STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND

BIMONTHLY MEETING
2200 University Avenue

St. Paul, Minnesota

Thursday, August 11, 2022

5:30 p.m.
APPEARANCES IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM:

REHABILITATION COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND          SSB STAFF

Corbb O'Connor, Chairperson          Brianna Holeman
Deborah Leuchovius, Vice Chair
Daniel Ashman
Frank Eller
Tom Heinl
Gloria Lafriniere
Catalina Martinez
Michael O'Day
Judy Sanders
Ryan Strunk
Jeff Thompson
Kyle Van Acker

ALSO PRESENT:

Natasha Jerde, Director of SSB

Susan Kusz, State Program Administrator

Whereupon, the following proceedings

were duly had and entered of record, to-wit:
MR. O’CONNOR: Welcome to the August 11, 2022 State Rehab Council for the Blind meeting. I am Corbb O’Connor, our chair, and we will start with a roll call of councilmembers and then we will do introduction of the audience.

Those of you on Zoom should be very thrilled with the work of Joe and Dave and several others here, we have lots of microphones. So let us know if you have trouble hearing, but it should be markedly better from last time we met.

And those of you in the room, Dave Andrews wishes me to pass on the following announcement, use the mike. Announcement given.
We will start with the roll call,

Daniel Ashman.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller.

MR. ELLER: Frank Eller, here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jessica Fordyce.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Tom Heinl.

MR. HEINL: Here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Gloria Lafriniere.

MS. LAFRINIERE: Here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah Leuchovius.
MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Here.

MR. O’CONNOR: Catalina Martinez.

MS. MARTINEZ: Here.

MR. O’CONNOR: Mohamed Mohamed.

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR: Michael O’Day.

MR. O’DAY: Here.

MR. O’CONNOR: Kristina Petronko may not be here, but we will get to that in a second.

Judy Sanders.

MS. SANDERS: Here.

MR. O’CONNOR: To your right is the microphone, Judy, or to your left, you are right
between the two.

MS. SANDERS: Anyway, I'm here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Judy says she is here,

she will find a mike in a second.

Ryan Strunk.

MR. STRUNK: Ryan Strunk is here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson is here.

MR. O'CONNOR: Trevor Turner.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: And Kyle Van Acker.

MR. VAN ACKER: Here.
MR. O’CONNOR: Excellent. Thank you all for joining. Let's do some --

MS. SANDERS: Now I'm here.

MR. O’CONNOR: Excellent.

It's not very loud in the room, but hopefully the folks on Zoom are hearing it.

Let's do quick introduction of those who are in the audience, we will start with those who are on Zoom. Audience members, there is a microphone between the two tables in the back there if you want to make your way there.

We will start with those on Zoom.

MS. KUSZ: This is Susan, I am a staff
member for SSB, Susan Kusz.

MS. OIEN: This is Kirsten Oien, I'm the specialist for the Blind and visually impaired with MDE.

MS. O'CONNOR: Briley O'Connor, I'm an NFB member.

MS. HOLEMAN: Brianna Holeman, staff member SSB.

MR. VAN ACKER: Good evening everybody, I'm Kyle Van Acker, I'm a workforce.

MR. O'CONNOR: Kyle, I will need you to get a lot closer to your microphone. But Kyle
Van Acker is what I heard so far.

MR. VAN ACKER: Yep. Manager with Good Will Easter Seals, state representative or State Rehab Council representative and Governor's Workforce Development Board representative.

MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Thank you, Kyle. Any other members of the public?

MS. LASHER: Randi Lasher with SSB.

MR. O'CONNOR: Great. Assuming we've got everybody on Zoom, I will give you an extra couple of seconds in case we missed someone. And we'll do the members in the room.

Audience members in the room want to introduce
yourselves.


MR. O’CONNOR: Excellent. Did we miss anyone?

Okay. So our next order of business for today is the approval of our minutes from our June 2 meeting and I wonder if someone would like
to make a motion to accept the minutes as sent?

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, motion, so move.

MR. O’CONNOR: Is there a second?

MS. SANDERS: Judy Sanders.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Deb Leuchovius,

second.

MR. O’CONNOR: So we got Deb Leuchovius seconding and Daniel moving, thank you.

Any discussion/correction to those minutes?

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR: Okay. So we will move
to a vote. Daniel Ashman.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller.

(No response.)

Frank, we will come back to you.

Jessica Fordyce is not here.

MR. ELLER: Frank Eller, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller yes, thank you.

Tom Heinl.

MR. HEINL: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Gloria.
MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah Leuchovius.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina Martinez.

MS. MARTINEZ: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Mohamed Mohamed is not here, I believe.

Michael O'Day.

MR. O'DAY: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Kristina Petronko.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Judy Sanders.

MS. SANDERS: Yes.
MR. O'CONNOR: Ryan Strunk.

MR. STRUNK: Ryan Strunk, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Trevor Turner is, I believe, not here.

Kyle Van Acker.

MR. VAN ACKER: Kyle Van Acker abstains.

MR. O'CONNOR: Kyle abstains.

Corbb O'Connor, yes. So the motion carries. Fantastic.
Quick reminder to our committees that if you were the chair of a committee in the '21/22 year to remember to start drafting your sections of the Annual Report. And those are needed by October 14. So it would be really helpful if those were done before our next Council meeting, but if not, you have an extra few days after that Council meeting to get those completed.

So before we move onto our Director’s report we would like to appoint our committees. At the previous council meeting we went through, thanks to the work of the task force, the committee charges and plans for the coming year as well as
the structure of those committees, now we are appointing individuals to those committees.

So I have spoken hopefully with everybody's whose name I put forward here, but for starters with the Communication Center Committee I would like to put forward the following recommendation. Steve Jacobson as the chair with Catherine Durivage, Kristin Oien, Ryan Strunk, Sharon Monthei, Lynn Johnson and Rocky Hart.

Now those of you who have been on the Council longer than me, do we need to, I presume, appoint each committee individually; is that
correct? Can we pass one motion for all committees?

MR. HOBSON: This is Rob.

MR. O’CONNOR: If you could get closer to a mike, Rob.

MR. HOBSON: If I recall when I was chair I was able to do all the committees at once.

MR. O’CONNOR: Excellent, great, that was my hope. Thank you, Rob.

Is there any discussion for the Communication Center Committee?

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR: Hearing none, the
Customer Satisfaction Goals & Priorities Committee,

putting forward the following recommendation of

Jennifer Dunnam as chair with Jeff Thompson, Steve Jacobson, Ryan Haenze. And Ryan is going to be representing on behalf of Kristina's organization, the Disability Law Center, if I have the name correct. And she is taking on a new position within DEED as Associate Corporate Counsel.

So for our -- any discussion on that for the Customer Satisfaction Goals & Priorities Committee?

(No response.)
MR. O’CONNOR: Okay. For the

DeafBlind Committee we have Trevor Turner as chair

with Mohamed Mohamed, Wendy Devore, John Filek, Kim Johnson, Ann Mayes and Patrick Veilla. Any
discussion on our DeafBlind Committee appointments?

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR: Okay. For our

Employment Committee, Dan Ashman as chair with

Sarah Thiewes, Kathy McGillivray, Lori Thompson,

Michael O’Day and Kyle Van Acker. Any discussion

on that one?

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR: I may say Sarah Thiewes
and I have worked together, she is now a talent acquisition for a startup that's working on -- as a tech startup they are working on adoptions and foster care and so bringing the voice of a recruiter onto that committee was my intention.

Okay. Minority Outreach, thank you to Gloria for agreeing to chair. Gloria Lafriniere as chair with Michael Culbrunn, Frank Eller, Briley O'Connor, Yadiel Sotomayor, Samantha Flax, Kyle Van Acker. Any discussion of that committee?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Senior Services. Judy
Sanders as chair with Jeff Thompson, Barbara Klein,

Jan Bailey, Theresa Gfroerer, Tom Heinl. Any
discussion on the Senior Services Committee?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Transition Committee. Chair Wendy Devore, Deb Leuchovius,

Logan Stenzel, Joya Musa, Kristin Oien, Ryan Haenze

and Ryan Strunk. Any discussion on that committee?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Good.

Then Vendor Outcomes and Measures,

d this may be the most number of people that have

ever volunteered for this committee, thank you.
Dan Ashman as chair, Briley O’Connor, Jan Bailey and Kimberly Strickland.

Those are the committees. Is there any discussion?

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR: Is there a motion to appoint those committees?

MS. SANDERS: Judy Sanders, so moved.

MR. STRUNK: Ryan Strunk, second.

MR. O’CONNOR: Excellent.

We will move to a vote then.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, yes.
MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller.

(No response.)

We will come back to you Frank.

Tom Heinl.

MR. HEINL: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Gloria Lafriniere.

MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah Leuchovius.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina Martinez.

MS. MARTINEZ: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Mohamed Mohamed.

MR. ELLER: Frank Eller, yes.
MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Frank.

Mohamed Mohamed.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Michael O'Day.

MR. O'DAY: Michael O'Day, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Kristina Petronko.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Judy Sanders.

MS. SANDERS: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Ryan Strunk.

MR. STRUNK: Ryan Strunk, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff Thompson.
Jeff we'll come back to you.

MR. O'CONNOR: Trevor Turner, he's not here.

Kyle Van Acker.

MR. VAN ACKER: Kyle Van Acker, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Unanimously passing the motion to appoint those committees.

As I say, committee and committee chairs, please take a look at the documents from the last Council meeting that outlined the charges for those committees this next year and please make sure to work with Susan and myself to make sure that we get the announcement of your committee
meetings posted and to the large group of folks on

the Council who may wish to attend.

Any questions on committees from

anyone?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Excellent. Then moving

onto Natasha Jerde for your Director's report.

MS. JERDE: Okay. I think I am ready,

thank you, Corbb.

So greetings, Council, it's hard to

believe summer is nearing conclusion, but I think

our fall is shaping up to be an incredible time of
year for us. There is an incredibly low
unemployment rate and a record number of job
vacancies. We have a surplus of federal VR funds.
Our equity OKR initiatives are picking up momentum
and we are starting the next biennium budget
planning process. The coming months are just
screaming with opportunity.

