

Nebraska Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Public Meeting
Saturday August 10, 2013
Quality Inn and Suites
2102 South Jeffers
North Platte, Nebraska

Approved Minutes

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

Julie Johnson, Chairperson of the Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and she welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Commissioners present: Julie Johnson, Chairperson, York; Mike Hansen, Designee of the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska, Lincoln; Jim Jirak, Vice Chairperson, Designee of the American Council of the Blind of Nebraska, Omaha; Nancy Oltman, Hastings; Darrell Walla, Omaha.

Commission staff present, Dr. Pearl Van Zandt, Executive Director; Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant; Carlos Serván, Deputy Director VR; Bob Deaton, Deputy Director IL; Wes Majerus, Program Manager/Technology, all from Lincoln; Jamie Forbis, OC Counselor, North Platte; Sarah Stewart, North Platte District Supervisor, Kearney, Jan Brandt, Technology Specialist, Kearney.

Public Present: Dan Bird, meeting recorder and driver, Omaha; Chris Turner, North Platte; Paulette Monthei, ACB-N President and presenter, Omaha.

It was noted that public comments are always welcome regarding the agenda items. Dan Bird recorded the meeting and the recordings are available on the website.

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available, in both print and Braille format. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, the State Government Calendar, NCBVI Website, NFB Newslines® and Radio Talking Book. The Notice was also sent to ACB and NFB, the NCBVI List Serve. Everyone will be on their own for lunch.

Chairperson Johnson asked Vice Chair Jirak to chair today's meeting. Vice Chair Jirak agreed.

Approval of June 22 minutes

Commissioner Oltman moved to approve the Minutes of the June 22, 2013 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Walla seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and it was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Focus Topic: Technology Program Manager Position

Technology program Manager, Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired – Report by Wes Majerus, Technology Program Manager

First of its kind

I was hired as Technology program Manager in 2012, and started my four-month Center Training on April 28, 2012. It was beneficial to go through the training Center so that I had an opportunity to have an overall feel of the Commission Culture before starting my position.

The Technology Program Manager position that I currently occupy is a first-of-its-kind position for the Commission. This is so because the Technology program Manager deals with Information Technology and Access Technology, and in addition, manages three technology specialists. The specialists serve each of the three districts, Omaha, Lincoln, and North Platte. From the start of my formal duties on August 20, I have attempted to keep staff and client technology needs separate. In other words, the technology specialists have been asked, as much as they can, to concentrate on client tech requests and the duties that go into serving the clients. Due to the vast size of our state, and the nature of technology problems, this is not always possible.

I serve tech needs of Commission staff in a number of ways. I am available by telephone and email both at my desk and via my iPhone to field tech questions. We have urged the staff to report issues to me as much as possible rather than going to district tech specialists for support needs. In this way, I can see trends in tech issues, and ensure that the district specialists can work with the clients in their district. When it is warranted, I utilize JAWS tandem to both work remotely on the computer, and to hear the output of the screen reader. There are some tasks for which this will not work, for example, anything that requires administrator privileges or dealing with Windows's User Account Control. For quick issues, or issues that cannot be solved remotely, I have asked tech specialists to work on these issues on a limited basis. Examples of such issues might be troubleshooting a stand-alone product like a notetaker, iPhone, or peripheral, or installing software or dealing with portions of a computer where JAWS tandem will not work. Because hardware installation often requires the installation of software or drivers, I will need the assistance of someone on site if I am unable to make it to that remote office. Password resets are handled through the Office of the CIO Help Desk, with some contacts here at NCBVI serving as authorized agents who get the password to the affected employee. There was a transitional time where staff would refer to their local specialist more than working directly with me, but now, it does seem like we have a system worked out, and that we are handling staff tech issues across the state in a timely and efficient manner.

I also complete some training of staff in the use of State systems. This primarily happens when new functionality is rolled into the systems, or when either the systems themselves or a revision of the screen access packages modifies the accessibility of the system. We often refresh staff's understanding of infrequently-used systems like Open Enrollment. When questions arise regarding these systems or more formal training is established, I will do the training in person when I can. When a user is outside Lincoln, I will work with them when I am in a particular office, or utilize JAWS tandem and the phone to provide the training remotely. When Open Enrollment happened last year, I worked with some staff here in Lincoln in person and offered to do the same for the satellite offices. In these cases, I focused primarily on accessibility and referred benefits questions to Dave Robinson or State Personnel. I also make documents available outlining steps to work through Open Enrollment, view a paystub, etc. This gives staff something to refer to at a later time.

