

WSRC FULL COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Red Lion Seattle Airport
18220 International Blvd
SeaTac, WA 98188

October 17, 2008
9:00am to 4:00pm

Meeting commences at 9:00am

In attendance: J. Martin McCallum, Chair; Joelle Brouner, Executive Director; JoAnne Lang, Executive Assistant; Jeffry Abe-Gunter; Joanne Butts; Sandra Carr; Lou Colwell; Kimmer Gordon; John Harrison; Rudy Hernandez; Jerry Johnsen; Jim Larson; Carol Maher; Bill Murray; Sharey Cleveland; Lynnae Rutledge; Kris Tefft; Bob Roberts;

The Chair asks for introductions around the room. Carol Maher, Bill Murray, Sharey Cleveland, Jim Larson, Rudy Hernandez, Jeff Abe-Gunter, John Harrison, Lou Colwell, JoAnne Lang, Martin McCallum, Joelle Brouner, Bob Roberts, Sandra Carr, Joanne Butts, Paul Cox, Don Kay, Kelly Boston, Kelly Franklin, Kimmer Gordon, Jerry Johnsen.

Mr. McCallum asks Jerry Johnsen to tell us about his personal experience as a volunteer at an overflow homeless shelter the previous evening. Jerry volunteers with his church to house 14 homeless men overnight at their church and provide dinner meals and breakfast meals. He has gotten to know a few homeless men through this volunteer work. He said that he is amazed at how close we all are to homelessness, and that every one of those homeless people has a disability, whether it is substance abuse, mental illness, or family dysfunction.

Mr. McCallum asks for a member of the Council to move for the approval of the agenda.

MOTION: Approval of Agenda—John Harrison
Seconded by Bill Murray.

Aye: unanimous

Nay: none heard.

Reviewing the minutes of the July 24th meeting of the WSRC: Mr. McCallum commends JoAnne Lang for the exceptional minutes she prepared. He asks for comments about those minutes. He opines himself about the transparency of our council, and with minutes of this quality it makes a very readable public record of our meetings. He calls for a motion for approval of the meeting minutes from the July 24th meeting.

MOTION: Approval of Minutes—Jerry Johnsen
Seconded by Bob Roberts

Aye: Unanimous
Nay: None heard

Remarks from the Chair – Martin McCallum

Mr. McCallum reported on what he believes are 7 ways that the experience of our meetings brings the Council closer to Vocational Rehabilitation and emerging policy. 1) We met with the customers and prospective customers of DVR at the Forum. Following the formal part of the forum, Mr. McCallum heard comments from customers that they have greater hope after their forum experience and that three people told him that they have made appointments with their Counselor for the coming days. 2) We had the full participation of DVR staff and leadership at the forum. 3) Visiting the SeaTac DVR office. Mr. McCallum thanks Mr. Hernandez for arranging that visit. 4) We have perspectives from the field, and Mr. McCallum thanks Beth Calvo on behalf of the council. He also asks that Ms. Brouner and Ms. Lang prepare thank you notes to Ms. Calvo and Mr. French for their outstanding presentations. When Ms. Calvo spoke about the struggles of people with Mental Illness, Mr. McCallum decided that the ‘R’ in WRAP is really a *revolution*, rather than recovery. 5) Exchange among members, we have full participation from our volunteers and he compliments each member for their commitment to the volunteer work. 6) We have a chance at this and every meeting to hear from the Executive Director of DVR. 7) We get closer to DVR because of the literature and data assembled by Ms. Brouner in the meeting mailing.

Remarks from Executive Director – Joelle Brouner

Ms. Brouner welcomes everyone and especially Ms. Cleveland, our newest member. She points out how glad we are to have her volunteer with us. She would also like to thank every one of the members for their continued dedication in service to the council and the work we do. There is a lot of meaty data in this meeting's notebook, especially under the customer wages section and regarding economic advancement. She thanks Kelly Franklin for her wonderful job helping David Hankinson to motivate the staff of DVR to participate and be engaged and positive in our public forums. One of the things that the Council has always advocated is strong consistent training for DVR staff to support continued skill building and refreshers. Ms. Brouner has heard a lot of positive feedback about new training opportunities available. She also thanks all the DVR staff who participated last night in our public forum, including David Hankinson, Ron Falberg, Jan Staroski of the Kent DVR office, Rivera of North Seattle, Strand? Stander? Andres Aguirre and Jamalia Jones and Linda, Helen, and all the DVR staff who we are bound to forget if we try and name every one of them. She appreciates the hard work of our interpreters. She thanks Ms. Lang for doing a fabulous job of taking the spirit of the Council to heart. Ms. Brouner informs the Council that the Annual Report is finished, and that we are producing it on a CD. She thanks Jerry Johnsen for taking photos for the report to make it a nicer product. She wants to talk now about the challenges of recruitment for the coming year. Many people are terming off of the council in September. She does not believe it will be a challenge to find new people, but that it will be a challenge to find the right people. She will be encouraging all members to help recruit throughout the year.

