

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities  
April 16, 2014 Minutes

Commissioners

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

David V. Daugherty  
Michelle Dillingham  
Cynthia Rees

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Rees moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Commissioner Dillingham. Motion carried.

Introductions

Staff: Kevin Miller, Executive Director, Jon Hackathorn, Business Relations Manager, Stephen Wilson, Legislative Liaison, Mindy Duncan, BSVI Deputy Director, Susan Pugh, BVR Deputy Director, Shirley Marchi, Communications

Teleconference: Mark Seifarth, Former OOD Commissioner

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Rees moved to approve the February 19, 2014 minutes, seconded by Commissioner Brown. Motion carried.

October Commissioners Meeting Date

OOD is not hosting the DisAbility Jobs Summit (DJS) in October 2014; rather OOD is hosting a Job Fair on August 21, 2014, in Columbus. Since OOD is not having the DJS this year, Commissioners agreed to schedule the Commissioners' Meeting on October 15, 2014 at OOD.

Consumer Advisory Committee Member Appointment

Commissioner Daugherty moved to approve Russell Turos to the CAC and remove Randall Jones and Nelson Freed from the CAC, seconded by Commissioner Rees. Motion carried.

Nate Jones and Shonda Causey will remain on the CAC as ex-officio members. Their terms will end December 2014. Commissioners thanked Nate Jones for his time and commitment to the CAC as Chair.

Executive Director's Report

Director Miller reported the Waiting List release is back on track. There are just over one thousand people on the Waiting List. The Waiting List is to be eliminated in late May or early June. Once the Waiting List is eliminated we will be able to serve individuals who have an entry level disability category for the first time since 1991.

Cost recognition is the new term to explain cost reduction because people believe that

services are being capped, which is not true. Cost recognition strategies are a way to look at making better decisions and spending money in a better way than was previously spent. Cost reduction strategies are about individuals who are really committed to the process. If we are trying three, four or five times to get an individual to engage with us, then they are not engaging with us and it is taking costs away from individuals who really are engaged with us.

The Governor has placed language in the Mid Biennial Review bill that the ODJFS Director and OOD Director are to co-chair a taskforce to look at employment barriers for individuals who are deaf and individuals who are blind. BSVI Deputy Director Duncan is OOD's point person on the Research phase of the taskforce. We are engaging the University of Cornell, National Federation of the Blind, Community Centers for the Deaf, and anybody that has an interest.

As required by law, each agency must set aside fifteen percent of its spending dollars on Minority Business Enterprises (MBE). Case service dollars are exempt from the law. All other operational goods and services are to be purchased from MBEs. OOD has spent over fifteen percent (closer to 18 percent) of its monies with MBEs.

#### Business Relations Update

Currently there are forty businesses engaged with the Ohio Business Leadership Network (OHBLN). This is an increase of nineteen businesses from last year. OOD is partnering with the BLN on the 503 Compliance federal rules that went into effect on March 24, 2014, which requires federal contractors to have a seven percent utilization rate of individuals with disabilities. OOD and the Ohio Industry Liaison Group provided training to over 30 businesses.

OOD is working with the OHBLN on the Central Ohio Workplace Initiative (COWI), an initiative that originated from a private family foundation, which supplied OOD and the OHBLN with resources in order to place individuals with disabilities into sustainable employment over the next year. OOD's responsibility is to place seventy persons with disabilities into employment within the first year.

OOD's Business Sourcing Analysts and Business Relations Manager attend Windmills Training the end of April. Windmills training is an attitudinal program that helps employers successfully include persons with disabilities as a labor resource.

#### Budget and Audit Committee Report

The current Monthly Budget Report produced is not very meaningful. The Budget and Audit Committee members discussed what tools would be more meaningful as a monthly report. The Budget team created a draft dashboard and created a more user friendly Monthly Budget report.

