

Nebraska Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired  
Public Meeting  
Saturday, November 03, 2018  
Outlook Nebraska  
4125 S 72 St.  
Omaha, NE 68127

Minutes

Call to Order. Welcome and introductions. Announcement concerning public comment periods, meeting agendas, open meeting act, proof of publication, recordings, other logistics.

Mark Bulger, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. The meeting began with introductions.

Commissioners present: Mark Bulger, Chairperson, Designee of the American Council of the Blind of Nebraska, Omaha; Robert Newman, Vice Chairperson, Omaha; Mike Hansen, Designee of the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska; Chad Bell, Alliance; Becky Rieken, Executive Secretary, Dakota City.

Commission staff present: Carlos Serván, Executive Director; Carol Jenkins, Deputy Director; Nancy Flearl, Omaha District Supervisor; Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant.

Outlook Nebraska staff present: Eric Stueckrath, President and CEO; Donna Faust Aman, Communications Director and Susanne Waltermeyer, Executive Assistant.

Public Present: Michaela DiMauro, Caroline Avant, Paul Rieken, Ryan Osentowski, Michelle Holoubek, Lauren Jams, Sandy Alvarado, Jennifer Okell, Kristal Platt and Kenda Slavin.

It was noted that public comments are welcome during the scheduled Public Comment periods regarding the agenda items or other relevant issues. Kathy Stephens recorded the meeting and the recordings are available on the website.

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available. The Act was available in both print and Braille format. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, the Omaha World Herald, the State Government Calendar, NCBVI Website, NFB Newslines® and Radio Talking Book. The Notice was also sent to ACBN, NFBN, and the NCBVI List Serve.

Approval of the August 4, 2018 public meeting minutes.

Commissioner Hansen moved to approve the Minutes of the August 4, 2018 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Bell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all

commissioners voted in favor of the motion except Chairperson Bulger who abstained. Chairperson Bulger abstained because he was not present at the August 4, 2018 meeting.

Focus Topic: Outlook Nebraska, presentation by Eric Stueckrath, President and CEO of Outlook Nebraska.

Eric thanked NCBVI for allowing Outlook Nebraska to host the Commission Board meeting today.

Outlook Nebraska was founded in early 2000 as a not-for-profit organization with just four blind associates producing paper products in Fremont, Nebraska. They had a clear vision for the future and a determination to establish and foster a productive blind and visually impaired workforce. This helped Outlook Nebraska to grow into a janitorial paper company that supplied tissue to the federal government under the Ability One program and the Javits-Wagner O'Day Act. Eric pointed out that Commissioner Robert Newman was a founding Board member of Outlook Nebraska. As they grew, they kept learning, expanding and providing enriching opportunities for their associates, clients and community. Currently, Outlook Nebraska employs about 90 people and around 55 of them have no to low sight. They have blind individuals and low vision individuals who are in leadership to entry-level skill set positions. They continue to produce tissue and towel products, along with hopes, dreams, accomplishments and futures.

In 2002, Outlook Nebraska moved to Omaha at 42 and Q Street. Then in 2005, they moved to 103<sup>rd</sup> and I Streets, and in 2008 they leased about 80,000 square feet in the building they are currently located. In November of 2012, they bought the building and in 2017, they finished the renovations to the building.

Change has been constant at Outlook Nebraska through renovation of their facilities, added and improved programs and growth in employment opportunities for people who are blind. Outlook Nebraska firmly believes in the capabilities and dreams of people who are blind. Since the grand opening of their new technology center, their team has delivered 30 percent more training hours on computers, smartphones and other devices. The training facility transformed from a single room with the ability to train only one person at a time to a center with three private training rooms and classroom space for 20. They have added one full-time and one part-time trainer to serve more clients.

Multiple meeting spaces allow for greater collaboration and productivity. Navigating the facility is safer for community clients and associates with wide-open walkways, better lighting and intentionally placed visual and sensory contrast points. The large community room, with seating capacity for over 100, has allowed for new programs including audio-described movie nights, larger tours, community events and educational programming. With room to grow in their office area, they are actively exploring new business opportunities to offer more jobs to the highly capable but underemployed visually impaired community.

Outlook Nebraska is a 501 (c)(3) organization. They make it a priority to ensure that they continue to build on public trust by upholding their responsibilities to their associates, board

members, clients and community. Their actions and decisions are guided by their core values: seek collaboration, nurture growth, show respect and build trust. They adhere to processes with checks and balances to ensure they operate in an efficient and ethical manner. Their aim is to remain open and inclusive, supporting their mission to positively impact everyone who is blind and visually impaired.

At Outlook Nebraska, people of all ages and walks of life who are blind, legally blind or experiencing vision loss have the means to accomplish their goals through employment, adaptive technology training, recreational programs, cultural experiences, resources and camaraderie.

At Outlook Nebraska, partner agencies and community leaders are invited to collaborate with them so they can reach and empower as many people as possible.

Outlook Nebraska's Mission is "To positively impact everyone who is blind or visually impaired." They do this through robust employment opportunities with plenty of room for advancement and success; adaptive technology training that helps anyone who is blind or visually impaired learn how to use a computer, navigate a mobile device, try on digital eyewear and gain independence; recreational programs that boost confidence and increase physical activity; cultural experiences that enrich the lives of the visually impaired; community education and collaborative programs that allow people to meet others with similar conditions, start conversations among loved ones and open a world of organizations that are here to help.

Outlook Nebraska has three Board officers and eight Board members. They are community leaders from a range of disciplines who volunteer their time because they care deeply about the cause and want to help Outlook fulfill its mission to positively impact everyone who is blind or visually impaired.

### Enrichment Programs

Outlook Nebraska's Enrichment Programs deliver a variety of tools, events and clubs that allow individuals to try something new or continue doing the things they love in spite of vision loss. The Enrichment program provides adaptive technology training, cultural programs, recreational programs and it helps educate the public and leaders in the community about the capacities and capabilities of people who are blind. Enrichment has been very important for them because it helps to more realistically provide for the needs of people who are blind. Not everyone is coming to Outlook Nebraska wanting a job. Some people just want to learn how to use Facebook, be more efficient with their cell phone, or shop on-line. These are all things that Outlook Nebraska can help with.

Eric said that when he talks about showing people all the resources that are available to them, the Vision Resource Coalition is very important. Outlook Nebraska collaborates with over two dozen organizations in the Vision Resource Coalition to restore hope to those who need it. Outlook Nebraska co-founded the Vision Resource Coalition in 2011 to bring

organizations serving the visually impaired together to create greater awareness of resources available in the region and to facilitate complimentary services and referrals.

Eric spoke about the vision of Outlook Nebraska and what it might look like within the next 5, 10 and 15 years. Eric stated that he sees a family of organizations that serve the blind in different capacities. Outlook Nebraska will be forming entities that are a bit more specific, but held together under one common umbrella. Organizations like an Outlook Enrichment Program will be inside its own organization and distinctly different from the Outlook Nebraska who employs people who are blind. It will also be distinct from Outlook Business Solutions, which is a newly formed opportunity where they do contract center work and marketing for businesses that want to grow their own business, but do not necessarily want to hire people to grow and expand their market.

