

NEBRASKA COMMISSION FOR THE
BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED
PUBLIC MEETING
Lincoln, NE
Saturday, November 19, 2005

Approved Minutes

Call to Order and Introductions: Barbara Loos, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order at 9:05 AM, welcomed everyone and read through the agenda.

Commissioners Present: Barbara Loos, Lincoln; Dorothy Westin-Yockey, South Sioux City; Bill Orester, Lincoln; Nancy Oltman, Hastings; Bob Burns, Omaha.

Commission Staff in Attendance from Lincoln: Dr. Pearl Van Zandt, Executive Director; Val Peery, Administrative Assistant; Bob Deaton, Deputy Director of Independent Living; Carlos Serván, Deputy Director of Voc Rehab; Fatos Floyd, Nebraska Center for the Blind Supervisor; Connie Daly, Lincoln District Supervisor; Bob Shankland, Orientation Counselor; Amy Buresh, Voc Rehab Counselor; and Shane Buresh, Orientation Counselor.

Members of the Public Present: Fritz Yockey, South Sioux City; Brad Loos, Lincoln; Hubert Paulson, Lincoln; Peggy Zierenberg, Lincoln; Ryan Osentowski, Lincoln; Wes Majerus, Lincoln; Kathy Brown-Hollins, Omaha; Jamie Forbis, Lincoln; and the following students of the Kids Home Teaching Group: Brice Mellen, Jessica Wymore, Matthew Pettit, his interpreter Cindy Skiles, and Breann McCoy.

Announcement Concerning Public Comments and Tapes of Meetings, Lunch Arrangements and Other Logistics: Loos called everyone's attention to the times noted on the agenda for Public Comment. Loos stated that youth from the Lincoln Home Teaching Group would be providing lunch and that we would adhere to timeframes of agenda items as closely as possible.

Minutes of the August 13, 2005 Meeting: Orestor moved minutes be adopted and approved. Oltman seconded to approve the August 13, 2005 minutes. The vote was unanimous. Loos stated that minutes should be moved from draft to approved status.

Focus Topic - Unserved and Underserved Populations: Dr. Pearl Van Zandt, NCBVI: Van Zandt stated that she appreciated the statistics and report sent by Bob Deaton and other information provided by Dottie Wilmott and Fatos Floyd. Van Zandt stated that there are gaps in serving all who need services, due to limited resources, but staff are always attentive to everyone's needs and try to ensure that they do not leave anyone out. Still, some blind people in Nebraska remain unserved or underserved. Van Zandt discussed several targeted groups, i.e., Native American and other minority races, age, geographical, and people with multi-disabilities. She stated that not all people approach the Commission, so staff attempt to reach out to groups who do not feel comfortable either coming to the Commission or initiating contact. Van Zandt stated that she and many staff members make themselves available by going to reservations, serving on committees and panels, familiarizing themselves with other languages and modes of communication, forming partnerships with other service providers, inviting speakers from various entities to educate staff both individually and in meetings, etc.

Public Comment: Discussion continued concerning outreach opportunities for NCBVI and the importance of tours of the Nebraska Center for the Blind was emphasized.

Report from the Chairman:

Loos reported that since the last meeting she attended and gave a report at the NFB State Convention which was held September 30 - October 2, 2005. She stated that she attended the NFBN Omaha Chapter's White Cane Banquet on November 5, 2005. Loos attended the mentoring kickoff. Loos reported that Burns, Oltman, and she have all committed to being mentors. Loos stated that she was unable to attend the Nebraska Center for the Blind Alumni Banquet on October 22, 2005, due to her mother-in-law's funeral. She and Brad appreciated everyone's notes and other expressions of sympathy. She stated that she hopes the OCAA fundraiser goes well.

Loos congratulated Van Zandt on her AFB board position. She also thanked Van Zandt for sending her 2006 goals.

Loos stated that the Board was pleased with the complimentary messages regarding Jan Brandt, Connie Daly and Amy Buresh and enjoyed receiving anniversary letters regarding Candy Laursen, Bill Brown, Jan Brandt, DeAnn Johnson, Shawn Djernes, Don Ward, Nancy Flearl, Terry Harris, Fatos Floyd and Amy Buresh.

Loos stated that the Board is pleased that Governor Heinemann and Senator Heideman's staff toured the Center. She stated that she hopes Senator Price will also tour the Center soon.

Loos stated that she was pleased to know people from the Commission and the Center are always reaching out to help others. She thanked Kathy Brown-Hollins and others who worked to get contributions for the hurricane flood relief effort.

Loos reported that she was sorry Jane Lansaw and Sara Schmidt have gone, but hope they like their new positions.

Loos stated that she continues to be concerned about the Rehab and the Randolph-Sheppard situations. She wrote to George Kosovich, our new RSA liaison, and is awaiting a reply. She thought the letters regarding Randolph-Sheppard from Randy Swanson and Van Zandt were on target and hopes that things will turn around.

Public Comment: No additional comments were made.

Break: The Board took a 10-minute break and reconvened at 10:30 AM.

Report from the Executive Director:

Van Zandt reported having email problems and said that if she does not reply to a message, to please call her.

