Task Force. The Champion of Opportunity Award was presented to OHBLN member Fifth Third Bank. OOD and the OHBLN are in preliminary discussions with Walmart to begin a disability workplace initiative in certain Ohio Walmart stores.

OOD is responsible for 200 placements for the second year grant with COWI. OOD has 105 placements.

Four job fairs will take place in October in Columbus, Cincinnati, Cleveland and Toledo in support of National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

#### Division of Disability Determination (DDD) Report

The Social Security Administration (SSA) has not yet provided a workload goal or budget. The average case processing time is 88.4 days; and the accuracy rate is 97.5 percent. The DDD has produced 52,323 disability determinations for the fiscal year to date.

Medicaid 1634 status conversion moves forward. DDD continues to work with the Ohio Health Transformation, Ohio Department of Medicaid, and Ohio Department of Job and Family Services to determine business processes for completing Medicaid disability determinations.

#### VR Report

The VR program has achieved 28% of its rehabilitation goal at the end of the first quarter. The Employment First Initiative has an open caseload of 1,141 individuals with 52 closures and an additional 90 individuals employed during the first quarter.

The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and the Department of Labor (DOL) have announced the publishing of proposed rules for the Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) will be delayed until the spring. Under WIOA, the VR State Plan will be incorporated into the Unified State Plan.

VR has available caseload capacity and outreach efforts are underway in the field offices. The VR Fee Schedule is being updated. OOD is required to update the VR Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment in FFY 2015. A focused review of services to transition youth is being planned.

BSVI applications are up by 24 for the first quarter of the year. Time in application is down to 38 days. There are 223 BSVI consumers in Job Ready status.

OOD is bringing the Independent Living Older Blind case management in-house to increase efficiencies and case service dollars. A supervisor has been hired for the new unit and interviews for the case load assistant position has begun.

OOD and the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) delivered the Workforce Integration Task Force Report to Governor Kasich on December 31, 2014. The report identified 10 recommendations to remove barriers to employment and income parity for individuals who are deaf and or blind.

OOD has been engaged with WIOA partners and the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation to discuss OODs alignment with the reforms in the State Plan.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

Commissioner Haxton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Licate. Motion carried.