Outlook also has an organization called Outlook Properties and it continues to grow. Just two years ago, they bought 11.75 acres of land to the east of them. This is a completely green space where they can see their vision grow. As this facility continues to offer more and more to people who are blind, they can dream of what they want to become.

Tour

Eric Stueckrath and his staff gave a tour of the new Outlook Nebraska facility to everyone in attendance.

Break

A break was taken at 11:00 a.m.  
The meeting resumed at 11:10 a.m.

### Report from the Executive Director

#### I. Client Statistics October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018 – Final FFY 2018

##### A. For Older Blind/Independent Living services

At the beginning of the fiscal year, 257 individuals applied for services, along with the six that applied from the previous fiscal year, for a total of 263 applicants for services. Of these, 259 applicants were accepted for services; four applicants were not accepted for services, one for other reason, one for institutionalized and two withdrawn. There were no applicants remaining at the end of the period.

There were 181 active clients on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year. Two hundred fifty-nine clients were added to active status since the beginning of the fiscal year, making for a total of 440 clients altogether in active status during the fiscal year. Of these, 309 clients closed successful with zero clients referred to VR services, 31 clients closed unsuccessful with nine deaths, one institutionalized, one moved, six withdrawn and 14 closed for other reasons.

One hundred clients remain in active status at the end of the period. Total number of OIB applicants and clients served in all statuses at the end of the period was 444.

#### B. Independent Living under 55

Since the beginning of the fiscal year, there were 44 applicants. Forty-two applicants were accepted for service with two remaining at the end of the quarter. Along with the four carried over from the previous fiscal year, a total of 46 clients were currently in active status. Of these, seven clients closed successful and three closed unsuccessful, two due to other reasons and one due to withdrawn. Thirty-six clients remained in active status at the end of the period. Total number of IL applicants and clients in all statuses served at the end of the period was 48.

#### C. Vocational Rehabilitation

Since the beginning of the fiscal year, there were 163 applicants for services. Along with nine on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year, there is a total of 172 applicants. Of these, 134 applicants were accepted for services; 20 applicants were not accepted for services: six had no disabling condition, one for health/medical, two were no longer interested in receiving services, six were unable to locate or contact, three for all other reasons, one for ineligible and one had no impediment to employment. Eighteen applicants remain at the end of the period.

Three hundred eighty-nine clients were in active status at the beginning of the year. One hundred thirty-four clients were accepted for services since the beginning of the fiscal year, totaling 523 clients in active status during the fiscal year. Of these, 55 clients were closed as successful. One hundred twenty-two clients were closed as unsuccessful after an IPE was developed. The reasons for closure are: 33 were no longer interested in services, one does not require VR services, one has a disability too significant to benefit from VR, one entered foster care, two for no disabling condition, 11 for health/medical reasons, one was institutionalized (Not Jail or Prison), 33 were unable to be located, five deaths, ten transferred to another agency, and 24 for all other reasons. Eleven clients were closed as unsuccessful before an IPE was developed for the following reasons: five were no longer interested in receiving services, three were unable to be located, one for does not require VR services, one due to being ineligible and one for all other reasons. Three hundred thirty-five remain in active status. Including the 18 applicants, there are a total of three hundred fifty-three clients.

Total number of VR clients served in Active Statuses was 524. Total number of VR clients in all statuses served at the end of the period was 562.

We had clients get jobs as: Assembler/Fabricator, Bill/Account Collector, two Customer Service Representatives, Executive Secretaries/Administrative Assistant, Psychiatrist, Human Resource Assistant, Laborer/Freight/Stock/Material Mover, three Randolph-Sheppard Operators, Postsecondary Teacher, Childcare Worker, Combined Food Preparation/Server, Electrician, Accountant/Auditor.

## II. Administration

Senator Crawford office call me to let me know that she would not introduce the NBE Legislative Bill. However, she agreed to introduce a bill that will exempt the Commission from LB-429, the Transparency Bill. This bill requires all State agencies to scan and upload all their contracts into the State system. HHSS and VR General already have an exemption to scan and up-load contracts for client's services, which has confidential information. If this bill passes, it will save a great deal of time for us.

Senator Wishart from Lincoln called me to let me know that she will introduce the bill to strengthen the NBE law in Nebraska. We are working on the draft so the bill can be introduced in January 2019.

The Governor's Policy and Research Office (GPRO) has not given an opinion on the possibility to amend the NBE law and make clear the priority to blind vendors.

Some of the events/meetings I attended were WIOA Partners meetings, the NFB State Convention, National Fiscal conference with Kat Carroll, regional meeting for VR State Administrators with Kat and Carol in Kansas City, and CSAVR and NCSAB Fall Conference. At the NCSAB National Conference, RSA reported that Nebraska was second on Measurable Skill Gains. New Mexico was first and Virginia was third. Executive Director Serván noted that the three agencies that are at the top on Measurable Skill Gains are separate agencies for the blind.

Executive Director Serván reported that he has had conversations with Jane Neilsen, Executive Director of Radio Talking Book (RTB), to see about the possibility to get extra State funds to support RTB. She is also talking to some senators about supporting the Older Blind funds.

Kat Carol submitted the Biennial Budget Request, which included the increase for OIB services. Julie and Kat also submitted most of the Federal reports. Our team also continues to help test FusioN. We cut JAWS licenses from 45 to 25 for a savings of \$3,072 a year; and cut FusioN licenses from 15 to 10 for a savings of \$2,104 a year.

As a result of the State-wide assessment, we wrote a Plan Of Action to address some of the areas and we forwarded this document to RSA.

Do to our success on expending Pre-ETS funds, we were again asked to do a presentation at the NCSAB National Conference in November. Carol Jenkins did this presentation yesterday. Executive Director noted that at the NCSAB conference, someone did a presentation on STEM, cyber, and computer science for blind students. We would like to bring them to Nebraska to train some students and our staff members.

The Public Hearing for the four chapters of our rule was September 13. We sent the proper documentation to the Governor's office and the Secretary of State and we will need to wait until they get back to us. If the NBE law is amended, we will have to go back to work on Chapter III of our rules.

In regard to FuzioN, we will have another meeting with the Oracle Accessibility expert in January or February to see and test the progress.

#### Human Resources and Training:

Bill Brown retired August 7, 2018. As Carrie DeFreece left, we hired Sarah Martin to be the new NBE Manager and her first day was October 29, 2018. Sarah will be in Center Training for 16 weeks. Elaine Kavulak announced that she will retire on March 29, 2019.

We will have our State Staff meeting in April of next year in Lincoln, at 4600 Valley Road, next to our offices in the first floor. The Friends of the Commission announced that they will provide coffee and snacks for the State Staff meeting.

Kim Schnitzer, one of the VR Counselor in the Omaha Office, graduated in August with her Master's in Social Work.

Angie attended the SS PASS training held at Voc Rehab. She completed and became certified in Psychological First Aid. Adrienne and Charli Saltzman attended Pre-Audit certification training and passed their test. The Pre-Audit certification is something that all VR Techs have gotten so that they are able to help in the business office. Kat Carroll and Greg DeWall will start attending the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute (NRLI) seminar in December. After Kat and Greg complete their training, the leadership team and supervisors will all have completed this training.