Van Zandt reported that, during the fiscal year 2005, we served 840 Voc Rehab clients, with 82 successful closures. We served 844 Independent Living clients, with 262 successful closures. This is a total of 1,684 clients served. Van Zandt reported that the Center has served 133 full-time clients since tracking began in 1996. She reported that 89.7% are employed, 20% are students, and was very proud to report that only 8.25 % are not working.

Van Zandt reported that Betty Buresh was selected as the Governor's Employee of the Year and that Bill Brown (who was employed with Voc Rehab prior to coming to the Commission) celebrated 30 years of employment with the State. Van Zandt stated that Jeff Altman, Mary Davis, and Fatos Floyd all celebrated their 10-year anniversary with the State. She stated that the entire Center went to the awards ceremony at the Capitol. She mentioned also how much she appreciates all of their good work. Van Zandt reported that Sara Schmidt's position has been filled. Kathy Brown-Hollins will be the new Voc Rehab Counselor in Omaha. She will complete her Center training on November 23, 2005, and will start employment on November 28, 2005. Van Zandt stated how excited and pleased she is to have Kathy at the Commission.

Van Zandt reported that effective Nov 2, 2005, DeAnn Johnson's position in Omaha was upgraded from Staff Assistant to Voc Rehab Technician.

Van Zandt reported that Jane Lansaw's last day was September 14, 2005; Susan Roe and Janet Graham - September 16, 2005; Sara Schmidt - September 23, 2005; Linda Cain and Karen Mosier - September 30, 2005.

Roe, Graham and Mosier are still working for the State of Nebraska and Cain plans to move back to Colorado. Van Zandt also reported that Jeff Altman was elected to the National Blind Professionals Certification Board.

Van Zandt reported that the Committee of Blind Vendors has drafted new By-laws to bring them up to date with new regulations. They will be voted on at their next meeting which will be held on December 2, 2005, in Omaha. Van Zandt asked the Board and they reported that they had not received either the draft By-laws or the Public Notice of the meeting. Van Zandt stated that she would send the draft By-laws and Public Notice this time and in the future Peery would email such information to the Board.

The Immigration Services will be opening new buildings in Omaha and Lincoln. Van Zandt reported that the Lincoln building currently only has a few security guards working. They want vending machines operating as of December 2, 2005. By January 15, 2006, they will have 500-600 employees. She stated that a formal letter would be sent to all current vendors regarding bidding on the new facility and the process will continue from there. She will ask Terry Harris to send a copy to the Board.

Van Zandt reported that she was not able to attend the Alumni Association Banquet and was sorry to have missed it, but she was traveling that day. She heard that Mary Davis gave an excellent speech. The Alumni Association is selling logo shirts as a fundraiser to support ongoing activities of the Center. Dr. Nyman, who also was unable to attend the banquet, was surprised yesterday when he was asked to attend a meeting at the Center and was, instead, presented with an award for his work in starting the Center. This event was coordinated by the Alumni Association and the Center.

Van Zandt reported that the Mentoring Project is in full operation. Matches have been made, mentors and mentees have received their training and have had their first activity together.

Van Zandt stated that the In-Service Training Grant for the next five years will be the basic amount of approximately \$21,000 for each year and that a portion of the money will be spent on State Staff meetings, utilizing local talent while still maintaining quality. Staff will also receive training elsewhere, but not to the same extent as in the last five years. Van Zandt reported that she has begun to be very conservative in where she goes. Because of the lack of funds, she did not go to the fall conference in San Diego. She stated that she is still on the Executive Committee and plans to attend the retreat in Kansas City next month. She will make a decision about attending the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB) spring meeting, in Washington, D.C., when the funding situation is more clear

Van Zandt reported that the one-day Management Retreat at the State Office Building was an excellent meeting. Its focus was our mission statement. Deaton and Serván have created questions for a survey for staff connectedness and development. They will work with Van Zandt and supervisors to find the best way to proceed with the project.

Van Zandt reported that she had the honor of reading the White Cane Proclamation from the Governor's October 12, 2005, ceremony at the White Cane Banquet in Omaha.

Van Zandt stated that she attended the Governor's Workforce Conference in Omaha. We had a booth there staffed by Connie Daly and Nancy Flearl.

Van Zandt reported that she received a plaque and letter from the Helen Keller National Center. We have completed the five-year partnership grant program. Although the funding from HKNC has ended, they continue to work with us as a resource. Van Zandt described the plaque and stated that she plans to share it with each office. Ultimately, it will reside in the Omaha office because this is where the largest population of deaf-blind people live.

Public Comment: No additional comments were made.

Old Business:

Budget Update: Van Zandt reported that she received a call from Senator Combs' office asking the amount of State dollars spent on serving the blind. She stated that this presented an opportunity to discuss matters beyond amounts of money and to invite further interaction.

Van Zandt reported that the Appropriations Committee and the Governor allotted an additional \$80,000 above the earlier amount approved, but it was still below the level of our request. The Commission has submitted a Deficit Budget Request seeking to bring our funding from the State to the level we need to adequately provide services. The request won't be voted on until the Unicameral is in session.

Van Zandt reported that staff have been doing a good job and being conscientious regarding expenditures and that we have been keeping within the projected budget. She stated that we don't want to hold back services because of limited funding and that staff are working hard to ensure that clients have what they need for their individualized plans.