She also mentions customer wages and economic advancement for people with disabilities. She knows that the Council will not find a person who thinks more strongly that the dirtiest secret within the disability community is how expensive it is to be a person with a disability. That cost is underestimated by our society. Ms. Brouner believes that the promise of the Rehab Act is strong wages, good benefits, the opportunity to achieve career advancement and to challenge ones' self. At the same time, the challenges of the economy exist. We cannot hold DVR solely responsible for low wages in this economic environment. We will begin a discussion today about strategies the division is undertaking to draw attention to customer wages as a matter of performance measured by the Rehabilitation Services Administration. Ms. Brouner hopes that it will be the beginning of a longer discussion and that the council might look at publicizing strategies for people to find work in challenging economic times.

Remarks from the Director of the Client Assistance Program—Jerry Johnsen

At the community forums, we hear the frustration of people trying to get Vocational Rehabilitation services. Peoples' personal stories are emotional, and at the same time Mr. Johnsen knows the amount of hours that DVR staff has spent working with each individual to get them on a path to employment, and knows that it can be frustrating to see the same person at the customer forum asking for more help. It can be discouraging. As we listen to peoples' stories, it is really important to have a relationship between the customer and the staff providing services. The counselors who are most successful in Vocational Rehabilitation learn how to forge that relationship. They bond with their customers. That relationship is important to be clear about how communication is going to take place in the process, and to not forget about people. Often the CAP sees case closures that have closed because there is no movement on the case. This usually happens because both sides of the relationship have not made anything happen. When nothing has happened for a while in the case, a supervisor reviews it and sees no movement, and then the case is closed. CAP runs into a lot of those cases and when they do, they point out to DVR that yes, nothing has happened on the case, but DVR needs to have ownership since they are partly responsible for the movement of the case. Timeliness is important. People use an entire 60 days to decide on a case, when really it could be moved along quicker than this.

There is a huge lack of mental health resources in our community. There are times when the agency needs to step up to the plate when we recognize that a person needs counseling or medical help, which is rehabilitation. We should not just turn a person away and tell them to come back when they have gotten their therapy. DVR should be able to identify what community resources are available and if they will accomplish what is needed for our customers. Not everyone needs intensive mental health counseling that will take 2-3 years to prepare a person for work. Some people just need some consistency in their life to address some issues. If the community mental health system is not working, our clients will not be working. The beauty of VR is that there are exceptions to every rule. The people who look for those exceptions are the staff persons who have the knowledge to do that.

The best and worst thing that DVR can do is in the hiring process. When you hire good people, the process is fruitful. If you hire people who are

problematic, it is hard to change staff behavior. We need to hire good people, mentor people, recognize good counselors, supervisors and area managers in the system and capitalize on that, partnering those staff with people who are struggling in the system. Identifying problems early is key. There are people working in DVR who should not be there. If a supervisor recognizes that, they need to figure out a way to help a staff person be successful. If they cannot help a staff person be successful they need to help them find new employment. Our clients get the worst end of that. We need to pay attention to field staff, how they do business.

Mr. Johnsen has had some great experiences this week. There are supervisors and area managers that are great about looking at a problem, stepping up to the plate, finding answers and approaches to doing business. He has experienced this with Ron Falberg. Mr. Falberg finds ways to look at problems from different perspectives.

Mr. Johnsen opens up the floor to any questions the members may have for the Client Assistance Program.

Ms. Brouner mentions that at the last quarterly meeting we discussed that we were planning on looking at information on fair hearings, but not redacted files and especially those fair hearings related to closure, because case closure seems to be the most frequent reason people have fair hearings. Ms. Brouner wonders if CAP has noticed any trends this quarter, regarding case closures or fair hearings.

Mr. Johnsen replies that though he tries not to be too redundant. The issue of when a person is in the VR system and one applies the principles of trial work and what is clear and convincing evidence, it continues to be a misunderstood thing by DVR staff. CAP spends a lot of time with DVR staff explaining that process and what sort of evidence needs to exist, and what kinds of conversations need to happen with customers if they are going to use trial work. That it cannot be an arbitrary decision just because a customer of VR is difficult. There needs to be an appropriate procedure. CAP sees people returning to the system and having decisions made to not reopen their case, when there is clearly not the kind of clear and convincing evidence to make that decision. CAP spends a lot of time explaining to VR staff what VR policy is. CAP welcomes that opportunity, but there are times when it is frustrating.

Mr. Johnsen gives an example of a case in the Blind VR, where someone had applied a policy of not allowing a customer to go to school part time for three years, because the counselor misunderstood the policy. When CAP explained the policy, the counselor said that was what she had been applying and explaining to customers for four years. The best thing that can happen is that people who are good counselors are in offices and new people come to this work and they are able to spend time with people who have been in VR for a while, and learn to model their behavior. By the time you realize it, a person has been interpreting things in a very narrow way for a very long time. It often comes down to the pressure of moving people through the system in a timely manner, which can sometimes affect the quality of outcomes.

Ms. Carr asks Mr. Johnsen if he feels that some clients do not understand, and that it has not been explained to them how the system works, or why things happen the way they happen?

Mr. Johnsen replies that yes, there are a lot of people who do not understand the way the system works. However, there are a lot of clients who are unable to process that information, and that it has been explained to them but that they aren't absorbing that information. He looks at how often they hear the same problems, and who are the people having these problems to determine whether the problem is systemic. The other place they gather information is actually sitting in on the client/counselor interviews and getting involved in mediation to observe the relationship. They see that as an opportunity to have conversations with the counselors to coach them. Some counselors are open to that and some are not. It depends on the office culture.