There are times in which I have worked with clients. We have adopted a policy wherein I will serve as a point of contact for a district when their tech specialist is on vacation for an extended period of time, or when something critical comes up. I have traveled to North Platte to perform a technology evaluation, and have worked on a job site in Columbus, NE to ensure that the technology there was usable by clients.

I want to say a word about our technology infrastructure. All of our computer systems connect via the State Data Communications Network (SDCN). The SDCN provides such things as our email, storage for individual files, an agency-wide file repository, and servers for sharing networked copier/printers. It also provides general network connectivity so that one can browse the internet or use web-based applications like our client tracking system, the State's procurement system, as well as other web-based applications hosted by the State. The SDCN is administered by the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO). The OCIO also hosts applications such as eForce, the Procurement system, and the application used for completing Open Enrollment. This means that for any issues of a technical nature that are not related to access technology, the OCIO will likely play a part in the resolution of such issues. When it is deemed appropriate, I will either call the Helpdesk for a staff member (if the issue is technical or time sensitive), or I will direct the staff member to the help desk (if they are in a remote office, the issue is with just one machine, or if I am not sure of the cause of the issue and it is not of an Access Technology nature). I usually keep track of these issues informally by checking in with the staff member until I know that the issue is resolved. This may or may not require additional calls to the OCIO depending on issue complexity or the need for further information. If I deal with the OCIO or the Help Desk, I keep affected staff members apprised as to the status of issues. If an issue is of an Access Tech nature, I may direct staff to the vendor of the Access Technology or call the vendor myself with or without the staff member. If I take ownership of the issue, I keep the staff member apprised as to what is going on.

Just before I assumed my formal duties, we changed the processes by which computers were prepared for staff members. Tech specialists had been preparing the

computers for staff use after they were purchased. Now, we purchase computers from Dell, and have the OCIO add the machines to the network domain and load productivity software onto them. Once they are ready and returned to us, I load screen access software and other access technology onto the machines if needed. For administration purposes, sighted staff computers also get a copy of JAWS. In this way, I can ask a staff member to start JAWS, and then use Tandem to assist them in resolving an issue. If a staff member has a specific need or concern, I ensure that is addressed during initial computer setup. We have procured a number of desktops and laptops over the past year, and overall, the system we have in place seems to be working.

One unique concern that has occurred as of late is the need to provide more and more software solutions to staff and clients that are not sold as boxed copies. This is prevalent with the proliferation of smartphones and tablets whose software is downloaded on an individualized account like an AppleID. The tech Team is currently looking at joining the Apple Value-Added Program for Business so that we can purchase apps centrally and then push them out on an as-needed basis. Though we are confident that this would work well for our staff, we need to ensure that it is legal for us to provide the apps to our clients outside the organization. This will make it easier for us to, for example, provide a Mac-based word processor for a client through a promo code sent to their email, or let us procure a school-required application that a student might use on the iPad that costs a significant amount of money. From a staff standpoint, we could purchase, in bulk, licenses for blindness-specific iPhone apps and roll them out to a staff member's iPhone as needed so that the staff member could use them for demonstration purposes.

Tech Team

NCBVI has a committee called the Tech Team. Although it was in existence before I arrived at the commission, it has now become part of my job duty to administer this team and guide its proceedings. The team is comprised of the three District Technology Specialists, the Center Technology Instructor, the Business Manager, and the two Deputy Directors. The core of the team is the three Tech Specialists, the Center Tech Instructor, and I. Due to the nature of their work; the Deputy Directors and Business Manager do not attend all proceedings of the team, but are called in when issues affect their areas of focus. Dr. Van Zandt is also invited to all meetings. I have also opened up the meeting to district supervisors if they have a concern, or one of our programs impacts their district or a program that they are administering. For example, Connie Daly represented the Lincoln District at a meeting early in the plenary stages of the Employment Conference to ensure that the team's plans met the needs and goals of the Employment Conference.

Issues that may be examined by the Tech Team include:

- Adoption of certain hardware or software solutions in the Center or the field.
- Evaluation of web sites or curriculums for training.

