Attendees:
Council Members: Christopher Paslay, Chair; David Maples, Co-Chair; Craig Reinhardt; Kesha Pilot; Keith Vire, PhD; Tom Masseau; Robert Fagan; Addie Edwards; Wesley Eddington; Kelley Sharp; Kimberly Clayborn; Jonathan Taylor; Alan McClain, ARS Commissioner.

ARS Staff: ARS Deputy Commissioner, Joe Baxter; Dr. Charisse Childers, Director, DCE/ARS; Carl Daughtery; Chip McAfee; Robert Trevino; Otis Dixon; Rodney Chandler; Lynn Franquemont; Charles Lyford; Jonathan Bibb; James McCune; Nathan Winter; Judy Smith; Jim Moreland; Lisa Kelley; Christy Lamas; Deandria Bass-Carrigan; Gaye Jones-Washington; Freddie Harshaw; Bernice Gunter.

Guest(s): Brent Williams, PhD; Dani Fields; Mandee Harper; Marsha Rigney; Dawn Hamby; Debbie Eddington.

Call to Order:
State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) Chair, Christopher Paslay declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Mr. Paslay welcomed all present. New Council members were introduced with each given the opportunity to provide information about themselves.

Approval of Minutes:
At the request of Mr. Paslay, council members reviewed the minutes of the most recent meeting. A motion to approve the minutes as presented was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Comments from Arkansas Rehabilitation Services (ARS) Commissioner – Alan McClain:
Commissioner McClain welcomed new council members and indicated he was looking forward to working with them. He also thanked existing members for their continued commitment. He expressed the need for ARS and the SRC to have a true partnership to address the needs of those the agency serves. As part of his comments, the Commissioner indicated that the recently completed Statewide Needs Assessment would be presented by Dr. Keith Vire and Dr. Brent Williams. The Commissioner informed the Council that the Needs Assessment was a requirement of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), our federal funder. He indicated that the Needs Assessment would be used in the development of our new State Plan that should be completed by the end of this calendar year.

Statewide Needs Assessment: Dr. Brent Williams and Dr. Keith Vire: (The Statewide Needs Assessment was forwarded to the Council for review prior to the meeting.) Dr. Williams of the University of Arkansas @ Fayetteville and Dr. Vire presented the Statewide Needs Assessment to the Council. Dr. Vire reviewed the process of completing the Needs Assessment and its objectives. The document also included a review of ARS’s 2018 outcomes. Dr. Williams and Dr. Vire concluded the presentation with an analysis of the Findings and Recommendations. Council members and those present had several questions regarding the needs assessment with much discussion taking place. Following discussion, a motion to accept the Statewide Needs Assessment was made and seconded. The motion passed.
Conversion of the Arkansas Career Training Institute (ACTI) to a Non-Residential Facility—Alan McClain, Jonathan Bibb, and Joseph Baxter: Commissioner McClain informed the Council that after much consideration ARS had begun the process of converting ACTI to a non-residential program. He indicated that ACTI would reduce its footprint to only the Armory where only those training programs that will be retained and staff will be housed. He related that ARS has occupied the old Army-Navy Hospital in Hot Springs since about 1960, first as the Hot Springs Rehabilitation Center and later as ACTI. He informed the Council that by the end of the calendar year ARS intends to have vacated the main campus with remaining programs and staff being moved into the Armory. Commissioner McClain reported that by September 30th the number of employees at ACTI would be reduced by 107 individuals. He indicated that ARS will be working with the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and other agencies to assist those workers who are displaced in finding employment in positions with other state government agencies. Mr. Bibb continued the discussion by indicating that ACTI staff will be working closely with Field Services staff to insure the needs of current ACTI clients are met. He indicated that the transformation of ACTI programming would be adapted to best meet the needs of ARS clients. Mr. Bibb informed the Council that ACTI would be exploring opportunities to partner with community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) regarding the replication of short-term training currently occurring at ACTI and Pre-Apprenticeship training opportunities would also be explored. Much discussion followed.