Before I get into my report I did just
want to share I will be on vacation during our next
Council meeting in October and Jon and Bri, the
deputy directors, will be representing for the
director's report.

So first I wanted to give you an
update on our equity OKR. As a reminder these are our objectives and key results goal planning, if you will, all around equity. So our first OKR, let me make sure -- okay.

So our first equity OKR was around the Communication Center increasing access for people with print impairment who speak other languages. Our goal was five print materials. Well this group has taken that and exceeded. We are in the process of producing audio files for our general agency brochure in several languages. We've already completed Hmong, Russian and Spanish and we are now
working on Somali and Vietnamese. These will be posted on our website and they are available on a cartridge.

And a cute story that Lisa shared with me. She attended the Hmong Freedom Fair and she had the book player and cartridge available with our brochure in Hmong. And a couple came up who didn’t speak English, they walked up and were very inquisitive like what is this? She played the cartridge and they were just beaming, there was so much enthusiasm. So we can tell it is making a different in connecting people.

Another exciting new thing that's
going on is Dan Gausman has reached out to an
award-winning Minnesota author who has a children's
book that has been translated into Hmong. She has
agreed to record that Hmong edition for us this
fall. So far we've completed audio books in
Dakota, Ojibwe, Karen and Somali. And we also
continue to add English language books related to
the experiences of diverse communities in
Minnesota. Our second OKR is really around our
Workforce Development Unit or VR program and
looking at why do people leave us unsuccessfully
and what are the factors that lead to success. So
they have been looking at closure data for the past five years and they are trying to figure out what leads to our top three closure reasons.

The first is successful employment, the second is no longer interested in our services and the third is unable to locate or contact. So this group broke down those closure reasons all the way back to January 1, 2017 and they chunked it out into different demographics like age, race, region of the state, education level to see if there were any glaring disparities.

They are also hosting a counselor from the VRS, Vocational Rehabilitation Services, New
American Project to discuss their efforts in working with non-English speaking customers who are seeking employment. And this is in hopes to compile additional training and resources to share with our team.

This group is also starting a collaboration with DEED's Assistant Commissioner for immigrants and refugee affairs. And we are going to starting learning about the work that our own department is doing with this group and how can we foster relationships.

The third equity OKR was all around
our relationship building with the Veteran’s Administration and local veteran organizations to increase our exposure. This group completed a gap analysis with services that are offered to the vets at the VA and services offered by SSB, they did that already in St. Cloud and Fargo. They are still waiting to connect with the Twin Cities VA because they do not have a director at this time. This group is creating an internal list of contacts for all veteran services and all the groups that are servicing the vets throughout Minnesota. They are also providing material to every one of those organizations about who SSB is,
what do we offer and additional information around senior services and the Communication Center.

Our fourth OKR is around our customer satisfaction survey. And being able to dive in a little bit more based on demographic data about the quality of services we are providing. And we are fortunate to have Steve Jacobson on that group and it is great that that committee has been voted on because I think we will have some exciting updates for that group.

We had a small subcommittee that we called the communication needs subcommittee. They
reviewed the letter that goes out to customers when we want them to take the customer satisfaction survey. That letter was revised and messaging updated and the customer satisfaction survey rolled out, I think, today.

We also shared information about the survey with our own staff so that they can at least explain to customers what it is, but we do not want them influencing the results in any way, so just very neutral responses we are teaching them.

We are also including in our orientation that customers come in, they get orientated to our program. We are sharing a little
blurb that hey, you might be asked to provide some satisfaction information and we really hope you do because that information is valuable to us.

We have also added a text messaging reminder so if someone hasn't taken the survey from their email they will get a text, they can take the survey right on their phone.

And then we will be meeting again in October to look at the survey results and really develop a plan how are we going to use the information we get to do better and be better. And I think that is the most important part of the
We were also able to add a demographic profile to our satisfaction survey results so we know satisfaction rates based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, region of the state so we have a lot more in-depth information. The interesting thing was individuals who are from communities who are black, indigenous or people of color have an almost 20 percent higher satisfaction rate with our services.

Okay. Our number 5 is a big one.

This group is developing plans for comprehensive talent recruitment to have a more inclusive hiring
process for individuals with a disability and they are really diving into this.

Rob, who is here and is the facilitator of that group, indicates that this group has been struggling with momentum,

subsequently this group has decided to come back together as one group rather than the two smaller groups. They are going to be narrowing down their focus to be more geared toward discovering barriers of employment and they are going to rebuild momentum allowing them to reach the finish line.

Onto administration and operations
updates. The first is our staff adjustment to Blindness training guide. Many of you probably know that a vast majority of our staff attended adjustment to Blindness training.

Our counselors are statutorily required to attend six weeks of it, but what we have found is sometimes they are not very prepared for the experience and Jon Benson led the charge of creating just a small guide of okay, you are going to be going off to training, what is that going to look like, feel like, what are you going to experience? It has things like the purpose, what to expect, conduct expectations, scenarios like
what do you do if you are sick, how do you call in,

how do you let the center know, unwelcomed

behaviors as well as our mandated reporting

requirements. And I sent a copy of that guide to

the Council, I believe, possibly yesterday.

The next step is to then create a

customer version of that adjustment to blindness

training guide that is geared towards individuals

who are going to center-based ATV. Rob Hobson has

taken the lead in drafting this guide and will be

seeking input from the three Adjustment to

Blindness Centers before we finalize its
distribution.

The next is a huge, huge, huge undertaking, a huge project that we are in the very early days of, but I am excited to talk about and that is Operation Rebuild VR or Vocational Rehabilitation. So we are looking at a surplus of VR funds so we have this opportunity to do something that I wanted to do for many years.

So back in 2016, if you can imagine SSB was a square peg and WIOA came and it was a bunch of round holes, so we shaved the corners off our peg and we fit it in, we made it work, but it really wasn't what it could be. I knew we could
create a new peg, one that fit perfectly with what

the whole essence of WIOA was about.

So what's our new peg going to look like? Now this is big dreams here, but these are our three purpose statements. We are building a customer-centric program that results in individuals obtaining life sustaining careers that offer competitive wages and opportunities for advancement. We are building individualized and transformational vocational services that positively impact the lives of individuals who are Blind, visually impaired and DeafBlind and,
frankly, we are building the best VR program in the
country that people want to work for and that
people want to work with.

So we are in the early days of
structuring this long-term project. Jon and I have
our vision, we have a proposed model which we did
introduce to supervisors last week to get their
thoughts and initial reactions. We then are going
to be sharing it with our staff for their input,
their feedback, their ideas. And then we are going
to be sharing it with the Council in October for
your thoughts and additions.

This first year is really going to be
information gathering. We are going to be

surveying our partners, we are going to be actually

having sit-down conversations with our partners,

with our council members, with our customers about

truly what are they experiencing when they work

with our program. Because we know we have some

great things we do and we know we have some not

great things we do and we need to be back to this

is customer centric.

The next update I have is around our

community partner forums and our updates around

community partnerships. So we currently have 17
new contracts as of July 1 with another six in
process and two just starting the application.

This is approximately half the number of
contractors we had before expiration.

Several of the community partners that
have not reapplied for a contract are those that
provide employment-related services and they also
contract with VRS. So since SSB can use those VRS
contracts, some of those providers have chosen not
to pursue a separate contract with SSB. Some of
our adjustment to blindness providers have retired
from contracting or they just determined they no
longer wish to work with us. We have picked up a
few new providers at the start of this new contract cycle and I expect there to be more in the future. Our community partner manual is underway. There have been many changes since the last iteration and we need to update it desperately. In addition we will be updating community partner information on our website in the near future. We also have contracts for our staff adjustment to blindness training, those are expiring on August 30. We extended it by six months until February 28, 2023 to give us time to
go through the quite extensive process of putting

up a new request for proposal and that would be

coming up in a few months.

So some facilities update. We are

locking our doors, you may have noticed. We have

had some safety concerns in the neighborhood,

especially since COVID has hit. Our doors will

remain locked for the near future, however, we do

have an intercom system which is to the left right

above the -- I think it is right above the door

hitter that opens the doors, the automatic door

opener. So you can talk to the front desk

reception, she also is able to buzz open the door
right from her computer.

We also have a new mural on the west side of our front parking lot that finishes up tomorrow. It's a beautiful mural, it's very interesting. It's a head with the back of the scull open and there's a bear and fish leaping out of the back of his head, it sounds much more gruesome than it is, but it is actually quite a beautiful mural. The business, I think it used to be like a cat furniture store, they really wanted to bring some energy and vibrancy back to the neighborhood.
We are also working with Brenda Tuma with our department, she is the safety coordinator, on adding some heavy-duty resistant film over the glass. Not to scare anyone, but it's considered bullet resistant film, but it's just an extra safety precaution that we are taking.

Outreach updates. So we have partnered with our departments new office of public engagement to have an SSB presence at a lot of summer festivals and events. These include Juneteenth, Somali Independence Festival, Hmong Freedom Festival, Little Africa Fest, Family Day sponsored by the Urban League in North Minneapolis
and Latino Day at Valleyfair.

We will also be at the Minnesota State Fair. We will be booting with the Minnesota Council on Disability and I think we got the best day of all and that is Labor Day, so come check us out.

A retired optometrist, Dr. Georgiann Jensen-Bohn reached out to us and is our newest volunteer. She will be visiting eye clinics to let doctors and staff know about referring to SSB. She and Lisa Larges will be speaking to several staff meetings at Minnesota eye clinics in August and
September. She will then visit eye clinics throughout the state to drop off referral cards, answer questions and build connections.

And onto Workforce Development, some data information. So every quarter we submit data to the feds. We are fixing some data issues so the numbers we are submitting to them are not great, but we fixed one big one and that’s our reporting on any in-house disability-related skills training, which is Kia Yang, our rehab teacher. And it shows that she is working with 13 individuals receiving training from Kia.