- Discussion of and preparation for programs of a statewide nature i.e. the Employment conference or exhibits at a meeting affecting more than one district.
- Having a forum for sharing training methodologies and techniques that could benefit the team statewide.
- Guiding procurement decisions for certain types of software or hardware that may be used by staff or clients when they visit offices.
- Discussion of training opportunities.
- Coordinating statewide projects.

Accessibility

Accessibility has been a large function of the Technology Program Manager position. One of the things that Dr. Van Zandt and I have agreed on is that we do not have the time or resources to be the "police force" when it comes to accessibility of state resources. Having said this, we also recognize that there is expertise within the agency, and issues need to be resolved when applications and sites directly touch the work of our staff, and to some extent, clients that work for the State. I currently sit on the Workday Accessibility Advisory Council, which meets on a bimonthly and sometimes quarterly basis to discuss accessibility features in the Workday software package. Workday is the software the State uses to complete Open Enrollment and other tasks. My seat on this council has led to enhancements being made that affected Open Enrollment tasks, and provides a direct line to the Accessibility Product Manager at Workday. I work closely with the IT staff of the State Accounting division to impact the accessibility of the Edge Enterprise Resource Procurement system. This has led to the reformatting of one of the paystub output pages to make it more accessible. Work also continues on the Cornerstone Talent Management System that is being used by the State to host performance appraisal, web-based training, and enrollment for classes offered by the State. This piece has been the most difficult to work with. I still await promised revisions to be made to the system and a log of said revisions stating how accessibility has been altered. We hope to also have some influence on the new purchasing module that the Materiel Division is planning to unveil.

Notable Projects

- Procurement and implementation of two networked Braille embossers for Lincoln and Omaha.
- Assistance in the procurement of an Audio/Visual system for the newly-renovated Lincoln District conference room. Provision of support for the system when necessary. Utilization of a fully-accessible AppleTV box to allow display of content through iOS devices.
- Replacement of the server that licenses Access Technology products across the state.
- Procurement of iPads and iPad Minis for all offices.
- Work on the accessibility of three major state systems that are used by Commission staff in various aspects of their work.
- Evaluation of a proposed new client tracking system.

- Assisted in the strengthening of network connectivity in Kearney and Norfolk.

Upcoming Projects

- Implementing a shared calendar through the State's Exchange 2010 server.
- Taking a look at staff usage of iPads as notetakers.
- Looking into distribution of apps for the iOS program in a centralized way.
- Evaluate the training needs of staff regarding the use of the iPhone, deployment of said training.

Concerns

- I often struggle to look at the 30,000 foot view of technology across our state as I am often looking at details and solving day-to-day problems.
- Ensuring that programs don't impact one district specialist more heavily than others; balancing the work load across the state.
- Balancing time spent on accessibility projects, team observation/management, and resolution of tech-related issues.
- There have been times when someone has experienced a problem for a long time, but because it wasn't brought to my attention right away, I did not know they were having the trouble. The problem could have been resolved in a timely fashion if the problem was reported earlier.
- Ensuring that our unique needs as an agency are met by the OCIO's practices and policies. Ensuring the technology works as we need it to while keeping in mind security and accessibility.

Conclusion

In closing, I also want to thank my team. This has been a year of transition for all of us, and I think that it has gone as smoothly as it could have because we are working together. None of the projects mentioned here would be possible without the work my team does and ultimately, the clients we serve.

Job Description for the Technology Program Manager.

DPI PROGRAM MANAGER
BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED - NCBVI

COMMENTS: Successful candidates for employment must be able to satisfactorily pass an extensive criminal background check.

All new hires will complete 600 hours of immersion training in Lincoln, at NCBVI expense, at the Nebraska Center for the Blind to learn the alternative skills of blindness (cane travel, Braille, assistive technology, activities of daily living, etc.).

Work is performed under the supervision of the agency Executive Director. Physical office will be at the NCBVI Headquarters, 4600 Valley Road, Suite 100, Lincoln Nebraska 68510.

Field assignments and travel are involved in varying degrees.

State agencies are responsible to evaluate each of their positions to determine their individual overtime eligibility status as required by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA).