2019 State Plan Update—Charles Lyford & Joe Baxter: Mr. Lyford informed Council members that RSA has informed ARS that our current State Plan will require modifications to reflect the new organizational structure that came about as a result of the Governor’s transformation of state government. He indicated that changes in the plan were technical in nature and has tentatively been approved by RSA. He also informed the Council that the public comment period regarding the State Plan changes was underway. Due to the 2019 State Plan not being provided to Council members for review prior to the meeting, at the request of Chair Paslay, a motion was made and seconded to defer approval of the update to the State Plan until the September 19, 2019 meeting. The Council concurred.

Agency Updates:
Field Services—Carl Daughtery: Mr. Daughtery introduced new members to the Field Services leadership team to the Council. They include Dr. Deandria Bass-Carrigan, Deputy Chief of Field Services; Gay Jones-Washington, Deputy of Field Operations and Christy Lamas, Deputy of Field Operations. Mr. Daughtery informed the Council that Field Services was currently serving 15,046 clients. He reported there being 93 Counselors across the state with an average caseload of 161. He indicated that year-to-date 1,376 clients had been closed as successfully employed (Status 26) with another 1,137 working but not closed (Status 22). Dr. Bass-Carrigan related that prior to the meeting the new Field Services regional map was sent to the Council for review. She indicated that Field Services has changed from Districts to Regions with the number of Regions being reduced to nine. She reported that the Lonoke Field Office has been merged with the North Little Rock Office with the District Manager of the Little Rock Field Office having the supervisory responsibility of both offices. Dr. Bass-Carrigan informed the Council about Moodle and how it will be utilized as a new training platform for Field Services staff across the State. She presented a video on State Agency as a Model Employer (SAME) with her informing the Council about two individuals participated in the program, one at the Conway Field Office and the other at the Russellville Field Office. Ms. Lamas provided Council members information regarding Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) summer camps and the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF). She indicated that YLF would occur June 23-28, 2019 at Hendrix College in Conway. She distributed the YLF agenda for the Council’s review. The Council also watched a video about last year’s YLF. Ms. Lamas concluded her presentation by extending an invitation to Council members to come visit this year’s YLF.
Business Engagement-Rodney Chandler: Mr. Chandler began his presentation by indicating that the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is very specific about collaboration with both internal and external partners. He informed the Council about Mr. Paslay attending a Business Engagement staff meeting to discuss how Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRPs) and ARS Business Engagement could collaborate to better engage businesses in developing relationships that can lead to the employment of Arkansans with disabilities. As part of the meeting, Business Engagement staff and Mr. Paslay reviewed different literature and presentations as it relates to marketing to businesses. Mr. Paslay indicated that Business Engagement staff could do a lot to assist CRPs and other agencies in learning the correct language to use when approaching businesses. Mr. Chandler indicated that when you talk about Business Engagement it’s all about alignment. He stated that Business Engagement wants to align with the CRPs to assist them in being successful. He concluded his presentation by providing Council members a copy of last year’s Business Engagement’s Annual Report asking them to pay special attention to the success stories contained in the report.

Access & Accommodations-Nathan Winter & Lynn Franquemont: Mr. Winter updated the Council on the Assistive Technology at Work (AT@Work) and the Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) programs. He informed the Council that current fiscal year-to-date the AT@Work has had 74 closures and Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work 17 closures. Ms. Franquemont provided the Council an update regarding the five Community Programs to include the Telecommunication Access Program (TAP), Increasing Capabilities Access Network (ICAN), the Alternative Finance Program (AFP), the Governor’s Commission on People with Disabilities (AGCPD) and the Arkansas Kidney Disease Commission (AKDC). As part of her presentation she indicated that the AKDC would be relocated from ARS to the Arkansas Department of Health as a result of transformation.

Freedom of Information Act-Chip McAfee: Chip McAfee, agency Director of Communications, provided SRC members information on the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). He provided an overview of the FOIA and its implications to members. As part of the overview specific information was provided as it relates to meetings and required notification of meetings to the public.

Election of Officers: The State Rehabilitation Council has 2 officers, Chairman and Co-Chairman. Dr. Vire made a motion to re-elect Christopher Paslay as Chair and David Maples Co-Chair with both agreeing to accept the positions. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously.

Announcements
Chair Christopher Paslay informed the Council that the next scheduled SRC meeting would be September 19, 2019.

Adjournment
With no additional business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned.