

Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
State Rehabilitation Council Executive Committee
August 11, 2025
Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Joliefawn Liddell, Christopher Martin, Brandy Schantz, and Nick Zweerink.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Lillian Garland, SRC; Frederick Foard, SRC; Meghan Cox, DARS; Cara Kaufman, DARS; Becky Gibbs, DARS; Lisa Robertson, DARS; Matt Luther, DARS; Catherine Harrison, DARS; Liz Leitch, ASL Interpreter; Carrie Humphrey, ASL Interpreter.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:31 a.m.

Introduction of Members: Schantz called the meeting to order. All members and others present introduced themselves.

Approval of meeting agenda: No changes. Agenda approved by unanimous consensus.

Approval of March meeting minutes: No changes. Minutes approved by unanimous consensus.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Discussion: Cox provided an update on current membership/vacancies and previewed business meeting items.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:35 a.m.

Meeting Handouts:

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda
2. Draft Executive Committee Meeting Minutes from June 9, 2025

Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
State Rehabilitation Council Nominating Committee
August 11, 2025
Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Ryan Haywood and Joliefawn Liddell.

Members Absent: None.

Others Present: Nick Zweerink, SRC; Frederick Foard, SRC; Lillian Garland, SRC; Christopher Martin, SRC; Becky Alwood, SRC; Meghan Cox, DARS; Catherine Harrison, DARS; Cara Kaufman, DARS; Becky Gibbs, DARS; Lisa Robertson, DARS; Matt Luther, DARS; Traci Branch, DARS; Liz Leitch, ASL Interpreter; Carrie Humphrey, ASL Interpreter.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Committee Representative: Liddell agreed to be Nominating Committee representative at the full Council meeting.

Approval of Chair/Vice-Chair slate: Upon discussion, Haywood and Liddell agree to include Martin and Brunk for Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively, on proposed slate.

Approval of Members-at-Large slate: Upon discussion, Haywood and Liddell agree to include Foard and Zweerink for Members-at-Large on proposed slate.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:51 a.m.

Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS)
State Rehabilitation Council Quarterly Meeting
August 11, 2025
Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Brandy Schantz, Joliefawn Liddell, Nick Zweerink, Ryan Haywood, Lillian Garland, Travis Staton, Becky Alwood, Christopher Martin, Lee Talley (virtual), and Frederick Foard.

Participating Electronically (Personal Matter): Lee Talley

Members Absent: Commissioner Kathy Hayfield, Gayl Brunk, Tlisha McAuley-Davis, Marco Callender, Heidi Lawyer and Ryan Mauzy.

Others Present: Dale Batten, DARS; Catherine Harrison, DARS; Julie Jacobs, DARS; Alison Shaner, WWRC; Cara Kaufman, DARS; Becky Gibbs, DARS; Lisa Robertson, DARS; Meghan Cox, DARS; Barbara Burkett, DARS; Wil Barber, DARS; Traci Branch, DARS; Matt Luther, DARS; Liz Leitch, ASL Interpreter; Carrie Humphrey, ASL Interpreter.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

Introduction of Members: Schantz called the meeting to order. All members and others present introduced themselves.

Approval of meeting agenda: No changes. Minutes approved by unanimous consensus.

Approval of June Business Meeting minutes: No changes. Minutes approved by unanimous consensus.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received.

Chairperson's Report: The Chair provided a report from the Executive Committee meeting and presented the Council with proposed meeting dates for 2026. Motion to approve the proposed meeting dates presented by Haywood, seconded by Garland, and passed by voice vote.

The approved meeting dates for 2026 are:

Wednesday, March 4, 2026

Wednesday, June 3, 2026

Wednesday, August 5, 2026

Monday, November 9, 2026 (Council Retreat)

Tuesday, November 10, 2026

Cox presented the proposed SRC Electronic Meeting Policy for discussion and consideration. Motion to approve the proposed SRC Electronic Meeting Policy presented by Liddell, seconded by Schantz, and passed by voice vote.

Commissioner's Report: DRS Deputy Commissioner Batten provided the DARS agency report relaying that DARS continues to monitor federal actions and respond accordingly, but that DARS operations and services continue uninterrupted.

DRS Division Reports

Deputy Commissioner Batten introduced DRS staff in attendance to provide the Council with updates, including reporting that was requested in the 2024 SRC Recommendations.

Julie Jacobs, Director of Field Rehabilitation Services, provided an introduction to FRS for new Council members and updates on FRS performance metrics, FRS strategic framework, and process improvements, and delivered a related presentation, which was provided in advance to Council members in their meeting materials.