DESCRIPTION: Incumbent will serve on the NCBVI management team and report directly to the Executive Director. Will also supervise a staff of three Technology Specialists & perform related work as assigned.

Job Duties: Provide leadership to a statewide technology program for staff and consumers.

Participate in state enterprise initiatives.

May serve on local, state, and national committees related to disability and information technology issues.

Plan and implement long-term goals and short-term objectives for assistive technology.

Participate in Administrative and Supervisors meetings.

Develop and enforce policies, procedures, and guidelines to ensure that computers, supporting software and hardware, and the agency's networks operate as required by the needs of NCBVI staff.

Develop and implement plans, policies, and procedures for the maintenance of computer hardware, software, networks, and data to be used by agency staff.

Develop, implement, and maintain procedures for the timely and appropriate acquisition of computer hardware and software.

Develop and enforce guidelines to ensure that software used by blind staff members is compatible with nonvisual access technology.

Direct and coordinate efforts to enable technical support

personnel to evaluate and solve technical problems in a timely and correct fashion.

Participate in planning, development, and implementation of the agency's strategic plans as they relate to information and nonvisual access technology..

Direct the development of procedures to ensure that technologies used in the loaner pool and technology resource center are current and that equipment is loaned in a timely and responsive way to our consumers who need it.

Develop and implement policies, plans, and procedures to ensure that technical support is available to help our clients keep functional the nonvisual access technology they use in educational settings or on the job.

Direct efforts and provide leadership to ensure that rehabilitation technology specialists maintain the most current knowledge about nonvisual access technology and the integration of that technology into the workplace.

Coordinate efforts to ensure that rehabilitation technology specialists provide valid and timely recommendations to counselors and teachers in support of their clients.

Provide leadership, supervision and guidance to rehabilitation technology specialists to enable them to solve technical problems in an expeditious and correct fashion.

Supervise, evaluate performance, mentor, train, and discipline rehabilitation technology specialists.

Plan and arrange for the technology training needs of agency staff. Assure that new and senior staff have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to carry out their job duties by assessment of the training needs of all staff. Plan and evaluate new staff training as it pertains to technology.

Qualifications/Requirements: Applicants will be screened for possession of these qualifications. Applicants who need accommodation in the selection process should request this in advance.

Bachelor's Degree in business/public administration, social work,

behavioral science, computer science or related field. Relevant coursework/training or experience may be substituted for the educational requirement on a year-for-year basis. Prefer experience working with software and hardware functionality and computer accessibility technology and licensing.

Knowledge ,Skills and Abilities: These are needed to perform the work assigned.

- * Excellent verbal and written communication skills-in English.
- * Ability to exercise leadership where called for and motivate others to accomplish difficult tasks.
- * Ability to evaluate strengths and weaknesses of various nonvisual access technologies-including screen access software, screen enlargement technology, Braille embossers, and personal digital assistants for the blind.
- * Proficiency with the Windows operating system and various Microsoft applications-including Microsoft Outlook, Microsoft Word, and Internet Explorer.
- * Proficiency with Apple technology, devices, software and applications.

Must have a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment towards completing assignments in a timely manner; must be motivated and able to work with minimal supervision.

Sets priorities, and determines resource requirements.

Have very good customer Service skills.

Must know Computers and Electronics of electric circuit boards, processors, chips, and computer hardware and software, including applications and programming.

Client Technology Request Guidelines.

Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Technology Services Guidelines

Definition of Technology: For the purpose of these guidelines, technology is defined as computer hardware, software and peripheral devices, both mainstream and adaptive.

Services to Individuals with Active VR Cases

Inclusion of Technology in the Client's Plan

When a client and his/her VR field counselor are considering including technology in the IPE, a technology specialist shall be involved in the assessment of the specific technology needs. The technology specialist will assist the client and his/her VR field counselor by making recommendations on appropriate equipment after the initial assessment of the client's needs.

When technology training is needed, the client and VR field counselor will outline training goals, with input from the technology specialist, based on the individual's current skills and the expected outcomes. The training goals developed by client and VR field counselor will be incorporated into the IPE, detailing the resources that will be used (staff time, third party provider, software, hardware, tutorials, classes, etc.). Progress evaluations will be made by the client, field counselor and technology specialist to ensure that the training goals are being achieved. Any necessary adjustments to the technology services will be made in the IPE.

