

NEBRASKA COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Commission Board Public Meeting

August 8, 2009; 9:00 a.m.

Scottsbluff, Nebraska

Approved Minutes

Call to Order and Introductions:

Nancy Oltman, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and she welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Announcements Concerning Public Comments, Meeting Recordings, Lunch Arrangements and other Logistics:

Commissioner Walla read the agenda items and introductions were made. It was noted that public comments are always welcome regarding the agenda items. Lunch will be delivered by a restaurant to be determined. Dan Bird recorded the meeting.

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was located on the table in the meeting room. The Act was available in both print and Braille format.

Commissioners present: Darrell Walla, Jim Jirak, Julie Johnson, Carol Jenkins and Nancy Oltman.

Commission staff present: Dr. Pearl Van Zandt, Executive Director, Lincoln; Dan Hill, Vocational Counselor, Scottsbluff; and Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant, Lincoln.

Public Present: Dan Bird, Plattsmouth; Rosa Gehlert, Scottsbluff; Carol Goranson, Scottsbluff; Frank Hohn, Hemmingford; Karen Lemmon, Whitney; Tim Lemmon, Whitney; Carolyn Schaffer; Chadron; Sarah Gunther; Scottsbluff; Alisa Gunther, Scottsbluff.

Minutes of May 2, 2009 Commission Meeting

Commissioner Walla moved to approve the Minutes of the May 2, 2009 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Jenkins seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and it was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Focus Topic: Supported Employment

Executive Director, Dr. Pearl Van Zandt noted that Bob Deaton is the Deputy Director for Independent Living Services and he also has a lot of experience as a Vocational Rehab Counselor in the past working with Supported Employment. Mr. Deaton continues to be the Commission's point person for Supported Employment in answering questions that counselors may have.

Bob Deaton emailed to the commissioners three documents regarding Supported Employment prior to the meeting. The first document was a Fact Sheet, the second was Definition of Terms and the third was Supported

Employment Providers. For informational purposes, the documents are posted below the minutes.

Director Van Zandt stated that Supported Employment allows individuals who cannot function in a job completely on their own to work successfully with a job coach. There are many details on how this is funded and structured. This is a good way for folks who could not otherwise have jobs in the community to be a part of the workforce.

Chairperson Oltman noted that Bob Deaton did an excellent job in putting the information together as usual. Oltman noted that she was impressed with all the opportunities there are across the State for supported employment.

Commissioner Johnson stated that she was surprised by a couple of things. One of them was that if a person needs a job coach for a short time period, they may not necessarily be in supported employment. Johnson asked what criteria are used to identify a person for supported employment.

Van Zandt stated that Supported Employment guidelines come from the Federal and National programs. Supported Employment is very rigidly established. It is not always known if someone will absolutely always need a job coach until some years down the line. The way NCBVI approaches it is if it looks to be that a job coach on an ongoing basis is likely to be needed for whatever reason, we proceed as if it is a likely supported employment and we go ahead and provide the services to them. If the person has a developmental disability, we work with the individuals in that Division of HHSS to do the work for it to be carried out after the support from NCBVI ends.

Van Zandt noted that we would rather get the supported employment started and then if it is found out that the individual does not need it after all, then they can go off of supported employment.

Chairperson Oltman noted that Mr. Deaton indicated in his report that if a person is given a job coach and then it is not needed, there is no penalty.

Van Zandt reported that NCBVI does not use a job coach just to get someone started in a job because many times there is not a need for a job coach. Van Zandt noted that the amount of funds received is very minimal; \$30,000 per year. Supported Employment is an important program for those who need it. In some years, NCBVI does not spend very much money at all for Supported Employment. NCBVI has recently completed spending carryover money from 2008.

Van Zandt reported that when Supported Employment ends early it is usually because the individual has become ill and is unable to continue to work. Many individuals have multiple disabilities.

Commissioner Johnson inquired as to what happens if the money runs out. Van Zandt reported that NCBVI could pay for Supported Employment with Basic Support funds. While Supported Employment has its own funding, the individual is treated as a vocational rehabilitation client. NCBVI has never run out of Supported Employment funds to Van Zandt's recollection. It would be very uncommon.

Chairperson Oltman inquired as to if this is because individuals do not know about the opportunity or because there is no job they could do.

Van Zandt stated that she would like to think that it is because it is a low incidence population. Van Zandt asked Dan Hill for his thoughts.

Dan Hill stated that typically in Scottsbluff they are in close contact with the school system. If there are young children that they are working with in the system, they will be eligible when they get to employment age. Dan noted that they work with Office of Human Development (OHD) which is the service in the Panhandle that provides the job coach service. Dan stated that he has been successful in seeing OHD provide the majority of the funding for job coaching. Good working relationships are very helpful. NCBVI works with the job coach and staff to make sure they understand blindness and alternative techniques.

Dan reported that he just closed a man in his 30's who had been in Supported Employment. OHD still checks in with him on a weekly basis. The individual was doing dishwashing at Runza in Sidney. He is now doing trash, carrying out orders, and kitchen work. This individual has multiple disabilities; but he is very motivated.

Dan is also working with a 26 year old man in the Chadron area. This individual also has multiple handicaps. He is mildly mentally handicapped, is legally blind, and has a syndrome that has no name because it is so rare. The syndrome causes him to have a speech impediment and it requires him to use a communication device. This individual also has poor grammar and poor speech. His parents are about the only ones who can understand him. He also has low muscle tone and poor balance, yet he is motivated. He lives in Chadron in his own apartment. His parents live on a ranch near Chadron. Dan worked with him on home teaching, cane travel, and kitchen alternatives and other independent living types of things. He is currently involved with OHD workshop in Chadron. He is now also working at a few motels tearing beds and remaking them for two hours per day.

He spends a few hours per day vacuuming apartment complexes in the community. He would like to stock shelves. He did do this in Alliance, but the grocery store closed. We are pushing OHD to make more employer contacts. He has been in a workshop for about three months.

Commissioner Jirak asked if OHD is a government agency. Dan Hill noted that they must be because they drive government vehicles and they use government funds to operate. They are under the Department of Health and Human Services.

Commissioner Jenkins inquired as to how often Supported Employment cases are closed successfully, and if they are not successful, is the case closed? Dan stated that he has not worked with many Supported Employment individuals in the Panhandle. He believes he has closed one case in the Panhandle.

Van Zandt noted that it is the trend for a client to be served for a long time over a lot of years. In 2008, NCBVI served 14 individuals in Supported Employment. None of these were closed for successful or unsuccessful. These cases were active for the entire year of 2008 and they are still active. She noted that Dan provided good examples of why it takes a long time.

Chairman Oltman inquired as to where an individual could purchase a communication device. Dan noted that AT4all has communication devices on their website. Most of these devices are very visual. If a person has communication problems and is blind, these devices most likely will not work for them.