So some new and interesting numbers
have us looking at how we are reporting some of our
other training programs, and we are not entirely
sure they are accurate. So Courtney Wanick has
been really looking at our data, making sure that
the feds have a really good picture of what we are
providing and how.

Another error that we are looking at
is it said that we only reported 38 of our 95
students as receiving pre-employment transition
services, which we know is incredibly low and we
know that the majority of them have received at
least one, so we think we have some errors there.
So not to be confusing, but we have a calendar year, a state fiscal year, a federal fiscal year and we also have something called a program year. We are in program year, oh goodness, we are in program year 2022 and we are in state fiscal year '23.

Well, we are now doing all of our performance updates like our successful closure numbers are all going to be on a program year moving forward. So for program year 2021, which was July 1 to June 30, just June 30 of 2022, we had 82 successful closures, that is 20 more than what we had in program year 2020. We are seeing
pre-pandemic numbers. Our applications and successful closures are on track to be around what 2019 numbers were, so we are seeing some trends upwards.

Some projects and initiatives. So our northern regions we have got those realigned, the far northern band from east to west is Steve Pesola, the second band from east to west is Aarica Burke, and the third band is Jason Dornbusch. We ended up moving the Duluth counselor position that we posted four different times and never got an applicant, we ended up structuring it to be a
northeast region right above the Metro so it was like Pine and Isanti. And I will have a little update in a bit, but we did have someone take the job and we will have a new counselor in that region.

And something that I think is really cool, this was an idea from Courtney, our director of policy. You know, I mentioned we have a budget surplus, a several million dollar surplus of money that we need to spend, and so we have been looking at well, how can we use that money to actually benefit customers? Yes, we are doing conference room upgrades and stuff, but we want to get that
money in the hands of our customers.

So we are doing, at least for the fall semester, a moratorium on the fee schedule for post-secondary. That means if someone is going to be going to private school we had a fee schedule where we could only pay up to a certain amount of money and anything above that is on them. So for fall we don’t want students to have any out-of-pocket expenses for school, so we are going to put a moratorium for the fall where they would not have to take out any loans or anything to cover those overages. This is also for out of state. We
are going to reevaluate this every semester.

So it is just for the fall for now and that's the messaging we are sending, but we believe we will probably be able to do it in the spring and we will evaluate each semester.

The policy is still there, it's still in effect, we still have a fee schedule, but we have a unique opportunity to provide additional funding to help students with COVID, with extra expenses, housing costs, food costs, we are hoping this will give at least a little reprieve to those students.

We will also be doing that for housing
costs for post-secondary students and we will also be looking at other areas that we can take advantage of these short-term moratoriums, I'm calling them, but these short-term possibilities to alleviate any financial burden that our customers have.

Hiring updates. ShaQuantaey Mack started as a counselor in our metro area on July 27. She will replace Jessica Fordyce whose last day is September 1. She comes to us from Arizona where she worked as a rehabilitation counselor for the Blind. Previously Taey lived in
Minnesota and worked at Blind, Incorporated, so she

is very familiar with the area. Amanda Anthony

will be starting at SSB in August as our new

Northeast Metro counselor. She comes from the

Department of Corrections. I think her

announcement was I'm fresh out of prison and here

at SSB. So she is serving customers in the

counties of Anoka, Chisago, Kanabec, Isanti and

Pine. And this replaces the Duluth counselor

position and Steve Hibbing will be covering the

Duluth area, he is only 45 minutes away in Hibbing,

so it's a natural fit.

Pre-ETS updates. So we have some
recent transitions in our pre-ETS staff. I'm pretty sure Sheila Koenig meant that to be a pun so I'm going to go with it. So the transitions in our Pre-ETS staff include Shane DeSantis who took on Sheila's previous role. He is now our transition coordinator, so a huge congratulations to Shane. He used to be a Pre-ETS counselor. Shane and two other staff, Tou Yang and Hannah Edwards, accompanied students on a canoe experience with Wilderness Inquiry. Ten students signed up to participate at our August 10 event, they will be starting -- well, they started and
ended at Lake Phalen Beach House and they learned about self-advocacy with staff from Wilderness Inquiry. The goal is to have 20 students next year. Apparently it was a huge hit.

I volunteered to attend the next canoe trip, I don't know how to swim, I said I may drowned, but I would be happy to attend and I would love to, it sounded like it was a blast.

Our pre-ETS staff gathered actually today for a staff development day, a retreat, if you will. The focus was on connections and resources. They heard from young people about the most helpful programs and services for them. They
visited a few community partners and participated in a variety of team activities.

We would like to share part of a letter that was sent to customers regarding those recent staff transitions mentioned earlier. It's important to us that students and families continue to have a strong connection with SSB, so the following was emailed to customers who had been on Travis Meshuga's and Robin Padilla's caseloads and both of these counselors have departed. But I do think this is a really good example about the style and how we want to communicate in a really customer
We don’t want to be bureaucratic, we want to be supportive and I think Sheila did a really great job with this letter.

She states: Dear Student and Family,

We are reaching out to let you know about transitions in our staffing here at SSB. Recently several of our counselors have moved on or taken other positions within our department. And we are in the process of hiring and training for those positions. This means that we have shifted current staff members' assignments to make sure that you and all of our students continue to have a strong connection with SSB. We know how important this
time is in your life as you continue to develop the

skills you'll need for success in your future, we

want you to know that we are here to support you.

One of our staff members will be in

touch with you soon and that person will be your

contact until our new counselors are ready to work

with customers. We also wanted to provide you with

the names, roles and contact info for each of the

members of our team should you have specific

questions or needs. We are proud of the team we

have and excited about the staff who will be

joining us, but most of all, we thank you for your
understanding as we go through this transition.

It's a privilege to work with you and we will continue to do our best to support you in your goals and aspirations. Warmly, Sheila Koenig, Pre-ETS and Transition Program Manager.

And then she goes on to state Debbie Sengbusch and Lori Thompson are VR techs, they work behind the scenes to purchase services like adjustment to blindness training or other services that support your future career goal. Randi Lasher and Tou Yang are Work Opportunity Navigators. They work directly with students to help with things like job exploration and finding work experiences.
Kia Yang is our rehabilitation teacher, she does short-term teaching in the area of independent living or workplace readiness. Shane DeSantis is our transition coordinator. He coordinates our youth programs and activities and connects with schools and other partners across the state. And Sheila Koenig is the manager of our youth programs and services.

Now, going from Pre-ETS to employment services. Right now the Commissioner's office is doing something called the Summer of Jobs Campaign. It has three primary goals: To showcase the
thousands of amazing jobs available in Minnesota,

to amplify the many sources of labor that employers

often overlook and to highlight the innovation and

best practices in workforce development from

businesses, job seekers and communities.

The Summer of Jobs Campaign has three

designated employer visits where Commissioner Grove

will actually go out, talk to the workers, talk to

the businesses and actually like the guy from Dirty

Jobs, he actually does the job.

So in the first visit he did in Duluth

at Essentia Health. He had a meeting with the

employers around the critical need for employees,
then he job shadowed some individuals with disabilities that were doing their job and then did a round table.

The second site was a few weeks ago, it was Schmitty & Sons, it was a vocational rehabilitation services site where Schmitty & Sons works with is it the Minneapolis or Minnesota Valley Transit Authority and the students are actually cleaning buses. And Commissioner Grove helped them clean a bus and interviewed the Director of VRS and it was on MPR, it was a lot of great press around it. But SSB was like no, well,
we want to highlight our jobsites too and all of
the great things that individuals are doing with
assistive technology and adjustment to blindness
skills and we want to get out to sites to showcase
that.

And so we are working with the United
Health Group to get the commissioner out there to
visit. So United Health Group has had a
disabilities internship program that trains and
hires persons with disabilities. They currently
have three of our SSB customers that were hired as
UHG employees from those previous internships and
they are hosting another internship class on
September 12. So we are really hoping to get the Commissioner out there to showcase.

So we have also noticed this not great trend of there is a great supply and demand for jobs and there is a huge shortage in on-the-job supports, job coaches, providers who are able to do that. So the employment services team has been doing a lot of surveying around what are our gaps and what are we going to do to meet that need. We have had individuals have to turn down jobs or delay starting jobs because there were no job coaches around.
Short update but a mighty update from Ed with Senior Services. We are on pace for serving around 3,500 seniors this federal fiscal year, we are nearly back to pre-COVID level. Our partnership with the Mayo Clinic is currently at a standstill, this would have placed us in the clinic once per week. The clinic is reluctant to allow us to use space.

And finally, we are working on a partnership with the STAR program on being able to track our assistive technology.

John Hulet shares about Business Enterprises. Vending sales continue to grow at
prisons, post offices and state hospitals. We are hoping with the start of college in the next few weeks that business will grow there, however, sales at federal and state office buildings are drastically reduced to pretty much nonexistent. This will continue to be the case because many government offices have permanently moved to a hybrid working environment with significantly less people on site. Minnesota is not the only one, of course, that is facing this. BEPs across the country are grappling with this new reality and
some of the businesses will not continue operating as they once did. Many, if not all, of these businesses will be absorbed by other BEP businesses to help them remain viable. We want to limit this reduction as much as possible, but we are recognizing this is to be the new normal in the BEP world.

The BEP is working with our elected committee to disburse a $3,000 vacation payment to each operator. We are hoping to get them in the hands of operators in the coming weeks. We disbursed about half a million dollars in support funds to operators last year and we are always
looking for ways to continue supporting them financially whenever we can.

You may remember we purchased 330 new vending machines. It is a lot harder to get 330 vending machines out to buildings across the state than I thought, it's very complicated. We have moved about 50 of them and it will take about a year and a half to deploy all vending machines.

The BEP is also working with the elected committee on their policy and procedure manual. They will be meeting with RSA in September to hash it out. BEP operator, Jeff Armstrong, will
be retiring in the fall after 36 years in the program. His business was bid out, but due to a decrease in sales it was not bid on. So therefore, all the locations of that business are going to be divided up between two other operators when Jeff retires. The hope is that they will help those other businesses remain viable going forward.