Website Update: Van Zandt stated that she has visited with Jirak regarding the changes to make the website user friendly. She has checked with supervisors and Connie Carlow has agreed to check each link on the entire website to make sure all of them reflect the latest changes. Jirak and Djernes are in the process of switching from a Word format to Dream Weaver. She reported that it has been frustrating for Jirak, but he is committed to getting it right and he continues to do a good job. It is their intent to make the site visually attractive without compromising the ability to get information using speech. Van Zandt reported that Jirak has also been working with logos, as every page must be "branded" with a logo because of a new legally required mandate. We have chosen a simple one that will be at the top of every page. It just says "State of Nebraska" with no graphics.

There was discussion of information concerning Center student reports, initiated by Loos's comment that, although she had received notice on the listserv that a specific student's article was on the site, she hadn't received it from Floyd and couldn't find it on the site. Since no one on the Board had recently received Center reports, Floyd agreed to send articles, evaluations, and community project reports again. Loos agreed to check dates of last receiving them. It was recommended that Jirak send notices to Commissioners whenever he posts items. The materials list submitted by the chairman also serves as a check and balance for what is being received by the Board. It was also recommended that the Appropriations Committee be made aware that all the hours and dedication of our Webmaster are volunteered and that we are not using state funds as other agencies do.

Status of Rehab Update: Loos reported that she hasn't heard when George Kosovich (the RSA state representative for Nebraska) will be coming to Nebraska, but has written to him. Van Zandt stated that he has communicated with her regarding the cooperative agreements from the colleges and university. He hadn't received our agreements. Van Zandt has now provided them to him.

Loos stated that she has also received an abstract and letters from the Department of Education and from Peter Davis, the President and CEO of Development Associates, Inc., a management and governmental consultant in Virginia. Van Zandt reported that she had received the same information, but nothing electronically. Van Zandt stated she would send letters to both the Development Associates and RSA to request copies be sent electronically and asked Loos to also send electronic letters on behalf of the Board and to copy her. Van Zandt stated that she attended the conference on Monitoring of State Agencies and Operations of Rehab by RSA, but hasn't heard anything from RSA except for an electronic survey.

Friends of the Commission Update: Van Zandt reported that she was unable to attend the last meeting, but stated that they passed their new by-laws. Loos reported that she had not received them. Others on the Board concurred. Van Zandt will check at the Friends meeting, to be held on Monday, November 21, and see that the information is forwarded. Van Zandt reported that Deaton has been working with Friends to develop a grant to be submitted to the Ethel Abbott Foundation for funding to help support the WAGES program next summer. Since they are still waiting to receive some needed documentation, there is concern about meeting the deadline for the grant. Van Zandt stated that a proposal for money to purchase gift certificates and small items like pens or t-shirts to provide to employers or people in the commission who help build relationships was sent to Friends and she plans to discuss this idea at the Monday meeting. Van Zandt also stated that in September she ordered the cassette version of People of Vision from ACB, which will be paid for out of Friends funds, but has not yet received it.

NIS Update (potential job opportunity): Van Zandt stated that she and Majerus have been concerned about losing the expertise he provides to the Commission when he graduates. The good news is that the State of Nebraska will be creating a full-time position regarding accessibility. The State has informed Majerus that, until the permanent position is finalized, he can continue to work with the State after he graduates.

Van Zandt spoke with Brenda Decker, Chief Information Officer of the State, and was informed that they plan to utilize Majerus not just for accessibility issues with NIS, but also to work as support to all state agencies. Decker also mentioned to Van Zandt that the task force on regulations that they both were on needs to meet to discuss laws and regulations.

Newsline® Update: Osentowski reported that NFB-Newsline currently has 1,026 subscribers in Nebraska. He stated that the Grand Island Independent is in the final stages of coming on board and would be joining Newsline some time this coming week. The World Herald is renewing its contract. Newsline® is now available in either English or Spanish. Osentowski explained a few new features of the system and encouraged people to apply. Burns suggested that the application form be placed on the website.

Status of Taped Public Meeting Educational Materials: Loos stated that she still has the tapes. Van Zandt suggested that the next time Loos comes to the Commission, she bring them with her and give them to Peery. The Board discussed future use of the tapes and decided, upon Van Zandt's suggestion, that they be listed as a resource for new Commissioners, but not be made part of the packet's required reading.

New Commissioners' Packet Update: Van Zandt stated that she is making a list of information for the packet. Physical packets will be created upon appointment of new Commissioners, based on their format preferences. Since the web site is an important part of a new Commissioner's learning, she has asked Carlow to check out all the links to see that they are up-to-date. Anyone interested in applying must send an application and a letter to the Governor's office expressing an interest in being a commissioner. She stated that she had applications with her or that the application could be downloaded from the governor's website.

Lunch break: The students who provided lunch were introduced. The Board then took a break for lunch at 12:40 pm and reconvened at 1:20 PM.