The week of October 15, several staff were recognized for their years of service with the State. Deanna Jesse 30 years, Glenn Ervin 30 years, Connie Daly 25 years, Shane Buresh 20 years, Don Ward 20 years, Kelly Coleman 20 years, Carlos Serván 20 years, Kim Schnitzer 15 years and Larry Oleson 10 years.

### III. Field Services

Erin Brandyberry, the North Platte District Supervisor has been on maternity leave since the middle of September and should be back in December. Connie Daly and Nancy Flearl are taking turns to supervise the North Platte District until Erin is back from her leave.

#### Lincoln District Highlights

Lincoln has started another job class with seven participants. They attended a Job Fair last Friday along with two Center clients. Clients were able to get some leads on manufacturing jobs and several clients applied for jobs on the spot. Last week, one client got a job as a result of attending the Job Fair. The Lincoln District has been involved with Employ LNK. This is a group made up of case managers. They have monthly meetings. Usually two employers present each meeting about the job openings that they have available and they arrange monthly tours of businesses. This concept has been replicated in Omaha and they

are starting a similar group in Norfolk. John Schmitt is participating in getting that one off the ground.

Connie is on the planning committee for the Project Search job fair to take place in April.

The Greater Lincoln Workforce Investment Board has launched an initiative called Next Gen. We have identified the Healthcare industry as the business we are starting with. It brings individuals from different healthcare areas to talk about common issues. The agency providers are not driving this process. The Healthcare providers have identified a number of areas to work on together.

Connie continues to host the Monthly VR Conference call. We had a presentation from Pam Berenzki about assessment tools for youth. We also had a conference call regarding the five required Pre-ets services and activities that we can do with our clients for each required service.

Most of our staff got time management training. Counselors have been attending a number of webinars. There have been some for low vision evaluations, motivational interviewing, and engaging businesses.

#### Omaha District Highlights

Staff continue to attend Public Schools meetings. As a result, we are getting some more referrals from the school districts for students in transition. We have also had a slight increase in the number of older blind referrals.

This quarter counselors have been more involved with some of the newer NBE vendors as they develop a routine for their vending sites.

Some staff attended the NFBN State Convention.

Omaha staff spent time at the Academy of Eye Surgeons and Eye Doctor State Conference held in Omaha. This was an opportunity to network with physicians and their staff about the importance of early referral.

As part of the negotiations with the Veterans Affairs, in order to avoid Arbitration, at one of the meetings with them the issue of working together was brought up so we can collaborate with the VA to train their blind veterans on IL and or VR services. As a result, Omaha staff met with Ronita Bland the new VIST (Visually Impaired Service Team Coordinator) for Blind and Visually Impaired Veterans and already tour the Training Center.

Omaha staff attended an event with NFB Omaha Chapter and Outlook Nebraska "Do you Dream in Color" on October 4.

We worked with Channel 3 (KMTV) to film PSA's highlighting services provided by NCBVI.

We continue to attend EmployOMA and WIN (Working in Nebraska) meetings, meet with employers, and tour businesses. Staff also continue to develop On-the-Job Trainings and Work Based Learning Experiences.

They are doing some major renovation in the State Office Building in Omaha. They decided to start on the third floor. This is affecting our office, mostly the front lobby, several offices occupied by counselors, our hallway and into the kitchen. We hope that this will be completed within the next few weeks.

### North Platte District Highlights

#### NETWORKING:

Some of our staff have been attending the Lincoln County Interagency meetings, the Community Connections and the Aging Coalition in Kearney. Deanna Jesse also attends the Elder Issues group in Grand Island. Staff serve on several agencies, such as Advisory Board for Senior Services in Kearney.

Angie conducted two Fall Prevention workshops in conjunction with the hospital's wellness program for seniors. She provided training to Workforce staff on our services. She meets monthly as a core member of the WIOA committee of Western NE. She became a committee member on the ADA regulations committee for the local Midwest Theater.

Cristal continues to attend Community Connections on a monthly basis. She attended a Disability Leadership Training put on by Monroe-Meyer Institute. Cristal attends monthly WIN meetings which are held at VR. She attended the Kearney Service Area Providers meeting. This involved several community agencies brainstorming how to meet employer's needs in the community. Cristal is an active participant in Project Search for Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney locations. She also gave a presentation about blindness to Head Start students.

The Tech Team met with Jeff Bazer from Freedom Scientific to learn about the newest technologies, including the El Braille note taker. Jan Brandt provided an evaluation of some new software for Central Community College Instructional Technology Specialists.

### Transition Highlights

Staff have attended several transition events with various education service units and we are continuing to further our relationship building and collaboration with NCECBVI. Our staff from the Lincoln District are beginning to conduct regular trainings in the dorms and classrooms and staff have been invited to present at parent teacher conferences and during a parent weekend focusing on benefits planning. If chosen, Leslie Wagner, transition specialist from NCECBVI, and I will be collaborating, for a presentation during the transition statewide conference in February. During the next quarter, NCECBVI is also planning to make a trip to spend a day in the Center with several of their Pre-ETS aged students.

NCBVI supervisors, Carol Jenkins and Shane Buresh along with several administrative staff from NCECBVI are engaging in a series of meetings this academic year to further the efforts that began last Spring.

The Mentoring for Excellence Program continued to gather momentum and focus on growth with monthly calls for both mentors and mentees. There are 11 mentees and 8 mentors enrolled in the program. Many matched pairs have begun regular discussions and some have managed to meet face-to-face. During the weekend of November 2, we will be holding a retreat with the mentors and mentees in attendance, along with a number of additional NCBVI Pre-ETS students who might have otherwise attended a Winnerfest program. Mirroring the partnership in the overall program, the NFB Career Mentoring Retreat is serving as a Winnerfest and a triannual mentoring program event in one package. Students will be working on projects, getting to know their mentors better, hearing from employed blind persons and much more.

#### IV. Center's Quarterly Report

Currently: Seven Students

One New Staff Trainee (NBE Supervisor began training 10/29/2018)

Five Three Day Stays (1 from North Carolina)

Two Students had Mini Meals

Two Students had Commencement Meals

Tours: One Representative from VIST (with the VA), three tours with agency consumers, three candidates for State Legislator, seven Union College Students.

Observations: seven Union College students observed classes at different times. This included observing Home-Management, shop, and travel. In addition, a Lincoln High School student did a job shadow in Home-Management and Shop.

In October, the students attended the NFB of Nebraska convention in Columbus.

Also, in October, the students attended a viewing of "Do You Dream in Color." This event was put on by the Lincoln NFB Chapter. Students also were able to attend the Omaha Counsel of the Blind Picnic, where they had a choice of listening to a professional storyteller or learning how to ice-skate.

Amber Ward from Department of Labor continues to come monthly. She has discussed interviewing techniques. This included having the students participate in mock interviews, which were recorded. Amber and Center staff viewed the recordings and provided constructive feedback.

The Center's travel instructor, Jeff Altman, has begun attending the Star-Tran monthly meetings. Instructors are regularly working on projects to improve their classes and participate in webinars to gain knowledge in working with students with multiple disabilities. Cindy, the Center's client services counselor, has been working diligently to get students

connected with comparable benefits. This allows students to get better connected with community resources, such as SNAP benefits, as well as help shave costs for NCBVI.