When clients are at the center, midway through their training, a staffing will include the Center staff and VR field counselor to evaluate the technology needs related to the IPE.

Services to Individuals with Active IL Cases

Technology will not be purchased for IL consumers if more than one or two instructional sessions with a Technology Specialist or other staff member is indicated. Exceptions will be considered depending on the consumer's need for technology. If denial of technology and requisite support will affect the person's ability to maintain independence and quality of life, and if no other resources are available, the Commission will provide that service.

Technology for IL consumers may also be purchased if training can be arranged with third party providers rather than Commission staff. This may involve identifying and developing local providers where such support is not available.

Requests for the Purchase of Technology

When an active client requests financial support from the Commission for the purchase of technology, the following steps should be followed:

1. The request will be made in writing or other appropriate format by the client and reviewed by the VR field counselor and the district technology specialist. The submitted request should demonstrate the client has an understanding of why this technology is required to achieve their vocational goal, and should include the anticipated cost of the technology.

Exceptions may be made in cases where obtaining or retaining a job requires immediate purchase of technology and/or services. The technology specialist will be consulted to ensure compatibility with software and existing technology.

If the request is being made by the VR field counselor, the VR field counselor will discuss the technology needs with the district technology specialist to help ensure that all appropriate alternatives and available technology are considered prior to fulfilling a request. In cases where the field counselor is making the request, the written request from the client may be omitted, but is still encouraged.

2. A hands-on assessment with the requested technology should take place prior to its purchase. This will help to ensure the client has appropriate expectations of the technology. In the case where a VR field counselor makes a request, the VR field counselor, along with the client, should be involved in the hands-on assessment when possible. When the specific technology in question is not available for a hands-on evaluation, reasonable attempts to gain access to the technology for the purpose of evaluation will be made. A reasonable attempt may involve borrowing technology from the AT4All website, a vendor, arranging a demonstration at a vendor's site, demonstration software, or evaluating a similar piece of technology. This evaluation should take place prior to the written request.
3. The district technology specialist and field counselor will review the request. The technology specialist will discuss the request with the client and/or VR field counselor if more information is needed prior to making a recommendation. It is not the technology specialist's role to approve or deny requests, rather to review them and make appropriate recommendations. The purpose of this step is to help ensure that all appropriate alternatives and available technologies are considered prior to fulfilling a request.
4. Clients will be informed of the responsibilities that come with ownership of technology including the costs associated with upgrades and repairs before purchases are made. When technology is issued to a client, they will be given a supplement to the acceptance agreement, which will include detailed explanations of the responsibilities specific to the technology they are being issued.
5. The VR field counselor and supervisor, if appropriate, will approve or deny the request after considering the client's requests and the recommendations of the district technology specialist.
6. The VR field counselor will inform the client of the approval or denial of the request and the reasons for the approval or denial, in person or by phone. If another NCBVI staff person is working with the client, inform that staff person by email of the approval or denial of the request and the reasons.
7. REMINDER: If the client disagrees with the decision, remind the client of the Client Assistance Program.

8. The original request along with any documentation of the technology specialist's recommendation should be included in the client's file.

Requests for Technology Support Service to Active Clients

Maintenance and updates of equipment are the responsibility of the VR client. Requests for technical assistance beyond email, or short telephone or remote assistance contacts, or if it is determined that the issue does not relate to a vocational goal, the technology specialist will refer the client to technical support for their product or other local resources. If other resources have been exhausted or are unavailable, the technology specialist, in conjunction with the client and field counselor, will determine whether or not Commission resources can be used to resolve the issues and if so, which resources. On-site visits by technology specialists for the purpose of installing upgrades or maintaining equipment for any client will only be done when it is determined to be necessary for the client to reach their vocational goal.

Services to Individuals without Active Cases:

Requests for technology support from individuals without active cases will be limited to short email, telephone or remote support. If the issue cannot be resolved in a brief period of time or if it is a recurring issue, the technology specialist will refer the individual to the vendor of the product or other local resources.

Technology specialists cannot provide on-site visits/support for individuals who do not have an active case or for routine maintenance unless it is for the purpose of gathering information to determine the need for opening a case. If support from a technology specialist beyond that outlined in these guidelines is necessary, an application for active VR services will be made.

If the support needed is related to an employment situation, the Services to Employers guidelines will be used.