Status of Braille on Vending Machines: Van Zandt reported that she had sent letters to different national vending groups about the issue. She had received a report from Dave Hunt who was unable to attend today's meeting because of his health, but that he would be available at home if the Board wanted to call him with questions. Burns discussed an idea he had and stated that he would contact and share his thoughts with Mr. Hunt. Loos stated that everyone needed to continue thinking of new ideas. She stated that she would not be able to attend the Committee of Blind Vendors meeting on December 2, 2005, and asked Burns if he could attend, since it would be in Omaha. Burns stated that he would make a concerted effort to attend the meeting and would also begin working on a Board response to Mr. Hunt's letter. Van Zandt stated that Terry Smith, Director of the Agency for the Blind in Tennessee, is the committee chair for the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind and that he would keep this issue on their agenda and would notify her of any progress. She stated that, if there is progress, it would probably be most effective on a national level. Burns stated that he thought every pop machine should be Brailled. Van Zandt stated that each vendor has been given a Braille embosser and believes they are being used.

Public Comment: Comments continued concerning vending machines. Several of the students who had provided lunch had creative suggestions.

New Business:

Status of Randolph-Sheppard: Van Zandt reported that the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind has called a meeting on December 1 st in Washington to strategize on how to work together to keep the Randolph-Sheppard program strong. Van Zandt encouraged people to write to the members of Congress to express their views concerning the Randolph-Sheppard program.

Focus Topic for Next Two Meetings: February's topic is new staff training. After some discussion, it was decided that May's topic will be Counselor/VR client relationship and how it works.”

Public Comment: No additional comments were made.

Announcement of Date and Location of February 2006 meeting: Loos stated that the meeting is to be held in Omaha, February 4, 2006. Burns will check on the Hattie B. Monroe Building as a possible meeting location and report back.

Loos stated that she did not know when the Governor would make appointments for Board positions being completed at the end of this calendar year. Westin-Yockey's appointment expires the end of December and cannot be renewed. She thanked her for serving on the Board. Westin-Yockey stated that she learned a great deal about State Government and the Commission and thanked her husband for his support, and the Governor for appointing her. Van Zandt thanked Westin-Yockey for her years of service as a Commissioner and wished her well.

Loos and other Commissioners added their appreciation and Loos announced that she had brought a cake from the Board with flowers and the inscription "Thank You Dorothy" to be served after the meeting as a token of celebration for her service.

Adjourn: Orestor moved that the meeting be adjourned. Oltman seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Val Peery, Administrative Assistant

Barbara Loos, Chairman

NCBVI Board of Commissioners

Activities Promoting Outreach to Unserved and Underserved Populations

Report Submitted to the

Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Board of Commissioners

November 19, 2005

The phrase “unserved and underserved populations” as used in this report refers to consumers representing groups that have traditionally had limited access to services. This may include consumers living in remote rural areas of the state, those with significant secondary disabilities, and those aged 55 and older as well as consumers of diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds.

Over the years, supported employment services have gradually expanded to serve more consumers with significant secondary disabilities. This is especially true for consumers with diabetes, deaf-blindness, and developmental disabilities.

A part-time alternative diabetic skills counseling position was created in 2000. This has significantly increased the level of expertise and quality of services available to consumers with diabetes not elsewhere available in the state. Mary Davis, the Alternative Diabetic Skills Counselor is frequently consulted by other staff members and has made presentations demonstrating the alternative skills for managing diabetes at the national, state, and local levels.

The grant from the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) supporting the Nebraska Individuals with Deaf-Blindness Project, begun in October 2000, made it possible to employ a full-time Deaf-Blind Services Coordinator and expand services to a population that traditionally “falls through the cracks.” The grant expired in September but the activities initiated by the project will continue with Cheryl Poff as Deaf-Blind Services Coordinator.

Cheryl Poff concluded over a year of training in sign language communication with the Lincoln district staff earlier this year. She is a statewide consultant regarding best practices in the delivery of services to consumers with deaf-blindness and the appropriateness of adaptive technology used by deaf-blind consumers.

There are presently 239 deaf-blind Nebraskans registered with HKNC’s national registry. These statistics may prove useful for the purpose of raising funds for the project in the future.

Two deaf-blind consumers participated in training at the HKNC in Sands Point, New York this year.

Consumers with developmental disabilities were traditionally found ineligible for rehabilitation services because the disabling condition was regarded as “too severe” for there to be a reasonable expectation that services will result in a positive outcome. That began to change in the 1980s with the expansion of the Rehabilitation Act to include funding for supported employment (SE) services. Often SE services will involve a partnership with the Developmental Disabilities System and SE service providers. This has meant that counselors have had to learn new strategies to work effectively with a different population with unique service needs.

This was awkward at first, but by now, every office has experience working with supported employment cases, and counselors are more comfortable serving this population.

The Nebraska Individuals who are Blind Project was created in response to recognition on the national level that consumers aged 55 and over with significant vision loss represented a large segment of the population not traditionally served by state rehabilitation agencies. There is no need to go into further detail regarding services to the older blind population at this time since this was extensively reviewed by the Board of Commissioners last spring.

Carlos Servan, Deputy Director of Vocational Rehabilitation Services, serves on the Lincoln-Lancaster Multi-cultural Advisory Committee and also on the HHS Diversity Partnership. On both committees Mr. Servan is able to network with people from the Indian Center, Native American Nations, African American, Asians, Latin Americans, African, etc. In addition, Mr. Servan works with other disability groups and organizations thereby enhancing our knowledge and sensitivity to multi-disabilities. Mr. Servan has also provided assistance with cases involving consumers of Hispanic background with limited skills in English.

On different occasions, we have had presentations on diversity at annual state staff meetings. Individual staff members have also attended workshops focused on issues relevant to serving specific minorities including African Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Native Americans.

