

**STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (SRC)**  
**July 10, 2020 MINUTES**

**Via Skype for Business:**

<https://meet.lync.com/hawaiiomt-dhs/asantiago/B1CVD9RQ>

**or via Phone:** 1 808-829-4853 Access Code 504680043

**MINUTES – 07/10/2020**

**Attendance:**

Howard Lesser (Client Assistance Provider and Vice Chair of SRC);  
Michele Ku (Community Rehabilitation Provider and Chair of SRC);  
Bernadette Howard (Workforce Development Council);  
Joshua Graham (Private practice, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor);  
Rosie Rowe (Parent Training and Information Center);  
Jodi Asato (Business Industry & Labor # 1 and Secretary/Treasurer of SRC);  
Rene Berthiaume (Business Industry & Labor # 2);  
Evan Nakatsuka (Business Industry & Labor # 3);  
Caroline Campbell Wright (Business Industry & Labor # 4);  
Art Cabanilla (Disability Advocacy Group);  
Terry-Ann Moses (Kauai, Disability Advocacy Group);  
Christine Pascua (Disability Advocacy Group);  
Annette Tashiro (State Independent Living Council);  
Stan Young (Disability Advocacy Group);  
Wally Soares (Disability Advocacy Group);  
Maureen Bates (Vocational Rehabilitation Administrator);  
Gregg Van Camp (Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist);  
Iva Cain (Vocational Rehabilitation Assistant Administrator)

**Excused Absences:**

Dustin Park (Current or Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services);  
Nani Watanabe (Maui, Disability Advocacy Group)

**Guests:**

Chris Barnett, Employment Specialist for the Arc of Kona;  
Jeri, Employment Specialist for the Arc of Kona;  
George Massengale

Michele Ku – SRC Chair, called meeting to order at 10:06 am.

**I. *Review of Consent Agenda:***

- 1) Approval of Minutes – July 10, 2020
- 2) SRC Partner Council Report
- 3) State Rehab Council Standing Committee Reports

Hearing no objections, consent agenda approved by general consent.

#### Verbal Council Reports

1) CRPs, Verbal, Michele Ku- It has been absolutely intense since mid-March for CRPs. They have been doing emergency response and working with funders, DD Division to put in emergency flexibilities with services to ensure some continuity of services as essential business providing critical services to people with disabilities.

2) SILC, Verbal, Annette Tashiro – SILC has completed their statewide independent living plan which was submitted on June 30. Its open for anybody to review since it is public information.

## II. Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) Report, Maureen Bates

### 1. Status & Timelines of Order of Selection by Priority & Island

- Since July 2019 through July 6, 2020, DVR has removed 705 individuals from the Category 1 Most Significantly Disabled (MSD) Order of Selection deferred list.
  - Oahu - 414
  - Big Island - 145
  - Maui – 86
  - Kauai - 46
  - Molokai - 14
- Those who are currently being removed from the list have application dates that range from 3/2/20 to 3/20/20.
- DVR will continue to work to resolve Category 1 (MSD) most significant disabilities deferred list and anticipate the resolution of Category 1 deferred list before September 30, 2020.
- 442 eligible individuals with disabilities remain on DVR's OOS list including Category 1 (MSD), Category 2 (SD), and Category 3 (NSD);
  - MSD - 33
  - SD - 388
  - NSD - 22

### 2. Status & Timelines of Contracts Request for Information & Request for Proposal

- There are no RFIs or RFPs being solicited right now.
- DVR will begin a HlePRO RFP for psychological evaluations in October and will have an RFP for rehab tech in early 2021 with Governor approval requirements.
- All current contracts are being extended without Governor approval requirements.

### 3. Status of RSA 2019 Monitoring

- DVR has not received notification of the final RSA 2019 monitoring report after June 2019 on-site monitoring was completed. DVR is responding to RSA monitoring of State audits from 2016-2019 with requested documentation, and/or State Corrective Action

Plan. DVR has been making corrective actions and process improvements in areas that were preliminarily identified as possible RSA monitoring findings. Procedures are being re-written and updated to clarify staff responsibilities with emphasis on documentation and internal controls, inclusive of regular review of reports for RSA compliance.