Greg DeWall is getting settled in to his new position. In October, he attended the NFB of Nebraska State Convention in Columbus.

Greg's short-term goals are to make a great training center even better by adjusting the schedules of students and staff, in efforts to maximize learning for students and efficiency in the center.

In October, two Center students attended a local job fair that was hosted at Center for People in Need. In addition, two students are looking forward to attending college in January after graduation. Each of these students are using the necessary class time to make needed arrangements to prepare themselves for the winter quarter.

The Center is filling up. We have two students that need one on one teaching/training at this time due to severe multiple disabilities. By the end of November, the Center is projected to have nine students, including one from North Carolina.

The total number of students attending the Center does not include staff trainees because they do not stay in the Center Apartments. We have ten Center Apartments and so ten students can attend the Center regardless of how many staff trainees we have. Nebraska consumers always have priority when attending the Center when it comes to consumers from other states.

## V. Nebraska Business Enterprise Report

### Vending Sites Update

We finally got the permit with the Veterans Administration signed for the new Omaha clinic that will start building in 2019. However, we will keep the Arbitration procedure open until we get a permit for the new Lincoln clinic that would start building in 2020.

### Department of Corrections

NCBVI intends on submitting a bid for the RFP for the Department of Corrections in order to try to expand the NBE Program.

### Nebraska State Building Division

Carol and I met with the Nebraska State Building Division to continue negotiations for the Nebraska State Building Division contract. We are already operating the locations, but the contract will formalize this process. The contract will include the following locations: The Nebraska State Capitol, the Lincoln State Office Building, the Omaha State Office Building, the Lincoln Executive Building, the Lincoln 501 (OCIO) Building, Lincoln White Hall, Lincoln Health and Human Services, Lincoln TSB, and Lincoln State Labs.

The transition from First Choice Vending (LinPepCo) to the NBE Program began on July 2, 2018 and was completed by August 31, 2018. NCBVI has an agreement with Pepsi and Coke, which will allow the licensees to use the machines as long as product is ordered directly from Pepsi or Coke. This agreement is saving \$84,000 in machine purchases for the NBE Program. Keurig's have been delivered to NCBVI for some of these locations, and Don Ward will work with the licensees to get the Keurig's up and operational.

#### New Grand Island Location

NCBVI has sub-contracted for the new vending location in Grand Island at the USDA Agriculture and Immigration building due to no bids from current licensees. NCBVI purchased two new beverage and one used snack machine for this additional location.

#### Other Potential Vending Site Expansions

We received a Request for Proposal during the third week of September to run a military cafeteria at USSTRATCOM at Offutt Air Force Base in Omaha. We submitted the proposal on October 22. Last Thursday, I got a call from USSTRATCOM to let me know that they are working on writing the letter of Award.

All licensees were given a chance to bid for this site and interested vendors needed to submit a letter of intent and a business plan. We only received one applicant, Miguel Rocha. Miguel and the teaming partners (WG Consulting and Investment and Worley Enterprises) will operate this site.

We had an error with the distribution of unassigned funds and this error was corrected. Some active vendors did not get such portion of the unassigned fund into their retirement funds. Starting October 1, 2018, a licensee must be an active vendor and that same licensee must be paying into their NBE Retirement Program to benefit from the unassigned funds.

#### Licensees Update

Dan Knuter retired from the NBE program in July 2018. Shanon Clark, a new operator, has taken over operation of the vending machines in the North Platte area, the Western Nebraska I80 rest areas, and the Sidney area.

Tom Scheibler also retired from the NBE Program in August of 2018. Atty Svenson expanded her vending sites and took over the operation of the Douglas County Civic Center and Federal Court House in Omaha.

#### Douglas County Civic Center

Carol Jenkins negotiated a new contract with the Douglas County Civic Center to update a 30-year old contract.

Carol Jenkins attended the Region VII Midwest Randolph Sheppard Training in Des Moines, IA on September 19-21, 2018. At this training, attendees were able to tour the USI manufacturing facility to observe how vending machines are made. During this visit, attendees were also able to work with fully ADA compliant USI machines, which included

voice output and braille keypads along with built-in cashless management software. National Vending presented at this training on their full-service program, leasing of vending machines, and their gap in service option. On October 17, USI and National Vending met with Kathy Carroll, NCBVI Business Manager, Carol Jenkins, and me to explore options for growing and expanding the NBE program. Another highlight from the Region VII Midwest Randolph Sheppard Training was the presentation on Micro-Markets, and how Micro-Markets are becoming the trend for the future when looking at the Millennial and Generation Z populations. Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director is considering this for a training topic for next year for the NBE Program.

Commissioner Hansen asked if the reduction in the JAWS licenses needed is a result in the reduction of the number of blind staff that NCBVI employs. Director Serván stated that as they worked with supervisors on looking for ways to save money, they found that NCBVI simply had too many JAWS licenses. We do not have less blind staff.

### Public Comment

There was no public comment.

### Budget Update

Director Serván reported that NCBVI's budget is around \$4.3 million. \$3.1 million comes from the federal government and \$1.2 million comes from the state government. We were spending close to \$6.5 million dollars because we had extra funds. This last year, we still spent more than what our federal and state grants are, and our reallocation and social security reimbursements have been less. Therefore, we have looked at ways to reduce the budget. Director Serván thanked the supervisors and staff members for working very hard to reduce our spending. Director Serván added that in general the budget is okay. NCBVI is not going to have to go into Order of Selection or lay off staff at this time. The approach that the leadership and the supervisors have is we bring up the budget and explain how much we have. We work with staff to make sure they understand and help us keep the spending down. Sometimes it is not enough and we may have to make some drastic changes. When we do make drastic changes there may be some staff who do not understand why we are making those changes. Director Serván noted that this is normal. Director Serván asked the commissioners let him know if staff contact them regarding changes that are made. NCBVI has never been in Order of Selection. Of the 79 agencies, both general and agencies for the blind, 41 are currently in Order of Selection.

Chairperson Bulger reported that he was at a meeting yesterday and they were talking about independent living dollars and NCBVI knew that with the changes in WIOA, we had to go to the state and ask for more state funds to provide independent living services. We had leadership that cast a vision to do this and we had consumers who went to testify. This does not always happen among disabled groups but we were able to do this with the blind

because of the consumer group support. Therefore, the consumers are needed to help get more money to serve the older blind.

### Newsline® Update - Bryan Baldwin, Outreach Coordinator

Greetings!

Recently, I was asked to attend the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska state convention where I had a table available for people to learn more about Newsline, as well as answer any questions and do some troubleshooting for clients of Newsline. I also gave a report there in which I informed users that the past year will be no comparison and is not the standard to what I will be doing this following year. I also informed users that KNFB Reader will be integrated into the Newsline application. I have also put up a list of local consumer organizations chapters and contact info such as the NFB of Nebraska chapters and divisions. I was also asked to attend the Vision Resource Coalition Summit at Outlook Nebraska in which there were a number of different organizations that work with the blind, where I gave a quick synopsis of what NFB Newsline is, how to use it, and how to sign up. This seemed like a great summit for everyone to learn about different services available and was very positive. This also led to me coming up with my last plan. I have and will continue to call eye doctor conventions to speak during their sessions about utilizing external resources at the eye doctor's offices, complete with a list of rehabilitation services, talking book services, and most importantly NFB Newsline. I feel that this will further educate the doctors on how to treat not just the eye, but the person behind the eye.