Swahili, Arabic, French, Sign Language and Spanish speaking interpreters have been employed in the past year to facilitate communication with consumers with limited skills in English. Interpreters are hired even if the consumer's English is passable to ensure satisfactory comprehension and provision of quality counseling.

When consumers with significant secondary disabilities and limited language skills come to the Nebraska Center for the Blind, we do the best to accommodate them first by using comparable benefits and then those resources available to the Commission. Partnerships with other relevant agencies are also developed to help build our expertise and resources.

The following agencies and organizations have been contacted during the course of delivering services to people of diverse backgrounds:

Developmental Disabilities Services

African Community Center

Hispanic Center

Islamic Resource Bureau

People's City Mission

Lincoln Action Program

Goodwill Industries

Indian Center

Martin Luther Homes

Mosaic

Community Alternatives

Area Agencies on Aging

These are only a few agencies and organizations contacted by the Commission on behalf of consumers with diverse backgrounds.

The Lincoln district has ongoing contact with the Lincoln Action Program and the City Mission as we serve homeless and low-income individuals.

One counselor in the Lincoln district attends the Coordinated Funding meeting that reviews more difficult cases of a number of service providers to discuss which agencies can best provide needed services.

The phrase "unserved and underserved," as used in the Rehabilitation Act, includes geographical areas that may not have ready access to many services because of remoteness. The strategic location of the six offices operated by the Commission ensures statewideness in our service delivery.

Bob Deaton, Deputy Director of Independent Living Services, represents the Commission on the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC). It is the mission of the SILC to promote the philosophy of independent living in "unserved and underserved" parts of the state.

Staff members working for the Commission include 2 staff with hearing loss, 15 blind people, 5 people with diabetes, 1 African American, 5 Hispanic Americans, 1 Turk, and 1 Palestinian. This permits us to build trust with the clients we work with and expand our knowledge of diversity.

Racial Diversity Among Consumers Served by the Commission

Submitted to the

Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Board of Commissioners

November 19, 2005

Non-white consumers have traditionally been identified with unserved and underserved populations. Before considering statistics reflecting racial diversity among consumers served by the Commission, it is helpful to look at statistics reflecting racial diversity in the overall population of the state.

The racial distribution of the general population of Nebraska, based on the 2000 U.S. Census, is as follows:

White: 89.6%

Hispanic/Latino: 4.2%

African American: 4.0%

Asian: 1.3%

Native American/Alaskan Native: 0.9%

Demographics reflecting racial diversity among consumers receiving VR services in all statuses in fiscal year 2005 are as follows:

White: 634 85.9%

Hispanic/Latino: 29 3.9%

African American: 48 6.5%

Asian: 4 .5%

Native American/Alaskan Native: 21 2.8%

Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander: 2 .3%

Total: 738

Note: The total does not include 133 cases for which race was not reported. For the most part, these were cases closed from referral status. Many of these referrals came from the Low Vision Clinic in Omaha.

Note: More than one category was indicated for race in a number of cases. The distribution of cases with multiple backgrounds are as follows:

White-Hispanic: 23

White-African American: 2

White-African American-Hispanic: 2

White-Native American: 6

Demographics reflecting racial diversity among consumers aged 55 and older receiving independent living services in all statuses in fiscal year 2005 are as follows:

White: 379 92.2%

Hispanic/Latino: 12 2.9%

African American: 16 3.8%

Asian: 0 0%

Native American/Alaskan Native: 3 .7%

Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander: 1 .2%

Total: 411

Demographics reflecting racial diversity among consumers aged 55 and older receiving independent living services in all statuses in fiscal year 2005 are as follows:

White: 108 87.1%

Hispanic/Latino: 6 4.8%

African American: 6 4.8%

Asian: 1 0.8%

Native American/Alaskan Native: 2 1.6%

Hawaiian Native/Pacific Islander: 1 0.8%

Total: 124

Fatos Floyd reported the following statistics representing consumers served in the Nebraska Center for the Blind:

A total of 158 consumers were served by the Center since 1996.

African American 8 5 percent

Native American 5 3 percent

Asian 0 0 percent

Hispanic 6 3.7 percent

Diabetic 39 25 percent

Mental illness diagnosed 12 7.5 percent

Deaf and hard of hearing 26 16.5 percent

Learning disability diagnosed 15 9.5 percent

It is important to remember that rates of incidence for conditions such as diabetes, glaucoma, and cataracts are often significantly higher for consumers of non-white backgrounds.

Given the relative lack of racial diversity in Nebraska, special outreach efforts must be made to identify and serve consumers representing traditionally unserved and underserved populations.

Webmaster Report

Web Server Statistics for Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

August 1-30, 2005

(Figures in parentheses refer to the 7-day period ending 01-Sep-2005 00:06).

Successful requests: 10,357 (1,970)

Average successful requests per day: 334 (281)

Successful requests for pages: 10,330 (1,969)

Average successful requests for pages per day: 333 (281)

Failed requests: 1,929 (416)

Redirected requests: 8 (1)

Distinct files requested: 224 (198)

Distinct hosts served: 552 (140)

Unwanted logfile entries: 2,641

Data transferred: 229.96 megabytes (41.65 megabytes)

Average data transferred per day: 7.42 megabytes (5.95 megabytes)

September 1-30, 2005

Figures in parentheses refer to the 7-day period ending 30-Sep-2005 23:59.