#### 4. Update of Covid-19 Policies and Practices

- DVR has sustained essential services during the Governor's "Stay at Home" then "Safe at Home" proclamations for the pandemic. DVR employees have transitioned to teleworking and are still able to provide services to about 5,500 participants remotely and safely.
- During the period of the pandemic, March 27 to June 30, 2020, DVR has accomplished:
- 222 new applications were processed
  - DVR anticipates increases in applications as a consequence of the pandemic which increased Hawaii's unemployment rates since March 2020.
  - DVR supported 145 participants in completing unemployment insurance applications, and anticipate an influx of applications for VR services when unemployment insurance benefits are not approved, or reduced.
- 169 individuals were determined eligible since March 27, 2020.
- 564 new or renewed Individualized Plans were developed.
- 194 participants were placed into employment, which includes their IPE goals or transitional work experiences.
  - DVR's last quarterly unemployment insurance report ending March 31, 2020, identified 3,127 current DVR participants were employed in a wide variety of work activities leading to their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) goals or transitional work to explore careers, financial necessity, to gain soft skills or work experience with transferrable skills.

This data shows that the DVR program services are supporting participants engagement in Hawaii's workforce in competitive, integrated settings, not only in the clerical, retail, or landscaping field, but also in jobs as Environmental Engineering Technicians, Psychiatric Technicians, Graphic Designers, and Purchasing Agents where wages are generally higher than Hawaii's living wage. The average wage is \$18.75 per hour and most participants are working 40 hours a week. The 194 new placements will be added on the next unemployment insurance report from April-June, 2020.
  - The income from the participants earnings for the last quarter totaled \$15 million. Using a conservative 8.25% State tax rate this would equate to \$1.3 million as a quarterly 28% return on investment (ROI) to the State match for federal funding awarded annually.
- DVR has successfully closed – rehabilitated 32 participants since the start of the FFY 2020, 10/1/19 – 6/30/20. That number may appear low, however, DVR implemented

temporary procedures during the pandemic for staff to hold off closing any cases from March to ensure all successful rehabilitations have a post-employment plan updated in the event their employment is not sustained due to the pandemic's impact on Hawaii's economy. DVR is returning to closing cases based on documented moves, and employment.

- DVR continues to support program services in collaboration with community partners and providers for students with disabilities that are Potentially Eligible or VR Eligible.
  - Under normal circumstances, VR runs a Summer Youth Employment Program as one of the 5 Pre-Employment Transition Services, but this year has presented very unusual circumstances with COVID-19. Despite this challenge, DVR and partners have continued to collaborate with creating alternative virtual learning opportunities for participants to continue their career exploration.
  - On Oahu, Abilities Unlimited, Lanakila Pacific and Network Enterprises are running live virtual classes focused on furthering soft skill development and vocational interest exploration. Abilities also placed students as interns with organizations that lost volunteers because of COVID-19 concerns, like the Institute for Human Services. This unique strategy was actually featured on Hawaii News Now by Jim Mendoza on June 30, 2020.  
<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2020/06/30/prepare-students-with-disabilities-workforce-nonprofit-turns-online-learning/>
  - Our neighbor island communities have continued to experience challenges as many of our families do not have the necessary resources to actively participate, and participants have concerns about their health and safety in public settings. VR has requested laptops and internet resources to address these challenges, unfortunately, most of these resources have not arrived in time for the summer youth programs.
  - As we prepare to re-engage with our students for the upcoming school year, we are working to align service delivery with DOE, collaborating on DVR's program services being integrated with DOE's remotely and face-to-face. We anticipate having to offer more virtual class experiences and are planning accordingly.
- DVR is working to develop and implement re-opening procedures by September for face-to-face customer service to be integrated with remote services and/or community-based services while we support staff, partners, and participants safety.
- In the development of DVR's re-opening plans, DVR leadership continues to work with community partners, providers, participants, employers, and staff to ensure we are inclusive and flexible in our approach and practices, integrating best practices for social distancing, or addressing limitations on remote accessibility.