Services to Employers

Evaluate and assess client's technology needs and ability to perform essential job duties.

Technology specialist and/or consultant will evaluate potential employer's computer system for accessibility and compatibility with adaptive technology.

When counselor, supervisor and employer deem it necessary, equipment recommended by technology specialist will be purchased for the job site.

Install and customize necessary adaptive technology to perform essential job duties.

Technology specialists will make a recommendation with NCBVI supervisor as to providing direct service or contracting for service.

The employer needs to provide a computer administrator account for technology specialist/consultant, or have an administrator available at all times, when technology specialist/consultant is on-site, if applicable.

When a consultant is needed for a job site, the technology specialist, district supervisor and employer will determine who will pay for consultant fees.

The employer will designate a person within the business who will work with Commission staff to coordinate ongoing training and support. The Commission will provide training to client and the employer's designee on use of adaptive technology. Written documentation, in accessible format, will be provided to client and employer.

After employment begins and technology is in place, the technology specialist will continue to maintain contact with employer, client and counselor until placement is considered successful.

Routine computer maintenance is to be completed by employer's designated technology staff. If employer's technician is unsure about an adaptive technology issue, the employer should first contact the NCBVI technology specialist.

Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Break

A break was taken at 10:20 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:35 a.m.

Commissioners Report

Chairperson Johnson reported that she attended the Employment Workshop in Lincoln. She noted that the conference was very good.

Vice Chairperson Jirak reported that he also attended the Employment Workshop in Lincoln. As part of his attendance he conducted client interviews. Jirak noted that the clients were very well prepared for the interviews.

Report from the Executive Director

We are excited to report that two staff members will receive the Governor's Employee of the Year awards this fall. The worthy recipients are Cheryl Livingston, Lincoln Vocational Rehabilitation Tech, and Carol Jenkins, Omaha Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor.

Scott Pavelka is now a Certified Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (CVRCB).

The Annual State Plan for Voc Rehab and Supported Employment Services was submitted to RSA as required. Also completed for RSA was another quarterly update to the RSA Monitoring Review Corrective Action Plan. As was the case last quarter, most items have been fully resolved. Some parts of the financial items are still waiting on action from the U.S. Department of Education/Indirect Cost Group, and Rehab Services Administration. We have submitted what we can do and we have changed practice and procedures to be consistent with what we expect to be approved.

I've worked with Wes, Bill, State officials on aspects related to accessibility problems of various state systems applications. Wes has been working diligently to remedy the problems for the long term.

In June, the Market Place of Community Values took place at Sheldon art gallery in Lincoln. We had both positive and negative feedback from the event.

I attended the NFB and ACB National Conventions.

I continue to attend meetings with Center, Field offices, our Administrative Team, NBE Vendors Committee, State agency directors, Lincoln/Lancaster Multicultural Advisory Committee, Nebraska Department of Education Transition Advisory Council. Wes and I met with the Interim Director of Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing to work out details of the Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution program.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

From January through May, the surveys to be used for all data collection efforts were developed by NRTC (Mississippi State University's Research Center) staff and presented to NCBVI staff. The surveys were approved, with some recommended changes. IRB approval was obtained for the surveys and an interviewer was trained for the consumer surveys. Data collection began on the consumer, staff, and employer surveys.

By early August, data collection had been completed on the employer survey (10), the staff survey (19), consumer survey (81), and key informants (8). Data from existing data sources has been collected. The next step will be to analyze all of the data collected and the 911 data, then write the report. This will be the most labor intensive part.

Field Services

Thus far in Federal Fiscal Year 2013 (October 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013), we served 840 Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients in all statuses. Twenty four (24) were closed having achieved their employment goals. Twenty eight (28) were closed without achieving employment (refusing further services, unable to locate, disability too severe to benefit from VR, and other).

In the Independent Living (IL) track, from October 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013, we have served 551 clients in all statuses. Two hundred twenty nine (229) were closed successfully; thirty two (32) were closed without achieving their goals (withdrew, moved, deceased, and other reasons).