Frank Hohn noted that there is a famous Physicist who is in a wheelchair and he has a computer hooked up that can read his eye movements.

Dan Bird stated that there is software available that allows a person to type on a keyboard and it will speak the words for him.

Van Zandt added that often the service community does not know what to do with involved multiple disabilities and it is typical to write people off as they could never work. NCBVI works very hard with these individuals to help them get through their barriers. Often you must come up with very creative approaches to make a situation successful for a person. If a person is disabled because of a car accident or something and does not have a developmental disability, they are not eligible for ongoing developmental disability support.

Commissioner Johnson inquired as to whether providers such as OHD only work with development disabilities. Van Zandt clarified stating that OHD does a lot of different things, but the specific funding for job coaching for supported employment is a much narrower program.

Commissioner Johnson inquired as to if these individuals get services through other funds and are there agency's to partner with or do they just fall through the cracks. Van Zandt stated that the more complications an individual has in their situation, the more likely they will fall through the gaps of the service system. However, there are a lot of good people in all of the service entities and there are a lot of partnerships that happen. Therefore, she does feel that professionals out in the field really do try to provide the services needed.

Public Comment

Karen Lemmon – Karen stated that she is curious about job coaches. Does the company that a person is working for provide the job coach or is it someone who specializes in the area? Karen added that she thinks there is a client who is currently doing Center training who wants to be a tour guide and that is what she does at Fort Robinson. Because of the individual's speech problem it may be difficult for him to find a job; however, she suggested that we look at Agget for employment for this individual because they just lost a person who was working for them.

Van Zandt – NCBVI staff does not technically do job coaching, but we often do job coaching tasks for a person who has a new job and needs more than the basics. Staff may go with the client to the site and offer some coaching. For actual job coaching we contract with providers.

Dan Hill – Dan stated that he would like to make a statement in regards to Karen Lemmon. Karen is a past school teacher for 18 years in the Crawford area. Karen was instrumental, along with one or more staff from NCBVI in getting a legislative bill passed this last session. Dan asked Karen to elaborate upon this.

Karen Lemmon– Karen started by saying that NCBVI has some awesome staff in the Scottsbluff office. Karen noted that she began losing her eyesight 10 years ago and because she did not want her programs at school to go down in quality, she retired. Possibly now she could think of ways to re-endorse herself in other areas and get back into teaching. Karen noted that Dan Hill, Jan Brandt, Angie Hoff and Josie Rodriguez out of the Scottsbluff office are wonderful. Karen stated that this past legislative session LB 449 was introduced and passed.

Karen, Dr. Pearl Van Zandt and Carlos Servan went to a Legislative Hearing to try to get the bill passed. Without LB 449, she was told that when she received her disability income from the Nebraska Retirement System, she could not in any way do any work that had instruction or teaching involved with it. This meant that even though she had spent a lot of time in the classroom she was not able to even go to work as a substitute teacher. They pursued the legislation and it finally passed on April 22, 2009 and it will become law on September 4, 2009. With LB 449, teachers and people who are receiving disability from Nebraska Retirement System can continue teaching up to 15 hours per week without losing disability income.

Frank Hohn – Frank stated that he seconds everything Karen said about Dan, Angie and Josie.

Carol Goranson – Carol said she thirds that. Carol added that about 10 years ago she started losing her eyesight. The Scottsbluff staff helped her out of her depression. Now, she is able to still be a part of her community. Thank you for your help.

Karen Lemmon – Karen stated that one obstacle she had when losing her sight was that she became very depressed. Then one day she decided she had to take on projects and learn to accomplish them. Her first project was baking a pie which took her about a week to make one turn out right. Last year she did Ski for Light which was the best thing she has done in her life. It gave her confidence. She had never skied in her sighted life, but decided to give it a try. This event will again take place January 24-30 at the Black Hills. This event allows people to gain confidence. The ski instructor does one on one instruction for a physically challenged or blind person. Karen asked if NCBVI can help her promote this? The website is bhsfl.org.

Fontenelle Tours has agreed to cut the cost of this trip as far back as they can. They will pick up physically challenged and blind people across the state and take them to the Black Hills at Deadwood, South Dakota. Participants can either go cross country skiing or downhill skiing. The total cost is \$350 which includes lodging, meals, ski lift tickets, ski equipment and transportation. Karen said that she will have applications available at the NFB State Convention and they are also available on the website.

Chairman Oltman – Nancy added that Jim Jirak is associated with the ACB and she would assume that individuals from that organization would enjoy the opportunity as well.

Commissioner Jirak – Jim suggested that Karen also talk to Mitch Green about hosting a sky diving event.

Commissioner Walla - Darrell noted that when we set up our meetings in advance NCBVI tries to go to other parts of the state and we try to have public attend the meetings. It is nice and valuable to have interested individuals attend the meetings. NCBVI tries to go out state for the May and August meetings. Darrell inquired as to if there would be a more convenient time to travel to the Western part of the State.

Karen Lemmon – Karen stated that she does not know if the time makes any difference, but she recommends NCBVI hold a meeting at Fort Robinson State Park. The Commission could have its own meeting center and meals could be catered. It was noted that individuals attending the meeting would need to purchase a park permit to enter the park.

Report from the Chairman:

Chairman Oltman reported that NCBVI was recently audited by the Nebraska State Auditor's office. The commissioners were invited to attend the Audit Exit meeting. Commissioners Johnson, Walla and Oltman attended by conference call. There was nothing significant that came out of the audit; however the auditors did recommend a few minor changes in operations. One of the suggestions was that the Commission Board become more involved in day to day review of the budget. The Auditor's office has suggested this before. This item will be discussed later in the meeting.

Networking group met via conference call on Wednesday evening, July 15, 2009. They discussed different aspects of rehabilitation which gave them a chance to bounce off of each other's ideas. They also discussed stimulus funds. They had a lively discussion. There were some different individuals participating in the call than in the past. The NCSAB has a list of other entities that have the same interests and they were all invited to attend the conference call.

Oltman reported that interesting things happened with the staff survey that is sent out every year. This year the survey was completed on-line with the assistance of Nebraska.gov. Some staff mentioned that their submitted comments were not a part of the final survey results. After checking with Nebraska.gov, it was discovered that there had been a glitch in the system and all surveys did not get recorded. Therefore, the survey was again opened up for staff to complete. The suggestions that were received will be discussed later in the meeting. Oltman noted that she also received two comments through the virtual suggestion box and a staff comment through regular email. These comments will also be discussed later in the meeting.

Chairman Oltman gave a report on Friends of the Commission. Oltman spoke to Chris Boone who is the President of Friends of the Commission. Chris currently lives in Michigan but she is a former staff member of NCBVI and a former resident of Nebraska. Oltman noted that she recently reviewed the Minutes from the last meeting of Friends of the Commission. They are currently in the process of making changes to their by-laws in order to make it easier to do some things. Oltman noted that if anyone indicates that they wish to donate money to NCBVI; Friends of the Commission would be a good place for them to donate. Friends of the Commission will meet again on August 19 at 2:00 p.m.