In response to Jacobs' update on strategic framework redesign, Foard initiated a discussion on rebranding efforts and requested that Council members be prepared to further discuss their ideas and provide additional ideas in November and throughout the strategic process.

Matt Luther, Transition and Education Services Manager, provided a quarterly update on Pre-ETS that the Council requested in its 2024 Recommendations and delivered a related presentation, which was provided in advance to Council members in their meeting materials.

Alison Shaner, Director of Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center, provided updates on facility programs and operations. In addition to routine updates, WWRC is focusing on organizational agility and how it might leverage its foundation in vocational services to provide additional services.

Chairperson's Member Awards

Schantz recognized Liddell, McAuley-Davis, and Mauzy for their service on the SRC. Liddell was presented with a certification of appreciation, with others to be mailed to those not in attendance.

Policy Reports:

Lisa Robertson, Policy Analyst with the Division of Policy and Legislative Affairs, provided a brief overview of the WIOA Combined State Plan Modification and delivered a related presentation, which was provided in advance to Council members in their meeting materials.

Wil Barber, Policy Analyst, provided the Council with a copy of the proposed Memorandum of Agreement for administration of the FFY 2026 Consumer Satisfaction Survey and discussed its contents and scope of services. Cox suggested a correction to the MOA with regard to the timing of its annual review/approval. Motion to approve the FFY 2026 Memorandum of Agreement as amended presented by Haywood, seconded by Martin, and passed by voice vote.

Meghan Cox, Policy Analyst, provided the Council with the SRC recommendations from the 2024 SRC Annual Report and asked that members keep these recommendations in mind as they consider recommendations to include in the 2025 Annual Report.

Nominations Committee Presents Slate of Officers for FFY26

Schantz, on behalf of Nominations Committee, presented the following Slate of Officers:

Chair: Christopher Martin

Vice Chair: Gayl Brunk

Members-at-Large: Frederick Foard and Nick Zweenink

All have agreed to be nominated and no nominations from the floor were received. Haywood motioned to accept the slate as presented. Liddell seconded and the motion passed by voice vote.

Hearing Officer Selection Update: Cara Kaufman, Fair Hearing Coordinator, provided an update on Hearing Officer selection efforts. DARS released an IFB for Impartial Hearing Officer Services on May 30, 2025. On August 1, the DARS/DBVI Hearing Officer review sub-committee met to review the writing samples submitted by two bidders. Based on its review of the writing samples submitted, the subcommittee voted unanimously that the first bidder, Jade Solutions, did not provide an acceptable writing sample and that the second bidder, Kennington Law, did provide an acceptable writing sample.

Motion to not initiate a new contract with Jade Solutions presented by Foard, seconded by Haywood, and passed by voice vote.

Motion to initiate a new contract with Kennington Law presented by Foard, seconded by Liddell, and passed by voice vote.

Member Roundtable Reports:

Brandy Schantz: Nothing to report.

Becky Alwood: Nothing to report.

Ryan Haywood: Haywood provided updates on DOGE contract/grant terminations and consolidations/changes within the HHS hierarchy.

Lillian Garland: Reported on personal advocacy and charity activities.

Joliefawn Liddell: Reported on dLCV Disability Rights Summit, “I Have a Choice I have a Voice!” resources, and voting rights and access activities.

Nick Zweenink: Nothing to report.

Travis Staton: Provided update on impact of federal funding reductions on workforce programming, and voiced support of efforts to be responsive to changes in client population and needs.

Chris Martin: Nothing to report.

Frederick Foard: Nothing to report.

Matters of Public Comment: There were no public comments received. Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:01 p.m.

The Annual Report Subcommittee meeting will be on August 25 and the next meetings of the full Council will take place on November 12 and 13, 2025, at the Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services Central Office in Henrico.

Meeting Handouts:

1. Proposed Meeting Agenda
2. Draft Meeting Minutes from June 9, 2025
3. 2026 DARS SRC Proposed Meeting Schedule
4. SRC Proposed Electronic Meeting Policy
5. SRC Member Listing August 2025
6. DRS Presentation: FRS (Jacobs)
7. DRS Presentation: Pre-ETS (Bonessi/Luther)
8. Combined State Plan Update Presentation
9. Draft Consumer Satisfaction Survey Memorandum of Agreement FFY 2026
10. 2024 Final SRC Recommendations