Successful requests: 7,566 (1,972)

Average successful requests per day: 252 (281)

Successful requests for pages: 7,549 (1,970)

Average successful requests for pages per day: 251 (281)

Failed requests: 3,080 (1,020)

Redirected requests: 1 (0)

Distinct files requested: 231 (185)

Distinct hosts served: 597 (246)

Corrupt logfile lines: 2

Unwanted logfile entries: 2,361

Data transferred: 194.33 megabytes (49.78 megabytes)

Average data transferred per day: 6.48 megabytes (7.11 megabytes)

October 1-31, 2005

Figures in parentheses refer to the 7-day period ending 31-Oct-2005 23:59.

Successful requests: 8,482 (1,975)

Average successful requests per day: 273 (282)

Successful requests for pages: 8,475 (1,975)

Average successful requests for pages per day: 273 (282)

Failed requests: 4,281 (738)

Distinct files requested: 154 (139)

Distinct hosts served: 690 (213)

Corrupt logfile lines: 1

Unwanted logfile entries: 2,210

Data transferred: 206.47 megabytes (43.78 megabytes)

Average data transferred per day: 6.66 megabytes (6.25 megabytes)

We currently have eighty-nine on the list serve.

Webmaster Report

*On August 23, received E-mail from staff member advising of some incorrect E-mail address online. Made corrections and advised staff member raising the concern the matter had been resolved.

*On August 29, received E-mail from Nebraska.gov advising site maintenance would be unavailable for a period of time on August 30 resulting from all Nebraska.gov hosted sites being moved to different servers. Nebraska.gov requested to know whether any scheduled maintenance was taking place on August 30 prior to moving the site. Sent E-mail advising to make the move and provide E-mail confirmation when completed.

*On August 30, received confirmation from Nebraska.gov that the site was moved and was provided new server information for uploading.

*On August 30, sent E-mail to Kelly requesting her assistance with switching servers with the new instructions as sent via E-mail. After a period of missing each other via phone, we will meet September 6. Until such time as the server information is switched on my end, site maintenance cannot take place. Posts to the list serve, however, remain un-effected.

*On September 5, left Kelly a voice mail canceling September 6 resulting from a death in the family.

*On September 6, touched base and re-scheduled for September 21.

*On September 9, called Nebraska.gov to inquire about a re-direct from ncbvi.state.ne.us/ to ncbvi.ne.gov/ since the commission site is now housed on a different server. Dan sent E-mail to Trent and copied me on his send.

*On September 12, Trent advised the re-direct was now in place. Sent E-mail to Trent and Dan inquiring as to whether the temporary re-direct housed on our homepage, if removed, would affect Nebraska.gov's re-direct.

*On September 13, received confirming E-mail that since the re-direct is on the old server, removal of the text on the homepage re-directing to the new web address would not effect the permanent re-direct currently displayed at the old web address.

*On September 21, Kelly assisted with the necessary changes from the old server to the new server on the Webmaster's PC to allow updates to once again be made. Sent E-mail to Pearl once complete advising updates are now available to be made again.

*On September 21, received E-mail from an Internet visitor to the site advising the links on the General Information page re-directed back to the home page and not where they were to be directed. After checking all the links on that page, discovered the links take surfers to the re-direct as put in place by Nebraska.gov. Corrected the issue then sent reply thanking the surfer for pointing out our error.

*On September 21, received E-mail from Commissioner Loos advising the employment brochure was broken. And due to a Webmaster vacation, this problem was rectified September 27.

*As Pearl was copied on the E-mail from Commissioner Loos, on September 28, received E-mail from Pearl asking whether a support staff should review all links on the site to determine whether all links are functioning properly. And on October 4, sent Pearl a reply stating this would be a valued idea and suggested that any links needing modification as discovered be forwarded to the Webmaster for handling.

*On October 4, went to run the hit report for the Website for the month of September and discovered the numbers were not available. Sent E-mail to Nebraska.gov asking if the change in server locations could be the result of the missing statistics.

*On October 5, received correspondence advising my previous contact was no longer with Nebraska.gov and to provide a description of the stats being requested. After re-introducing myself and sending Kelly a "BCC" on the message to ensure the proper information was being conveyed, made Pearl and Commissioner Loos aware of the situation and will keep them advised of the end result.

*On October 12, sent follow-up inquiry to Nebraska.gov concerning the missing stats and what can be done to re-establish monthly reporting.

*On October 16, received E-mail from Nebraska.gov stating:

I have checked with our Director of Development regarding these statistics and we were able to determine that normally, these stats would be generated automatically and placed at <http://www.nol.org/webstats/>.

However, due to some migration issues we experienced while moving our applications to our central data center, it appears that the log rotation script that runs automatically at the end of the month didn't work correctly. Since the script is what kicks off the web stats process, the stats were not written to the directory properly. At this point, given that we've already got several days worth of October's statistics in the log file, it may be easiest to just wait until mid-month when the logs get rotated again and posted after that. If you would like, I can email you and let you know when we have posted the stats (I'm not sure if that's what Dan was doing before his departure or not.).

Please let me know if you have any questions.

*On October 23, sent E-mail asking if September stats were posted yet.