BEP staff and operators will be attending a micro market conference at Three Square Markets this month. The hope is to learn more about the micro market business and what opportunities may exist for operators in Minnesota. And finally, we are working with the
Department of Corrections this month on a new agreement. We are very fortunate in it's a little bit unique that our vending machines are available throughout the prison, including general population. Many states are only allowed to have those machines in visiting areas. And fun fact, I found out when I was at my executive committee for CSAVR, there are still nine states that did not deploy a single dollar as part of the Federal Restoration and Relief Program, so we all got money. We got about three or four hundred thousand dollars. Every
state got money and nine states haven't given a

single dollar out. So the feds are not pleased

because they worked very hard to get that money, so

ey are working with those states to figure out

why have you not disbursed those funds.

So onto the Communication Center.

Angela Bodensteiner from our development office

shares updates on our donations. Since October 1

to date we've received about $150,000 in donations

in our annual fund, about $10,000 in bequests and

we are kicking off our largest direct mailing in

November. Angela will be adding a new feature to

that, which is recurring gift options. So now
people can say I want to donate $5 a month, they

now have that ability to do that. Last year we got

about $24,000 from that mailing.

Our April planned giving newsletter

generated about $5,200 and Angela is going to be

sending her next planned giving newsletter in

August. And we did receive a $20,000 challenge

grant and we also were awarded $1,700 from the

Manual H. Ruder Fund because of the work our

Communication Center has done to meet the needs of

diverse communities.

Engineering and Radio Talking Book. I
first just want to thank Joe Niffen, who is sitting in the back corner, for making this hybrid meeting so seamless, thank you, Joe, I appreciate you so much. He has hung out all evening with us. Dave is enjoying his vacation out East.

Our long time broadcaster, Edy Elliot, retired on May 4 after over 33 years of service.

Joe Papke has been hired as her replacement as the new part-time weekend broadcaster. He has been an intermittent to SSB for many years. He is also currently working out a class while we await Scott McKinney's return from his medical leave. We believe Scott will be returning to us in a few
weeks and Joe will stay on for a little bit of time to help with the transition.

Radio Talking Book has also hired three now intermittent broadcasters, one of whom, Brandon Herring, has already been trained and working shifts on his own and the other two are still in training.

We have also been working on getting current released books recorded and broadcast as opposed to airing -- or re-airing old material and since May we broadcast 60 new release titles.

The engineering unit continues to
place books on BARD. We finally got the Google Assistant Play Action to work. We were then informed that Google is removing Google Play Actions next June so we are going to be relooking at that, but we got it up. We will have it for a good nine months at least.

So now if you have a Google Home or a Google Assistant equipped device simply say talk to Radio Talking Book, you will be prompted from there and it will work the same as the Alexis Skill.

We will soon, possibly by the time I am reading this out loud, be distributing refreshable Braille eReaders from the National
Library Service. We will also be making available
Amazon Echo Dots, not part of the National Library
Service, for SSB customers who want or need them.
We are making them available to people who want to
listen to Radio Talking Book and don't have one.
This was available as part of our TAM Fund we get
from the Telecommunication Access Minnesota.
Since we don't have the satellite
signal anymore we are like well, what can we do
with the funds that we were using for that? And we
came up with this smart speaker device program
where if someone needs a smart speaker we can give
it to them. And we are partnering with Senior Services to get those out into the hands of people.

Work continues on the Communication Center system upgrade project. Tentatively we should have our conversion of our Braille processes to KLAS this winter. There are several magical things that need to happen in hopes that we can keep to that schedule, but if everything works out we should be able to move forward this year.

And likewise we are moving forward with upgrading all of the equipment in every one of our conference rooms. Because we work for the state it's never easy. We had to get three bids
when we thought we only needed one, so that’s what

the delay is, but we are wrapping it up and we

should be able to move forward with hiring out.

Audio Services. As I had mentioned

before, as a result of Dan Gausman's gentle

persistence, Joua Lor's encouragement and Lisa

Larges' exceptional communication skills we are

excited to announce we will be recording a book in

the Hmong language by author Kao Kalia Yang.

Ms. Yang is an award winning Minnesota author who

plans to record her new children's book with us

this fall.
As mentioned, our introductory brochure is recorded in Spanish, Russian and Hmong, adding Vietnamese and Somali. All of these recordings will be on our website.

A little bit more about the Braille eReaders. These Braille eReaders offered by the National Library Service has a 20 cell Braille display, an eight-key Perkins style keyboard and individuals can download electronic Braille through BARD or transfer from the cartridges that are sent through the mail.

And audio is partnering with engineering and SSU to distribute our Echo Dot
smart speakers and Ronnie Washington is compiling a list of all the names of all the people who have expressed interest in getting one and will be working with SSU to distribute and set up.

And last but never least, Braille reports some numbers, this is from July 1 to today.

They have served 37 students, produced 122 Braille titles and 117,620 Braille pages. Thus concludes my report, if there are any questions.

MR. O’CONNOR: Thank you, Natasha.

You know, I appreciate very much your consistent mindset and vision of being customer
centric and it's clearly evident in the excerpt of the letter that you've read and in so many of the priorities that you are undertaking. So thank you very much for that.

Are there any questions?

MS. O'CONNOR: Briley.

MR. O'CONNOR: Briley.

MS. O'CONNOR: Thank you for that.

I'm curious as to why the Mayo Clinic decided not to have Senior Services there once a week, I assume it's a COVID precaution? But do you have that info?

MS. JERDE: This is Natasha. I don't,
but Jon Benson is on the call.

Jon, do you happen to have a little bit more information on that? You went off mute, Jon, but I don't hear you talking. I think Jon has technical difficulties.

MR. BENSON: I am ready.

MS. JERDE: There you are.

MR. BENSON: Am I here?

MS. JERDE: You are here.

MR. BENSON: Okay, thank you.

Unfortunately I don't have that information, but we will get it and get it out to you.
MS. O'CONNOR: Thank you, appreciate it.

MR. O'CONNOR: Other questions?

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Deborah Leuchovius.

MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah and then Daniel.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: You had mentioned two things early on that were of interest to the Transition Committee and one was that of the 95 students that you have only 35 received Pre-ETS services. Do you know why that is such a small percentage of the students that have been served?

MS. JERDE: This is Natasha. Yes and
the answer is it is wrong, it is not actually the right data. So what we did was we changed how we were tracking the services we are providing in-house. It's easy to track if we bought something or paid money for something, we can pull that, but it's really hard to track if we just did it ourselves.

So we changed it to be a lot easier for staff to say hey, I went and offered a workplace readiness training activity. But unfortunately when we made those changes it didn't get programmed into our reporting tool, so Courtney
monitors that every quarter and saw that yeah, we
don't think it's being tracked accurately. So if
you give us about a quarter the real number should
be coming out, which I am going to say is probably
80 to 90 percent of our students have received at
least one Pre-ETS. And I can safely say that.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: The other question I
had is that you at the beginning of your report
mentioned closure data for five years that had been
collected, does that include youth through age 24
or something like that or all ages?

MS. JERDE: Yes, this is Tasha.

Yes, all ages. And if you are
interested in that data, Shane DeSantis actually
facilitates that group and so he would be the
perfect person to connect with. He has all of
that.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Okay, thank you very
much.

MS. JERDE: You are welcome.

MR. O'CONNOR: Daniel.

MR. ASHMAN: Absolutely. I have a
couple of questions and this will probably take us
all the way back to the beginning of when you
started talking.
You talked about the talent acquisition struggling with momentum and going to be looking at holding meetings to discover what the barriers to employment are. Are these going to be open meetings for the public or providers to come into?

MS. JERDE: I am looking at Rob's face, he is the facilitator and he is smiling. I'm going to let you jump in, Rob, in just one second.

The Council has a standing, in fact, anyone has a standing invite to get involved with these equity OKRs. Kristina Petronko and Steve Jacobson so far were the only two that volunteered.

MS. JERDE: Oh, and Michael O’Day,

Michael O’Day as well. But Rob, I know you were going to say something.

MR. HOBSON: I was just going to say Dan, you are welcome to join us.

MR. ASHMAN: I will send you an email.

MR. HOBSON: All right, that sounds good.

MR. O’CONNOR: I’m gonna take a privilege for just a second. It would be helpful to get a list of those, if those are recurring
meetings, just a list of when those are out to the

Council and maybe it's just a matter of topic and

contact person we can leave it at that so we know

what to ask for.

MS. JERDE: Perfect, this is Tasha. I

will put together the facilitator contact

information for each OKR and get those out,

everyone has a different rotating meeting schedule.

MR. O'CONNOR: For sure, yep. I

realized the depth of my question as I was asking

it. So thank you, that will be helpful.

Daniel.

MR. ASHMAN: Thank you, this is
Daniel.

MS. JERDE: Oh, and Kristin said she can't hear you so you'll have to speak a little bit louder.

MR. ASHMAN: Okay, is this better?

You really have to choke down on this mike.

The next one was going to be operation rebuild VR. You had talked about going more customer centric in the programming and one of the concerns that I always have when people talk about customer centric is a deviation away from informed choice. Can you talk a little bit more about how
you are going to maintain a more customer centric approach without getting into a more cafeteria approach and more maintaining informed choice?

MS. JERDE: Oh, absolutely. So when I say customer centric, it's -- what I think can happen is when someone comes into our program it's, okay, here is our policy, here is our processes and you have to conform to what all of our policies and processes are, but rather you don't need to have the right words when you come to us, our job is to help counsel and guide and support and help you experience all there is to experience so you can make the best choice possible.
How we talk to people, one of the things that I cringe is sometimes I hear well -- I hear someone tell a customer well, that's not in policy. People don't care about our policy, they are just like how do I get services? I just want to get a job, how do I do that? And they shouldn't have to say these magic words to get services, that should be our job is to help navigate them.

So when I say customer centric, it's an experience that they actually want to work with us, it's not hoops, it's not a bunch of paperwork, it's employment and experiences to get them ready.
and it's not even just employment, it's careers,

it's life-sustaining careers, not just entry-level work, it's what do you actually want to do and how do we get you there? So informed choice is going to be of -- that's like a corps component of that.

