

WEEKLY
FOCUS

Kevin L. Miller, Executive Director

The mission of the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission is to ensure individuals with disabilities achieve quality employment, independence and disability determination outcomes through integrated services, partnerships and innovation.

NEW PURCHASE OF SERVICES PROTOCOL

As I have quoted many times, *"If you strive for perfection, you will get excellence."* During the past 18 months, we have been in a continuous improvement process to determine if there is a better way of doing business at RSC. We began our journey by contracting with The Ohio State University to complete a Statewide Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CSNA) so that we could gather demographics about individuals with disabilities. The CSNA answers the questions, *"Who is it that we need to serve and where are they located?"* The CSNA is unlike any assessment in the past in that it also provides information about penetration rates in Ohio which reflects how much of the need we meet.

On the heels of the CSNA, we contracted with the Public Consulting Group (PCG) to make recommendations for a market based fee schedule so that RSC could purchase quality services at a fair price. The fee schedule will establish a baseline of what is to be provided in each of the 29 service categories and determine a consistent price for each service. The fee schedule will answer the questions, *"At a minimum, what should be provided to consumers and how much should RSC pay for it?"*

When you do a word cloud of Weekly Focus articles, it is obvious how important partnerships are to RSC. Despite our close working relationships with our partners, the agreements between us are not sealed with a handshake; our dealings are driven by contracts. Last fall I chartered a Committee to revamp our Purchase of Services protocol (contract process) to **clearly document** *who we are serving, where they are located, the minimum level of service delivery expected and the fee for the service.* The work of the Committee is completed and the new process will be used for the FFY 2013 contracts.

RSC's duty is to ensure that there is clarity and a common understanding of the scope of work that is expected by RSC and delivered by our contractors. Our obligation to our consumers and the taxpayers of Ohio

is to use more precision in detailing expectations for services and the costs associated with those services. RSC's purchasing is a complex and multi-layered process but we believe our new system simplifies the process while simultaneously improving accountability for all of us. The improved purchasing process begins with a clearer and more consistent Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Within the revised RFP protocol, RSC will be required to provide more detail about what it is that we want to purchase; and the vendor, in many cases, will be required to provide a more extensive response. The RFP and the bidder's response will become the contractual obligations of the winning vendor.

For those services that will not be bid out but will result in contract renewals, RSC and contractors will still be required to provide more detail on what it is that RSC wants to purchase; and the contractor will be required to document clear deliverables before a new contract will be secured.



The man hours of a widely experienced team of RSC employees on the Purchase of Services Committee are obvious in the sophisticated new process they have created, anticipating potential problems and designing the most user-friendly solution in every instance.

Applause is due to Chairman Harvey Sukienik and project team members April Bagley, Steve Ball, James Clinkscale, Greg Dormer, Vicki Friesland, Jenny Jones, Aneesa Locke-Hines, Adam Newman, Maria Seaman and Beth Stephens.

Surprised by History

By Elizabeth L. Sammons, Assistant, Vocational Rehabilitation Programs

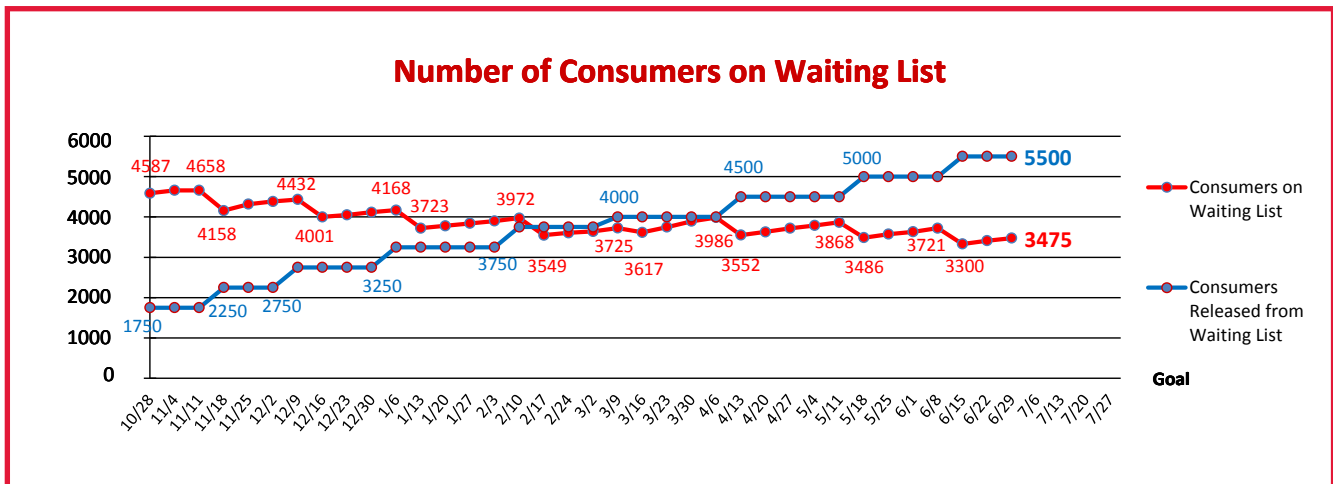
Officially, our meeting Monday involved receiving a check, but I got a lot more than I'd bargained for. First, let's tend to the business at hand -- thanking Kiwanis Club of Columbus for the purchase of five iPads and protective cases. These will find immediate use in this summer's Work and Learn program at the Ohio State School for the Blind (OSSB), and later, in OSSB's vocational department and mentoring projects. Three of us who are mentors, (Nathan Fernandes, Kathryn Frederick and I) accepted the award along with OSSB's vocational teacher Tara McCarthy. Work and Learn is a paid, residential experience for consumers age 18 to 24 who wish to gain work experience, while improving skills in technology and independent living activities. Several of our fellow mentors proficient in using iPads look forward to sharing their knowledge with this summer's group, teaching skills that will help students at work as well as at home and in their studies.



Ipad tablet like those donated to OSSB from the Kiwanis Club of Columbus

The surprise came when I spoke with my table neighbor, Kiwanis trustee David Timmons. In the late 1960s, David explained, he was assigned a new project as a junior Kiwanis member – his mission – to expand the groups Key Club from its original activities with boys from Ohio School for the Deaf, to include boys from OSSB. David began inviting groups to Kiwanis meetings downtown. He still remembers his shock as OSSB's orientation and mobility instructor Rob Mills told the group, "Get back to the school on your own," and, turning to David, "and I mean you don't help them." But this is how foundations of independence were laid.

David recalled boys by name that stayed in touch – sometimes at all hours -- after graduation, including an upcoming organist who had never "seen" a pipe. "I went up there, disconnected one, put it in his hand and let him blow through it to understand how the sound was produced," David recalled. As I expressed my thanks for this week's gift of iPads and invited Kiwanis members to become involved in OSSB's mentoring program by offering job shadowing and internship opportunities, I realized what a great foundation the club has already laid toward independence and employment.



Happy Fourth of July! We hope you all have a safe and enjoyable Holiday. The Weekly Focus will be taking a week off and return on July 13.

For more information or questions on stories in this publication please call Shirley Marchi, Community Relations Liaison, at 614.438.1477.

Produced by the Office of Communications, June 29, 2012.

