

**Nebraska Business Enterprises (NBE)  
Blind Licensee Committee Public Meeting Minutes**

Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
1313 Farnam St.  
Omaha, NE, 68102  
Room 227

**Chairperson Sandy Alvarado called the meeting to order at 10:09 AM.**

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, on the NCBVI website, and on NFB® Newslines. The notice was sent to the ncbvi.everyone Email List.

**Attendance**

Board Members

Sandy Alvarado, Chairperson; Jim Jirak, Vice Chairperson; Ronnie Kellogg, Secretary; Tanya Cady, Amy Eidenmiller

Blind Licensees and Trainees in Attendance

Atty Svendsen, Jay VanWinkle, Monte Ekern

NCBVI Staff in Attendance

Lizzie Heidenreich, NBE Orientation Counselor; Jeff Scheer, NBE VR Counselor

Guests

Chris Cady

**Approve Minutes from August 16th, 2025**

Amy made the motion that we approve the minutes from our August 16, 2025, meeting.

Jim seconded the motion.

Jim: Aye

Amy: Aye

Tanya: Aye

Sandy: Aye

Ronnie: aye

The motion passed.

**Committee Chair Report – Sandy Alvarado, Chairperson**

Emergency meeting held on September 26, 2025, via Zoom which passed general liability premium for October 1, 2025, through September 30, 2026. Minutes were sent out for all vendors to read.

Sandy said she visited with Lizzie and Jeff many different times since our August training. She specifically spoke with Lizzie when it was announced about the ICE detention facility change for a Nebraska state to Federal and wanted to make sure, we have priority over it. Erin has been on top of it.

On October 17<sup>th</sup> Lizzie received an award for Excellence in Leadership.

RSVA check-in call to be held on Tuesday November 18<sup>th</sup>. Sandy forwarded the info to everyone once, expect another one.

The Sagebrush conference will be held in Las Vegas from February 23<sup>rd</sup> to 28th, 2026.

NABM events:

- *Cantaloupe University - January 20-22 in Scottsdale, Arizona*  
This is an annual event sponsored by Cantaloupe that provides training focusing primarily on micro markets. This training is available to blind entrepreneurs, SLAs, and micro market operators outside of Randolph-Sheppard. There will be special breakout sessions for blind entrepreneurs. Arizona is a great place to be in January.
- *Washington Seminar – January 26-29 in Washington, D.C.*
- *Vistar Southeast Buying Show - March 29-30 in Orlando at Sea World*

### **SLA Report – Lizzie Heidenreich, NBE Coordinator**

#### **STRATCOM Deterrence Diner**

In September, Sodexo was chosen to take over as teaming partner for the STRATCOM Cafeteria and 1<sup>st</sup> floor micro-market. After that decision, STRATCOM was put out for bid for a blind vendor to work with the teaming partner and Miguel Rocha was chosen to be the vendor of record. Sodexo plans to transition into the facility in December of 2025.

NBE continues to work with USSTRATCOM on their upgrade/remodel of the cafeteria area. New additions when the remodel is complete include a hot/cold bar. The hot bar will be used primarily, at least initially, to serve a buffet style breakfast option. The cold bar will primarily replace the existing salad bar.

#### **National Guard Base in Ashland**

Currently the SLA plans to contract with Jessica Beecham, a Blind Vendor from Colorado, who is teaming with Blackstone. Ms. Beecham and Blackstone will need to submit their proposal in the next couple of months with the plan to open the cafeteria in January 2026.

#### **ICE Facility**

The SLA has reached out to the General Services Administration to inquire about the converted Work Ethic Camp that will be an ICE facility. The SLA does not currently have information on what the food service would look like at this facility or if there is currently a contract in place with another company. The SLA will continue to look into this matter for this information.

#### NBE Licensed Vendors

NBE currently has 15 licensed vendors who are actively servicing routes. One licensed vendor has returned to the program. There is one individual who is currently in training and one vendor left the program, making the total of vendors in the program 17.

#### Vending Site Complaints

The SLA had received several complaints from locations regarding insufficient stocking of machines and markets. Due to this, one vendor left the program in September, and those sites were taken over by a vendor in training. This vendor is working weekly with Jeff Scheer for training and to ensure that the locations will be properly stocked.

#### Operator Agreements

In the last year many Vendors have had changes to the sites that they service, and even more since Operator Agreements were last updated. The SLA has completed about 50% of the operator agreements for operators to sign. The remaining operator agreements should be completed within the following weeks.