MR. ASHMAN: Well, thank you very much for that, because it always concerns me when there can be any chance for informed choice to be pulled away from that.

Got a couple more, bouncing all the way to the last one for me that I took a note on was the smart speaker program. You talked about being able to get the Amazon Dots out, is there
training provided in that? Because I've worked with training seniors on all sorts of different technology and it is a process. Are you going to provide the training or are you going to be looking at outsourcing training if those individuals need that?

MS. JERDE: This is Tasha, that's a good question. Primarily it's with the collaboration with Senior Services. We have Reesy and Mark who are the SSU training folks who would be providing the training, but I can't guarantee that is the only method we are going to use, they
are still working out the process. We just got the

Dots like a month ago, so I will get back to you on

really what the full plan is for -- we don't want
to just give it to someone and say here you go,
good luck, have fun, because some people will need
that extra training.

MR. ASHMAN: Okay. And then I did

have one concern. When you talked about Robin

Padilla departing, where I work at BLIND,

Incorporated I do a lot of the authorization
requests and this might have been a reason why we
had an extreme backlog in trying to get an
authorization from one of her consumers and we were
never informed that she departed and prior to her
leaving she informed that all requests go to her,
not her and her tech. Is there a way that service
providers can get access to counselors' techs when
they leave? I look at the bits and I don't always
get that information and that really does cause
problems.

MS. JERDE: This is Tasha. Thank you.

And Jon, did you note that from Dan as counselors
and support staff are leaving we should make sure
that our service providers are aware of that so
they know who to contact and connect with?
Yes, he is signing yes.

MR. ASHMAN: Thank you, Jon.

And that's the last of my questions,

thank you.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Daniel.

Other questions?

MS. DUNNAM: Jennifer D.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jennifer Dunnam.

MS. JERDE: And we have a question in the chat after.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you.

Go ahead, Jennifer.

MS. DUNNAM: My question is about the
Braille eReaders, two questions. Number one, are they available through the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library as well or just through SSB? And number two, is it still sort of in pilot phase or can anyone who is eligible for it now request them and expect to be able to get one without a wait or where is that?

MS. JERDE: This is Tasha. This is when I would love for Dave to be here, he had all of the information.

Bri, did you hear those two questions and do you happen to have the answers for those?
MS. HOLEMAN: I believe, and I will have to double check with the notes Dave gave me, that it's still kind of in a pilot phase, hoping to be rolled out very quickly to others that are eligible. So I will also follow up and see what information I can get out to you guys shortly.

MR. ASHMAN: This is Corbb. I can tell you from the Advisory Committee for the Minnesota Braille and Talking Book Library the library here in Minnesota has just taken on the tech support side of the eReaders for Minnesotans, previously that was being handled out of Utah, as well as bringing more of those eReaders into
Minnesota. So my recommendation is to start with
the Braille and Talking Book Library, Jennifer.

MS. DUNNAM: So they are doing
distribution as well?

MR. O'CONNOR: Yes.

MS. DUNNAM: Okay. It will be good
for us to know if SSB is doing that too.

MR. O'CONNOR: Absolutely.

MS. DUNNAM: Great, thank you.

MS. JERDE: And this is Tasha. And I
do know SSB, we had some, we got a whole bunch in
which we are distributing as well because Dan came
out and showed them to me last week, so.

MS. SANDERS: This is Judy.

MR. O'CONNOR: Can you get closer to a mike, Judy? You got to eat it.

MS. SANDERS: Sure I can. This is Judy. And I know I needed to get one, I had one and it broke and while I was waiting for one I started with the library and it wasn't happening. Eventually what I found out was that the library was asking the Communication Center to send it out and there was a little bit of confusion, but because I nag a lot it works to do that and the Communication Center sent it out.
So I don't know what that means, you know, I don't know if the library is going to start doing it, but they were told -- I made the request with the library because it was an NLS thing, but eventually it was the Communication Center that sent it.

MR. O'CONNOR: Great, sounds like we might have some room for follow-up on that.

Natasha is nodding. Great.

There was a question in the chat?

MS. JERDE: Yes. The question comes from Rocky Hart. Which adjustment to Blindness
providers have retired their contracts with SSB?

Are questions permitted only for councilmembers or for all in attendance? And are you able to comment on which ATB vendors have retired contracts with SSB?

This is Tasha. I, at this time, can only comment on which providers we have contracted with and that list is on our website. I myself am not entirely sure which ones are just talking about retirement or actually committing to it. So a lot of this information is private so I am not able to disclose, but the 17 or so providers that we are currently working with are on our website.
question that I had was around, and I am looking at our goals and priorities for the year, and one of the questions was around the internal controls and quality assurance just around the case review process and the data dashboards. You spoke some about data with regard to transition, is there anything further you can tell us about kind of the work that is started on that?

MS. JERDE: This is Tasha, it's my favorite topic. So I had a dream, I had a dream about a data dashboard where 81 of you could be
like I want to know how SSB is doing today. Click a button, boom, you could know. That's my dream.

We are not there yet, I'm just gonna tell you, but we are working on a couple things.

The first is we jumped on the bandwagon with some of our other WIOA partners and they have a Tableau dashboard, you can export the data to Excel and it gives some information about, you know, demographics, who we are serving, employment, a little bit of that. So that was our toe dip in playing with it.

We are also creating something in our case management system where we can quickly pull
our performance measure data, like how are we doing

with our credentials? How many have a measurable

skill gain?

And then my ultimate dream is to

actually have something on our website that shows

some of our key metrics, who we are serving, how we

are doing, that's the end goal. We definitely

aren't there yet, but we are making small strides

and it's part of my Operation VR Rebuild, not to

give away my secret yet, but one of them is

performance. And under performance is being able

to tell our story to everyone who asks.
MR. O’CONNOR: Not to be confused with underperformance, you are saying on the topic of performance.

MS. JERDE: Yes, on the topic of performance.

MR. O’CONNOR: Good, good. And then one other question was about you mentioned this, and this is probably a theme from some previous meetings about job coaches, not being enough job coaches and impacting somebody's ability to start a job. Do you have a sense of how that problem is, is it growing, is it stable and kind of what work is being done to get more job coaches on the job?
MS. JERDE: This is Tasha. This is a huge systemic issue. I don't think it's just in Minnesota, but it's really prevalent in Minnesota.

We are not the only agency experiencing it, Department of Human Services is experiencing it.

COVID caused a lot of programs to shut down or change their service model. Partnered with a number of initiatives to get people out of subminimum wage employment and into work out in the community, which means there are a lot of people who need those supports with not a lot of providers.
This is not a systemic issue that SSB can solve alone. We have worked with Council on Disability, Department of Human Services, the legislature is very aware of this issue and some of it's pay, job coaches aren't paid a lot, it's a very, very high turnover job. So we can only focus on what we can control right now and that is do we need to hire some internal staff to be able to provide those supports, at least short-term, until we can find a long-term provider? And that's one of things that we are surveying on is where would we need to place them? Would this be a pilot project? What would that
look like? So that's where we are at right now.

MR. O'CONNOR: Is that, from the pay issue, is that something you are able, kind of like the moratorium on payment for post-secondary education, does that give you an opportunity to increase the pay for job coaches?

MS. JERDE: This is Tasha. Well, unfortunately we just initiated July 1 contracts and that takes a lot to amend them, so it's harder to do a moratorium on contract rates, but I think we would have an opportunity to relook at our rates down the road here. That's a good idea.
MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Other questions?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Hearing none, I am going to move on, but I will pause an extra few seconds as somebody may be running to a mute button.

Great. Well then let's move on and again, thank you Director Jerde for the report, for your willingness to answer questions and for bringing a lot of the metrics to the top of the report, certainly very helpful.

The Budget Task Force. I feel like we just met, but we also met again to look at the next
year. Fortunately we only have to deal with one fiscal year so Ryan Strunk chaired that task force and we are eagerly hearing your report.

MR. STRUNK: All right. Thank you very much. Is my mike working?

MR. O'CONNOR: Yep, it is.

MR. STRUNK: Excellent.

So I want to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who worked to pull this together. And the fact that the flexibility of the committee really lead to this as I was dealing with some clock and computer issues, so Corbb and Dan
and Susan and the rest of the accounting staff

really made this happen.

You all have likely seen the budget

that we proposed in the attached -- or in the

attachments to the meeting, I just want to share

with you a couple of brief notes. Oh, actually I'm

sorry, I missed Tom Heinl in that rundown as well,

so thank you to Tom Heinl as well.

So the summary is basically this:

Since we are returning to in-person events there is

a lot that we think really now needs to be shifted

in terms of the budget. We want to allow for

expenditures in areas where we might now have
expenses because of that in-person meeting. So

that could be travel, things like mileage, travel

reimbursement and et cetera.

Also one of the other pieces of this

is that conferences are happening in person, so we

have more money set aside for conferences as well.

One other thing that I want to point

out is that we have had, both because of the

structure or because of representation on the

committee and preferred accommodations, as well as

the, you know, sort of trends of accommodations

being requested, we have seen a decrease in
requests for interpreter services. And so you will also see less money allocated to that as well.

So with that in mind, that is the basic rundown of the report which again was attached in the documents that others have received or that you have received.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Ryan and task force. What questions are out there?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: We will speak more to this later on in the meeting, but there was also some additional money set aside for bringing a speaker/presenter/facilitator in to work with the
Council either at a council meeting or as a group

at a different time, so that's also part of this

budget.

Is there -- again pausing for

questions?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Hearing none, is there

a motion to accept the task force's report?

MR. STRUNK: On behalf of the

committee, Ryan, I would move the report.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, second.

MR. O'CONNOR: We will to move to a
vote then. Daniel Ashman.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller.

(No response.)

Come back to you Frank.

Tom Heinl.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Come back to Tom.

Gloria Lafriniere.

MR. HEINL: Tom Heinl, yes.

MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Tom Heinl yes, Gloria says yes.
Deborah Leuchovius.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Deborah Leuchovius, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina Martinez.

MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina says yes.

Mohamed Mohamed is not here.