Mr. Abe-Gunter, addressing DVR as a shop steward, notes that managers are not always trained in just cause. He recommends to DVR that they really train their supervisors thoroughly in just cause, building a pathway to unemployment. Using letters of expectation, to solidify an employees' knowledge of their own job, and when they know what is expected, they step up to the plate.

Don Kay wanted to respond that he doesn't think that anyone in DVR would argue that they do not have some staff that is more or less skilled than other staff. He does not think that anyone would argue that we probably do have some employees who are not in the ideal job. DVR does recognize that. But he wants to share what they are doing about it. DVR does recognize who is

struggling. Kelly Franklin is a great supervisor and could sit down and have a conversation with any employee in the field who is struggling. DVR is currently doing employee annual performance evaluation. Every DVR employee has an annual performance evaluation happen every October. They take that process very seriously and use the process the way that it was intended to be used, which is where the supervisor and employee have a meaningful two-way discussion about the employee's performance. When there is a need for improvement, there is a plan put in place to make that happen. Once every employee's evaluation has been completed, Ms. Rutledge herself reads all 350 evaluations every year. She does that to better understand what types of support employees need, and she uses that to provide feedback to Ms. Franklin and other managers and supervisors to recommend what kinds of trainings and supports to emphasize. She also uses that as an opportunity to give positive feedback to employees. Mr. Kay wanted to make note that DVR does take performance very seriously and where employee performance is not at the level that it needs to be, they do take action.

Ms. Brouner reminds the council that Paul Cox's presentation has been moved to the place where the DVR Directors' comments were on the agenda, due to Ms. Rutledge's current unavailability. She apologizes for the changes and comments she doesn't often take a squarely planted field staff stance on any subject because she doesn't work in the field and she has affinity for the customer perspective because she has been a VR customer. She has been through a Performance and Development Plan (PDP) and finds it valuable. The hiring freeze has caused a lot of vacancies in VR offices. Counselors have pretty large caseloads right now. Ms. Brouner thinks it would be really challenging to build relationships with 100-150 customers at a time. An email crossed her path about an understanding between the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB), and DVR about recruitment practices and people having opportunities extended to them across agencies.

Kelly Franklin comments that she appreciates Ms. Brouner bringing up the challenges faced. DVR has just come out of the wait list environment. For years we had huge system issues in which DVR lacked training and support for staff. Eliminating that waitlist and learning how to operate outside of it involves how we provide quality of service and timeliness of service. Supporting staff and recruitment issues. Competing with the VA and other organizations which have better incentives and wages. We continue to be challenged by these problems. Ms. Franklin provided everyone with a

recruitment packet. Even during the hiring freeze DVR is still recruiting. They have a bit of a waiting list of people who might want to come and work for DVR when the freeze is over. She included all of the information related to the brochures for transition or vocational rehabilitation, because marketing our programs, whether it's an employer or customer need improvement. She met her goal of creating a DVD and other marketing so that we can communicate more effectively with those that we serve and the employers that we rely on. Training has been a huge gap. Mentorship is great as long as the people mentoring are the people we want mentoring. We have used our Rehab Academy. They have implemented the Rehab Law Review, and motivational interviewing. They are creating a curriculum for Advanced Best Practices. They have incorporated a Rehab Technicians Academy and a Supervisors Academy.

Bob Huven introduces himself at Mr. McCallum's request.

Joelle Brouner introduces Paul Cox, of the DVR state office. He heads the IT unit.

Paul Cox joins us to explain his leadership role in DVR. DVR satisfaction is based on how their customers can perform in the jobs that they do. Customer satisfaction is the cornerstone of the job they do. Part of the customer satisfaction deals with the reasonable accommodations of individuals with disabilities and how we can meet those needs. Mr. Cox feels he's been able to make a significant leadership contribution to DVR over the last few years. One thing that he's proud of in DVR is being able to offer assistive technologies to our staff who need them as a part of reasonable accommodation. A dirty word in his vocabulary is the word 'can't'. It is an unacceptable word. When people come to Mr. Cox's department with a need that would help them become more productive in the workforce, he looks at how they could accommodate that need to be better at what they do. As a part of those technologies, the larger flat panel screens, naturally speaking technology, video phones, instant messaging, and other ways to improve those services. One particular technology recently effecting Mr. Hernandez's office was to implement a network connection that would allow a video phone to communicate with customers. Over the last 2 and a half years they've been told by internet service providers like Qwest, Verizon and other ISPs, that there is no technology available in SeaTac that would allow DVR to use a video phone. As a part of his leadership role he has gone to the DSHS technical department, working with Ian Roberts who has helped him

come up with some solutions where a special type of circuit that will allow the staff to communicate with hearing impaired customers.

Remarks from the DVR Director—Lynnae Ruttledge

Ms. Ruttledge says that Ms. Franklin is working to get all the Areas together to celebrate and thank field staff and they invite Council members to attend if there is a celebration and appreciation in their area. Say Hey Olympia has been going for over a year; we have had five quarterly Say Heys. It has been such a success. The most recent one was sponsored by the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council. They picked up the cost of the food and the meeting space. There were more than 70 people there. The Rehabilitation Council started Say Hey Spokane. Say Hey in Spokane will be continuing, and Say Hey Seattle is sponsored by Microsoft. Say Hey Tacoma is happening next month, and is a partnership underwritten by Goodwill Industries.

Mr. McCallum asks Ms. Ruttledge about Goodwill Industries receiving a new grant.

Ms. Ruttledge says that the Rehabilitation Services Administration has grant authority with a program called Projects with Industry, which has been around for about 30 years. It is a program funded by the U.S. Department of Education for three years at a time. It is a no-cost job placement service for Vocational Rehabilitation. People being served by this program need to be VR eligible and individuals get high quality job placement services because part of the criteria for the grant is that you have to identify the wages that people will earn and the percentage of people who are going to be successful. Goodwill Industries in Tacoma is now a grantee. It started on October 1st. SL Start in Spokane was funded. They had a grant three years ago, did not get funded in the last round, and did get it this time. And Orion Industries in the Auburn/Kent area got funding too. These grantees will provide employment outcomes for VR eligible people. There has been turnover in terms of dollars going to 121 programs, and she will get a summary out pertaining to who got funded and who did not, and she wants people to know that VR will be providing assistance to any 121 programs who were not successful to help them prepare to be eligible for funding next October. She also mentions that Noemi Ortega had been funded with a Migrant Grant but is no longer, so those resources will go to a Yakima organization.

Mr. McCallum thanks Ms. Rutledge and suggests that when we meet in January, a Goodwill Industries representative join us. Ms. Rutledge also suggests that we invite Orion Industries.

At this point the Council looks at the proposed meeting dates schedule for 2009 meetings.

MOTION: To approve the proposed dates of the 2009 quarterly meetings. John Harrison Moves, Sandra Carr Seconds.

Motion approved.

Mr. McCallum leads us through the list of transition motions. He asks Ms. Colwell to read motions #1 & 2:

1. **MOVE THAT:** “DVR develop a standardized correspondence advising the parents or guardians of DVR’s customers enrolled in high school of three things: 1. The right to incorporate employment-related goals in the Individual Education Plans (IEP) of their student; 2. The link to the web page containing contact information of local transition liaisons; 3. A DVR Counselor may be available to attend IEP meetings upon requests.”

And

2. **MOVE THAT:** “DVR add guidance to the Customer Service Manual directing each VRC to distribute the standardized correspondence on transition annually in the fall to customers enrolled in high school on their respective caseload.”

Mr. McCallum points out that these motions arise out of our conversation on Transition in July, when our panel spoke about the preparation of an individual education plan is one that can miss key partners, like DVR. DVR doesn’t know unless the school informs them who the youth customers transitioning are. He asks for any comments on the motions.

Carol Maher says that she is on the Disability Advisory Committee for the Department of Social and Health Services they are interested in this subject matter.

Ms. Brouner says that if we pass this motion, we should add an implementation that when we mention a standardized letter, like using the Stars system. If it entails IT impacts that we are not aware of, we would like to work with DVR to find solutions and take that into account.

Mr. Larson comments that we are getting into some very specific directives and he wonders if we should do a broad policy motion instead. He is not sure that it will solve a problem of being included in an IEP. If someone is identified as a potential customer of DVR, they have already been signed up for DVR. He would prefer a broader policy directive than this.

Ms. Brouner explains that Karen Blaine, Cinda Johnson, and Maureen Roberts on the panel we had in July all said that the communication breaks down between the high schools and DVR and the customer. The customer and their family are not aware that they have the right to participate in the IEP. DVR may not know that there is an IEP to attend and so the parent or student need to know that they have the right to invite DVR. We are not trying to tell the school what to do, we are trying to inform parents and students of an option. If it is worded poorly and needs to be changes we will be happy to do that.

Ms. Colwell sees it as asking a state agency and their personnel to do something that is dependent on another agency to do their part. Districts are responsible for informing the family that they can invite DVR to IEP meetings, but that is dependent on the district doing their part. She does not know that we can ask DVR to do something that is dependent on the school providing information to families. She is not sure if she's misinterpreting the verbiage.

Ms. Brouner clarifies that yes, a Council as a policy partner with DVR cannot tell a school what to do, but rapport needs to be built and sustained between families and students and DVR. DVR has an obligation to the customer in the interest of informed choice and their success, that they know that they have the right to DVR representation during an IEP meeting. The important part of this is that DVR provide information to future customers about the availability of services and working toward employment related goals and informing the customers of their rights. We aren't telling them how to do their IEP, we are telling them that they can have a DVR representative at the IEP.

Mr. McCallum mentions that the motion does not say that all high school students should have correspondence come to them from DVR. It is people who are already customers of DVR who can benefit from being aware of their right to have parents and other community representative and counselors, but their right to have a DVR representative too.

Mr. Abe-Gunter suggests that when he finds out about IEP, he contacts the family directly and informs them of who their liaison is. Perhaps it would be better to provide a

letter rather than a directive, asking the superintendents or principals to include information about DVR to their students who are having IEP meetings.