Nebraska Center for the Blind

Total Full-time Clients Served between 1996 through July, 2013: 212

Competitive Employment: 123

Homemakers: 23

Students: 44

Results:

Of the clients that finished training and schooling,

87 percent are employed (competitive employment and homemaker)

73 percent of the clients who finished training and schooling are competitively employed

13 percent are homemakers

21 percent are students from the total number

10 percent are not working

Activities:

ACB State Convention

Fishing

Employment conference

Technology work-shop

Omaha Zoo

NFB and ACB national conventions

Fire safety activity

Joint PI activity

WAGES tours both at the Center and apartments

North Platte District by Sarah Stewart

The North Platte District welcomed Scott Pavelka, Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor to our North Platte office in early May. We had a successful and full FYI/CORE training program in late May. We had 6 participants, a combination of VR, IL and OIB clients.

Staff and 3 clients from our district participated in the Employment Conference and Technology Expo held in Lincoln on June 5, 6 and 7th. It was a great opportunity for clients to get new information and networking skills. There were two of Teacher's for the Visually Impaired from our area who made the trip to Lincoln for the Technology Expo on Friday.

The North Platte District had two students participate in WAGES this summer.

We also had training in Motivational Interviewing in late June. Another session scheduled in July was unfortunately cancelled due to a last minute emergency for the speaker. We hope to complete our training soon.

We had four participants return to Project Independence this July. It was another great program and they all look forward to attending yet another year next summer. Jamie Forbis was on the planning committee again this year and they did a wonderful job again this year developing a memorable and fun program for the kids.

The North Platte District had one client successfully closed as a certified nursing assistant.

Our district is gearing up for another FYI/CORE program scheduled in September. We will hold our annual district meeting in Kearney on October 2nd and 3rd.

Omaha District Update by Nancy Flearl

Another busy summer.

We have had several transition students graduate and are making plans for school and work.

We have four students attending WAGES and all are doing well. Thanks to all staff that supported the first week of training. Kelly, Monica and Carol worked tirelessly that week.

We have a number of younger clients registering for Project Independence.

Chad, Carol and I attended a Behavioral Mental Health Conference in Lincoln and gained a great deal of information that will be useful in working with clients that may experience mental illness. Elaine coordinated consumers to attend the Proclamation for Deaf Blind Awareness on June 12th as well as arranging all the logistics with the Governor's office.

We had a number of clients attend the employment conference in June and were extremely excited about what they gained from this event. I am in awe of the work the committee put into this conference and the ribbon cutting event was awesome. There was a committee, but it would not be a success if all of NCBVI Staff were not behind it a 100%!

I also think we have a remarkable tech team and the Tech Expo was great. I thank them and all that volunteered to assist in making it the success it is. I thank Kelly and Kathy for stepping in to support the NCBVI Team.

Cheryl has been named to the Interpreter Review Board and will be serving for the next few years representing NCBVI.

We have had a counselor leave us and have been contracting with Robert Newman a few days a week, with an emphasis on employment and placement. We have hired Ashley Pinkelman for the Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor position and will begin training at the Center on July 15th. We have requested a Temporary Secretary to support the office and will have Linda Swoboda join our team on July 16th. We will be posting this VR Tech position with a closing date for August 2nd.

We had Carol, Monica and Ashley attend the NFB National Convention and a client attend the ACB National Convention.

At the last meeting we had a person that hired at Wal-Mart and since another person as well. The gentleman is doing overnight stocking. He is so very happy and grateful for services. His quote, you people at the commission for the blind are okay in my book. We have had another placed at ONI as administrative assistant to John Wick that does fund development, another in production. We had two clients placed a Hy-Vee one part-time and other full-time. A woman in self-employment as an instructor of healing arts. We have assisted individuals as a Marketing Coordinator, 3 Randolph Sheppard Vendor, Construction Manager, and security guard; we have been attending a lot of meetings in the community and doing an extensive work with employers. We all participated in CPR and AED training on July 8th.

We have been operating somewhat shorthanded with Nicole leaving and Chad and having temporary staff while Ashley is in training. I admire the team I work with here at NCBVI and value the skills they bring to their jobs.

Lincoln District by Connie Daly

Conchita Hernandez accepted a position with Washington DC public school system. It is her dream job and we are happy for her. It is a big loss for us.