Michael O'Day.

MR. O'DAY: Michael O'Day, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Kristina Petronko not here.

Judy Sanders.
MS. SANDERS:  Judy Sanders, yes.

MR. STRUNK:  Ryan Strunk, yes.

MR. THOMPSON:  Jeff Thompson, yes.

MR. O’CONNOR:  Jeff Thompson says yes very quietly.

Trevor Turner.

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR:  Kyle Van Acker.

MR. VAN ACKER:  Kyle, yes.

MR. O’CONNOR:  And Frank Eller.

(No response.)

MR. O’CONNOR:  Corbb O’Connor, yes.

So we have a unanimous acceptance there. Thank you
again to the task force. It seems like a straightforward project to spend money and an hour later we proved that it is not. And big thanks to Susan Kusz for keeping track of a lot of those numbers along the way and to the support from our finance team.

Director Jerde, I am going to let you introduce this next item.

MS. JERDE: Okay. So this is Natasha. It's the choosing ATB training forms, that is the topic. One, this is not going to be a very long update because I don't have the information that
you are looking for, but I am going to explain why

and really what we have done around informed choice

with choosing adjustment to blindness training,

because that's really what the purpose of this form

was.

It was introduced several years ago,

I'm sure there are people in the audience here who

know the history much better than I, but this form

came about because there was just are we pushing

customers into one center over another? Are we

influencing those decisions? Do people truly have

informed choice when choosing an Adjustment to

Blindness Training Center?
So this form, really we would fill out, you know, the tours that you took, where did you ultimately end up deciding it was signed off on? It ended up becoming less about informed choice and more about well, we've got one more document to fill out. So we really started talking with staff about what is the purpose of this, what is the purpose of informed choice and going to tours and having individuals go to the different centers to experience what their philosophy is and what they are about so that they can ultimately make that decision.
So the form, when our new case management system came about, it ended up disappearing, going away. And instead we are documenting all of this information in our case noting -- in our case management system because informed choice is a mandatory part of our program and we talk about that with training.

So in essence, choosing adjustment to blindness training is just a natural part of our process, it's embedded in what we do. But what I hoped to bring you today was some data around how many individuals went to each of the three Adjustment to Blindness Centers, as well as how
many chose itinerate routes, but unfortunately our
data analyst, not unfortunately, fortunately his
daughter got married and he is celebrating her
wedding, so fortunately he is spending time with
his family, but unfortunately I wasn't able to get
those numbers. But I will have them available in
our Director's report in October.

MR. O'CONNOR: Fantastic. Thank you
very much.

Any questions?

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman.

MR. O'CONNOR: Daniel.
MR. ASHMAN: So when you said that this just becomes more paperwork, have you thought about putting a little bit more of the onus on the actual ATB Training Centers? I don't know if you have known this or experienced it or someone has talked to you about it, but Arizona does a very fascinating process where they have what's called a road show. Where they bring all of their vendors in virtually to that, talk to consumers about each of their programs at a specific time. It's a way for the vendors to be able to present their programs and present them all at the same time so the consumers can get a very good
picture of that and then follow up with the vendors

on their own or the vendors can follow up with

those consumers if the information is shared.

That puts a little bit less paperwork

in your lap, a little bit more of the

responsibility on the vendors to be doing what they

rightfully should be doing best, which is talking

to people about what their programming is and why

it's innovative and unique and what is it that

drives them.

Just a thought, I mean, imitation is

the most sincere form of flattery, so we can
absolutely imitate other states.

MS. JERDE: This is Tasha. I'm spilling my secrets already before I can share this. But one of the how are we going to get to Operation VR Rebuild, one of the ways is to steal from other states. I am a big believer in that.

MR. ASHMAN: Appropriate.

MS. JERDE: Appropriate, okay, I will use that word. But Jon, did you catch the idea that Dan had around putting kind of the onus back on the vendors?

MR. BENSON: Yes, I appreciate hearing that. And even one of our latest, shall I say,
acquisitions of a counselor, I think we can maybe

tie that in with some of the things that she may be
able to tell us about that too. So yeah, be very
interested in following up with them and seeing how
they actually do it.

I can appreciate in one respect the
c Convenience of it and the expansiveness of it being

presented in that fashion, so I would be very
curious to see how they actually implement it in a
way that makes it work.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you very much.

Other questions on choosing ATB providers,
1 adjustment to blindness providers?

2 (No response.)

3 MR. O'CONNOR: Hearing none, I'm gonna

4 suggest we take a 15 minute break before we come

5 back for our committee reports as well as talking

6 about the fall conferences. So we stand in recess

7 for 15 minutes.

8 (Break taken from 6:55 to 7:08 p.m.)

9 MR. O'CONNOR: I will bring us back to

10 order and since Susan brought me this I can hit

11 things.

12 We are going to start with something

13 that's off the agenda and for that I am going to
turn this over to Susan.

MS. KUSZ: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I hope I am being heard.

I am going to address some items that were in the chat about appointments and first of all, I would like to say that Madelyn Nelson, who was serving in the governor's office and helping us do our appointments, has left. And so now Jacqueline Congello is sitting in taking over to help with the appointments. And in the last couple of weeks they have been cleaning up the Secretary of State's website because there have been some
kerfuffles on appointments, one of which was, well,

Lori Thompson received a thing saying she was appointed. And so she was like really concerned and she was like wait a minute, I didn't sign up for this. And I had to call her up on the phone and say well, if you read the last line it actually said that your appointment was completed at the beginning of the year. So it was like a little confusing to her, but they were just trying to straighten things up.

So they have kind of cleaned some things up. We have our rehab counselor, Jessica Fordyce, has resigned. We have some applicants
that are now out there and one of the things that

Corbb, I think, was going to allude to at the

beginning of the meeting, and I'm not sure he quite

got there, was Kristina Petronko has also stepped

down from her seat on the Council, she has actually

taken a position with DEED. So yeah, we really

appreciated Kristina and all she did for the

Council, but we are welcoming her to onboarding

with DEED.

Last time that we had the Council

meeting someone by the name of Ryan that works with

Kristina sat in on the meeting for her and he
actually, I believe, is on the meeting again tonight. He has submitted an application to take her seat. Kristin Oien actually has submitted an application, our lovely Rob Hobson has also submitted an application. And then we also have another gal by the name of Jennifer Points, who has submitted an application for an industry rep. And when I did talk to Stacy Shembautz (phonetic) in Senior Services, she does work out at the Vets. And so those are the outstanding apps that are out there. And usually the process is Natasha and I usually kick it around and look over the resumes and cover letters and then when the
Governor's office reaches out they ask us a bunch of questions about whether or not we feel that these folks are worthy and whether or not they kind of fit into the criteria of, you know, sitting on the Council, one of which is like what is the balance of how many people on the Council are currently Blind, visually impaired or DeafBlind and are they Blind, visually impaired or DeafBlind? And if I recall it's not necessarily something that people have to divulge in an application. So some of the time it's not easy for us to figure that out.
I also know that coming up on the Work Plan, this was not on the Work Plan for this month, but we did have questions on the chat. So one of them was, well I know Rob asked me before the meeting, Kristin asked me tonight on the chat, about, you know, have the appointments been made and unfortunately, no, they have not.

And as, you know, people that have been sitting on the Council already know, that the Governor's office is not real expedient in doing our appointments for our Council, unfortunately, and so I'm sorry, we have to be patient with that.

But as long as we are on the topic of
appointments, I figured that I would pull together whose appointments are going to be up in January. And maybe I think at the next council meeting this is like what's going to be, you know, like one of the topics. So Daniel Ashman, your term will be up as of January, I am not sure whether you have served one or two terms, but if you've only served one term you are eligible to reapply and serve another term. Natasha, you are ex-officio and so your appointment could be extended. I just have to talk to the Secretary of State about that and I'm
1. sure we would manage that. Gloria Lafriniere, your
term also is up in January, you would need to
2. reapply. Deborah, Deborah Leuchovius, your term
3. would be up. You also would need to reapply
4. because I think you have only served one term as
5. well. Jeff Thompson, I think you are on your
6. second term, but your term is also up as of January
7. of 2023.
8. And that concludes that report,
9. Mr. Chair. If you would like I can move into the
10. portion about the conferences if nobody has any
11. questions.
12. MR. O'CONNOR: Exactly. I'm going to
pause you for just a second. Any questions on appointments?

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman.

MR. O'CONNOR: Daniel.

MR. ASHMAN: Historically speaking when do they usually post your appointment for reissue or reupping?

MS. KUSZ: Usually it gets posted around I think it's October or November.

MR. ASHMAN: Thank you.

MS. KUSZ: And then you can go out there and reapply for it.
MR. O'CONNOR: And that position, Jeff
Thompson's position, is the recipient of VR services, so encourage others you may know or Jeff to apply.

Any other questions on appointments?

MR. O'DAY: Yes, this is Michael O'Day, I have a quick question.

MR. O'CONNOR: Yes, Michael.

MR. O'DAY: Maybe I should have asked this during the committee selection piece, but in the Employment Committee we had two people that basically dropped the committee when their appointment was up.
And so I am wondering just a little clarification, so for people who sign up for a committee now is it through the end of next year, you know, this time next year or is it just through their term? Because we had two people kind of say well, I am off Council now, why am I on this committee still? And my understanding was you serve the full year, even if you weren't on Council, but maybe I am wrong about that, so.

MR. O'CONNOR: This is Corbb, you are correct, that any member of the public or Council is eligible to be on a committee, so those who are
appointed to work on that committee, the expectation would be that they remain engaged in that committee's work through the end of the committee's work period which would be July 31 of next year.

MS. KUSZ: Mr. Chair, that is not exactly correct. Committee appointments go from September 1 until August 31.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, thank you, August, August.

MR. O'DAY: It's a good point, though, for people who are finishing up their term on Council, that that doesn't necessarily mean that
your term on the committee ends.

MR. O'CONNOR: Correct.

MR. O'DAY: As of January 1 or whenever your term ends.

MR. O'CONNOR: Yes.

Other questions?

MR. HOBSON: This is Rob.

