

Nebraska Business Enterprises Program

Nebraska Blind Licensee Committee Meeting Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired 4600 Valley Rd., Suite 100 Lincoln, NE 68510

**September 29, 2023
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

Meeting called to order at 10:02 AM by Chairperson Sandy Alvarado

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 Newsline®. The notice was sent to Commission Staff and Commissioners.

Board Members in Attendance

Sandy Alvarado, Chairperson; Andrea Chizek, Vice Chairperson; Ronnie Kellogg, Secretary; Atty Svendsen, Jeremy Richey

Blind Licensees and Trainees in Attendance

Antonio Aguilar, Jim Jirak, Wiley Elmshouser, Jason Thompson

NCBVI Staff in Attendance

Eric Buckwalter, NBE Supervisor; Lizzie Heidenreich, NBE Counselor

Guests

Linda Mentink, NCBVI Commissioner

Committee Chair Report (Sandy Alvarado)

Sandy Reported on the following:

- Worked with the SLA on many issues this past quarter.
- Talked about the process for the site bids that were just released last week.
- Talked about set-aside funds.
- Spoke about the approval of additional memberships.
- Spoke about new individuals interested in the NBE program.
- Discussed the potential government shutdown.
- Discussed the new repair person with GAD.
- Discussed the subcontracted site payments.
- Discussed Electronic Set-Aside payments.
- Talked about the reason for rescheduling this quarterly meeting and reminded Elected Committee members about their responsibilities.
- Discussed end of year inventory.
- Talked about BLAST on the Boardwalk (currently happening).
- Reminded Vendors of the Coffee, Tea, and Water Show.
- Reminded Vendors of Sagebrush '24; which will be held February 12 – 16 at the Golden Nugget Hotel in Las Vegas. Mentioned that Zoom will be offered for some sessions.
- Reminded Vendors to get their September P&L Reports in ASAP.

- Reminded Vendors that Committee members are here to assist them.

SLA Report (Eric Buckwalter)

NEBRASKA BUSINESS ENTERPRISES

SLA Report

September 29th, 2023

Vending Site Update

State Office Building – Lincoln

The remodel of the cafeteria in the State Office Building in Lincoln is complete and is reoccupied and open for operation.

Chief Standing Bear Building (formerly Executive Building)

The remodel of the vending area at the Chief Standing Bear Building in Lincoln is complete and is reoccupied and open operation.

New Opportunities

NBE is working on several new sites that will be up for bid soon; with a timeline of starting sometime this fall. There are two sites in Omaha, two sites in Lincoln, one site in Kearney, one site in Hastings, and one site in Beatrice. The Bid Notifications for these sites have been released to NBE Licensed Vendors with a deadline of October 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM.

NBE Licensed Vendors

There are currently 12 Licensed Vendors in the NBE program. Several individuals have expressed interest in the joining the NBE program. Two of those individuals has been training with Lizzie for several weeks.

Vending Site Complaints

There were no significant vending site complaints in the past quarter. However, the SLA noticed a number of machines during our fixed asset verification visits that were not as clean as we like to see our equipment. Dirty machines, especially from exploded beverages, can lead to mechanical issues as the residue dries and becomes sticky. In addition, dirty machines can be a deterrence to customers using your machines.

Electronic Set-Aside Payments

The SLA apologizes for the delay in communicating additional information about the automatic set aside payments. Information on the electronic Set-Aside payments will be sent out next week.

P&L Documents

This is a reminder to please submit August and September P&L documents in a timely manner. The SLA needs these documents in order to process our annual end-of-year fiscal documents that we are required to submit to the federal government. Please also make sure and passed due P&Ls are also submitted as soon as possible. Delays with receiving information make it extremely difficult for the SLA to complete our responsibilities.

Cantaloupe

Vendors should be aware that Cantaloupe is now charging \$10.00 to reactivate a telemetry device. This affects NBE as we occasionally reuse a telemetry device that has been deactivated from a previous machine. Later in the meeting it is on the agenda to address how this situation will be handled.

Other Items

Des Moines – Mini BLAST

In June Lizzie and Eric had the opportunity to attend the NABM – Mini BLAST in Des Moines, Iowa that was held in partnership with U-Select-It (USI). It was a very good short conference and the SLA was able to make important connections with Cantaloupe, Three Square Markets, and USI. In addition to becoming more familiar with USI products we learned of some potential changes coming to Cantaloupe that will better serve BEPs across the country. Other highlights included an update on BEP and SSDI. Michael Dalto, who presented on SSDI, will be presenting to all NCBVI staff in September. If there are any specific BEP questions Vendors have please email them to Eric so that he can discuss those with Mr. Dalto at that time.

Over Machined

Several Vendors have reached out to the SLA regarding their concerns that certain sites of theirs are over machined; leading to wasted product and higher overhead than necessary. Individual Vendors are encouraged to reach out to the SLA if they feel this is the case and NBE will perform an audit on the sales at the sites and discuss options with the Vendor. In certain cases, this may be a process as it is written into contracts how many machines NBE will provide to a site.

