

Blind Vendor Committee Meeting  
4600 Valley Road  
Lincoln, NE 68510  
Friday, March 8, 2013

Meeting called to order by Chairman Howard Simons at 10:05 A.M.

Vendors in attendance:  
Howard Simons Chairman  
Dave Johnson Vice Chairman  
Sandy Alvarado Secretary  
Todd Shumaker  
Antonio Aguilar  
Chris Nolan  
Victor Ireland

NCBVI employees in attendance:  
Dr. Pearl Van Zandt Executive Director  
Carlos Servan Deputy Director  
Don Ward  
Jan Stokebrand

Guests in attendance:  
Oscar Alvarado

Approval of minutes:

A motion was made by Dave Johnson to approve the minutes from the last meeting held in December 2012 as distributed It was seconded by Sandy Alvarado. Motion passed.

Report from Executive Director, Dr. Van Zandt:

Secretary's note: -Below is the written report from Dr. Van Zandt. When a discussion was held after Dr. Van Zandt's comments, I have placed the discussion between (brackets).

#### NBE 2013 MARCH REPORT:

In December, we started Victor Ireland in the 5 Lincoln Post office annexes. These annexes were sub contracted. Ireland should become a licensed vendor this month.

A client who was in training in Norfolk had to leave early in February because of medical reasons, as a result, we are subcontracting this Post Office annex with National Vending.

We closed the Offutt Juice Bar in the middle of February because there was not enough business.

We will be gaining the 14 Omaha post office annexes April 1. Our vendors will manage eight locations; and we will sub contract the other six in a later time, perhaps a two to three week period. These will be added to Sandy Alvarado and Randy Swanson's routes.

(Dave Johnson asked a question to everyone there. He wanted to know how often would these annex sites need to be serviced? Since Victor has been working the sites in Lincoln, we deferred the question to him. Ireland stated that most of them only need to be serviced about once a week. Dr. Van Zandt asked a follow up question. She wanted to know if Victor felt that if he was at each site more often would it make a difference in sales? Victor went on to explain that he didn't really think so since most of the employees are the carriers and don't stay in the facility all day. He stated he has a good rapport with those who do stay there.

Howard Simons asked if the machines were located where the public can use them. Victor answered that no, they are in the break area for the employees only.)

We have been working on contracts with the Army National Guard for the Joint Forces Headquarters Building in Lincoln. Related paperwork is still in their legal department and should be done in the next few weeks. We made an announcement about this opening back in December and current vendors were not interested, thus Victor Ireland will manage that location.

A new agreement with the Department of Roads for the rest areas should be completed in the next few weeks. This agreement should help vendors to save around \$10 per location per month.

(Dr. Van Zandt suggested to the committee that we invite the DOR representative to our planned retreat since they were unable to attend our meeting today. It would give them a chance to actually meet the vendors that work out in the rest areas. Howard asked if during the discussions if NCBVI inquired about using the now empty spaces that are inside the rest areas. This space used to be where the travel information was kept. Don Ward stated that at one time something was mention but nothing was ever done. Dr. Van Zandt requested that this topic be brought before the DOR again.)

Finally, we are looking at the Retirement Plan that is now in place as a benefit for vendors. Only a few currently participate. Don will add a segment of his training for new vendors to explain the plan. We want to offer this if folks find it to be a positive thing. Fees continue to increase over time, so it is important that we do review the plan.

(Discussion held about how many participate. Jan stated that some vendors only contribute once a year so the numbers may not look like too many participate. Dr. Van Zandt wondered out loud if perhaps people aren't aware of it and how it could benefit them. Dave Johnson asked if there had been any thought on increasing the amount of matching funds.

Todd Shumaker wants to have Jim Budde present at our retreat again so more vendors can become more aware of this opportunity. Todd stated he has heard negative opinions about the program and wanted to give all vendors the opportunity to ask questions at the retreat. Dr. Van Zandt stated that she and Bill Brown will be investigating this plan to make sure it is still a benefit to offer or if we may need to make a change.)