MR. O'CONNOR: If you could eat the mike.

MR. HOBSON: Yeah, I wasn't that hungry, but I will try.

I'm pulling from Dan's idea hat and
what I'm thinking is maybe when we send the letter,

and I don't think I ever included this when I was chair, so maybe you have already done this, but when you send a note to everyone letting them know that they have been appointed, including the term time starting September 1 to August 31, that might help. And I never did that myself, so maybe that's something you already had in mind.

MR. O'CONNOR: This is Corbb. Those who can't do, teach, is what I've heard. No, I appreciate that, Rob, very much. Thank you, and we will definitely include that.

MR. HOBSON: Thanks.
MR. O’CONNOR: Thanks.

Moving on, then, we have a note about fall conference attendee recommendations from the Council. Susan is going to give us the details.

MS. KUSZ: Okay. Thank you again, Mr. Chair, this is Susan. So as you requested, I did go out and look on the website about the CSAVR and the NCSAB fall conferences. And much to my surprise it is out there and they are going to have -- it appears, anyways, an in-person and perhaps even a virtual meeting this year in San Antonio on the Riverwalk.
It appears that the CSAVR portion,
and it does look like they are running this concurrently this year, all I could find, however,
was the amounts of the cost for the CSAVR.

MR. O’CONNOR: The Council of State Agencies --

MS. JERDE: The Council of State Administrators and Vocational Rehabilitation.

MR. O’CONNOR: Thank you.

MS. KUSZ: And that is running from October 29 to November 2. And then the NCSAB is running November 2 through November 4.

MR. O’CONNOR: And that acronym stands
for?

MS. KUSZ: National Council on

State --

MS. JERDE: -- of State Agencies for

the Blind.

MS. KUSZ: That's what it means, yep,

that.

MR. O'CONNOR: Very good, all right.

MS. JERDE: And this is Natasha, if I

may?

MR. O'CONNOR: Please.

MS. JERDE: So I am on the planning
committee for the NCSAB conference, we are meeting

next week and we should have costs hashed out. I

have a feeling they are going to run on par with

pre-COVID numbers, which was like 500 some dollars

a person. We are members so we might get a member

rate and councils get other rates, but I don't

believe they are going to have a full virtual

option. There may be supplemental virtual

activities, but participants of the conference will

not get the full experience if they are virtual for

either conference, I'm on both conference planning

committees, so.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you very much.
So with that in mind I'm going to ask the Budget Task Force to get back to your microphones, Ryan, Dan and Tom and refresh my memory. I believe from a budgeting prospective we were looking at kind of eight persons going to a conference, whether they go to the same conference or not the costs are pretty similar, over the course of a year. And I want to double-check that that is correct, at least kind of as we planned the numbers that's what we were thinking.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman.

MR. O'CONNOR: Daniel.
MR. ASHMAN: Two participants over the course of four conferences was the conference per diem that we were looking at as well as registration.

MR. O'CONNOR: Right. So two participants attending four conferences is eight people attending a conference.

MR. ASHMAN: Yes. But it's written two times four.

MR. O'CONNOR: Yes, I understand how it's written, that's why I was asking the clarifying question.

So what that means is over the course
of the year, Council, the money is budgeted and all

budgets are flexible for us to have eight trips to

a conference, so that could be, you know, the same

person goes to eight conferences or eight

individuals go to a conference, we can figure that

out.

But as we are thinking, then, about

the Council making a recommendation for people to

attend, I would ask first, given the dates that

Susan read, are there individuals interested in

traveling to San Antonio for the conference that

last week of October?
MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman.

MR. O'CONNOR: Daniel.

MR. ASHMAN: My schedule is open right now.

MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. While people are getting to their mute buttons I will throw out that Corbb is available only through Thursday, but would be interested in attending.

MS. SANDERS: What is Thursday?

MR. O'CONNOR: So that would be kind of half of the NCSAB conference.

MS. SANDERS: Yeah, but what is the date of Thursday?
MR. O'CONNOR: Oh, the date of Thursday is November 3. I will throw out there that the National Federation of the Blind Minnesota convention, if memory serves, and Steve is here to keep me honest, is the 4th through the 6th of November; is that correct?

MR. JACOBSON: Yep.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you. Others interested in attending the conferences this fall?

I will remind you it is in San Antonio.

MS. LAFRINIERE: This is Gloria, I would be interested in the CSAVR.
MR. O'CONNOR: Did I hear that was Gloria?

MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you.

Other council members interested?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: So hearing Corbb, Daniel and Gloria I'm gonna see if there might be a motion recognizing that the three of us may not attend the entire conferences, but we attend what we can, that the Council support three in-person attendees this fall. Is there such a motion or discussion?
MS. SANDERS: This is Judy, so moved.

MR. O'CONNOR: Try again Judy, a little louder.

MS. SANDERS: This is Judy, so moved.

MR. O'CONNOR: Judy moves, is there a second?

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson, second.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff seconds. Any discussion?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Hearing none, we will move to a vote.
MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Tom Heinl.

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: We'll come back to them.

Gloria.

MR. HEINL: Tom --

MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Tom, go ahead.

MR. HEINL: Tom Heinl, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah Leuchovius.
MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina Martinez.

MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Mohamed Mohamed is absent.

Michael O'Day.

MR. O'DAY: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Kristina Petronko is absent.

Judy Sanders.

MS. SANDERS: Yes.

MR. STRUNK: Ryan Strunk, yes.
MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Trevor Turner.

Kyle Van Acker.

MR. VAN ACKER: Kyle Van Acker, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: And Corbb O'Connor,

yes. I think we got everybody. So that is a

unanimous motion. Thank you very much.

On that note I would like to again go

off the agenda for a second here. As I mentioned,

there are some funds set aside in the budget for

the Council to use for a

facilitator/presenter/guest speaker. Maybe it's

some form of professional development outing for
the Council, some kind of retreat, maybe it's some kind of conference, I would love to see if the Council members would be, you know, maybe there is some conferences out there that would be helpful for the Council members to attend, those who maybe don't frequent blindness conventions or if there is a DeafBlind convention that would be of interest or other conferences and programs that could help us to better do our jobs on the Council.

I would like to see if there is interest in appointing a task force to make some recommendations to the Council on those types of
events, types of programs, types of speakers that
would make sense for the Council to participate in
or to bring in. Is there any discussion of that
idea?

MS. SANDERS: This is --

MS. LAFRINIERE: This is Gloria.

MR. O'CONNOR: I'll start with Gloria and then go to Judy.

MS. LAFRINIERE: I would like to recommend Judy.

MS. SANDERS: Wait, what did you just recommend me for?

MR. O'CONNOR: This is Corbb, a
short-term task force.

MS. SANDERS: No, I know what you said. But I'm wondering what Gloria --

MS. LAFRINIERE: That's what I am recommending her to do.

MS. SANDERS: Be on the task force?

MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MS. SANDERS: Okay, sure.

MR. O'CONNOR: Judy, what's your comment?

MS. SANDERS: Well, I was going to volunteer.
MR. O'CONNOR: Yourself or someone else, because that seems to be the trend tonight?

MS. SANDERS: Yeah, I am not prepared to nominate someone else.

MR. O'CONNOR: Very good, okay. Other discussion or interest on this idea?

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff Thompson volunteers, thank you very much.

MR. THOMPSON: Yes, I volunteer.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff Thompson volunteers, thank you very much.

Other discussion or interest? If I wait long enough somebody will volunteer maybe and
join us.

MS. KUSZ: Mr. Chair.

MR. O'CONNOR: Yes, Susan.

MS. KUSZ: This is Susan. As the staff I would be happy to volunteer.

MR. O'CONNOR: Perfect.

MS. SANDERS: This is Judy, I could volunteer Gloria.

MR. O'CONNOR: I was waiting for that to happen.

All right, great, Gloria, thanks for volunteering. And members of the public, we would
Welcome you to join us. If you are interested you should contact the chairperson, Judy Sanders, of this task force.

Now, this being moderately informal, I do believe we still should appoint this task force and keep with our practice of calling our names multiple times in this meeting.

So is there a motion to appoint Judy, Gloria, Jeff Thompson?

MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina, so moved.

MR. O'CONNOR: Sorry I interrupted you, who moved that?

MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina.
MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina moves, thank you.

Is there a second?

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, second.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Daniel.

Any discussion?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Let's vote.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Tom Heinl.

MR. HEINL: Tom Heinl, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Gloria.
1 MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.
2 MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah.
3 MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Deborah, yes.
4 MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina.
5 MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina, yes.
6 MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina yes.
7 Michael O'Day.
8 MR. O'DAY: Yes.
9 MR. O'CONNOR: Judy.
10 MS. SANDERS: Judy, yes.
11 MR. O'CONNOR: Ryan.
12 MR. STRUNK: Ryan, yep.
13 MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson, yes.
MR. O'CONNOR: Kyle.

MR. VAN ACKER: Kyle, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Corbb O'Connor, yes.

Thank you very much. I look forward to being part of the task force, as well as Susan. So Judy, if you will kindly let us know when we are joining to make that happen.

MR. ELLER: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Who voted yes there?

MR. ELLER: Frank Eller.

MR. O'CONNOR: Frank Eller, thank you very much, we are glad we got you.
Committee reports. We have the update from our State Rehab Council rep, is Ryan here? Do we have a rep from the State Rehab Council here tonight? I don't believe so. We will go with no report on that front.

While Judy is standing at the microphone, the SILC report.

MS. SANDERS: Yes. The SILC met this morning and they are getting ready for a conference, a statewide conference that will involve any staff person from all eight Centers for Independent Living, they are all eligible to attend.
I think it's 21 members, I'm not sure if there was 17 or 21, anyway, however many members there are on the Council are all urged to attend and they have speakers from different parts of the country that they will bring in, a couple anyway, to teach us more about independent living. And that's going to be September 28 through the 30th in Bloomington, I think it is a Sheraton out there. And so they are doing a lot of planning for that. They are also getting ready, we just had a forum and it was to talk about they have to produce what they call their SPIL, it's the State
Plan for Independent Living. And it's a three year plan and so we are in the phase where we have to write the plan now.