GAD Repairs

I have talked with GAD about the issues with being informed about when repairs take place. This is something they will work on. Together the SLA and GAD will be working on a plan that we can implement to ensure good communication.

NBE Retreat

The NBE Retreat that was originally planned for this week was postponed. The postponement was caused by staff changes within the SLA leading to concerns that SLA would not be able to commit adequate time to preparing a quality program. Plans are in the works to have an NBE Retreat in the Spring of 2024.

Questions and Comments on SLA Report

- Jeremy Richey mentioned that if you become a lifetime member of NABM you can have access to Michael Dalto's services individually.
- Eric thanked Vendors for being flexible during the transition from Dave doing P&Ls. Lizzie has stepped up to the plate. He also reminded everyone to get September P&Ls, backdated P&Ls, and inventory into the SLA in a timely manner.
- Sandy asked if the inventory had to be for each site individually for those that have a lot of sites?
 - o Eric said that turning in an inventory that reflects your business as a whole is sufficient.
- Jeremy asked if the P&L sheets will be updated to the new fiscal year in the meter reading section?
 - o Eric responded that all P&Ls will be reviewed and new P&L templates should be sent out in time for the October P&L.
- Jeremy asked if we have something in place to penalize people for turning in late P&Ls?
 - o Discussion was held around this topic as there is a late fee that is supposed to be imposed on those who turn in P&Ls late; the SLA said that they would have a more concrete proposal at the next quarterly meeting about how to more effectively communicate and enforce this late fee.

Set-Aside

The SLA recommended that the Set-Aside fee be kept at 8%. The SLA reported that the Set-Aside fund is currently in a good and stable position. The SLA wants to keep the 8% because of the need to keep building a cushion for replacing and repairing machines as needed. Eric reminded Vendors that the Set-Aside money goes into a separate account and there is strictly defined list of what the money can be used for; ex. replacing machines and buying new parts, among other things. Eric mentioned that both the cost of new machines and replacement parts is increasing.

Sandy added that Set-Aside funds can also be used to go toward the matching for the retirement fund and urged all to participate with the retirement fund.

Ronnie made the motion that we keep the Set-Aside at 8% for the year.

Andrea seconded

Roll Call

Andrea – aye

Ronnie – aye

Jeremy – aye

Atty – aye

Sandy – aye

Motion passed

Discussion on P&L Allowable Deductions

Eric reported that during the last meeting the Vendors requested to be allowed to write off more than one club membership fee per year on their P&Ls. After discussion, the SLA is fine with Vendors writing off up to three club membership fees on their P&Ls. Vendors who want to take advantage of this for this year may do so on their September P&L.

Workers' Compensation and General Liability Insurance Update

Workers' Compensation Insurance is still on hold as a policy has not yet been identified.

There was a bit of delay in the new General Liability Insurance policy as the individual who the SLA was working with at Nebraska Risk Management moved on from their job and the SLA moved to working with a new individual. Discussions are on track and policy is in process.

Cantaloupe Update

Cantaloupe has started charging a \$10.00 reactivation fee on credit card devices; and this fee is charged to the Vendor on whose account the device is activated. There is nothing to vote on; however, the SLA is looking for feedback from Committee Members on how the SLA should approach this new charge as it wants to put forward a proposal.

Discussion was held and the SLA will have a proposal on how to handle the new charge at the next quarterly meeting.

Discussion and Questions

- Sandy asked about a brand new person and if the SLA would be able to write the reactivation fees for reused card readers off on their case file?
 - o Eric said that could be done; but it would have to come in the form of a reimbursement.
- Eric clarified that the charge is just for reactivating devices. If the devices are moved but not deactivated than the charge does not apply.
- Atty asked if her reactivation fee could go on her P&L?
 - o Eric responded that reactivation fees could be written off on the credit card section of the P&L.

Training for Next Quarterly Meeting

Atty suggested that having a training on the Retirement Match available to NBE Vendors.

Jeremy moved that we hold a training on the Retirement Match at the next quarterly meeting.

Atty seconded

Roll Call

Andrea – aye

Ronnie – aye

Jeremy – aye

Sandy – aye

Motion passed

Sandy will make the arrangements

Set Date for Next Quarterly Meeting

Sandy suggested December 1, 2023

Atty made a motion that we hold the next Committee Meeting on December 1, 2023 at the Omaha SOB at 10:00 AM

Seconded by Andrea

Roll Call

Andrea – aye

Ronnie – aye

Jeremy – aye

Atty – aye

Sandy aye

Motion passed

Ronnie made the motion to adjourn the meeting

Seconded by Andrea

Roll Call

Andrea –aye

Ronnie – aye

Jeremy – aye

Atty – aye

Sandy – aye

Motion passed

Meeting adourned