Report from the Executive Director

Van Zandt gave highlights of her report and she thanked the Commissioners for their time. The entire report of the Executive Director is to be placed in the minutes, so it is inserted below. Director Van Zandt noted for the record that a print copy or Braille copy of the minutes can be made available to anyone who requests.

Van Zandt announced the 2009 Governor's Employee & Supervisor of the Year Awards.

Employee of the Year is Dottie Wilmott. Dottie Wilmott deserves special commendation for her work on our new data management system, eForce. She worked with the programmer, staff members, technology consultants, and many others. Dottie's efforts made the system fully accessible, a perfect fit for service delivery, and a tool that will work well for the agency for years to come.

Dottie's persistence and determination to make sure that eForce would be user friendly, for blind and sighted staff alike, was a major reason for its success. Dottie traveled to each office and worked with individual staff members to answer questions and assure their comfort with the system. Staff members are already commenting that it helps them utilize information directly, all electronic and fully accessible. Dottie's work has been outstanding!

Supervisor of the Year is Bob Deaton, NCBVI Deputy Director for Independent Living. Bob manages rehabilitation teaching services, supported employment, deaf-blind services and many other aspects of our

agency on a statewide basis. In addition, this year Bob has served as co-supervisor for the three offices of the North Platte District.

Since taking on this additional role, Bob has not once acted overburdened with the extra work. He always has time for questions or concerns of staff members. Bob treats all employees with respect, giving them encouragement and support to perform their jobs professionally. In his work with FYI (the group training for older blind persons), Bob was one of the clients' favorite people. He puts them at ease, sharing his story and many laughs; Bob is a great role-model for the blind.

Van Zandt reported that the State Plan was submitted to the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration in June. Then, NCBVI received notification that there were areas that needed some changes. Van Zandt noted that the revised State Plan was submitted last Thursday. Van Zandt stated that at this time she does not know if there will be any more revisions that the federal agency will want us to make. Van Zandt added that she has emailed to the Board a copy of the revised State Plan. There were no changes made that were significant enough to need re-approval by the Board.

Van Zandt gave an update on Outlook Nebraska.

We have spent a lot of time learning regulations for tracking and reporting expenditures of the ARRA (stimulus) funds. We have a spreadsheet for planning projects, activities and projected costs. We also have a system for tracking actual expenditures by grant, project and activity that is based on what will be required by the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB). There is still a lot not finalized, so we continue to attend webinars, conference calls, and read information sent to all the states.

The State Attestation Audit was completed. All recommendations have been addressed. In most cases, problems were corrected and procedures revised. The auditor's office does not look at follow-up reports. The issues are addressed and when we are audited again in the future, they will see that the changes were made or at least considered.

Staff from North Platte, Kearney, Lincoln, Omaha and Norfolk attended Bridges out of Poverty Workshops. This was a valuable training opportunity.

Nebraska Center for the Blind:

Two Center clients participated in the Lancaster County Fair this year. One client entered her reduced sugar popcorn balls and received a white third place ribbon. Another client entered cookies and did not place, but he gave it a good try. Van Zandt congratulated the clients for their efforts.

Total Full-time Clients Served 1996 through August, 2009: 168.

Competitive Employment: 97; Homemakers: 23; Students: 34.

Results: Of the clients that finished training and schooling,

89.5 percent are employed (competitive employment and homemaker)

72.3 percent of clients who finished training and schooling are competitively employed

17 percent are homemakers

20.2 percent of the total number are students

8.3 percent are not working

We gave two weeks of training to WAGES staff for the first time. Buffet, outside games and kite activity with WAGES staff and clients; went to the Arch museum at Kearney; attended International Cultural Day in downtown Lincoln; Department of Correction work-site still going on: three of the Center clients are working. JR worked two weeks of WAGES program. Staff and clients attended NFB convention. Fire safety activity was held with Project Independence. In late August, we will have a camping activity and do horse back riding, boating, fishing etc.

Field Services as of July 31:

513 Voc Rehab Clients were served; 36 were closed successfully, achieving their employment goals.

661 Independent Living Clients were served; 170 were closed successfully.

WAGES (Work and Gain Experience in the Summer) ended July 24. Fourteen blind youth had jobs around Lincoln, with great success. Most employers were very satisfied, some asked to have a WAGES employee next year, too. One person was fired – this is sometimes an important lesson and we encourage the employers to expect good work ethic on the job. Meeting an employer's expectations needs to occur regardless of blindness to succeed in the work world.

Project Independence had 7 participants - July 19-23. The program went very well.

Work began on public service announcements to be produced by Dave Sampson.

Dave is currently finishing up a 2-year degree in broadcasting and plans to operate his own recording studio upon completion of his vocational training. The plan is to produce six Public Service Announcements with different messages.

Work began on the production of video and audio materials to supplement the training counselors provide in the field. One informational and six instructional modules will be produced. At this point, four individuals are under contract to write the scripts. Kent Taylor, producer of the Center video, will videotape the material.

For Your Independence (FYI) is scheduled to take place in North Platte during the third week in September. Jobs achieved this year in this area: Appliance manager at Home Depot, Chemistry/Mathematics instructor, ranch operator, tractor mechanic, food prep/dishwasher, house cleaning, medical aide and substitute teacher.

Sarah Stewart, Denise Johnston Rauterkus and Jan Brandt attended Project Search training and planning sessions in Grand Island and Kearney. We will work with an area hospital and public schools to develop jobs for transition age youth, for our blind clients and Voc Rehab's clients with other disabilities.

This quarter the Lincoln District placement class combined with the Center's vocational class. Marisol Rodriques from the Nebraska Business Development Center presented on Self employment. Larry Routh from UNL career services presented on Networking. We had Liz Shotkoski from Gallup present on strength finders, Dick Harding from Kenexa came to talk about how to keep a job, we played the friendly feud, Larry Mackey presented on disclosure, and how to write a resume.

Dave Bensley from Social Security Administration is coming on Aug. 7th to talk about Schedule A hiring (for people with disabilities).

We finished up our last GATE program in May. We are revamping the GATE program to make it 3 months instead of 4 months. We added Monday afternoon to it. We decided to shorten the program so that we can adequately serve individuals in the field that are not able to come to the program. We start a new GATE this month (August).

Connie Daly attended the Project Search conference in Atlanta, Georgia. She and Larry Mackey will be attending Project Search training at St. Elizabeth's (originally scheduled for mid-August; start date delayed and to be announced). We have four potential participants for Project Search in Lincoln.