The numbers of new subscribers for July through September was about two new subscribers a month, but I'm looking for that number to rise after my report and table session at convention as well as my summary at the VRC Summit. July saw call times of 10919, a slight drop in August to 10100, but raised back up to 10840 in September. We are seeing more online content numbers raising. July was at 6158, raising up to 6374 in August, and then sky rocketing to 8810 in September. We are seeing this trend of more use coming from total content viewed at 7193 in July, 7386 in August, and jumping to 8801 in September. Another stat that is raising is the use of the Regional number, which started at 46% in July and continued to go up to 52% in September. The amount of web sessions has increased as well. July saw 1226, August at 1187, and reaching 2029 in September. The mobile app has been sitting at around 450 average each month, which I should expect to see go up as I talked with a number of people at the state convention that did not realize there was a free mobile app. The in your pocket was another content usage that went way up in September, running from the 3000's in July and August all the way to 5234 in September.

Even though our new subscription list is low, we seem to have more people using the service as of lately. I am hoping for this to be the continuing trend. I will also be sending out an email within the next few weeks to NCBVI to be passed around to every counselor encouraging them to sign up more people for Newsline. There are a few counselors I am in contact with regularly, but not many of them. I am also dealing with people not getting their

welcome letter, which we tried to get Baltimore to send out, but there seems to be a disconnect. I will be in contact with Scott White to get this resolved, as I have had counselors contacting me about their clients unsure if they have been accepted. I have gone in and changed their status to active and send out their login information. It is also not sending me any notification when new people subscribe. This is another issue I need to address with Scott White.

Thank you for your time, and happy meeting!

11:50 a.m. Client Assistance Program (CAP) Complaints or issues – Jerry Bryan

**Communication re-established between individual and another party:** Initial complaint, client called indicating he was owed money for the vending machine program through the Nebraska Business Enterprise Program (NBE). Client reported he retired and has not received pay-out for merchandise and property. Client is complaining about the length of time it has taken to receive his money and is requesting help to re-establish communication. **Outcome:** Client stated recently he retired from Nebraska Business Enterprise Program and is currently waiting for payment of a coin machine, change in the vending machine along with stocked merchandise. Client reports it had been some time now and has not received payment owed to him. I was able to contact NBE Program Specialist, who indicated he completed working on an inventory list and submitted for payment. Staff also indicated this process usually takes approximately six weeks to complete, however he was able to complete it in a little over thirty days. Payment was made to the client, however; the client was not satisfied with the amount. Client requested NBE to re-calculate the figures again with additional information he was able to provide. Based off this new information, additional payments were made to the client to resolve his discrepancies with payments owed. Client is happy with this new total and feels he has resolved his concerns. Client has no further issues. All issues resolved in individual's favor.

Attended the NCBVI Supervisor Meetings.

### New Business

#### Discuss and set dates and focus topics for next year

The commissioners discussed dates, locations and Focus Topics for the 2019 Commission Board meetings.

Commissioner Hansen moved for the following:

February 2, 2019; Lincoln (and Scottsbluff via video conference)  
Focus Topic: The NBE Program

May 4, 2018; Nebraska City  
Focus Topic: NCECBVI and Executive Director Evaluation

August 3, 2019; Kearney (and Norfolk via video conference)  
Focus Topic: Friends of the Commission

November 2, 2019; Omaha  
Focus Topic: Radio Talking Book

Commissioner Newman seconded the motion.  
All commissioners voted in favor of the motion except Commissioner Bell who voted no.

Commissioner Hansen moved to change the Kearney location to Scottsbluff.  
Commissioner Bell seconded the motion.  
All commissioners voted in favor of the motion.  
Commissioner Rieken noted that for the August Commission meeting she will video conference in from the Norfolk office.

#### Public Comment

Kenda Slavin – Kenda noted that she reads a lot of Radio Talking Book as gets 20 magazines per month. The one news magazine that she gets is Newsweek and they have lost their funding for the audio recordings. Kenda asked if anyone knows why this happened.

Chairperson Bulger suggested that Kenda work with the consumer organization is a member of and as President of that organization; he would help her look into the matter.

Nancy Flearl – Nancy noted that since many of the commissioners have not yet met Jerry Bryan, the new CAP director, they may want to consider having CAP as a future Focus Topic. Another idea for a future Focus Topic is Camp Abilities as Kristal Platt had mentioned she would be happy to talk to NCBVI about Camp Abilities.

Chairperson Bulger thanked Nancy for her comments.

#### Typical Final Announcements

Chairperson Bulger thanked Outlook Nebraska for their hospitality in hosting today's meeting. Chairperson Bulger also thanked the consumers who attended today's meeting.

#### Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 12:40 p.m.

If you have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda of the February 2, 2019 Commission Board meeting, please email it to the NCBVI Commission Board at [ncbvi.commission-board@nebraska.gov](mailto:ncbvi.commission-board@nebraska.gov).

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant  
NCBVI

Mark Bulger, Chairperson  
NCBVI Board of Commissioners

## NCBVI Staff Reports

### Lincoln District Activity Report – Connie Daly

We have started another job class. There are seven attendees. They attended a job fair last Friday along with two center clients. We were able to get some leads on manufacturing jobs and several clients applied for jobs.

We have been involved with Employ LNK. This is a group made up of case managers. They have monthly meetings. Usually two employers present each meeting about the job openings that they have available and they arrange monthly tours of businesses. This concept has been replicated in Omaha and they are starting a similar group in Norfolk. John Schmitt is participating in getting that one off the ground.

The Greater Lincoln Workforce Investment Board has launched an initiative called Next Gen. We have identified the Healthcare industry as the businesses we are starting with. It brings individuals from different healthcare areas to talk about common issues. The agency providers are not driving this process. The Healthcare providers have identified a number of areas to work on together. One is a talent pipeline.

Charli Saltzman attended Pre-Audit certification training and passed her test. The Pre-Audit certification is something that all VRT's have gotten so that they are able to help in the business office.

I continue to host the Monthly VR Conference call. We had a presentation from Pam Berenzki about assessment tools for youth. We also had a conference call regarding the five required Pre-Ets services and activities that we can do with our clients for each required service.

We had time management training. Counselors have been attending a number of webinars. There have been some for low vision evaluations, motivational interviewing, and engaging businesses.

I am on the planning committee for the Project Search job fair to take place in April 2019.

We finished the fiscal year with 26 successful closures for the Lincoln District. We had clients get jobs as a Residential advisor and Substance Abuse Counselor.

### Omaha District Activity Report – Nancy Flearl

Elaine Kavulak got married on August 8 and in September announced that she will be retiring on March 29, 2019. Several exciting things happening in her life.

Kim Schnitzer, one of the VR Counselors in the Omaha Office, graduated in August with her Master's in Social Work. We congratulate her on this accomplishment.

