

Blind Vendors Committee Meeting
4600 Valley Road, Room 328
Lincoln, NE 68510
May 17, 2013

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

ATTENDANCE:

Members in attendance

Chair Howard Simons
Vice Chair Dave Johnson via phone
Secretary Sandy Alvarado
Todd Shumaker
Victor Ireland
Antonio Aguilar
Chris Nolan

NCBVI employees in attendance:

Executive Director Dr. Pearl Van Zandt
Deputy Director Carlos Servan
Don Ward

Guest: Michelle Morgan

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Dave Johnson to approve the minutes as distributed. It was seconded by Sandy Alvarado. Motion passed.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Carlos informed us of the election results for the Blind Vendors Committee (BVC). Elected were: Sandy Alvarado, Todd Shumaker, Victor Ireland, Antonio Aguilar and Chris Nolan. The newly elected committee met privately to elect officers. After returning to the meeting, Sandy announced the results of the deliberations: Sandy Alvarado as Chair, Todd Shumaker as Vice Chair, Antonio Aguilar as Secretary, Chris Nolan and Victor Ireland as members at large. At this time, Chair Simons handed the rest of the meeting over to Sandy to officiate.

REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DR. VAN ZANDT:

(Secretary's note: The following is a copy of Dr. Van Zandt's report with additional comments designated by parenthesis)

NBE Report for May 2013

The new contract with the Department of Roads, for vending at the interstate rest areas, is at their legal department ready for the final version. This will bring approximately \$20 per month in savings to our managers. This new contract is asking for all the vending machines to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Thus, we will up-grade the vending machines to be in ADA compliance. We plan to purchase approximately 50 new machines before the end of the federal fiscal year for a total of approximately \$180,000.

(Sandy reminded everyone of Howard's previous DOR request: Since rest areas no longer offer travel information, there is an empty room available at each site. Howard wants us to ask if the vending machines could be moved from outside to inside the now empty rooms. Don will address this question once the contracts have been approved and finalized.)

The new contract with the Joint Forces is done and the vendor, Victor Ireland, started last week and was licensed recently.

Two current vendors in Omaha recently added the eight new annex buildings from the US Postal Services to their locations.

Carlos and Victor are attending BLAST from May 20-23.

Two vendors had issues with their building managers. The first was put on probation a few months ago because of several complaints about customer services. We provided extra training to the vendor as well as conducting a survey on the quality improvement of the vending services. As a result, the vendor made progress and is now off probation.

On the second vendor, we were contacted by the building manager due to hygiene reasons. We sent a letter to the vendor, talked to the building manager, and continue to monitor the situation.

A vendor who was making back payments for over two years for DOR utilities finished their last payment this week. We sent a letter to confirm and thank the vendor for making the payments.

We added the Parthenon Greek Restaurant as a caterer for the Lincoln INS Highlands Building.

We added catering to the Lincoln Federal Building. We are now providing hot lunch two days a week to both of the INS Buildings and the Federal Building, in addition to the already existing vending in these buildings.

We are in the process of adding our first ATM machine to the program, for Antonio at the State Office Building.

DOR CONTRACT UPDATE:

See above

ANNUAL DISCUSSION OF SET ASIDE RATE:

Dr. Pearl reported that after analyzing the vending program, the Commission is suggesting a decrease of 0.5% to make our set aside percentage 12% starting for the July 2013 reports. Howard Simons made a motion for us to accept the reduction for set aside. The motion was seconded by Victor Ireland. Sandy called for any discussion. The following question was asked: "If we should keep the same amount to help prevent the vendors from having to increase it again next year?" Dr. Pearl and Carlos informed us that they carefully reviewed the reports and the status of the program to make sure the recommendations was a sound one. The Commission desires vendors to succeed and the goals are for vendors to keep more of their profits. After a few minutes of discussion, Sandy called for an end to the discussion and called the vote. The motion passed to accept the new percentage of 12% for set aside starting in July.

REPORT FROM SUB-COMMITTEE ON SEPTEMBER'S RETREAT:

Todd reported they have about 9 speakers. The committee is working on scheduling them during the allotted times. Carlos asked if they decided to start the retreat Friday morning with the committee meeting.

Todd said at this time that is the placement of the vendor committee meeting. The sub-committee would like any feedback from anyone for ideas or suggestions.

UPDATES ON VENDORS:

Victor has his license now. The Commission is looking for a new vendor in the Omaha area due to some additional openings that are available.

TIMELY AND ACCURATE PROFIT AND LOSS REPORTS:

Carlos and Don reported for Jan who was not able to attend. We are doing much better compared to a year ago. All reports are coming in on time and with payments.

UPDATE ON JOINT FORCES INSTALLATION:

Victor reported that machines were installed last week and the vending is proving to be very popular. He is impressed and excited about the potential of this site. Don explained more about the Joint Forces. This contract will help us get two more buildings in the future. They have a fully functioning kitchen in which they are asking for bids. The Commission is looking to place a bid for this site as well.

UPDATE ON PURCHASE ADA MACHINES:

Dave asked what will be done with the vending machines that will be replaced. Don explained that he will have several machines available that are in very good condition. Dr. Pearl asked if Don had a replacement plan for the available machines. She suggested that vendors send in requests for replacements. If the machines are not placed, they will go to a surplus auction. Sandy volunteered to send out the request and have the vendors respond to her and Don.

SET TIME AND DATE FOR NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be Friday, Sept. 27, 2013 at 10:00 A.M. at the Downtown Lincoln Holiday Inn.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Todd informed us that the construction of the Coliseum is about to be finished. His thoughts were on trying to get the vending contract. Dr. Pearl suggested contacting the City of Lincoln since it is their facility. Victor brought up a very important point. He explained how difficult it was for him to come up with money for initial stock for the Joint Forces site on the small amount of profit he has been making with the two Post Offices. Victor had to purchase product from Sam's Club and Pepsi on his own. The Pepsi situation has been rectified. However, Sam's Club has changed their rules. The Commission can't use a debit card nor get a Discover card. Victor explained how he submitted a request for reimbursement for the change he put into the machines at the Post Office, and that he had to resubmit the request before being reimbursed. Sandy suggested that we invite Bill Brown and/or Dave Robinson to a discussion to solve this problem. It is difficult for new vendors or even current vendors who are opening new facilities to come up with the funds for initial stock. It is stated in the rules for the program that the Commission will provide the initial stock.

ADJOURNMENT:

Dave Johnson made a motion to adjourn. It was seconded by Howard. Motion passed at 11:49 A.M.

Respectfully submitted by:
Sandy Alvarado
Secretary, BVC