Many of the staff attended the National Federation of the Blind convention this year. Larry Roos and Connie Daly attended Bridges out of Poverty training in June and we will have a second session in July. Candy Laursen attended an Aging Conference in Lincoln in June.

We had two clients become employed as phone interviewers and one as a scanner this quarter. We had a vendor start at the Ashland site. We had 2 new people start training in custodial work at Dept. of Corrections. We set up an internship at HHSS as a case aide. Two of our clients completed internships with our office teaching Braille and technology skills to a high school student. We are in the process of setting up an internship with the People's City Mission as a packager of coffee beans.

The Lincoln District is receiving five or six new referrals per week.

In Omaha, we have hired Cheryl Poff to fill the older blind counselor position. With that hiring it leaves a vacancy for an orientation counselor. Kathy Brown Hollins has been hired to fill that position, leaving a vacancy for a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor Position. We posted this position and will close it on August 19th and hope to start the hiring process by the last week in August.

We have had a busy summer with staff participating in our transition programs. Several staff worked on the planning committee for these programs. We value the work of the team and the success of these programs. We have heard exciting, positive comments from students and their families.

Chad Weber did a statewide presentation on Education Quest services. He did discuss the services and mission of NCBVI. These presentations were in Kearney, Lincoln, Omaha, Norfolk and a video conference to Scottsbluff.

We have continued to work on placement activities. The job market has been tight but have had several people placed. (Food Service, Spec Ed Teacher, Customer Service, Production, Sales Representatives). Many others that have had interviews and are waiting to hear back on positions. We are working with the placement committee in planning the next placement workshop to be held in September.

John and Glenn have continued to work with Apogee a new employer in their area, in Columbus. We have placed several clients with this employer.

The deaf blind group did an activity on June 13th in which they had representatives from the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Nebraska and Iowa Deaf Blind community, and staff and parents from Iowa School for the Deaf, as well as staff from NCBVI and Iowa Dept for the Blind. It was covered by the local media and was a wonderful opportunity to educate the public on the abilities of individuals that are deaf blind. It was a positive and exciting way to launch deaf blind awareness week.

We have had a number of request for presentations at assisted livings and health fairs for senior citizens. Cheryl will be presenting to these organizations.

On August 29, we are presenting on our services at a low vision workshop sponsored Heartland Eye Consultants. We will have a table available to meet individually with people attending this program.

The TABS (Teens Adventure in Blindness Skills) group went to Worlds of Fun on August 4th. This activity was sponsored by a parent of a student that is graduating and will be going on to College. We will be starting another round of group teaching for older blind individuals Seniors Adventures in Independent Living Skills (SAILS) on August 25th.

We have seen an increase in referrals over the past couple of months both in the IL and VR track.

John Schmitt and Nancy Flearl attended a planning session to help launch Project Search. This is a joint partnership with Faith Regional Health Services, VR, Norfolk Public Schools, and DDS.

It will provide rotating internships within the hospital/health care industry for students with a goal of employment at the end of the internship. The goal is for the program to begin the first week in January. They will begin with 4-6 students with the goal of 12 students for the 2010-11 school years. They will also open this up with a goal of working with surrounding school districts in the area.

Terry Harris, Nebraska Business Enterprises:

The Ashland Military Food Service Contract is up and going. We feed the Military Students during 2 week class situations. There are about 250 students per session. We had very good remarks on our first class evaluation. Our next class begins August 1st. There are going to be 15 to 16 two week class periods per year.

Don has been putting bar codes in all BEP equipment for the new inventory control. The inventory of the BEP equipment was completed by August 1, 2009, with just a few minor items to complete.

We have looked into putting vending in the State Office Building in Omaha and machines on a route in Falls City, Nebraska. As of now, we do not have any new facilities as a result of the inquiries. New contracts are going to be written for State Office Buildings in Nebraska and we are waiting to find out the result of those contracts.

We have put new cages on many of the rest areas across Interstate 80, to help protect from the elements and from vandalism.

We have started up newly remodeled rest area vending in East Bound Sidney, West Bound Sidney, East Bound Ogallala, and West Bound Ogallala. Each of these rest areas received up dated cages and new machines. We did reuse some of the same pop machines but the new Outsider Machine was put at each of these rest areas. The Outsider Machine made by AMS is a much improved version of the refrigerated snack machine.

Business Office

Kathy:

Completed work on National Conventions (staff and client hotel reservations, convention registrations and travel logistics).

Attended a 2009 Nebraska.Gov Partner Event.

Attended Kick-off program for Charitable Giving Campaign.

Has been working with the fixed assets and the bar code scanning. She also scanned several Alien Assets for the Office of the CIO. This is a big project, which must be completed by August 31, 2009.

Has registered for NIS fixed assets training, but the next class is not until this Fall.

Continues work on keeping the NCBVI website updated.

Bill:

Finalizing and Negotiating State Audit Report

Implementation of Processes to resolve audit findings

Set up of ARRA Grants

Work on Priorities of ARRA grants and set up reporting Mechanism

Work on Federal ARRA reporting guidelines with State Budget guidance

Close of State Fiscal year and set up new State Fiscal year in NIS

Work with NBE to help implement new DOD contract

Paying Bills

Dave:

Agency completed an Auditor's attestation review, which is similar to, though not as in depth as a formal audit. There were seven HR/Personnel issues that were not formal report issues, but comments. All were minor and all have been corrected.

As a result of one of the issues brought up, a complete review of all personnel files has been completed and all files now have the legally required forms in them and have been purged of old, unnecessary documents, such as old, old timesheets, insurance forms, etc. and now physically occupy about one-fourth the space they once did.

Bob Shankland retired on June 30, 2009

Bob Shankland's position has been moved from Lincoln to the Omaha office and has been filled by Cheryl Poff.

Kathy Brown applied for and will fill the position formerly occupied by Cheryl Poff.

Kathy Brown's position is now open and will be advertised until August 19, 2009.

In the last legislative session, the Legislature passed LB315, which requires State Personnel to accurately track and report vacancies to the legislature, on a quarterly basis, so we are in the process of updating our position control within NIS, to be ready to meet the September 2009 deadline. Dave, Kathy & Bill completed training on NIS position control to assure we are in compliance.

The Legislature also passed LB 403, which will require the use of the federal E-Verify program to insure that any employee hired on or after October 1, 2009, is legally able to work in the United States. State Personnel will complete the procedure, but we are responsible for making sure a certain amount of information is in NIS, by a certain time, after a new hire, so they can extract the data and complete the process.

Client Assistance Program - Vickie Rasmussen:

No CAP cases to report.

The Placement Committee is planning the Business Conference at Mahoney State Park September 29 and 30. The focus is to bring consumers and employers together. The first day is for Clients with speakers on technology (Curtis Chong), a luncheon with Jamie Forbis & Mary Budz, Technology Centers to try out different equipment (NetBook, Victor Reader Stream/BookSense, Screen readers, Magnification with speech, Notetakers), and to learn what to do when technology breaks down (low tech options).