- In addition, DVR's contract vendors have submitted Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) during the pandemic to ensure services are sustained for individuals with disabilities while safeguards are in place to protect staff and community members.

As a result of Executive Memorandum (EM) 20-01 implemented by Governor Ige on 4/3/2020, 33 vacancies associated with the delivery of essential services have been frozen. Five of these positions were already filled, leaving 28 vacant. Under the Governor's EM, DVR is able to request approval for recruitment and hiring for which we have already received approval to fill one request in June, 2020, with 10 more vacancies being routed for approval this month. In addition, DVR has also been directed to reduce program expenditures by 10% associated with State matching funds (\$430,278). The State legislature also reduced State matching funds for 30 vacancies in DVR, representing a reduction of \$459,638 for the foreseeable future. The overall State match of 21.3% (\$3.2 million) for \$12 million federal funds to be awarded remains in tact. This \$889,916 reduction in State match may impact the federal requirements associated with Maintenance of Effort (MOE) for two years prior non-federal expenditures to be sustained and associated penalties, however DVR is reviewing possible mitigation of this through offsets with paper match of non-federal expenditures, and MOE penalty waiver requests if needed. DVR anticipates being able to resolve the previous MOE penalty that will most likely not be waived from 2017/2018 State supplemental funds of \$1,983,394.46 in January 2018. Instead of this being deducted from the annual federal award for two forthcoming years (2022 and 2023), DVR has reached out the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and been given preliminary approval to have the deduction applied in January 2021 through a reduction of planned carryforward funding, or lapsing PreETS funding from 2019. As a result, DVR anticipates sustained federal funding award, meeting state match requirements, and carryforward funding with program income for FFY2021 and FFY2022 to sustain essential services and cover state funding reductions, unless further state reductions occur.

#### 5. Update of DVR MOU Partnership Plus long-term supports for employment, retention, and advancement

- The Partnership Plus MOU for DVR to collaborate with community providers contracted by the Social Security Administration to support job retention of ticket holders (SSDI beneficiaries returning to work) was sent to the AG's office to be reviewed. DVR is awaiting for this to be returned with recommendations. Upon completion and implementation, this MOU will support individuals with most significant disabilities to return to work and retain employment with long-term supports provided by the Employer Network of providers statewide.

### III. New Business

#### 1. Nominate Officers for SRC Executive Committee

- The Executive Committee slate of nominees include: Howard Lesser as Chair and Art Cabanilla as Vice Chair. Rene nominates from the floor for Evan Nakatsuka as Chair and Joshua Graham as Vice Chair. Howard respectfully withdraws his nomination and supports Rene's nominations of Chair and Vice Chair. Art respectfully withdraws his nomination as Vice Chair. Evan accepts

the nomination as Chair. Bernadette moves to close the nominations for Chair. Howard seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

- Josh accepts the nomination as Vice Chair. Bernadette moves to close the nomination of Vice Chair. Howard seconds. Motion carries unanimously.
- Jodi accepts to fill in for the position as Secretary until the next SRC meeting. Rene moves to close nominations and Bernadette seconds. Motion carries unanimously.

## 2. Officers Election

- Evan Nakatsuka – Chair
- Josh Graham – Vice Chair
- Jodi Asato – Secretary (temporary until next SRC meeting)

Rene moves to accept the slate of nominations. Howard seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

15 minute Break – 11:11 am – 11:25 am

## 3. Review of SRC Standing Committees

- Legislative, Membership, Needs Assessments, Policy & Procedures, and State Plan
- Review document of each committee description for next SRC meeting.

