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**STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** September 25, 2024

**Time:** 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Location:** Zoom

**Members Present:**

Lavinia Gripentrog	Selena Harris	Jennie Dopp
Bianca Gonzalez	Rob Ferris	Christine Anderson
Heather Mousley	Austin Oseguera	Steven Phelps
Linda Lartigue	Summer Sylvester	Jasi Sefcik
Esperanza Reyes	Dani Williams	Lisa Wade

**Excused:** *Jenni Thompson*

**Absent:** *Julie Beckstead*      *Velma Spencer*

**Quorum:**      **YES**

**USOR Staff:**

Aaron Thompson	Gordon Swensen	Aimee Langone
Sylvia Gines		

**OTHER ATTENDEES:**      Robert Andreasen      Sam Jackson      Honor Belche

## ACTION ITEM(S):

- Member Spotlight each meeting
- Success Stories
- Utah Schools for the Deaf & Blind would like to present
- Lora Bench would like to speak to the Council (date to be determined)

## WELCOME & OPENING BUSINESS

- Lavinia Gripentrog welcomed everyone to the SRC meeting on Wednesday, September 25th at 9:00 am.
- Review & Approval of previous meeting (May): **Motion to approve:** by Rob Ferris and Selena Harris with the second; council approved min.
- Mission Statement & Values read by Dani Williams & Selena Harris.
- New Slate for Ex. Committee vote: Chair: Jennie Dopp; Vice Chair: Bianca Gonzalez; Past Chair: Lavinia Gripentrog; Secretary: Esperanza Reyes; Member@Large; Lisa Wade. **Motion to approve:** by Selena Harris and Lavinia Gripentrog with the second
- Voted in new members : Shayne Roy and Lisa Wade. **Motion to approve** by Esperanza Reyes and Jennie Dopp with the second.
- Public Comment: None

## REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

- **BI&L (Rob Ferris):** 32 years with non-profit we are always hiring; opening for a full-time job coach, email with any questions.
- **BI&L (Dani Williams):** Outreach is going well.
- **Consumer (Selena Harris):** Outreach throughout the state. The word is getting out with Pre-ETS; DSPD
- **CAP (Bianca Gonzalez):** New cases, concerns with financial needs form. Our end of year is Sept. 30th.
- **Special Education (Lavinia Gripentrog):** Post High survey closes at the end of the month, data will be evaluated and I will talk about the results in an upcoming meeting. New website is now launched and will send a flier out soon.
- **UCAT (Austin Oseguera):** Nothing to report.
- **DSDHH (Jasi Sefcik):** New Director Lance Pickett; September is deaf awareness month, lots of activities taking place; fliers for HEAT & SHIP programs being emailed out.
- **DSPD (Lisa Wade):** been at Transition fairs; presented the employment pathway tool; working on DOJ concerns.
- **Navajo Nation (Velma Spencer):** No report.
- **DSBVI (Jenni Thompson):** No Report

- **VR (Steven Phelps):** Youth Mentoring events Oct. 2nd with Morgan Stanley; Oct. 15th with (UTA) Utah Transit Authority flier sent out to council. Held our Annual conference last week; great to see other colleagues and learn in classes.
- **USILC (Julie Beckstead):** No Report
- **Disability Advocate (Jennie Dopp):** Training with families to help with ABLE Accounts; helping them understand the program.
- **WDD (Heather Mousley):** Recertification visits this past month. Virtual job fair Nov. 7th. Every 2 months I have training for new employees.
- **U of U Center for Disability & Access (Christine Anderson):** More students in the office; our new space will be ready in November; there will be a designated sensory friendly place, made possible by donors. Pilot program for eligibility (TSNAP) Tiered Student Need Assistant Program. Four new positions opening soon; 3 will be accessibility consultants.
- **Summer Sylvester:** Customized employment placements, able to place clients quickly.
- **Linda Lartigue:** New partnership project20 with National Geographic. We are the first city in the state to participate. Stories of people with disabilities on a podcast.
- **Parent Center (Esperanza Reyes):** August and September are really busy months, Transition conference.

## USOR DIRECTOR'S UPDATES :

### Aaron Thompson -

- VR Performance Dashboard - PY 22 / PY 23
  - New Applicants; Total clients served; % of Transition age youth; Closed successfully employed; measurable skills gain rate; ave. days to eligibility; ave. days to employment plan; ave. Counselor caseload.
- Training Services
  - Graduate Programs; Undergraduate programs; Vocational training; Basic education; Apprenticeships & OJTs; Job readiness & life skills; Pre-ETS
- SRC Annual Report
  - open for feedback
- Disability IN Utah & 50th Annual Golden Key Awards
- Upcoming Job Fair - Tuesday Oct. 8th, 2024
- New Member Recruitment
  - Business, Industry & Labor ; Former or Current VR Client

### ABLE Update - Jolene Wyler UWIPS Director - Overview

- Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE) accounts allow individuals with disabilities and their families to save and invest without jeopardizing federal means-tested benefits like Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Withdrawals from ABLE accounts are tax-free when used for qualified disability-related expenses such as medical care, education, housing, and transportation.