Second Day for Clients will deal with Starting Your Own Business with Monica Braun of the Center for Rural Affairs speaking on Self Employment. Carlos will discuss Self Employment Rule. Breakout Groups will be 40 minutes for session and 5 minutes to move around. Clients will pick two of the following to attend.

Business Etiquette, etiquette with a cane, dressing for success.

Panel of Employed Blind: How they got their job, time they put into finding their job.

The first week on the job.

The lunch will be for networking. Talks will be given on Multi-generational Workforce and Diversity. Motivational speaker Aaron Davis will speak, as will the Nebraska Lt. Governor and Commissioner of Nebraska Department of Labor.

The Second Day is also for business people. Topics will include Technology for the Blind, Generational Issues, a Networking Luncheon and three breakout sessions: working partnership with employers; educating employers about blindness; technology demonstration for Employers; Burning Issues in the Business Community; and Diversity. Business people will joint the clients for the motivational speeches at the end of the day.

Public Comment

Karen Lemmon – Karen inquired as to what the outcome was from the March 4 Appropriation Committee Hearing.

Van Zandt – reported that the hearing covered the overall budget, while NCBVI stressed the need for older blind individuals. The hearing turned out well. The Governor is striving to have agencies do more with less. NCBVI did not receive our full request for funds, but we were not cut from last year's budget.

Frank Hohn – Frank pointed out that NCBVI is a state agency that actually does something useful.

Van Zandt – noted that NCBVI does stress the return on investment from Voc Rehab Services. Van Zandt noted that the State Legislature passed a bill requiring all state agencies providing benefits to follow certain steps to assure that the individual has legal status and to assure that benefits are not provided to those without legal status.

Old Business:

Budget Update

Van Zandt reported that NCBVI is on target with expenditures. NCBVI is spending more funds than normal, but we are using ARRA funds. The ARRA is funding that is to be used to stimulate funds into the economy.

Reallotment is something that happens each year. Some state agencies are not able to either match or utilize all of the federal rehab funds available. Therefore, each August there is a process wherein all states that cannot use or match all of their federal funds turn money back and states who would love to have more money ask for reallotment funds. NCBVI has requested \$625,000 for basic support, \$100,000 for older blind and \$35,000 for Part B Independent Living. Usually NCBVI will request the maximum that we can receive and we normally get a few thousand. Therefore, we hope to receive some additional funding. Van Zandt noted that we should know by mid September.

Chairman Oltman stated that Pearl Van Zandt and Bill Brown do a wonderful job with NCBVI budget.

NIS Update

Van Zandt reported that NCBVI still has issues with some of the screens in NIS that do not read well with JAWS. The Office of the CIO (Chief Information Officer) keeps working on it. Now a new version of NIS is to come out in December 2009.

There are also new versions of JAWS coming out. It is an ongoing problem to keep them both compatible. Van Zandt noted that NIS can be complicated for anyone to use if they are not familiar with it. The more frequent someone uses NIS, the easier it becomes for them. When we assess problems, we have to determine if it is accessibility or usability, difficulty that anyone has with NIS because they are not frequent users of the system.

NFB-Newsline® Update

Jamie Forbis emailed the NFB-Newsline® Update to the Board members, Pearl Van Zandt and Kathy Stephens. The Report is as follows:

NFB-Newsline®

August 3, 2009

By

Jamie K. Forbis, Nebraska NFB-Newsline® Out Reach Coordinator

Technology is changing the way the world does business and its no exception when it comes to NFB-Newsline®. In early spring two new initiatives were launched as you may remember. Web News on Demand and NFB-Newsline® In Your Pocket. Two more initiatives are on the way and should be available to subscribers in early September. The following is a brief description of the new features.

The first of these two initiatives is Keystream. Keystream will give subscribers the ability to call NFB-Newsline® via their computer with no screen software needed. Just as if you were using the phone, Keystream allows the subscriber to navigate using the standard keyboard number pad. The speech is generated by Newsline eliminating the need for a screen reader to access the information found on NFB-Newsline®. This feature will be very useful for subscribers who use cell phones or who have limited access to a land line.

The second initiative in the works is Podable News. Podable News is similar to Newsline In Your Pocket except that it allows you to essentially create your own newspaper. Using a pod catcher a subscriber can download particular sections of different papers and compile them into a file to download to their MP3 player. For example, if a subscriber wants the sports sections from five different papers all of those articles could be downloaded to the MP3 player with out the other content found in the newspaper. The NFB-Newsline® team is continuously striving to make Newsline usable and convenient for all subscribers.

If you have any questions or suggestions about any of the new features be sure and let me know.

At this years NFB National Convention in July I got a chance to teach some of the features mentioned above. Subscribers were given the opportunity to visit the NFB-Newsline® suite and get one on one instruction on Web News on Demand and NFB-Newsline® In Your Pocket. It was very helpful for the subscribers to get this hands on instruction and very exciting for me to work with subscribers from different states. For the last two weeks I've been testing the new feature Podable News. So far it's working great, and will be very helpful to subscribers who like certain sections of papers from across the country.

In January the Grand Island Independent completely reformatted their website there for interrupting service to NFB-Newsline®. This problem was resolved in May and now even more content is available from the Grand Island Independent. The Lincoln Journal Star has been acting up in July, but the issue is being researched. Please stay tuned for more information.

Now for the stats for this quarter. In May 16,288 minutes were used reading content in Nebraska with an average call lasting 19.23 minutes. May 8th was the most popular day for reading where as the 22nd was the least popular. Subscribers read 16,489 in June with the average call lasting 16.25 minutes. June 16th saw the most action on NFB-Newsline®, but three days later on the 19th action was down. July heated up with a total of 19,425 minutes read with the average call lasting approximately 17.43 minutes. July 29th was the most popular day for reading with the 25th being the least. NFB-Newsline® Nebraska currently has 1,351 subscribers which is up by 89 from this time last year.

With all the new features to NFB-Newsline® I'd like to focus on working with subscribers to access the information in the way best suited to them. If you have events or programs you think I should attend to reach subscribers please let me know. New instructional information is also in the works and will be distributed as requested. I expect this fall to be very busy, so look for a packed full report in November. Thanks!

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Complaints or Issues

There were no CAP Cases this quarter.

New Business:

Report from Committee Regarding Attending Advocacy Group Conventions

At the May 2009 Commission Board meeting, the commissioners had a discussion about commissioners attending blind advocacy group conventions. The commissioners are in support of commissioners attending these conventions. The logistics of commissioner attendance at these conventions was discussed at the May meeting and at that time it was decided to have a Task Force consisting of Commissioners Johnson, Jirak and Walla research the issues and come up with a proposal for the commissioners to discuss at the August 2009 Commission Board meeting.

