

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Draft Version

Date of Meeting: Friday, September 11, 2015
Time: 11am – 1pm
Location: MDOL, 45 Commerce Drive, Augusta
Facilitator: Betsy Hopkins

Present

Betsy Hopkins, VR	Janet May, CCIDS
Jan Breton, DOE	Jeanie Coltart
Terry Morrell, DDHHL	Debbie Gilmer, Syntiro, Maine APSE
Lisa Sturtevant, OADS	Gail Fanjoy, KFI
Rachel Dyer, DD Council	Tricia Jones (guest joining at KFI)
Lisa Soucy, High Hopes	Karen Fraser, BRS
Leticia Huttman, SAMHS	Brad Strause, Alpha One
Shannon Hartmann, Waban	

1. Welcome and Introductions

Minutes from the August Coalition meeting were not available, but will be reviewed and approved at the October meeting.

2. Ground rules review

Complete by Betsy

3. Membership review & preparing of ballot for October officer elections

Betsy will check with Rick on Monday to confirm process, but he is looking for names of individuals who are interested in joining the Coalition or serving in officer or workgroup chair capacities as he prepares the ballot.

We did a quick check of the bylaws, but still had questions about the 30 day notice requirement for voting. Nominations are accepted up to the point of voting.

Vision Quest update: Work through the assistance of ODEP and Vision Quest has really progressed and is finishing up under this round. Dr. Lisa Mills will be in Maine on October 21st and is working with Lisa Sturtevant and OADS. Nancy Brooks Lane will be here next week to provide further technical assistance regarding career planning; Abby Cooper delivered a webinar yesterday about hiring and supporting staff.

The application from ODEP for the next round of assistance was released yesterday and is due by October 9th. Discussion was how to use this as an opportunity for technical assistance and further the purpose of EmploymentFirst Maine. Data was area identified that could be very helpful, especially given some recent reports that have been released that do not portray Maine well. How do we tell our story in a constructive way? We all agree that there is much to be done to improve the employment of people with disabilities, but using data from 2010, for example, does not accurately portray all the work that is being done and progress. ODEP funds could be used for travel, so we might consider sending some representatives to another state if there are practices that might be helpful to Maine. We agreed that we will identify data as a technical assistance request area. Debbie Gilmer will take lead, but others to assist her in pulling the application together. Recommendations from the work group will be critical. What do we need from ODEP to implement the Act? Needs to be specific and measurable. A meeting will be convened for those interested in providing input to the application.

CMS just announced that Medicaid waivers can move towards outcome based payments for employment and community based services. We need to gain some understanding on the implications and opportunities for Maine that this presents.

Capacity Building: Debbie: Group has not met since last full Coalition meeting, but is scheduled to do so in October before next full Coalition meeting. She mentioned the recent Oregon settlement agreement and has sent information along to Rick for posting. The agreement speaks to reducing, but not eliminating, sheltered workshops.

Debbie announced something else, but it was not audible.

Policy/Legislative: Debbie: Met last week to assess sub-minimum bill status and developing educational plan for legislators in preparation of January.

Business: Group hasn't met recently, but MBLN funding was approved for July 1st from DHHS and for events from MDOL. They are looking at submitting a proposal to the SHRM conference in May for a workshop on "Mental Illness in the Workplace" with Maine Medical Center. Discussed statewide business relations efforts and the changing landscape with employers struggling to find workers. Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requires a focus and integration of services to employers as customer, so this really seems like a time of opportunity for job seekers with disabilities. BRS has not been able to fill its business relations position, which is a challenge.

Transition: Janet - Group is meeting today and developing a document to share with the Coalition. Betsy also spoke to WIOA and furthering work with DOE to provide VR services to youth with disabilities at a younger age while they are still in school. Although final rules have not yet been released, services to groups and those who are potentially eligible but have not yet applied for VR services may be allowed under the new regulations.

Jan Breton – They will be providing training in local schools this fall on how to write effective transition plans.

Data – Rachel: Met this morning. They have been focused on "first and preferred" language in the Act and the data that is available to inform this. Would be very helpful to have some data experts to provide some technical assistance around this. They are pursuing a series of questions that get to other data points and recommendations. Using Development Services to illustrate: Do we ask if people want to work? Work in the community? Is it in your service plan? National Core Indicators compile this data, so how can we use it for EF Maine purposes? They will bring to the next meeting with recommendations.

Lisa – OADS has added survey questions for 400 individuals to the National Core

Indicator for aging population. Are you interested in employment? If yes, do you need assistance? Will provide information on available resources, including a CareerCenter brochure and the Senior Employment program.

Communications: Karen: We haven't met for about a month and half. Rick and Betsy have been directly connecting about the agenda and meeting preparation. Expect that things to pick up now that summer has ended.

Success Stories – Five VR videos just released. Ask Rick to provide a link to them to EF Maine website. Using them with parents. Lisa – showed a video of *Popping Joe*, and example of successful customized employment that was really well received at recent SUFU event.

Other Business:

Terry Morrell invited everyone to the Annual Deaf Tea on September 17th.

Lisa Soucy mentioned that she will be presenting a 3 hour seminar, called *Changing the Mindset*, with 2 High Hopes members who are working full time at Employment Institute this October in Denver. As this is not just about club houses, she's interest in input from others as they pull it together. Maine is definitely ahead of many states with 64% of clubhouse members working, including fulltime. What is different here than in other states? Cultural. Expectations at clubhouse at the beginning. Really important to talk with people themselves. Also, very important to have a job that provides wages, so benefits are not needed.