September was a busy time with school districts. Staff have attended Omaha Public Schools (OPS) Special Education Night, OPS town hall with the superintendent. Educational Service Unit 3 (ESU #3) had an outreach for special education teachers and special education directors from across the city to learn about resources for students in transition. This meeting occurred during the day and then in the evening had a presentation for parents and students.

Kelly Coleman and Kim have been attending a Metro Transition Group that meets monthly. There is representatives for special education from each of the school districts in our area. We continue to get referrals from the surrounding school districts for students in transition. We have also had a slight increase in the number of older blind referrals.

This quarter we have continued to work with some of our newer NBE vendors in the Omaha area as they develop a routine for their vending sites.

I attended the NFBN State Convention. We had three clients that were finalist for scholarships. We had two of our transition students present about their experience at the NFB EQ Program this summer.

In September, Kim and Tim each spent time at the Academy of Eye Surgeons and Eye Doctor State Conference held here in Omaha. This was an opportunity to network with physicians and their staff about the importance of early referral. That it is far easier to maintain a job than to finding a new one.

We met with Ronita Bland the new VIST (Visually Impaired Service Team Coordinator) for Blind and Visually Impaired Veterans. She recently moved to Nebraska for this position. She has a degree in Orientation and Mobility. She is anxious to work with us and to learn about vision resources in Nebraska. We have arranged a tour for her of the Nebraska Center for the Blind for October 16.

We attended an event with NFB Omaha Chapter and Outlook Nebraska "Do you Dream in Color" on October 4.

The Omaha Council of the Blind is having their picnic for students in transition and their Families. This has been scheduled for October 19 from 3-6. The students with the Nebraska Center for the Blind will also be attending this event.

On October 19 several staff are being recognized for their years of service with the State of Nebraska. Kelly Coleman for 20 years, Kim Schnitzer for 15 years and Larry Oleson for 10 years.

We worked with Carol Jenkins and Channel 3 (KMTV) to film PSA's highlighting services provided by NCBVI.

We continue to attend EmployOMA and WIN (Working in Nebraska) meetings, meet with employers, touring business. Staff have also continued to develop On-the-Job Trainings and Work Based Learning Experiences.

They are doing some major renovation in our building. They started on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. This is impacting our office, mostly the front lobby, several offices occupied by counselors, our hallway and into the kitchen. We hope that this will be done with in the next few weeks. We have a greater appreciation for all that the Lincoln District, Center and Administration experienced.

#### North Platte District Activity Report – Connie Daly

##### NETWORKING:

Fritz has been attending the Lincoln County Interagency meeting on a monthly basis in North Platte. At the last meeting he found out Lexington also has Inter agency meetings twice a month and has plans to attend.

Deanna regularly attends the Community Connections and the Aging Coalition in Kearney. She also attend the Elder Issues group in Grand Island. I served on the Advisory Board for Senior Services in Kearney. Deanna has done two in-services during the past three months. Deanna attended a Violence Prevention Stakeholders meeting. She attended Husker Harvest Days with a VR client who is looking at farming or farming businesses as a vocation. Deanna was a speaker on a panel at the Housing Conference held in Kearney.

Adrienne worked with the North Central District Health Department on their Vulnerable Populations Panel to discuss how to best serve individuals with visual impairments in a state of emergency. She replied to questions asking how to best serve individuals and where there were pitfalls in the current system. Adrienne attended the Olmstead Plan Stakeholder Input.

Angie conducted two Fall Prevention workshops in conjunction with the hospital's wellness program for seniors. She provided training to Workforce staff on our services. She meets monthly as a core member of the WIOA committee of Western NE. She became a committee member on the ADA regulations committee for the local Midwest Theater.

Cristal continues to attend Community Connections on a monthly basis. She attended a Disability Leadership Training put on by Monroe-Meyer Institute. Cristal attends monthly WIN meetings that are held at VR. She attended the Kearney Service Area Providers meeting. This involved several community agencies brainstorming how to meet employer's needs in the community. Cristal is an active participant in Project Search for Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney locations. She also gave a presentation about blindness to Head start students.

Jan and the Tech Team met with Jeff Bazer from Freedom Scientific to learn about the newest technologies, including the EI Braille note taker. Jan also provided an evaluation of some new software for Central Community College Instructional Technology Specialists.

Diann participates in the Lincoln County Interagency Meeting. She has been collaborating with Agrability and Local Lion's Club for services for several clients.

## TRAINING

Angie attended the SS PASS training held at VR. She completed and became certified in Psychological First Aid. She needs to complete a couple additional online classes and then will be certified as a Mental Health Crisis Team First Responder who can be called on to be deployed anywhere in the state during a state of emergency to provide first response counseling and aid to mentally or physically handicapped individuals.

Adrienne completed the Pre-Auditor training. She attended the Munroe-Meyers Institute's Disability Leadership Training.

The North Platte district also received Time Management training.

## PROJECTS

Deanna is spearheading the effort to get letters of support together for OIB funding. Adrienne has completed the compiling of the PRE-ETS costs that could be re-journaled. She also entered all the older Eforce programs into AWARE for all districts. Adrienne compiled all the Spring Older Blind Reports into an excel sheet for Deanna to use in her report.

## CLIENT OUTCOMES:

The North Platte District had clients become employed as a Social Worker, Community Health Worker, Substitute Teacher and Mental Health Counselor. They had one client complete Center training and one person completed a three-day stay. A Work Based Learning Experience was set up for a client at the Children's Museum in Kearney.

Center Activity Report – Greg DeWall

Currently: 7 Students

1 New Staff Trainee (NBE Supervisor began training 10/29/2018)

5 Three Day Stays (1 from North Carolina)

2 Students had Mini Meals

2 Students had Commencement Meals

Tours: 1 Representative from VIST (with the VA), 3 tours with agency consumers, 3 candidates for State Legislator, 7 Union College Students.

Observations: 7 Union College students observed classes at different times. This included observing Home-Management, shop, and travel. In addition, a Lincoln High School student did a job shadow, with Jeremy in Home-Management.

Volunteer Activities: No volunteer activities this quarter.

Student Requested Activities: September's event was postponed until October. In October, the students attended the NFB of Nebraska convention in Columbus. This included an overnight stay, listening in on general sessions, and attending banquet. Also in October, the students attended a viewing of "Do You Dream in Color." This event was put on by the Lincoln NFB Chapter. Students were also able to attend the Omaha Counsel of the Blind Picnic, where they had a choice of listening to a professional storyteller or learning how to ice-skate.

Guest Speakers: Amber Ward, from Department of Labor, has come monthly. She has discussed interviewing techniques. This included having the students participate in mock interviews, which were recorded. Amber and Center staff viewed the recordings, and provided constructive feedback.

Center Staff: Some Staff continue to work with the Tech Committee and attend these meetings; as well as collaborate with the FuzioN implementation and testing project. The Center's travel instructor, Jeff Altman, has begun attending the Star-Tran monthly meetings. Instructors are regularly working on projects to improve their classes, and participate in webinars to gain knowledge in working with students with multiple disabilities. Cindy, the Center's client services counselor, has been working diligently to get students connected with comparable benefits. This allows students to get better connected with community resources, such as SNAP benefits, as well as help shave costs for NCBVI.