The Task Force presented their ideas for a policy on commissioners attending advocacy group conventions. Chairman Oltman requested that the Task Force write up a proposed policy and submit it to the Board of Commissioners. The commissioners will further discuss and vote on the proposed policy at the November 2009 Commission Board meeting. Commissioner Walla volunteered to draft the policy.

Executive Director's Goals for the Next Fiscal Year

The Executive Director goals are listed below and were previously emailed to the commissioners.

GOALS FOR THE NCBVI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

State Fiscal Year 2010 Pearl Van Zandt, Ph.D.

These goals drive my work and focus my energies daily.

I. Manage the NCBVI service delivery system to assure that consumers develop the confidence and skills to achieve their goals; including service delivery to individuals, positive relationships with consumer organizations, and effective work with employers and the public to ensure job opportunities for blind persons.

II. Administer fiscal operations of NCBVI to maximize resources, plan for emergencies, and create opportunities for growth and development.

III. Establish and nurture a work culture that attracts exemplary job applicants and that enables employees to perform quality work, grow personally and professionally, and maintain a strong commitment to NCBVI's mission. Objectives for the State Fiscal Year 2010:

Goal I. Service Delivery.

Objective 1.

Increase numbers of clients employed in State agencies and commissions through articles in state employees' newsletter, training hiring teams of other agencies on advantages of hiring blind job candidates, and increasing placement efforts for jobs within Nebraska State government.

Objective 2.

Establish “Project Search”, in partnership with Vocational Rehabilitation (general), hospitals and school systems, to develop job opportunities for Transition clients in targeted communities (Grand Island, Kearney and Norfolk).

Objective 3.

Implement protocol for working effectively with blind children in schools, with educators, and with families. Provide training to staff and educators, in conjunction with Dept. of Education, on approaches for effective communication and coordination with parents and educators of blind children.

Objective 4.

Improve services to older blind persons in the Omaha District with one Counselor carrying seniors-only caseload, providing training to generic aging and community service entities, and building networks with community programs. Analyze findings of Senior Needs Assessment Survey and incorporate into statewide services as appropriate.

Goal II. Fiscal Operations.

Objective 1.

Establish and maintain system for expenditures of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds to assure compliance with federal regulations. Implement expenditure plan to achieve ARRA purposes to create or retain jobs and for short term investment with long term results.

Objective 2.

Monitor expenditures and fund balances to keep within the budget, and to keep service provision at a level that supports quality employment and independent living outcomes for clients. In operations, monitor workload activity and area needs to balance staffing levels and task assignments.

Objective 3.

Continue and enhance outreach to Senators and other policy makers about services for the blind, encourage Center tours and visits with Staff, Commissioners and clients in legislative districts.

Goal III. Workplace Culture

Objective 1.

Develop in-house expertise on Benefits Planning by specialized training to one Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, who will be available to counsel directly with clients statewide on benefits and/or will provide consultation to other staff to assist clients.

Objective 2.

Work with all staff to maintain and improve good communication and teamwork efforts focused on NCBVI's overall mission and goals.

Objective 3.

Continue to monitor and train staff using eForce so that the benefits to case services efficiency and effectiveness are realized. Begin incorporation of Independent Living services tracking into eForce system.

Chairperson Oltman stated that she is very impressed with the goals that Executive Director Van Zandt has set for herself.

Commissioner Johnson asked for further information on Project Search. Van Zandt stated that Project Search began at the Cincinnati Children's Hospital. Van Zandt noted that she heard the lady who started it speak at a National Transition Conference several years ago. It is very inspiring because in hospitals there are important jobs that do not require education in the medical field, but often have a high turnover rate. Project Search came up with ways to make adaptations so people with multiple disabilities could do these jobs. This was a way to fill the need for the hospital and to provide jobs for many people who would have otherwise not gotten jobs. Project Search now goes all over to provide training to Voc Rehab agencies, to schools and hospitals on how to do a similar thing in their community. This needs to be a partnership entity with a local hospital that identifies the schools in the area and Voc Rehab agencies in Nebraska. Currently we have several communities who have started to make this happen (Grand Island, Kearney and Norfolk). Lincoln is a possibility but it probably will not start until next year. Project Search started about five years ago. Voc. Rehab is paying for some of the funding and NCBVI is paying for part. NCBVI's involvement is very important. Some agencies think outside the box for physically handicapped individuals, but NCBVI does creative thinking to help blind people do tasks. Project Search is for transition age clients and that is why the schools are involved.

The commissioners thanked Van Zandt for the information.

Discussion of the Second Staff Survey Comments and Those Sent by the Virtual Suggestion Box

Chairperson Oltman thanked NCBVI staff for their willingness to resubmit their responses to the staff survey. There were some technical issues with the submissions of the original survey. Nebraska.gov indicated that, the survey tool was recording different sessions with the two pages. They did fix this issue and had to implement what is called “sticky sessions.” Unfortunately, technology does have its faults and isn’t always perfect. Oltman indicated that some staff suggestions were also received through the virtual suggestion box and one suggestion was received by regular email to the Chairman.

Chairman Oltman noted that unfortunately she did not get the suggestions from the survey to the meeting today, but the commissioners will discuss the suggestions that they can recall. The suggestions from the virtual suggestion box and from email were available at the meeting. The staff comments are listed below. The commissioners addressed each of the comments individually.

(The entire discussion of the suggestions can be heard by listening to the audio of the Commission Board meeting which can be found on the NCBVI website.)

Commissioner Jirak stated that he remembered a comment expressing concern about hand-holding clients and why aren’t the clients taking more responsibility as it relates to transportation to doctor appointments and resume writing.

Comments discussed were as follows:

“I think we need to get back to having support staff do support work for our offices. Lincoln support staff has many other responsibilities than our field office support staff. But our support staff has been given the OK to not make calls for counselors do no paperwork they are to be freed up to work with clients while the counselors are told to do the support work. This makes no sense. I've talked with several counselors and it appears that our support staff now has more time to surf the net and email and call friends. When we ask our support person to do things for us we are met with suggestions about how we could do that ourselves. The current work situation does not contribute to team building.”

“I should have put an additional comment on the survey. I wanted to say that I think a priority for our agency should be to fund a person to work with counselors on work incentive issues as they relate to SSI and SSDI. Larry Roos has a special interest in this as does Kathy Brown. Larry has worked with me on several occasions and does an outstanding job with it. I know it takes away from his other duties when he does this, but he has a good grasp of these issues, which can get very complex. I believe Voc. Rehab. has a person specifically obligated to do this. Funding for a position like this may be a part time position, but a very important one. Thank you for all you and the board do for our agency.” John C. Schmitt.