Update on vendors:

Victor Ireland will be licensed by the end of March. Howard Simons asked if we had any other new vendors in the state. Don Ward stated that at this time there are no new vendors. Don Ward will be having Martin Gorgeous shadow him so that Martin can become familiar with our program. He is not legally blind at this time but if his vision gets worse he could become a vendor. Howard Simons commented on how it would be nice if we had people waiting in the shadows to become part of the program. Sandy Alvarado asked how the NCBVI finds potential participants. Carlos Servan explained how it involves the councilors to inform their clients. Sandy Alvarado stated that she knows of a counselor who is not very positive on the program and perhaps more than counselors should be used. Dave Johnson suggested that a post be placed on the NFB-Newsline or on the NCBVI website like a job notice. Sandy Alvarado suggested that if the commission is holding seminars with clients that a member of the program and not just the commission present to the group. Carlos Servan also went on to explain how in the past the idea of vending wasn't popular with clients since they didn't seem to make much money. We have been making changes in the program to make it more financially attractive by combining locations and other forward thinking ideas. Carlos Servan stated that a self-employment seminar is to be offered to commission clients soon and the NBE program will be part of that. Dr. Van Zandt suggested that the retreat subcommittee consider having something to show how you can progress from a smaller location to something larger in the program.

Timely and accurate profit/loss submissions:

Jan Stokebrand just reminded us to double check all our work and make sure we have all receipts. Overall the reports are much better. A couple of vendors are behind due to health reasons but she is working with them since she was notified of the issues. She also reminded us of the increase in the allowed mileage deduction. She pointed out that we need to stay on top of the changes and gave a special thanks to Dave Johnson as he was the one to let her know.

New business:

Discuss plans for the September retreat and set a date for the subcommittee to meet.

Identified the members on the subcommittee for planning the retreat in September. Todd Shumaker is the chairman of this committee. Howard Simons, Victor Ireland and Antonio Aguilar are the remaining members. Todd informed us that he wants to hold a committee meeting shortly after this meeting. He is looking for topics for the retreat. Since the Department of Roads (DOR) was not available to attend today it would be nice to invite them to the retreat as stated previously in these notes.

Sandy Alvarado asked a question specific to her situation. Since she will be adding six (6) locations to her route, she asked about funding for initial inventory. Don and Carlos explained how her case would be opened and treated as a new vendor to assist with this situation. Sandy also asked if the commission could investigate getting permission to place a vending machine near the Bob Kerrey pedestrian bridge since it is near the National Parks Service building Sandy already services. She would like to have something the public can access to get water or a sports drink. The potential seems great. Don Ward informed us that the PNS doesn't want to draw the public to the building. He said we could submit a request to see what they would say.

Sandy than told about a vending machine near a bus stop in the area that is very large and mentioned some of the items it sold. Discussion then fell to perhaps the commission should inquire if the City of Omaha or the State of Nebraska would allow a vending machine on their property near the bridge.

Todd Shumaker requested Jan send him contact information for the DOR and other information they may have. Jan stated that she would send all the information from last year. Antonio suggested we get someone from Coke or Pepsi. Dave asked if the retreat was for two (2) days this year. Don Ward informed us that the retreat is scheduled for September 27 & 28. We have reserved the Holiday Inn located on 9th and O Street. Dave suggested that we consider changing the time of our committee meeting for that day to be earlier. Discussion was held on the possibility of this happening to encourage more participation in the retreat and the meeting as well. Don will need to check with the hotel to see if we would be able to start earlier with the rooms. This will be something the subcommittee will decide after all information is available to them. Howard suggested we ask the person who spoke on technology again. Wes Majerus was suggested since he is in Lincoln and the head of the department for technology for NCBVI. The suggestion to have machines there again was made. Another suggestion was to have some suppliers there again. Sam's Club, Cash-Wa, Vistar and a few other names were suggested.

Old business:

Don gave a report from Justin, the Coke representative. We are right on where we need to be to stay on the agreement we have with them. Jan Stokebrand informed us that one thing that will need to be discussed at the next vendor committee meeting is the set aside amount.

## Committee Elections:

Jan Stokebrand explained how this is required and how it is to be done. She will send out a message to all vendors asking if they would like to run for the committee. Once a list of interested vendors is turned in, she sends out a ballot for all vendors to vote who they would like to have on the committee. We need five (5) vendors to be on the committee. Once the five are voted in, the elected members then meet to choose who holds what positions. Jan asked, who at the meeting, is interested in running again. Todd Shumaker, Howard Simons, Dave Johnson, Sandy Alvarado and Chris Nolan stated they would run. Antonio stated he would think about running. Sandy Alvarado asked if Jan could send out an updated contact list of vendors to everyone. Jan stated she would do so in different formats.

## Next meeting:

The Blind Vendors Committee (BVC) will meet again on Friday, May 17, 2013 at 10:00 A.M. in Lincoln Nebraska.

## Adjourned:

Dave Johnson made a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Chris Nolan seconded it. Motion passed.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Sandy Alvarado  
BVC Secretary