Center Supervisor: After 6 months, he is getting settled into his new position. In October, he attended the NFB of Nebraska State Convention in Columbus. Greg is looking forward to participating in the National Rehabilitation Leadership Institute seminar in December. He is regularly providing support and guidance to Center Staff and students. Greg's short-term goals are to make a great training center even better by adjusting the schedules of students and staff, in efforts to maximize learning for students and efficiency in the center.

Additional Notes: In October, 2 Center students attended a local job fair, hosted at Center for People in Need. In addition, 2 students are looking forward to attending college in January after graduation. Each of these students are using the necessary class time to make necessary arrangements to prepare themselves for the winter quarter.

The Center is filling up. We have 2 students that need one on one teaching/training at this time due to severe multiple disabilities. By the end of November, the Center is projected to have 9 students, including one from North Carolina.

The total number of students attending the Center does not include staff trainees because they do not stay in the Center Apartments. We have 10 Center Apartments and so 10

students can attend the Center regardless of how many staff trainees we have. Nebraska consumers always have priority when attending the Center when it comes to consumers from other states.

### Transition Activity Report – Shane Buresh

Since I last reported to you and just before your last quarterly meeting, we held another successful Project Independence at the end of July and beginning of August. We had 12 youth between ages 8 and 13 in attendance. Our theme was “Superhero in Training”. This theme served as a backdrop for discussion and program planning about why it is important for a blind person to consider adopting alternative techniques or a set of superpowers if you will, to help defeat the villains of fear, self-doubt and low expectations that exist in the world and/or are created within oneself. Beyond the customary sleep shade training; we conducted the seventh annual home chore challenge, had a visit by a blind dental hygienist, made our own catapults, ran our own Energy Drink and Power Snack business, visited the Omaha Children’s Museum, Visited a blind chef, zip lined, learned mobility through a saving the universe scavenger hunt activity, and much more.

In addition, this quarter the NFB Career Mentoring Program continued to gather momentum and focus on growth with monthly calls for both mentors and mentees. As of this writing, there are 11 mentees and 8 mentors enrolled in the program and many matched pairs have begun regular discussions and some have managed to meet face-to-face. Just a crossed town from your meeting in Omaha and on the same weekend, we will be holding a retreat with the mentors and mentees in attendance, along with a number of additional NCEBVI Pre-ETS students who might have otherwise attended a Winnerfest program. Mirroring the partnership in the overall program, the NFB Career Mentoring Retreat is serving as a Winnerfest and a triannual mentoring program event in one package. Students will be working on projects, getting to know their mentors better, hearing from employed blind persons an much more, and I will have more to report on this during my next offering.

Collaboration and outreach have also continued during this quarter as well. Myself and other commission staff have attended several transition events with various education service units and we are continuing to further are relationship building and collaboration with NCECBVI. Our staff from the Lincoln District are beginning to conduct regular trainings in the dorms and classrooms and we have been invited to present at parent teacher conferences and during a parent weekend focusing on benefits planning. If chosen, Leslie Wagner, transition specialist from NCECBVI, and I will be collaborating, for a presentation during the transition statewide conference in February. During the next quarter NCECBVI is also planning on making a trip to spend a day in the Center with several of their Pre-ETS aged students. My next report will have updates on many of these future events which should have happened by then. Certainly, last but not least, supervisors, Carol Jenkins and myself along with several administrative staff from NCECBVI are engaging in a series of meetings this academic year to further the efforts begun last spring. One of these did occur in September, and these meetings are proving fruitful as several of the above listed

opportunities are a result of this meeting, by virtue of being able to share calendars and partner within one another's event offerings.

I will conclude this quarterly report by saying that you can see that there are many moving parts and projects in play, even if we have transitioned away from the busy summer time schedule. Until next quarter when you hear from me again, know that we are hard at work showing the blind students in Nebraska that their future can be bright.

## Technology Program Activity Report – Nancy Burdine

### Printers

Cancelled the Service Maintenance Agreement on the Lexmark printer in the reception area in the Lincoln office. The monthly fee covered service calls and toner replacements, extra charges were incurred when prints went over a set amount for black and white or color prints. I will provide the support and we will order toner when necessary.

Replaced printer on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Lincoln office. New printer is the same as the ones placed in Omaha and Norfolk offices. It will scan accessible pdf's. It also meets the other requirements requested, volume, speed, faxing, etc.

### JAWS and Fusion License renewals

- Cut JAWS licenses from 45 to 25 for a savings of \$3,072 a year.
- Cut Fusion licenses from 15 to 10 for a savings of \$2,104 a year.

### Active Directory / Network

Continue to work on cleaning up our network presence.

- Deleting users and workstations that are no longer here.
- Cleaning up user groups and permissions.

### Surplus

- Rebuilding and repurposing computers than can be salvaged.
- Scrubbing or removing HD's on computers that will be surplus.

### Cellular Phone Security

- Working with small groups to get all NCBVI Cell phones compliant with OCIO's security.
- NCBVI has a separate group that allows third party apps to access email on the phone in order for accessibility options to work.

## Nebraska Business Enterprise Activity Report – Carol Jenkins

### **Legislation Update**

Carlos Servan, NCBVI Executive Director, has been meeting with senators and working diligently to have a senator introduce an NBE bill to amend the wording to mirror the Federal Randolph Sheppard bill. Senator Wishart has agreed to do this. Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, will be providing more information regarding public hearings for licensees to attend, letters of support needed for the bill, and any licensee assistance necessary to promote the bill.

### **Unassigned Funds Update**

NCBVI sent out a Memorandum in August of 2018 explaining the error that occurred with the unassigned funds for the NBE Retirement Program. This error will be corrected with the completion of the quarter, which ended September 30, 2018. Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, sought guidance on unassigned funds from Terry Smith at the national level. His interpretation of the Randolph Sheppard Act, with RSA approval, regarding unassigned funds is as follows:

“I take the position that you have to be an active vendor and RSA supports that position. 34 C.F.R. 395.8(c) refers to blind vendors being eligible. It does not say blind licensee. Although the regs do not define blind vendor, it does define blind licensee. A licensee is licensed to operate a facility but not necessarily operating one. It only stands to reason that a blind vendor is actually operating a facility. If you look up the definition of a vendor, it says a person offering something for sale. If you are not in a facility, you cannot sell and, therefore, are not a vendor. “

The Blind Licensee Committee can vote on what unassigned funds can be used for, but the SLA (NCBVI) can determine the eligibility requirements for unassigned funds. The Blind Licensee Committee cannot vote on anything the regulations do not allow. NCBVI has made the following eligibility requirements for unassigned funds to start on October 1, 2018 as follows: A licensee must be an active vendor and that same licensee must be paying into their NBE Retirement Program.

### **Vending Sites Update**

#### **Nebraska State Building Division**

In order to continue to grow the NBE Program, Carlos Servan, NCBVI Executive Director and Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director recently met with the Nebraska State Building Division to continue negotiations for the Nebraska State Building Division contract. The contract will include the following locations: the Nebraska State Capitol, the Lincoln State Office Building, the Omaha State Office Building, the Lincoln Executive Building, the Lincoln 501 (OCIO) Building, Lincoln White Hall, Lincoln Health and Human Services, Lincoln TSB, and Lincoln State Labs. Once the contract has been agreed upon and signed by all parties, Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, will set up a training for relevant NCBVI staff, NBE Staff, and licensees who will be responsible for carrying out the contract.