“I 'm not sure if my information was left out on the staff survey on purpose or if the information wasn't saved. Just in case it wasn't saved properly I would like to mention it here. I feel that current clients should not be allowed to volunteer or complete internships practicum's within the agency. This is a major breach of confidentiality. They have access to client information and hear information passed on by staff. It's not ethical and breaks the confidentiality of the other clients. I also think that the VR Techs should be able to go out in the field more and work with clients on skills they have the ability to teach. This would free up some of the stress on the counselors who could focus on the more important situations.

Clients with spouses should rely on that source for assistance with filling out applications. It is not cost-effective to drive 20 miles to pick up a client bring them into the office to fill out a paper online application for 5-10 minutes then take them back another 20 miles to home when their sighted spouse could assist them with this task. The client should be taking the initiative and accomplishing this easy task without the commission's assistance. That is a waste of time money for all involved.”

Election of Officers of the Commission Board

Commissioner Walla nominated Commissioner Julie Johnson for Chairman of the Commission. Commissioner Jirak seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and it was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Walla nominated Commissioner Jim Jirak for Vice Chairman of the Commission. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. Commissioner Jenkins voted against the motion. Commissioners Walla, Oltman, Johnson and Jirak voted in favor of the motion. The motion passed.

Commissioner Walla nominated Commissioner Carol Jenkins as Executive Secretary. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motions. A roll call vote was taken and it was unanimous in favor of the motion.

It was noted that these elections will take effect at the conclusion of today's Commission Board meeting.

Discussion of Recommendation of the Auditors for More Review of the Budget by Commissioners

Van Zandt reported that Business Manager Bill Brown sent her some examples of how he could send the commissioners basic information about the budget. Van Zandt stated that she will email the information to the commissioners for their consideration. Van Zandt suggested that the commissioners review the information once they receive it and discuss it during the November 2009 Commission Board meeting. The commissioners agreed with the suggestion.

Focus Topics for Next Meetings

November 21, 2009, Lincoln; Topic: Business Enterprise and Vendors

February 6, 2010, Omaha; Topic: Deaf-Blind Project

Other Topic suggestions for consideration:

Field Services or how staff work with individuals in the field

Final Announcements:

Commissioner Jirak thanked Chairman Oltman for doing a great job as Chairperson of the NCBVI Board of Commissioners for the past two years. All commissioners and staff agreed and applause was given for Oltman.

Adjourn:

The August 8, 2009 Commission Board meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Stephens

Administrative Assistant

NCBVI

Nancy Oltman

Chairman

NCBVI Board of Commissioners

Supported Employment

Fact Sheet

At present, Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI) receives \$30,000 annually for supported employment services through Title VI Part B of the Rehabilitation Act. Federal regulations require that the following criteria be met before these funds can be used for the purpose of supported employment:

1. The individual is to be placed on a job based in the community. The Rehab Act does not require the placement involve a minimum number of hours below which Title VI Part B funds cannot be used, although some agencies do. Also, an individual must be paid no less than minimum wage or that the expectation exists that the individual will eventually earn minimum wage in the near foreseeable future.
2. Placement in an integrated work setting. "Integrated" refers to the opportunity for interaction between the supported employee and the non-disabled work force around him or her with access to the same facilities as the non-disabled work force.
3. The need for ongoing support is expected to continue after funding from NCBVI is terminated. Federal regulations restrict Title VI Part B funds to a period of time not to exceed 18 months after a community-based placement has been made. It is necessary, therefore, that a source of funding for ongoing support be identified before an individual is accepted for supported employment. For those who have developmental disabilities, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), part of the Department of Health and Human Services, will most likely be the source for ongoing funding.

In some cases, NCBVI funding for supported employment services on behalf of an individual may be extended longer than 18 months if there is reason to believe that a source of long range funding will eventually pick up the cost of support allowing the discontinuation of NCBVI funding. This situation occasionally happens when supported employment worksites are set up for individuals between the ages of 18 and 21. DDD does not pick up the cost of supported employment services until individuals have reached the age of 22. In such cases, NCBVI will extend services for longer than 18 months until the age of 22 is reached.

It should be noted that NCBVI funding for supported employment is seldom used to support a case for the full 18 months as limited by federal regulations.

Responsibility for funding ongoing support is generally transferred from NCBVI to DDD when the supported employee's need for support has been reduced to minimal levels. The length of funding from NCBVI will therefore depend on how rapidly the individual's need can be stabilized. If the need for support is reduced to a minimum level in 3 months, responsibility for funding should be transferred at that point.

For individuals with disabilities such as head injury or mental illness who might benefit from supported employment services, ongoing funding is not available. This is one area where some may fall through the cracks. Once a candidate for supported employment has been identified, contractual arrangements between NCBVI and a local provider of supported employment services are established. In the Lincoln area, examples of supported employment service providers include ServiceLinc, Vital, and Employment Works. The contract reflects NCBVI funding for job development, placement services, and ongoing support from a job coach.

There may be instances in which support is only needed for a short time. Let's say that support from a job coach is terminated after 6 months and no other services are needed for employment to be maintained. Such a case is not considered a supported employment case and Title VI Part B funds should not be expended. Of course, whether or not extinction of support can be realized cannot always be anticipated and that's fine. The money has already been spent. If you have a pretty good idea, however, that a person's need for a job coach may be fairly temporary, funds from general case services should be used instead of Title VI Part B funds. In such a case, services from a local supported employment service provider can still be contracted, but basic support funds would be used.

Beyond funding for supported employment services, NCBVI is a resource for in-service training regarding the alternative techniques of blindness. NCBVI staff can also assist local service providers in the development of strategies for resolving difficulties that might arise in the work place due to blindness.

Definition of Terms

The definitions below are taken from the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended 1998):

The term "disability" means a physical or mental impairment that constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment or a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

The term "individual with a disability" means any individual who has a physical or mental impairment which for such individual constitutes or results in a substantial impediment to employment and can benefit in terms of an employment outcome from vocational rehabilitation services, has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment.

The term "individual with a significant disability" means an individual with a disability who has a severe physical or mental impairment which seriously limits one or more functional capacities (such as mobility, communication, self care, self direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome, whose vocational rehabilitation can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time, and who has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculo skeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia, and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, end stage renal disease, or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation.

The term "individual with a most significant disability", used with respect to an individual in a State, means an individual with a significant disability who meets criteria established by the State under section 101(a)(5)(C)

(In Nebraska, and most other states, individuals with the most significant disabilities are typically thought of as candidates for supported employment services.)

The term "supported employment" means competitive work in integrated work settings, or employment in integrated work settings in which individuals are working toward competitive work, consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individuals, for individuals with the most significant disabilities for whom competitive employment has not traditionally occurred or for whom competitive employment has been interrupted or intermittent as a result of a significant disability, and who, because of the nature and severity of their disability, need intensive supported employment services for the period, and any extension, and extended services after the transition in order to perform such work.