## 4. Schedule for remaining SRC meeting

- August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Meeting
- September 11<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Meeting
- September 25<sup>th</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter Meeting

## IV. Presentation: Sunshine Law, Attorney General Lori Wada

Refer to handouts:

- 1) COVID 19 – Updates 2020
- 2) Office of Information Practices (OIP) Sunshine Law
- 3) OIP Tips for Holding a Virtual Public Meeting

Lori's contact information:

- Direct Line: 808.587.3076
- Main Line: 808.587.3050
- Email: [lori.wada@hawaii.gov](mailto:lori.wada@hawaii.gov)
- Cell Number: 808.265.7000

## V. Comments from the Public

- Rene announces that Lanikila Pacific became the first nonprofit community rehab program to become a state approved apprentice program. He and George Massengale worked closely with Lanikila Pacific to become approved. This will open up the possibility of the eligibility of Lanakila Pacific to receive Department of Labor and WIOA monies to support the program.

**VI. Adjourn**

Rene moves to adjourn meeting. Terry-Ann seconds. Meeting adjourns at 12:39 pm.

Prepared by Secretary/Treasurer Jodi Asato

## Membership Committee Quarterly Report

The SRC Membership committee is proud to announce that 8 new members and 2 second-term members were confirmed for the SFY 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021) on May 21 by the 2020 legislature despite the chaos of the pandemic.

The new members are:

1. Caroline Campbell Wright to represent the Big island as Business Industry & Labor. She is a writer/musician and advocate/caregiver for family members with disabilities.
2. Joshua Graham to represent Private Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. He is a VR Counselor in private practice at Graham & Associates, LLC. He is certified and participated as an intern at DVR.
3. Evan Nakatsuka to represent Business Industry & Labor. He is the Director of Workforce Programs at Lanakila Pacific.
4. Rosie Rowe to represent Parent Training & Information Center. She is a Executive Director at Leadership in Disabilities & Achievement of Hawaii.
5. Annette Tashiro to represent Statewide Independent Living Center.
6. Wally Soares to represent Disability Advocacy Group. He is the president of Island Skill Gathering (ISG).
7. Evalina “Nani” Watanabe to represent Maui as a Disability Advocacy Group. Ms. Watanabe is the Program Coordinator of Maui Independent Living Center.
8. Stan Young to represent Disability Advocacy Group. He is a Blind vendor of Blind Vendor Ohana Inc.

Serving for their second term are:

1. Arthur Cabanilla to represent Disability Advocacy Group to be appointed for second term. He is a business owner of Six-Sense-Solutions and an assistive technology specialist subcontractor.
2. Christina Pascua to represent Disability Advocacy Group to be appointed for second term. She is a Transition Coordinator at Kapolei High School.

The SRC is waiting to hear from Boards & Commissions on the status of 2 potential members.

1. Nancy Gorman was confirmed on May 21 to represent Department of Education. She was the Educational Specialist, Out of School Placements in the Special Education Section of the Exceptional Support Branch within Hawaii Department of Education. Ms. Gorman resigned from the Department of Education to start a new venture at the University of Hawaii. Ms. Gorman no longer qualifies as the Department of Education representative. However, she is committed to the cause of SRC and requested to stay on as a Disability Advocacy Group representative. It is hopeful that Boards & Commissions will approve her as a “Holdover” and be confirmed as the as a Disability Advocacy Group representative at the next legislative session.
2. Bernadette Howard has applied to represent Workforce Development Council. She is the State Director of the Career and Technical Education State Office at University of Hawaii - Manoa. However, she was not scheduled to be confirmed during the past legislative session. It is hopeful that Boards & Commissions will approve her as a “Holdover” and be confirmed in the new representation at the next legislative session.

3.

2.

The membership Committee would like to remind everyone that it's never too early to start recruiting for SFY 2022. Potential members should submit their applications by December 2020, to get confirmed in Spring 2021, and start their term July 2021. The SRC Membership Committee is recruiting for:

- representative of Business, Industry & Labor
- representative of Community Rehabilitation Provider
- Representative of Current or Former Recipient of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- representative with legal or legislative background
- representative within the deaf community
- representative with a disability
- representative from the Neighbor Islands

Art Cabanilla  
Membership Committee Chair  
July 2020