The dashboard report reflects a higher level of information. The information identifies matchable and non matchable VR expenditures. The document reflects Social Security Reimbursement income, money that is Ohio's allotment, matching funds available, and the federal draw down monies. This new report will replace the monthly report. The dashboard will show time limited funds (TLF) - funds carried over from the previous year. The dashboard will allow Commissioners to see the detail too. The report will reflect the original budgeted amount, and what was obligated. The end result will be one report for both the Uses of Funds and Sources of Funds. Commissioners will be able to download these documents and take them to meetings with legislators. The new dashboard allows everyone to talk about the same thing and see the big picture. The Budget Unit will continue to provide the monthly financial statement and the new dashboard version so Commissioners can use the information to advocate.

#### Program Planning Committee Report

Four VR State Plan Public Hearings were held around the state. Topics discussed were the cost per case reduction and if there is a cap on dollars for people with disabilities, job developers OOD is hiring, and the Business Sourcing Analysts.

We reassured people there is no cap on case service dollars. The goal is to improve services in a more efficient manner. Regarding job developers, OOD provided job development services to over four thousand individuals with disabilities. The four job developers being hired are going to serve one hundred individuals with disabilities. This is a pilot program. Since the elimination of the Employer Services Unit, there was a gap in what we were doing at OOD. We emphasized the importance of the Business Sourcing Analysts and the business engagement work that OOD is doing.

These discussions will guide the development of the VR State Plan. Commissioners will receive the draft VR State Plan May 19, 2014 to review and provide feedback. In addition, RSA will be informed about the time tables for Commissioner approval of the VR State Plan in the context of the final issuance of the RSA Monitoring Report, which could impact the VR State Plan.

Commissioners commented that due to the anxiety on the part of the CRPs, about changes at OOD, there should be on-going continuing discussion with them so that are kept in the loop along the way.

Commissioners asked if OOD pays providers by services it provides, or pay a provider a certain amount of dollars for providing the service. Services are paid based on the rates that were established from OOD's Fee Schedule. Costs are not cost based rates; costs are market based rates. Largely services are paid by the hour. However, there are some performance based services or flat rates because some providers were unable to provide information on how many hours it takes them to do a task.

Self-Employment is a strategic initiative taking place to assist with the Cost Per Case initiative. A new Self-Employment policy and procedure was rolled out in December. Last year about \$8.1 million dollars was spent on Self-Employment. This year about one half a million dollars was spent. There is a fifty percent reduction in spending on self-employment cases. A full review of all Self-Employment cases was completed. Some cases had to be refocused. A two phase Self-Employment training was completed. The first phase was training on the new policy and procedure. The second phase was an in-depth, in-person training regionally to look at the application. A Self-Employment Review Committee was also implemented to insure that plans being written are the best consideration and direction so people will be successful. This has been in place since January. The Fee Schedule went into effect on April 1<sup>st</sup>. There are several enhancements.

Another Cost Per Case strategic initiative is the summer youth programs. Last summer youth programs ranged from six weeks to eight weeks. This year a two tiered approach has been implemented. One tier is a three week program for younger students and is focused on career exploration and is shorter in duration. The second tier is a five week program that involves soft skills training and paid work experience.

Job Developers will be hired in May. Their role is job development and job seeking skills training.

An initiative in the Strategic Plan Scorecard is to develop and implement structured agency wide reporting protocols. The Employment First dashboard was an example of how the agency is able to monitor monies down to field level spending.

The Performance and Innovation team have developed a scorecard to draw in providers to be part of the process. Meetings have been set and valuable feedback from providers on the scorecard is being received. We are looking at having a scorecard not just for OOD but for consumers who are seeking services so they can make informed decisions.