The transition from First Choice Vending (LinPepCo) to the NBE Program began on July 2, 2018 and was completed by August 31, 2018. NCBVI has an agreement with Pepsi and Coke, which will allow the licensees to use the machines as long as product is ordered directly from Pepsi or Coke. This agreement is saving \$84,000 in machine purchases for

the NBE Program. Keurig's have been delivered to NCBVI for some of these locations, and Don Ward, NBE staff, will work with the licensees to get the Keurig's up and operational.

The total thus far for purchases for the Nebraska State Building Division contract were \$122,000 less than originally planned. However, there may be more purchases necessary depending upon the Nebraska State Building Division contract negotiations for such things as cashless options.

#### New Grand Island Location

NCBVI has sub-contracted for the new vending location in Grand Island at the USDA Agriculture and Immigration building due to no bids from current licensees. NCBVI purchased two new beverage and one used snack machine for this additional location. This is yet another example of how NCBVI is working to grow the NBE program.

#### Nebraska State Capitol

Antonio Aguilar has contracted with Hy-Vee Catering to offer lunch services at the State Capitol while the Nebraska State Capitol goes through the 10-year HVAC renovation project. The renovation project, which covers the area of the cafeteria, is anticipated to last for approximately 18 months until November of 2019 when the Nebraska State Capitol cafeteria will be reopened for business.

#### Other Potential Vending Site Expansions

NCBVI continues to work and grow the NBE Program. NCBVI is continuously working with Stratcom to obtain the Offutt site. The Offutt site was posted for one month for all licensees to submit a letter of intent and business plan. Carlos Servan, NCBVI Executive Director, only received one letter of intent and one business plan from a licensee for the posted Offutt site. Miguel Rocha was awarded the site depending on the outcome from the Offutt RFP.

#### Licensees Update

Dan Knuter retired from the NBE program in July 2018. Shanon Clark, a new operator, has taken over operation of the vending machines in the North Platte area, the western Nebraska I80 rest areas, and the Sidney area.

Tom Scheibler also retired from the NBE Program in August of 2018. Atty Svenson expanded her vending sites and took over the operation of the Douglas County Civic Center and Federal Court House in Omaha.

Carlos Servan, NCBVI Executive Director presented Tom Scheibler with a Certificate of Appreciation for his years of service in the NBE program at the Blind Licensee Committee meeting held on September 22, 2018. NCBVI mailed and emailed Dan Knuter's Certificate of Appreciation along with an appreciation letter due to Dan's inability to attend the Blind Licensee Committee meeting.

#### Staff Update

NBE Manager Interviews were held on September 24-25, 2018. Due to two highly qualified candidates, NBE Manager second interviews took place on October 9, 2018. Sarah Martin

was hired as the new NBE Manager. Sarah will begin her sleep shade training at the Nebraska Center for the blind on October 29, 2018. Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, will continue to supervise the NBE Program in the interim.

Don Ward, NBE staff, has achieved 20 years of service with NCBVI and the NBE Program. The 20 years of service Employee Recognition ceremony will be October 18, 2018 at the Nebraska State Capitol.

### **Vending Site Complaints**

The categories of complaints that have come in to Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, this quarter have been as follows: Price inconsistencies, Backward facing products, Selling products not eligible for resale, Not having name and contact information visible and posted on each machine, Cleanliness of vending areas, Poor customer service, and Machines being less than 50% full. Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director discussed these complaints at the Blind Licensee Committee meeting on September 22, 2018 as well as gave a reminder that NCBVI has all of the contracts with the various owners of facilities, and licensees are representing themselves, other licensees, other blind consumers, and NCBVI statewide.

### **Additional Notes**

#### **Douglas County Civic Center**

Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, completed contract negotiations with the Douglas County Civic Center in October 2018, which updated a 30-year old contract.

#### **Canteloupe**

NCBVI has made the decision to discontinue the acquisition of Canteloupe. However, if a licensee is interested in acquiring Canteloupe, please contact Don Ward, NBE staff, and Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, to begin discussions.

#### **Forsyth Insurance**

Carol Jenkins, Deputy Director, is working with Forsyth Insurance to try to obtain a group insurance policy for the NBE active vendors. The goal is to try to obtain a group policy that can provide the necessary coverage but at the same time have each NBE active vendor pay less money for coverage.

#### **Looking Ahead**

Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director, attended the Region VII Midwest Randolph Sheppard Training in Des Moines, IA on September 19-21, 2018. At this training, attendees were able to tour the USI manufacturing facility to observe how vending machines are made. During this visit, attendees were able to work with fully ADA compliant USI machines, which included voice output and braille keypads along with built-in cashless management software. National Vending presented at this training on their full-service program, leasing of vending machines, and their gap in service option. USI and National Vending met with Carlos Servan, NCBVI Executive Director, Kathy Carroll, NCBVI Business Manager, and Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director to explore options for growing and expanding the NBE program. Another highlight from the Region VII Midwest Randolph

Sheppard Training was the presentation on Micro-Markets, and how Micro-Markets are becoming the trend for the future when looking at the Millennial and Generation Z populations. Carol Jenkins, NCBVI Deputy Director is considering this for a training topic for next year for the NBE Program.

#### Business Office Activity Report – Kat Carroll

This past quarter, I have worked on the following projects:

- Biennial Budget Request
- 2018/19 Budget update
- Approval Routes for E1
- Testing for FusioN
- Documentation as requested for conversion from E1 to FusioN
- Attended the RSA Fiscal Conference in Bethesda, MD
- Attended the CSAVR Regional Meeting in Kansas City, MO
- Attended the August board meeting in North Platte
- Traveled to Norfolk and Omaha for Coding training with the VRTs
- State Fiscal Year End
- Federal Fiscal Year End

Dave Robinson -

Carrie DeFreece's last day with the agency was July 31, 2018.

Bill Brown retired August 7, 2018.

The position that Carrie DeFreece occupied was advertised. Thirty-Eight applications were received and the agency hired Sarah Martin. Sarah's first day with the agency will be October 29, 2018.

Nancy Flearl sent out an agency-wide e-mail, informing the staff that Elaine Kavulak announced that she will retire on March 29, 2019.

Kathy Stephens –

The Year-End fixed assets inventory was completed and sent to Administrative Services before the August 31, 2018 deadline. State agencies have been asked by the OCIO to do a fixed asset cleanup. This will aid in the transfer of data from E1 to FuzioN. This involved adding the cities, counties and street name where fixed assets are located.

Worked with Office Innovations to move several desks around in the Lincoln office.

Bill Brown's retirement party took place on August 7.

I completed registrations and hotel reservations for some clients and staff attending the NFBN convention in Columbus, Nebraska and several other trainings/conferences.

The Public Hearing on the NCBVI amended Rules and Regulations was held on September 13, 2018.

SSA was here on August 15 to conduct an on-site compliance review. The purpose of the review was to verify that appropriate security safeguards remain in place to protect the confidentiality of information supplied by SSA.