(The Rehabilitation Act does not define the term "competitive employment," but we may think of this as employment most representative of the world of work. Workers with disabilities and non-disabled employees work in the same integrated work setting and are paid at least minimum wage. In this sense, supported employment is also thought of as competitive employment, the distinction being that ongoing support is required for that employment to be maintained. Sheltered employment, in contrast, is not integrated, and workers may be paid a sub-minimum wage.)

The term "supported employment services" means ongoing support services and other appropriate services needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment, that are provided singly or in combination and are organized and made available in such a way as to assist an eligible individual to achieve competitive employment, are based on a determination of the needs of an

eligible individual as specified in an individualized plan for employment, and are provided by the designated State unit for a period of time not to extend beyond 18 months, unless under special circumstances the eligible individual and the rehabilitation counselor or coordinator involved jointly agree to extend the time in order to achieve the rehabilitation objectives identified in the individualized plan for employment.

The term "extended services" means ongoing support services and other appropriate services, needed to support and maintain an individual with a most significant disability in supported employment, that are provided singly or in combination and are organized and made available in such a way as to assist an eligible individual in maintaining supported employment, are based on a determination of the needs of an eligible individual, as specified in an individualized plan for employment, and are provided by a State agency, a nonprofit private organization, employer, or any other appropriate resource, after an individual has made the transition from support provided by the designated State unit.

(The designated state unit serving blind consumers in Nebraska is NCBVI. Because Title VI Part B funds allocated to NCBVI for supported employment services are restricted in individual cases to 18 months, it is necessary for a third party to pay for extended services. Most often, that turns out to be the Division of Developmental Disabilities, part of the Department of Health and Human Services.)

The term "ongoing support services" means services provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities, provided, at a minimum, twice monthly to make an assessment, regarding the employment situation, at the worksite of each such individual in supported employment, or, under special circumstances, especially at the request of the client, off site, and based on the assessment, to provide for the coordination or provision of

specific intensive services, at or away from the worksite, that are needed to maintain employment stability, consisting of a particularized assessment supplementary to the comprehensive assessment; the provision of skilled job trainers who accompany the individual for intensive job skill training at the worksite; job development, job retention, and placement services; social skills training; regular observation or supervision of the individual; follow-up services such as regular contact with the employers, the individuals, the individuals' representatives, and other appropriate individuals, in order to reinforce and stabilize the job placement; facilitation of natural supports at the worksite; any other service (needed to support the client on the job); or a service similar to another service described in this subparagraph.

(Most often, we think of job coaches when we think of ongoing support services. It can mean much more than that. For consumers with developmental disabilities, it may often include residential services, life skills training, transportation services, and other supports. An interdisciplinary team of service providers work with individual consumers with developmental disabilities to ensure that the broad spectrum of service needs are met.)

Supported Employment Providers by Provider

Provider	City
Ability Building Services 909 W. 23rd St.	Yankton SD 57078
Autism Center of NE 4007 Harrison Street	Omaha 68147-1010
Black Hills Workshop and Training Ctr. P.O. Box 1137	Bellevue 68005
Career Solutions 1941 S. 42 nd St.	Omaha 68105
Cirrus House 1509 1 st Ave	Scottsbluff 69363-0442
Community Alliance 4001 Leavenworth St.	Omaha 68105
Developmental Services of NE 5001 N. 57 th St.	Lincoln 68507
Developmental Services of NE 3710 Central Avenue	Kearney 68847
Developmental Services of NE 10437 J Street	Omaha 68127-1019
Eastern NE Community Office of Retardation 900 S. 74 th Plaza, Suite 333	Omaha 68114
Eastern NE Community Office of Retardation 935 S. Schneider Street	Freemont 68025
Employment Works 101 E. Wilson Ave	Norfolk 68701-2970
Goodwill Box 1863	Grand Island 68802
Goodwill 2727 West 2 nd Street, Suite 470	Hastings 68901
Goodwill 4906 4 th Ave	Kearney 68845
Liberty Center 900 E. Norfolk	Norfolk 68701
Mental Health Association of NE 1645 N. Street, Suite A	Lincoln 68508

Mid-NE Individual Services 216 N. Denver	Hastings 68902
Mid-NE Individual Services 2536 Carleton	Grand Island 68802
Mid-NE Individual Services 710 Kiowa Lane	Broken Bow 68822
Mid-NE Individual Services 420 Riverview Dr.	Ord 68862
Mid-NE Individual Services 409 Grant St.	Holdrege 68949
Mid-NE Individual Services 504 West Derby	Oxford 68967
Mid-NE Individual Services 1400 East 27th Street	Kearney 68847
Mid-NE Individual Services 207 Central	Superior 68978
Mosaic 105 E. Norfolk Ave.; Suite 200	Norfolk 68701-5323
Mosaic 4979 S. 118 Street	Omaha 68137-2213
Mosaic 210 E. 8th Street	Fremont 68023
Nebraska Mentor 300 Oakcreek Dr., Suite 1B	Lincoln 68528-1571
North Platte Opportunity Center 501 N. Bryan	North Platte 69101
North Star 2866 48th Ave.	Columbus 68602-1097
North Star 312 N. 7th Street	Norfolk 68701
North Star 607 South Broadway	Bloomfield 68718
North Star 740 West 21 South	Sioux City 68776
North Star Services 318 East US Hwy. 20	O'Neill 68763
North Star Services 900 North Charde	Oakland 68045

North Star Services 1750 West 23rd, Suite C	Fremont 68025
North Star Services 324 S. Hall Street	Valentine 69201
Quality Living 6320 N. 70th Plaza	Omaha 68104
Rainbow Center 3602 16th Street	Columbus 68601
Region 1 Office of Human Development 1618 19th Avenue	Scottsbluff 69361-1327
Region I Office of Human Development 427 Illinois Street	Sidney 69162
Region I Office of Human Development Box 973	Chadron 69337
Region V Services 147 S. 6th St.	Seward 68343
Region V Services (SENDS) 2507 Schneider	Auburn 68305
Region V Services 1430 South St. Suite 203	Lincoln
Region V Services 360 S St.	David City 68320
Region V Services Box 366	Fairbury 68352
Region V Services 808 8th Corso	Nebraska City 68410
Region V Services 1910 N. Chestnut	Wahoo 68066
Region V Services 1951 E. 13th St.	Crete 68333
Region V Services 822 Lincoln Ave.	York 68467
Region V Services 421 Lincoln Avenue	Hebron 68370
Region V Services – ServiceLinc 145 S. 56th Street	Lincoln 68510

South Central Developmental Services 821 Ave. J	Cozad 69130
Southwest Area Training Services 606 East 12th	McCook 69001
Versatile Support Services 2316 9th Street	Columbus 68601-5421
Vital Services 2605 Fairfield Street	Lincoln 68521-1306