*As no answer received to October 23 E-mail, called Nebraska.gov and was provided the new URL for reviewing stats and that September stats were available at long last.

*On November 1, began the process of Website conversion from Word to Dreamweaver. Will advise when the site is fully converted and uploaded in the new format. As a result of this conversion, updates to the site cannot be made. Posts, however, to the list serve are un-effected.

MATERIALS LIST FOR NOVEMBER 19, 2005 MEETING

08-16-05--VZ: FW: July Friends meeting

08-16-05--VZ: August 2005 AFB eNews

08-16-05--Poff: Re: A question from Cheryl (concerning Hand in Hand; has follow-up)

08-17-05--VZ: My Goals (for 2006; has follow-up)

08-17-05--VZ: RE: Thank you (concerning message from Elizabeth Frable complimenting Jan Brandt)

08-19-05--VZ: RE: [Everyone] Technology Training {04} (concerning responding to all)

08-19-05--VZ: Leave for pay period 5:01 p.m., August 5 to 5:00 p.m. August 19, 2005

08-19-05--Peery: Revised Staff Listings

08-20-05--Nyman: Friends July 25th minutes (has follow-up)

08-22-05--VZ: My Schedule (has follow-up)

08-22-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary Candy! (to Candy Laursen)

08-22-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary Bill! (to Bill Brown)

08-23-05--Peery: May 21, 2005 Approved Minutes

08-23-05--Peery: Draft Minutes - August 13, 2005 (has follow-up)

08-23-05--Peery: Additional documents regarding Carlos's Focus Topic (has follow-up)

08-23-05--Peery: Letter from Senator Nelson (to Van Zandt, regarding her letter to Spellings; has follow-up)

08-31-05--VZ: Leave Report

08-31-05--VZ: FW: Report on RSA Monitoring Conference (by Dr. Fredric K. Schroeder; has follow-up)

09-01-05--VZ: A letter from Jane Lansaw (has follow-up)

09-01-05--VZ: Braille on Vending Machines (to Kevan Worley; has follow-up)

09-01-05--VZ: Braille on Vending Machines (to Richard Bird; has follow-up)

09-01-05--VZ: Braille on Vending Machines (to Terry Smith; has follow-up)

09-01-05--VZ: Thank you to Peggy Zierenberg and Terry Heany (for filling in for Center staff during resilience training)

09-01-05--VZ: Thank you Todd (for filling in for Center staff)

09-01-05--VZ: Thank you Mike! (for filling in for Center staff)

09-01-05--VZ: RE: Thank you (to Shane Buresh, adding thanks to that of F. Floyd, for his help in Center during training)

09-02-05--VZ: FW: Fraudulent Websites for Katrina Victims

09-02-05--VZ: Braille on Machines (reply from Smith and VZ response; has follow-up)

09-02-05--VZ: FW: Youth Advisory Recruitment (for Youth Advisory Committee for the National Council on Disability

Washington, DC)

09-02-05--VZ: Governor's Tour (has follow-up)

09-06-05--Hunt: Braille on Vending Machines

09-07-05--VZ: Governor's Tour Follow-up (has follow-up)

09-08-05--VZ: Flood Relief: Center Project to Help Hurricane Katrina Survivors (has follow-up)

09-08-05--VZ: Health & Wellness Survey

09-09-05--VZ: Leases and another question (to Charles Lowe concerning vending facilities and grants)

09-09-05--VZ: Senators Tour the Center (has follow-up)

09-14-05--VZ: FW: [rehabnet] Fw: WIA and Katrina

09-14-05--VZ: Staff Update (announcing Sara Schmidt's leaving for a new job; has follow-up)

09-15-05--VZ: Senator Price (needing to reschedule tour; has follow-up)

09-15-05--VZ: Letter to Governor Heineman (following up on his having toured; has follow-up)

09-15-05--VZ: FW: IM-05-10 - Summary of Statistical Information of the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Facility Program for FY 2004

09-16-05--VZ: FW: 2006 Deficit Budget Requests (memo from Jerry A. Oligmueller, State Budget Administrator)

09-16-05--VZ: Leave

09-16-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary (to Jan Brandt)

09-16-05--Brandt: RE: Happy Anniversary

09-19-05--Peery: Revised Staff Lists (has follow-up)

09-20-05--VZ: Annual Review and Survey (has follow-up)

09-21-05--Hunt: NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND SUES
FEDERALEDUCATION OFFICIALS FOR FAILURE TO IMPLEMENT LAW
FOR BLIND VENDORS

09-23-05--VZ: Center Tours (thank you letters; has follow-up)

09-23-05--VZ: Moving Forward: Staff Appreciation Day (has follow-up)

09-23-05--VZ: Senator Price (has follow-up)

09-25-05--Loos: Staff Survey, 2005

09-26-05--VZ: FW: Moving Forward: Staff Appreciation Day (forward of Loos message to staff)

09-26-05--VZ: FW: Staff Survey, 2005 (forward to staff)

09-26-05--VZ: FW: Minutes of State Committee of Blind Vendors - September 9, 2005 - Grand Island (has follow-up)

09-28-05--VZ: FW: FY 2005 Supported Employment Reallotment (has follow-up)

09-28-05--Hunt: Merchant's Meeting in North Platte

09-28-05--VZ: FW: NRA's Washington Wire: Federal Employees With Disabilities Sue RSA (has follow-up)