### **ABLE Utah: A successful Program for Employment and Savings**

- Launched in September 2021, administered by the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS).
- As of August 30, 2024 there are 1,032 active savers
- Nearly 900 account holders are employed, August had \$21,000 contributed under the “Able to Work” category

### **The ENABLE Act: Safeguarding and Expanding ABLE Account Tax Benefits**

Propose asking Senator Mitt Romney to support or co-sponsor S.4539, the Ensuring Nationwide Access to a Better Life Experience (ENABLE) Act, introduced by Senators Eric Schmitt (R-MO) and Bob Casey (D-PA). This bill is crucial to making three essential ABLE account tax benefits permanent before they expire on December 31, 2025.

A bi-partisan House bill HR 9614 has also been introduced by Rep. Smucker of PA and Rep. Beyer of VA. HR 9614 is the House companion to the Senate’s ENABLE Act (S.4539). The bill will ensure that the three ABLE sunset provisions- 529 Rollovers, ABLE to Work, and Saver’s Credit - do not expire at the end of next year.

The **ENABLE Act** would:

- Increase contribution limits
- Make ABLE contributions eligible for the Saver’s Credit
- Allow tax-free rollovers

### **Bottom Line: Supporting Financial Security for Americans with Disabilities**

- Key tax advantages for ABLE accounts are scheduled to expire on Dec. 31, 2025 without further legislative action.
- ABLE accounts allow individuals with disabilities to save for essentials
- The ENABLE Act seeks to preserve these tax benefits
- Maintaining these provisions helps individuals with disabilities save and invest without losing access to critical healthcare & income supports.

The ENABLE Act aligns with the original goals of the ABLE Act

## **PRESENTATIONS BY: Robert Andreasen - Public Meeting Overview**

- Utah Open & Public Meetings Act - Utah Code, Title 52, Chapter 4
  - Do the business of the public in public
    - Take Actions Openly
    - Deliberate Openly
  - Definitions -
    - Public Body - Any administrative body
      - Created by statute or rule
      - Two or more members
      - Expends public revenue, or supported by public revenue
      - Makes Decisions regarding public business
    - Participate - Ability to communicate with all members
    - Meeting - Gathering of a public body to discuss, receive comments, or act on a relevant matter
      - Called by an authorized person
      - Quorum must be present
      - Does not include chance meetings or social gatherings
      - May be conducted electronically (remotely)
    - Relevant Matter - within the scope of the public body's authority
    - Quorum - Majority of the members
- Open to Public - all meetings
- Notice of Meetings - 24 hours notice
- Class A Notice - Utah Public Notice Website & Publish on Agency Website
- Agendas - no less than 24 hours notice
- Errors - Matter may be discussed, no final action until corrected
- Emergency (Unscheduled) Meetings - matters of an urgent nature
- Closed Meetings - to discuss: character, competence, or health of an individual; for more see handout
- Recording Meetings - public portion required; complete and unedited; recordings posted on website; closed meetings must be recorded; site tours do not need to be recorded
- Minutes - written minutes required; see handout
- Electronic Meetings
- Enforcement - If Act is not followed properly
- Conducting Meetings - Maintain order and control

## **Rob Ferris - Council Training**

- Mission; Values; Overview - see handout

- Federal and State Structure
- Where we are in WIOA
- Responsibilities
- Purpose
- Membership
- Terms, Removal, and Resignation
- Meetings, Conflict of Interest and Quorum
- SRC Goals - 1, 2 & 3
- See handout for detailed information

### **Member Spotlight Esperanza Reyes - Utah Parent Center**

- Mission - to help parents help their children, youth and young adults with all disabilities to live inclusive, productive lives as members of the community.
- Impact -
  - 9,501 - services by phone, in person or email
  - 264 workshops held statewide
  - 627 School Meetings (IEP, Section 504, etc)
  - 5,856 attended trainings and workshops
- Staff - Primarily parents of children with disabilities. Our unique perspective of being a parent ourselves allows us an opportunity to provide real-life experiences and positive lessons learned.
- The Utah Parent Center Provides Free and Direct Personalized Services: Statewide & Regional; Web & Social Platforms; Virtually & In-Person
- Statewide Education Consultants
- Regional Education Consultants
- Parents as Partners in the IEP Process Handbook
  - Sections - IEP; Section 504; Guardianship; Transition; Choices; Activities; Early Hearing Detection and Intervention; Community-Based Service Waivers; Events & Workshops; TU Tuesdays; Sibshops; etc.
  - Spanish available

### **Pre-ETS Updates - Aimee Langone**

- Data updates from 2019 - 2023 (see handout)
- Contracts - 21 contracts with 18 vendors
- Instructors - 18 throughout the state
  - Self-Advocacy Specialist (housed with UWIPS)

- WBLE Specialist (housed with Business Relations)
- Fee for Service
  - Increased fees for WBLE and TWE Milestones
  - Added Supported Education
  - Agreements with Local Education Agencies
    - Ogden SD, Davis SD, Tooele SD
  - Transition Readiness Toolkit
- See handout

**Special Plaque Presentation for Lavinia Gripentrog's year of Service as the SRC Council Chair by Aaron Thompson.**

**Call to Adjourn Meeting by** - Jennie Dopp & Dani Williams with the 2nd.

Next Meeting will be Wednesday, November 20th 9:00 am to 11:00 am Virtually