Ms. Colwell asks would the district know that a student is a DVR customer already?

Ms. Rutledge replies that they would not necessarily know that. However, she would assume that most individuals don't necessarily have IEPs. So sending a letter to every transition student about IEPs might not be the best idea, because not every transition student has an IEP.

Mr. Roberts says that it is really important that DVR inform clients of their rights. If the schools do not do that, that is their problem. But it is important that DVR do their part. Many parents are not informed that they can attend IEP meetings, or are not encouraged to do so. Perhaps this letter would encourage parents and guardians to attend these meetings themselves and be more involved in the DVR process. If schools do not do their part, they are responsible for that, not DVR. However, it is DVR's responsibility to inform customers of their rights.

Mr. Johnsen says that there is a lot of good in these motions, but that it is too verbose. If it were to be done in thirty or forty words, we could come up with something better. He thinks it is too specific and we should ask what we want to see and condense it. The message gets lost with all the detail.

Mr. McCallum says that he is getting the impression that the motion deserves further review to get to the heart of what we are attempting. Can we afford to wait until January to work at the committee and executive committee level for more discussion?

Ms. Brouner asks for clarification as staff. She thinks that motions that are non-specific are not very useful. We have this motion because of Karen Blaine's comment that "parents don't know what they don't know." She welcomes any better ideas.

Ms. Colwell says that she thinks that there is a misunderstanding around what is required under IDEA for the school districts and what might be required for DVR. When the panel gave information, it was just that. We might want to react to that information but she doesn't think we are ready to make motions because there are too many pieces with legal obligations and some things that PAVE is doing and DVR is doing and possibly duplicating effort. Is this a process where we have a smaller group and refine these motions. Just because we have people present on a panel, it isn't necessary that we have to respond to every point that was brought up. If we are going to do motions, we need to understand the implications for each entity involved, but the law impacts as well. She

thinks there are holes in the motions that need to be understood before motions are brought forward.

Ms. Butts thinks that this issue is critical. PAVE had a transition program which is unfortunately no longer funded by RSA, but they do have great materials on transition and some written specifically for students, on their website and hard copies which include information about DVR. One thing they found out when their transition program was funded, school districts were asking for Karen Blaine to do trainings, and they found that special education teachers don't always know about transition and who should be present at an IEP meeting, and more specifically that DVR could be present at an IEP meeting.

MOTION: Mr. Johnsen moves that we table the discussion and rework the motions. Mr. Abe-Gunter seconds the motion.

Mr. Harrison asks for clarification, do we need to say that we are tabling it until the January meeting or just until we work it out?

Mr. McCallum confirms no.

Ms. Ruttledge asks if he means tabling all the motions or just the first two?

Mr. Johnsen confirms just the first two.

Further discussion: Ms. Ruttledge says that as far as the motions go, and she is referring to all of them, this involves the relationship between the SRC and DVR. We are partners and if we are partners she would like to be involved from the beginning, knowing what the things are that we are trying to address. What is DVR currently doing, what can we take from PAVE and the materials they already have, how do we look at this as a systems approach? It looks like the Rehabilitation Council is telling Vocational Rehabilitation what to do, and she would prefer, since DVR is actively engaged in activities at the local level, at the state level in VR and workforce system on transition, she would rather have a richer conversation, to distill what the issues are and find ways to address them. Some of the things in the motions are things that DVR is already doing. She hopes that we are not thinking that DVR will wait to continue their work until this discussion is complete.

Ms. Brouner thanks everyone and apologizes for any miscommunication and wants to recap. She hears what Ms. Ruttledge is saying about partnership and clarifies that in no way was any of this intended to be a brow beating by a partner to strong arm DVR into taking any kind of unthoughtful action. She thought that the panel discussion was part of having that discussion about what DVR does. This is why we brought forward DVR's

best practices in that discussion and disseminating the notes and notebooks in advance and sharing that information, the intent was not to be proscriptive or compromise transparency. The separate issue is whether the motions are appropriate. One thing she does not understand is, why we should not be telling someone what they *can* do, rather than what they should do, in the instance of informing people that they *can* have a DVR representative at the IEP meeting, this gives choice to customers and their families.

Mr. Johnsen would like to withdraw his motion to table the discussion of motions 1 & 2. He would like to make a new motion to table all ten motions. He realizes it is frustrating for those people who crafted the motions, but he believes we do need to have better dialogue with DVR. He does not think that it does any good to pass something and hand it off to DVR where there is no ownership. He thinks there is good intent here, but that the method of listing it out is not helpful.

Mr. Larson shares this view.

Mr. Murray points out a point of order. We have a motion on the table.

Mr. Johnsen replies that he removed his motion.

Mr. Murray clarifies that he does not think that you can withdraw a motion. We have to vote on it and then start again.

Mr. McCallum calls for a vote on the first motion, all those in favor of a motion to limit the tabling of motions 1 & 2 only say aye.

Aye: None heard.

Nays: Unanimous.

MOTION: Mr. Johnsen moves that all the motions be tabled.

The motion is seconded by Jeff Abe Gunter.