The first Lean Process training was with the Disability Hearings Unit, which coincides with SSA's mandate to continue disability reviews in order to address the volume of work anticipated with hearings increasing. The Hearings process has not been reviewed or changed so the timing is good for us to take a look at this. The second Lean Process training is looking at the administrative invoices. This group is identifying all of the entry points of all of OOD's invoices. Case balancing and assignment is another Lean process training that looks at standardizing the way as people come through OOD's doors, how are we channeling them to the counselors so that we do not have some counselors carrying 70 or 80 cases and other counselors carrying 40 or 50 cases. We intend to balance the caseloads first and then work on the assignment piece. We are currently in the data gathering stages and looking at historical information for the past

24 months in terms of trends. Case Service invoice payments is another Lean Process topic that counselors, accountant examiners and our providers determine where do the invoices go and who do the invoices go to, the e-mail system, etc.

The Strategic Plan Scorecard is intended for use at a high level (50 thousand feet level). However, when more real time information is needed, budget reports can be linked to the Scorecard and we can see how the big picture fits together.

The next Program Planning Committee Meeting is scheduled May 21, 2014 at OOD, at 10:30 a.m. to review and comment on the draft VR State Plan.

#### Legislative Report

Regarding the Mid-Biennial Budget Review, OOD was included in House Bill 483, which was recently passed out of the House. All items stayed exactly the same as it was in the introduced version of the bill. OOD does not have any concerns and we are not requesting amendments. The Senate is to review the bill the last week of April.

#### DDD Report

DDD's workload, Initials, and Reconsideration cases have gone down by about eight percent. However there has been an increase in continuing disability reviews, which is the Integrity Workload and the Fraud Unit. These are two big initiatives between the legislature and SSA. The influx of the continuing disability reviews are cases that are back logged at the national level. There are approximately 1.2 million cases that are past time to be reviewed. Ohio's share is fairly large. For the first time in a long time DDD has produced fewer cases than have come in. Despite the new files going down, DDD will still adjudicate about 190 thousand cases this year. DDD hired 26 new adjudicators in the fourth week. SSA provided equipment to conduct additional hearings without staff traveling. This saves a lot of time and is more efficient. We are waiting to see what comes out of the Lean Process team to move forward.

A Medicaid meeting was held last Friday with the Department of Medicaid, OBM and ODJFS. Medicaid Expansion has reduced the number of disability determinations that are needed for Medicaid. At first blush it seems to have significantly reduced it because the number of people who are at 138 percent of poverty level already qualify and don't need us. However, there is still a certain number left and we are still working with the ODJFS to determine, what the number is. The number may be so significantly reduced we may not need an agreement with SSA and the Office of General Counsel as well as a separate software system to process those claims.

SSA is working on new technology so Ohio DDD can share cases more easily. Each DDS has doctors and psychologists who review cases. The SSA Central Office has asked Ohio DDD to adjudicate a few thousand cases for the Kansas City Region. SSA is compensating Ohio and refunding the budget to capacity.

Commissioners inquired about the 216 newly hired adjudicators and if any new hires were referred from VR or if any of them have a disability. There is one adjudicator hired, who self-reported a disability.

Commissioners stated more marketing needs to be done to post jobs in local One Stops and current OOD offices. The Department of Administrative Services made the Disability Claims Adjudicator job positions the featured job for the entire time the job position was open.

#### VR Report

VR has 850 more successful employment outcomes than the same time the previous year. Last year, it took 115 days to determine eligibility and it is now taking 53.7 days.

The Employment First Initiative's caseload is over 500. New counselors began employment at the end of October and they have already successfully placed people with disabilities. We are working in partnership with the Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) to make quick eligibility determinations, create a very aggressive plan writing process and placement. There is provider training with DODD. There were 900 of the 1200 job developers and other personnel who completed the online training. We will begin in-person regional trainings. The capacity of our provider community to deliver a competency based Supported Employment model is being increased.

An AWARE upgrade is expected around the end of April or beginning of May, which will compliment a lot of the new changes that the federal government is requiring OOD to do with coding to be compliant with federal reporting.

BSVI had 110 individuals with visual impairments still on the waiting list. Only 29 of the 110 individuals were SD. Referrals for BSVI are down over the last year. The waiting list is what was keeping people from coming to OOD.

#### Public Comment

None

#### Adjourn

Commissioner Daugherty moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Brown. Motion carried