09-28-05--VZ: RE: appointments for Kearney staff

09-28-05--Deaton: RE: FY 2005 Supported Employment Reallotment

09-28-05--VZ: My Schedule

09-28-05--Loos: Appreciation Day (to Pearl)

09-29-05--Brown: RE: FY 2005 Supported Employment Reallotment

10-03-05--VZ: FW: WORKNET's Demise

10-03-05--VZ: FW: Leave Reporting September 16, 2005 through September 30, 2005

10-04-05--Deaton: Microsoft Excel Tutorial Attached (has follow-up)

10-04-05--Peery: Revised Staff Lists (has follow-up)

10-04-05--VZ: In-Service Training Grant (has follow-up)

10-04-05--VZ: Upcoming Events (concerning Pearl's involvement in NCSAB)

10-04-05--VZ: FW: State Liaison for the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (George Kosovich)

10-05-05--VZ: FW: [rehabnet] VR Continuing Resolution (has follow-up)

10-05-05--VZ: Happy Belated Anniversary, DeAnn! (to DeAnn Johnson)

10-05-05--VZ: Happy Belated Anniversary, Shawn! (to Shawn Djernes)

10-06-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary Don (to Don Ward)

10-06-05--Loos: Re: Brochure for Employers

10-06-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary Nancy (to Nancy Flearl)

10-06-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary (to Terry Harris)

10-06-05--VZ: Contact from RSA (about call from George Kosovich)

10-07-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary (to Fatos Floyd)

10-07-05--Nyman: Friends minutes (has follow-up)

10-11-05--Peery: White Cane Safety Day Proclamation

10-17-05--VZ: Sad News in the Loos Family (concerning death of Brad's mother, Esther Jones; has follow-up)

10-18-05--VZ: Happy Bosses Day (has follow-up)

10-18-05--Peggy Zierenberg: new fund raiser (for Nebraska Center for the Blind Alumni Association)

10-19-05--Zierenberg: testing my computer

10-25-05--VZ: FW: Help Missouri Avoid Consolidation (includes letter from Shelia Wright)

10-25-05--VZ: RE: Help Missouri Avoid Consolidation (asking for clarification from Shelia)

10-26-05--VZ: FW: Help Missouri Avoid Consolidation (further clarification)

10-26-05--Hunt: vendtalk] LINK TO DAMAGING SENATE HELP COMMITTEE REPORT

10-26-05--VZ: FW: NFVIC Fundraiser Nov. 19 (Nebraska Foundation for Visually Impaired Children)

10-26-05--VZ: FW: Statement on Randolph-Sheppard (by Dr. Fred Schroeder)

10-26-05--VZ: Your Good Work is Recognized (to Connie Daly and Amy Buresh for helping blind high school senior have chance to take college entrance exam in accessible manner)

10-26-05--Zierenberg: two new decisions made (new Board and fundraiser)

10-27-05--VZ: AFB Board (officially a member; has follow-up)

10-27-05--VZ: FW: Budget Deficit Request

10-28-05--VZ: Time Sheet

10-28-05--VZ: FW: Recap of Randolph Shepard attack (from Christine M. Brown Grant Manager Professional Development and Research)

Institute on Blindness Louisiana Tech University

11-04-05--Peery: Public Notice (for November Commissioners Meeting; has follow-up)

11-04-05--VZ: Accessibility Support (to Brenda Decker, concerning job involving NIS)

11-04-05--VZ: Randolph-Sheppard Programs (to Senator Enzi; has follow-up)

11-04-05--VZ: FW: Blind Vendors under Randolph Sheppard act (forwarding letter from Randy Swanson; has follow-up)

11-04-05--VZ: FW: Accessibility Support (to Wes Majerus)

11-04-05--VZ: FW: Budget Deficit Modification

11-07-05--VZ: FW: Speech Contest Opportunity for all Nebraska Students in Grades 9 - 12 (has follow-up)

11-07-05--VZ: FW: Forwarding this message (concerning Nebraska Center for the Blind Alumni Association fund raiser)

11-08-05--Loos: Re: Nebraska State Liaison and State Team (response to George Kosovich)

11-08-05--VZ: Time Certification

11-08-05--Loos: Draft Agenda (has follow-up)

11-08-05--VZ: Response to Inquiry (to Ms. Geier in Senator Combs's office, concerning budget)

11-08-05--VZ: FW: Response to Inquiry (from Ms. Geier)

11-08-05--VZ: FW: [Everyone] Braille drawings (has follow-up)

11-08-05--VZ: Happy Anniversary Amy (to Amy Buresh)

11-15-05--Loos: Re: Request to be added to the agenda (has follow-up)

11-15-05--Jirak: Webmaster Report (has follow-up)

11-16-05--Burns: Latest list of passed NCBVI Board motions (has follow-up)

11-16-05--Jirak: Revised Webmaster Report (has follow-up)

11-17-05--Peery: Email from Pearl (concerning web site)

11-17-05--Hunt: Braille on Vending Machines (has follow-up)

11-17-05--Deaton: Reports Attached (concerning unserved and underserved populations; has follow-up)

11-18-05--Deaton: Statistics Attached (concerning unserved and underserved populations; has follow-up)