Discussion: Ms. Maher says that she wonders how long these issues will be tabled. She has been working on transition since she was a Disabled Student Coordinator 1987, and we still seem to be missing the communication piece. Asking people to improve communications is not proscriptive and it isn't negative. It is only saying that it seems to be an area where we are missing the mark and asking that everyone try harder to have better communication.

Mr. McCallum says that we are not dismissing the motions altogether. He points out that the word 'tabling' means that we will hold off on formally approving the motions until we have talked about it further.

Ms. Maher replies that yes, however we have been talking about this since 1987 and that we have known about and discussed the communication breakdown for long enough.

Mr. Roberts agrees with Ms. Maher. This is taking too long. It should not be so difficult to let parents and students know what their rights are. If we are tabling this, he suggests that we form a special subcommittee on transition for the immediate future, to discuss now and get something specific that the Council can vote on.

Mr. McCallum suggests that we do these motions correctly. This may entail working on them more closely with DVR to deepen our partnership.

Mr. Abe-Gunter says that he would like to defend DVR on some of this stuff. Reading the motions, he wants to commend DVR because some of the things in the motions are things that they have been doing and have been doing well. For instance they updated their website with the current DVR liaisons to school districts, and that Area 1 has worked diligently meeting with educators and there are people in Area 1 who are aware of DVR. He thinks that DVR has been addressing a lot of these issues already. Perhaps we need the Area managers to tell us what they *are* doing to address the issues and if necessary, then we can make motions for recommendation if necessary. OSPI, school districts, DDD, DVR, the SRC, all are doing things to inform people of their rights. DDD has a large base of transition students and so it is also partly their responsibility to inform people of their rights. We can help communicate this with DDD. Case managers at DDD may have a good interface for advertising for DVR.

Mr. Hernandez mentions that he and Jamila Jones went to the federal way school district. They had a breakdown in communication because the DVR liaison for transition to the Federal Way School District is out on medical leave. He assigned Jamalia Jones to do transition with the Federal Way School District. They talked with the administrators about what they wanted to accomplish and asked the administrators what they would expect from DVR. Once we talk with them, we make a plan on how to interface with teachers and parents. That is the way that we should approach this. There are already transition coordinators from schools. We can go in and reassure those coordinators that we understand too, so that everyone can work together with useful communication and planning and follow-through. This should happen yearly.

The Council discusses a work group to discuss these transition issues and motions and asks for volunteers. Mr. McCallum volunteers. Ms. Maher suggests that we invite someone from the Washington Association of Post Secondary Educators for the Disabled. Mr. Harrison agrees, as does Ms. Colwell.

MOTION: Move that the Council have a work group between meetings to work further on the motions.

Motion Approved.

Ms. Cleveland and Ms. Maher are leaving early. Mr. McCallum asks that before they leave we hear from Ms. Cleveland and then take a group photo for the Annual report of the Council.

Ms. Cleveland says that there are 74 Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Programs across the country. In Washington State there are seven. They provide services to members of a federally recognized tribe, depending on the grants. Eligibility requirements include that people receiving services live on or near a reservation and have a disability which hinders or causes barriers to getting and maintaining employment. This allows for culturally relevant services. About herself, she is a mother. She has three children, 8, 3 & 2. This is a good opportunity for her and she is happy to be here. Throughout her life, she has faced mental health issues, chemical dependency issues; she has a traumatic brain injury from a motor vehicle accident in 1999.

The Council welcomes Ms. Cleveland, and Mr. McCallum suggests we break for a group photo.

After the break we hear a presentation by Kelly Boston about the wages earned by customers of DVR. She has a power point presentation, which is copied here.

Slide One:



Wages of DVR Customers

- **Federal Wage-Related Standards**
- **Current and past outcomes**
- **Wage Impacts**
- **Strategies under way**

Slide Two:

Federal Wage-Related Standards

	Standard	2007	Pass/Fail	2008 ytd	Pass/Fail
The ratio of the average hourly wage of customers employed at closure compared to the state average hourly wage. (Current Washington State average wage is \$21.68) <i>Washington State's average state hourly wage at was 12th highest in 2006.</i>	.52	.51	Fail	.51	Fail
The percent of individuals achieving competitive employment who report their own income as their primary source of support at closure as compared to at application.	53%	57.4%	Pass	51.8%	Fail

Slide Three:

Current and Past Outcomes
Average Hourly Wages of Employed Customers

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Washington DVR	\$10.45	\$10.24	\$10.57	\$10.67	\$10.55	\$10.60	\$10.85
National Mean	\$9.57	\$9.75	\$10.03	\$10.18	\$10.58		
Washington Rank	7	13	11	11	26		

Slide Four:

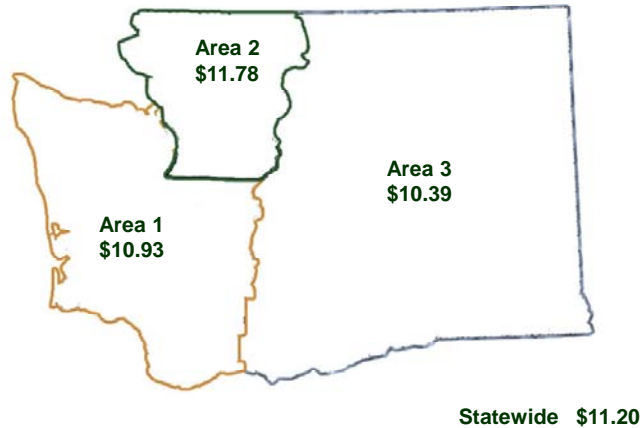
2007 Results Across Workforce Programs

WIA adults with disabilities*	\$10.00
WIA youth with disabilities*	\$ 8.00
Workfirst with disabilities*	\$ 8.84
DSB	\$13.12
DVR	\$10.60/9.43*