And we have hearings where we talk about what problems do you see -- they are forums, I guess, what problems do you see in your community that need to be worked on? And there is different subjects that can come up, is it housing? Is it transportation? Is it emergency preparedness?

These are just some examples and people are urged in the disability community to comment on all these things and then what we do is we listen to what they said and then we make objectives for what we
want to accomplish to improve in all these areas.

The process is good in theory and the Council works very hard at it, but it's kind of interesting because there isn't much participation from the public that you want to hear from to know what's going on, so it's kind of interesting.

The other thing that I want to say is that I noticed, and I don't know if that is something we want to think about here or not, but the Statewide Independent Living Council has -- you know, they have a governor's appointed council just like this one and one of the differences is,
though, that this Council interviews potential people who want to apply. The Governor makes the final choice, but this Council then recommends to the Governor who they want to go on now. It doesn't have to work that way but it usually does, that is, if the Council recommends someone, at least so far this governor has always exceeded that.

But they aren't any faster than for this Council, so it's a slow process for, I think, all councils. And I think that's all, that's one of the differences. So I don't know if anybody has any questions about any of this?
MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Judy. Are there questions?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Judy, will you send us the announcement about that SILC conference if it's open to this Council attending?

MS. SANDERS: Yes, I will find out if it is. I'm not sure that it is, but I will find out.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you. And hopefully that's something that we can consider about interviewing potential members of this
Council and I believe I will leave that to Natasha to take the next step on and let us know how to do that or if we can do that.

Thank you, Judy. Any other questions for Judy and the Statewide Independent Living Council?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: We will move, then, to our standing committee reports about their progress on goals and priorities and we will start with Customer Satisfaction Goals & Priorities Committee.

Do you have a report? If memory serves that's Jeff?
MR. THOMPSON: We don't have a report, but they will be getting together pretty soon with the goals and priorities and I will be writing the Annual Report submission so that will be prepared. And I believe Jennifer and everybody will be organizing as we come up into the goals and priorities stuff coming up.

MR. O’CONNOR: Very good, thank you. And I think that was the part of your report that we couldn't hear was that the committee would be getting on its way shortly for the following year and that's Jennifer chairing that committee; is
that correct, Jeff?

MR. THOMPSON: That's correct.

MR. O'CONNOR: Great, thank you.

Vendor Outcomes and Measures, Daniel.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman.

There is no report for Vendor Outcomes and Measures, however, I will be sending an email out to all new committee members as well as reaching out to the past committee members to see if they are interested in still attending regarding a meeting within the first week of September so that we can look at building out our meeting structure as well as refresh how we are looking at
what the outcomes and measures are moving forward.

MR. O'CONNOR: And the Annual Report.

MR. ASHMAN: Well, that goes to say.

MR. O'CONNOR: Excellent, thank you.

Is there any questions for Vendor Outcomes?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Minority Outreach Committee. Michael, I don't believe, is on the call, but is there anyone that wishes to provide --

Mike Colbrunn is not here, but does anyone on that committee wish to provide an update?

(No response.)
MR. O'CONNOR: No report then.

The DeafBlind Committee, Susan.

MS. KUSZ: Mr. Chair, this is Susan.

Since Trevor is not here I will just give a quick update.

We did meet on Tuesday night. Last meeting we had last month we reviewed our goals and priorities for the DeafBlind Committee. We also pulled down on Tuesday the items off the website for the communication with a DeafBlind member. And there is another item that's on the website for new members of the SRC-B that have to do with the community organizations that we are reviewing and
that's about all we did. Thank you.

MR. O'CONNOR: Questions for the DeafBlind Committee?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Okay. Moving onto the Senior Services Committee. Judy.

MS. SANDERS: Hi. We didn't get to meet in July or June, but we started working with Jeff Thompson who did a lot of this work and I appreciated it. What our idea is, and I will focus on it on the report for the Annual Report, is that we want to spread the word to eye doctors,
ophthalmologists and maybe optometrists too, about how blindness doesn't have to be the end of your life and that the doctor can set the tone for how they present it. Because, you know, doctors are notorious for being rather sad that they have to tell their patient that they are going to be Blind or that they are Blind.

And we want to help teach them a positive way of making the best of this situation and how there is a future. So we will be -- the new committee will be exploring that too, but Jeff did a lot of good work on it and I am glad he is going to continue.
MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Judy.

That's a partnership opportunity for the volunteer that we just brought on board as well.

MS. JERDE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: I am blanking on that person's name.

MS. JERDE: Georgiann.

MR. O'CONNOR: Georgiann. So encourage us to collaborate on that front.

Any questions for Senior Services?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: The Transition
Committee, do we have a report?

No report. The Transition Committee hasn't met over the summer, but we have something on the calendar in September.

MR. O'CONNOR: Fantastic, looking forward to it.

Communication Center, Steve.

MR. JACOBSON: Thank you.

The Communication Center Committee did meet on June 23 and we dived well into the process of getting volunteers, how volunteers are tested and what sort --

MR. THOMPSON: Steve, you are going to
have to speak up, we can't hear you online.

MR. JACOBSON: I will have to get rid of the mask, maybe that will help. Is that better?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not yet, you may have to get closer to the mike maybe.

MR. O'CONNOR: Steve, come try one of these mikes over here. Maybe that one is not connected in the same way.

MS. JERDE: There is one at your table.

MR. JACOBSON: I didn't see that.

MS. JERDE: I snuck it in, I snuck it
on your table.

MR. O'CONNOR: Potentially the big mike might not be connected to the system.

MR. JACOBSON: How is this?

MR. O'DAY: Much, much better.

MR. O'CONNOR: Excellent.

MR. JACOBSON: Communication Center Committee met on June 23 and we dived deeply into the process of recruiting volunteers which included testing volunteers, particularly those who are reading, and also the process of evaluating volunteers on an ongoing basis.

It was a real interesting meeting and
the committee learned a lot about this process,

which is a very well thought out and complex

process.

Our next meeting we set a tentative

date for September 22, knowing that members of the

committee will change, but for now that's when our

next meeting is and we will be verifying that with

the committee members and notifying the chair and

Susan for sure whether that's when it meets. Thank

you.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you, Steve. One

of the things I appreciate, one of the many things
I appreciate about Steve is the way that you have shepherded the committee to really focus on different topics and really dive deep into learning about that Communication Center. And I am hoping we can follow a similar process for our other committees this coming year.

So I would encourage chairs and members if you have questions about how your committee can be effective, the types of work it can do, the ways that it generates topics, please, I'm telling Steve that he can share that information with you.

Questions for the Communication Center
Committee?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Employment Committee,

Michael.

MR. O'DAY: Yep, this is Michael. We met last week for kind of a short meeting. The only news really to report is that we have been kind of following Mark Groves' path in creating a job club called Career From Here. And unfortunately after a handful of sessions there just wasn't enough interest in his opinion to keep it going. So I know a couple of times he said...
there was only like two people each time that attended, so unfortunately it's been discontinued which is too bad.

And I think there is maybe a different way of approaching it that would work better, so maybe the committee will work on that in the year ahead, we will see. But that really is the main thing that the committee discussed at the last meeting.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you Employment Committee. Any questions for the Employment Committee? (No response.)
MR. O’CONNOR: Okay. That concludes our planned agenda. Now we move to the period of public comment. Is there any public comment or anything from councilmembers on topics we have not yet addressed this evening?

Is there public comment?

MS. KENNEDY: Jennifer Kennedy.

MR. O’CONNOR: Yes, Jennifer.

MS. KENNEDY: When we are talking about seniors, what constitutes that 3,500? Is it an engagement like a telephone call, is it a home visit, how do we come up with that number?
MS. JERDE: This is Tasha.

So the 3,500, while I believe those may include folks in the 18 to 54 year old category, primarily it is a 55 and older. It could be any type of light touch all the way to intensive training and support, but it's an individual who is looking at purely independent living who comes to us and that's really what initiates the count. And it could be some low vision aids, it could be they are going to a more comprehensive training program.

MS. KENNEDY: And that's 35 unique individuals, correct, not 35 engagements?

MS. JERDE: That is correct, it's
3,500 people.

MS. KENNEDY: Thank you.

MR. O'CONNOR: Other public comment?

(No response.)

MR. O'CONNOR: Well I look forward to our next meeting on October the 6th.

And I would wonder, this is always really tricky to know if this is going to pass, but is there a motion to adjourn?

MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina Martinez, so moved.

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson, second.
MR. O'CONNOR: Again I don't know, but is there a second?

MS. SANDERS: Gloria seconds it.

MR. O'CONNOR: I appreciate the humor, but I would love to hear it from Gloria.

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson did second it.

MR. O'CONNOR: Jeff Thompson, thank you Jeff, I didn't hear it.

Let's move to a vote.

MR. ASHMAN: Daniel Ashman, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Daniel Ashman says yes.

Frank Eller.
(No response.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Left the meeting.

MR. O'CONNOR: Thank you.

MR. HEINL: Tom Heinl, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Gloria.

MS. LAFRINIERE: Yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Deborah.

MS. LEUCHOVIUS: Deborah, yes.

MR. O'CONNOR: Catalina.

MS. MARTINEZ: Catalina, yes.

Goodnight, all.
MR. O’CONNOR: Michael.

MR. O’DAY: Yes.

MR. O’CONNOR: Judy.

MS. SANDERS: Judy, yes.

MR. STRUNK: Ryan Strunk, yes.

MR. THOMPSON: Jeff Thompson, yes.

MR. O’CONNOR: Kyle.

MR. VAN ACKER: Kyle, yes.

MR. O’CONNOR: And Corbb O’Connor, yes. Unanimously we are adjourned.

(Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.)
REPORTER’S CERTIFICATE

I, Kimberly K. Evavold, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing transcript, consisting of the preceding 101 pages is a correct transcript of my stenographic notes, and is a full, true and complete transcript of the proceedings to the best of
my ability.

Dated: August 18, 2022

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KIMBERLY K. EVAVOLD
Court Reporter