#### Government Shutdown

The federal government shutdown on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025, due to Congress being unable to pass a spending bill. The shutdown broke a record for the longest shut down in history on Tuesday November 4<sup>th</sup> and today is the 38<sup>th</sup> day of the shutdown. Due to this shutdown, many federal agencies are operating without a budget which has caused employees to either work without pay or be furloughed, some of these agencies are providing employees with the choice between those options. During the beginning of the shutdown, the administration sent out many "Reduction in Force" notices to many federal agencies as a supposed solution to the current funding crisis, although the required severance pay for those employees would need to receive is not an allowed commitment of additional resources during a government shutdown. Many labor unions have filed court requests to stop the RIFs from taking effect. Some of these employees include those in the Rehabilitation Services Administration.

#### **Repair Requests - Lizzie Heidenreich**

Lizzie said that she thinks the timeliness of repair requests has gotten better and the SLA staff have been able to handle more repair requests on their own. Sandy asked if Candice helps and Lizzie says she's been doing a great job helping.

Lizzie has some requests of the vendors regarding the repair requests:

- Provide more identifiers to what machine is needing repaired. Especially for locations where there are multiple of one type of machine
- Use your reader or phone for serial numbers to provide that or the asset tag number.
- Vendors should provide more information on what they have tried already to fix the issue. Especially with coin mechs and bill validators, this would help Lizzie and Jeff know what to prepare for and bring to fix the machine.
- If you power it off or reboot the machine, please say so.
- Things must be clean.
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Lizzie said that tracking repairs on specific machines helps with replacements of trouble machines and financial records.

Sandy reminded vendors that the form asks for the asset number, serial number and the type of machine. She stated that when gathering meter reading is a good way or time to get the asset and serial numbers.

Vendors can use Facetime with Jeff or Lizzie if you don't have a reader with you and you need visual aid to help identify the issue. Lizzie and Jeff could also talk vendors through simple repairs over the phone.

Lizzie has a goal to revamp the repair request form.

Sandy said that would be more helpful on a checklist or something.

#### **Update on Profit and Loss - Lizzie Heidenreich**

Candice has been handling the P&L reconciliations. Lizzie doesn't have any issues to address now. She will be sending new ones out for 2026.

Sandy asked if vendors have done good with getting reports in. Lizzie said yes.

Sandy asked how things going on at the Department of Education affect the SLA's reporting. Lizzie said that there seem to be less training opportunities from the RSA than in previous years. Lizzie isn't sure overall because the report isn't due until December.

#### **Operator Agreements - Lizzie Heidenreich**

Lizzie said the edits need to be made. She has about 50% of the operator agreements ready for signatures. Candice has helped her compile a list of the equipment the people have, and she hopes to have them done soon. Lizzie will investigate converting the Operator Agreements to Docusign.

### **NBE Staffing Update – Lizzie Heidenreich**

The NBE Manager position has been reopened to state employees this week. Lizzie explained how the state's classification system works. Lizzie said she'd let us all know when things move forward, but she was hopeful that the position would be filled soon. It's been nearly 6 months without a manager.

### **Set Aside Report - Lizzie Heidenreich**

Combined Set Aside and Unassigned Fund: \$397,515.92

Sandy asked if we still get unassigned monies for subcontracted site. Lizzie said that we do: Civic Center in Omaha and some corrections facilities, which are state facilities. Sandy asked about a potential blind vendor at the Civic Center. Lizzie said that she will have to look at the contract. Lizzie said that the equipment is there, and the SLA owns some. Sandy said that she'd like to see a vendor there.

### **Set Date for Next Meeting**

Discussion occurred.

Tanya motions that we have our next meeting on March 6, 2026, in Lincoln, at 10:00 AM.

Amy seconded the motion.

Jim: Aye

Amy: aye

Tanya: Aye

Ronnie: Aye

Sandy: aye

Motion Passed.

Sandy asked about having training in the next meeting.

We decided to keep the subject broad, so train is a TBA.

Jeff suggested doing a Sagebrush wrap up.

### **Adjournment**

Jim moved that we adjourn the meeting.

Tanya seconded the motion.

Jim: Aye

Amy: Aye

Tanya; Aye

Ronnie: Aye

Sandy: Aye

The motion Passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:56 AM.