*Results from 2007 draft Workforce Focus Report

Slide Five:

Average Hourly Wage of DVR Customers by Area 2008



Slide Six:

Wage Impacts Wages by Disability Group

Disability Group	2008	% of Rehabs
Cognitive impairments	\$9.59	42%
Mental illness	\$10.85	22%
Mobility impairment	\$11.97	20%
Other disability	\$12.22	7%
Deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind	\$13.14	9%

SSI/SSDI Recipients	\$9.99	46%
HS Transition	\$8.99	18%

Slide Seven:

Wage Impacts Clients on SSI/SSDI

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Percent of all DVR rehabs - SSI/SSDI	33%	37%	40%	45%	47%	46%
National average	23%	23%	24%	25%		
National rank	46 th	48 th	49 th	51 st		

Jim Larson points out that Washington State is serving a larger number of the most significantly disabled people than other states. Because of the nature of disability, it turns out that the people with the most significant disabilities, who get jobs through DVR, are getting entry level wages. He thinks that the fact that we are serving such a large proportion of these most significantly disabled people it is reflected in the wages earned.

Ron Falberg points out that our benefits planners have done a good job planning for peoples' needs. It often makes sense for a person to do a gradual return to work. DVR tracks only the first 90 days of employment, when people might still be working part time and holding on to some of their SSI or SSDI benefits.

Ms. Ruttledge encourages us to collectively think about the goals we might set for the program and are there ways we would like to look at hourly wage and hour worked. Where would we like to set the bar? As we do the comprehensive needs assessment, we should think about what it will take to help our customers get the kinds of jobs where they are making more money. It is a good challenge to think about different partnerships with different organizations or incentives to use to get customers jobs with higher wages. DVR is contracting with O'Neill and Associates and WISE to do

capacity building activities in the VR system to improve outcomes for people served by CRPs. So what vision do we have for the organization we want to be? We have been using conversations related to the Ticket to Work.

Slide Eight:

Kelly Franklin presents the last slide. The strategies we are using involve marketing and accountability within the governor's GMAP system. DVR has internal internships where people intern as employees of DVR so that we can be a model employer in Washington State.

Strategies

- Project Search
- Customer Internships
- Supported Employment in State Government
- Business Leadership Network
- Comprehensive Needs Assessment
- Self-Employment Project
- Apprenticeships

Mr. McCallum thanks Ms. Franklin and Ms. Boston for the presentation and strategies. Now he would like to take a break and reserve questions on the presentation for after the break.

Returning from break, Mr. McCallum asks if there are questions related to the power point for Kelly Boston and Kelly Franklin. There are none, and so he gives the microphone to Ms. Brouner for some related material.

Ms. Brouner suggests that people keep this portion of their notebook to refer to in future discussions on this topic. She was asked to gather information about Ticket to Work, Benefits Planning and a cost of living calculation for each area of the state, and how much it costs to live with different disabilities and support needs. She was not confident that the calculation she came up with was strong enough to include in this notebook. If we are going

to talk about the wages people should or need to earn, we should really discuss what it costs to live with a disability. A friend and colleague, Lisa Manzer was doing research at the University of Washington on Disability and Self Sufficiency wage calculations. Ms. Brouner would like to know what information the Council needs in order to make practical recommendations to DVR. Does the council feel that at another time with more information, would we like to write a letter to RSA asking to raise the standard and indicator for wages earned by people with disabilities? The Council may not get another opportunity in the future to have a Director who is so excited about the discussion of raising customer wages. This is that moment, and though the economy is bad, can we still plan for the future?

Mr. McCallum clarifies that Joelle was speaking of the Seattle/King County's Self Sufficiency Calculator. It was designed by the Seattle/King County's Workforce Development Council with Ford Foundation money. It helps Worksource staff and others to plug in figures for a particular individual about their life circumstance, and helps to prepare an individual plan for employment and a financial plan, including all the related costs of transportation, housing, health care, and other wrap around services. He asks Ms. Brouner if it was not enough related to individuals with disability?

Ms. Brouner gives an example; the cost of personal care, if you need an attendant is not covered by any insurance that she is aware of other than Medicaid. The State of Washington offers long term care insurance to the State of Washington employees, and that policy can purchase support services to stay in your own home or a congregate care facility. If a person is acquires a disability during their lifetime, then they are eligible for that insurance. If a person comes to the State of Washington with a disability already and needs long term care, they are not eligible for that long term care insurance. So there is no calculus for attendant care, rep payee, transportation, medical transportation, hearing aids, prosthesis, these individual needs, and so no way to get a number with integrity to prove that each person needs to earn a solid amount of money.

Ms. Franklin says that the Senior Leadership Team at DVR has been looking at this as a tool for some folks but not for everyone. However DVR is incorporating that tool in their intranet as a PDF file so that people can have access to a tool to assess what financial needs they might have.

Mr. McCallum asks, how many states are currently in the Order of Selection (OOS).

Ms. Franklin replies that one third to one half of the states.

Mr. McCallum asks, the large number of customers that receive SSI or SSDI and how that influences wage, he would guess that some of those other states who are in the OOS would be behind Washington State in wage earnings.

Mr. Kay wanted to comment that he thinks that what made us unique is that we were in OOS longer than any other state. Toward the peak of that time, we had more people waiting, and waiting longer than any other state. Looking at the slides that show the percent of SSI/SSDI customers back in 2003 was about 33%, and if you look back beyond 2000 or the late 90's, it was only about 25%. It really is only since 2003 that we began serving very large SSI/SSDI population, primarily because of being in OOS year after year.

Mr. McCallum asks, are there any assignments we wish to give to Ms. Brouner for the next meeting.

Sandra Carr asks, when we talk about wages, we know that the election is coming between Gregoire and Rossi. It is her understanding that Rossi would like to lower the minimum wage in Washington. If that were come to pass, how would that impact what we do? He said that the minimum wage was never meant to be a family income.

Mr. Johnsen says that Rossi disputed that interpretation and said that it wasn't true, that it was a certain category he wanted to change.

Mr. Tefft says that the comments Rossi made were made at a debate sponsored by Mr. Tefft's organization, the Association of Washington Business. The comment was made in response to a question of whether or not either candidate would support a concept of a training wage for teens, individuals between ages 16-18, to the end that a higher minimum wage might be depriving some folks of opportunities. His answer was that he would be open to a training wage. It did not appear that the Incumbent was, but it was not applicable to people 18 and over in the workforce.

Mr. McCallum moves on to the final topic of the day, which are agency reports.

Lou Colwell gives a report on the work of the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. She does not have a lot to report. Many agencies are at a stand-still, because of funding. OSPI is madly trying to rethink how they will afford to do things. Around transition, the Center for Change has developed some more training modules on their website. Cinda Johnson and Denny continue to add to those modules and that they are accessible to anyone. Ms. Colwell continues to remind the Center to invite DVR to those trainings. OSPI does hope that DVR Counselors are invited. The Center for Change is beginning to collect data on students who graduated last June about where students are in their plans, six months after graduation.

Sandra Carr gives a report next on the State Independent Living Council. The SILC meeting was in July, and she has already reported on the meeting that they had then, but she does have Barbara Hathaway here from the SILC office and would like to have her a brief description of what is going on in the SILC now.

Ms. Hathaway says that Rob Honan is nearly done writing up the agenda on the independent living agencies and how to improve their programs. One agency may have resources that another does not, and how those centers can collaborate to share those skills among each other. They are doing a position paper on Housing and on Transportation and the Transition from high school to college or a job, and focusing on Veterans returning from the war, and migrant farm workers. Most migrant farm workers are in eastern Washington. Our SILC meeting is happening next week in Yakima. Right now I'm making all the hotel reservations and logistics planning for that meeting.

Mr. McCallum reports on the Workforce Board. There was a significant event that happened last month. A group of people met and adopted a significant plan that looks ten years out to look at the priorities of our state's Workforce Development System as a whole. The plan is called High Skills, High Wages, Our Strategic Plan for Workforce Development. The people who adopted this plan included the President of the Washington State Labor Council, Business on the Governor's Body including Mike Hudson in the Association of Washington Business, Ms. Rutledge was there representing the secretary of DSHS, the Director of the Community Trade and Economic

Development agency, the Commissioner of the Employment Security Department, the Director of the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, the Superintendent of the Office of Public Instruction. They signed a plan that identifies background information on our state's economy and how it is changing, the evolution of the demographics of our population, a snapshot of the systems operating in Washington and identifying goals for youth, adults and industry within Workforce development. Within the adult goals, there is a section involving working to improve service to target populations and a subset of steps to get us there: specific action like adult basic education and English as a second language are offered at technical colleges and community based organizations are tied to vocational training in tandem, rather than in sequence, called IBEST. Also improving workforce development services for individuals with disabilities by: There are four bullets under that section, which he reads:

- reaching out to more people with disabilities and utilizing community based organizations to assist with this;
- reassessing the business needs of employers and services to customers with disabilities;
- building stronger linkages between workforce development services and programs that provide the essential support services needed by many individuals with disabilities to participate in the workforce;
- enhancing partnerships with other state, local and private organizations that deliver services to individuals with disabilities.

After the list, there are agreements among the leaders as to what of a number of these strategies they wish to lead or partner in these strategies. This is what the Workforce board does. They update that plan every two years.

As we come to a close Mr. McCallum reminds everyone that in January at the next meeting, we will be holding elections. Think of your committees and review each committee's purpose.

Ms. Brouner asks if there is any follow up required before the next quarterly meeting.

MOTION: John Harrison moves that we adjourn.
Bob Roberts seconds that motion.

Discussion: none heard
Aye: unanimous

Nay: none heard.