We had the employment conference in Lincoln and it was a big success. I had a lot of contacts with the Business community and they are interested in helping us with our mission. We are having our first Business Advisory Council meeting on Aug. 13th. This group will be made up of our business partners. They will assist us by reviewing resumes, conducting mock interviews, being ambassadors for with their business partners...etc. Because we are short staff, I had wanted to postpone the start of the Business Advisory Council. I wanted to have invitations and letterhead. Our business partners wanted to start anyway and help get it launched. So away we go.

We had Project Independence with 15 participants. It was a huge success and very inspiring.

We didn't have our usual GATE program during the summer because of all the other activities. We decided to have one day group home teachings each month. We had 5 participants during June and 8 participants in July.

We had a client obtain a job with the IRS, a food service worker with a vendor, a cashier at Goodwill, customer service rep. with Black Hills Energy, and a cook at Burger King. We helped two clients maintain their employment with the state of Nebraska. The position at Goodwill in Lincoln pays minimum wage for all its positions.

Business Office - Bill Brown

Put together Vending Machine Specs for Rest Areas with Don

Close out State Fiscal Year and set up new SFY

Put together purchases to update equipment, and plan into future using available program income SSA

Explore new Case Service Management System

Coordinate a viewing of available office sites

Coordinate the clean up of flooding on 1st and 3rd floors in Lincoln offices.

Attended meetings involving new State Procurement system.
Put together Budget for next State Fiscal Year
Met with Consultant on federal monitoring issues
Attend Microsoft Word Training

Kathy Stephens – Administrative Assistant

Almost completed with fixed asset Annual Inventory for Division 001.
Completed travel arrangements and hotel for all Project Search participants.
Completed registrations for NFB convention and banquet.
Attended Word 2010 Basic and Intermediate classes at SCC. The training was excellent.
Worked on NCBVI Website Updates.
Attended Employee Verification and Labor Law Workshop.
Assisted with compiling NBE Request for Proposal.

Deputy Directors

Carlos Serván:

Scott Pavelka finished his training and is working in NP.

Ashley was hire as a VR counselor for Omaha and is now getting training a the center.

Conchita left to the East coast and we are on the process to interview candidates for the Lincoln VR position.

WAGES ended as a successful program 12 participants came to work during the summer and five of them got part time training at the center. The Lincoln-Lancaster Records Management, were one of our participants worked, is going to give an award to the student for her excellent work.

The Employment Conference and Technology workshop was a success. Clients gave good evaluations and suggestions for the future.

NBE:

The blind managers held Annual Elections in May. The new committee members are:

Sandy Alvarado, Chair

Todd Shoemaker, Vice Chair

Antonio Aguilar, Secretary

Chris Nolan and Victor Ireland: Elected Members at Large

Carlos attended the BLAST conference with a new vendor. One of the ideas gathered from the conference is to train our blind managers on their rights and responsibilities. We also learned more about customer services and how to continue building a business.

A new vendor is managing the new Joint Forces facility in Lincoln. He is doing very well.

The NBE team (Carlos, Don and Jan) attended very good two day training with Susan Gashel, a lawyer from Denver Colorado, who is a nationally recognized expert in Randolph-Sheppard law and Business enterprise procedures. Jody Gittins, from the AG office, was present one day.

We are planning the implementation of the replacement of all machines on I-80 rest areas. We got the approval from Nebraska Administrative Services this week. Don will order machines this fall, the project will begin in the spring and run thru next summer.

We have a new Department of Roads (DOR) master contract and agreements for all the rest areas ready to be signed.

This week, we were awarded a new contract to operate the cafeteria at DOR headquarters that will open in three weeks. This will expand our existing facilities.

A vendor committee is planning our annual vendors training retreat Sept. 27 and 28 in Lincoln. You are all invited. We are finalizing the agenda and menu's this week.

Bob Deaton:

June 11 Pearl and I met with the public visiting the NCBVI exhibit at the Sheldon Art Gallery

June 30-July 6 Attended NFB National Convention in Orlando

July 16-19 Attended Project Search conference in Cincinnati, Ohio

July 28-August 1 Project Independence (15 campers)

Wes Majerus Technology Program Manager

Accessibility

I have worked on a number of accessibility projects this quarter. I am analyzing an online course system for Southeast Community College that we could potentially use as a training tool. In addition, I have also sat in on a meeting with the State Materiel Division to learn about plans for an electronic purchasing system upgrade and to ensure that accessibility was incorporated in the design of the system and processes. It was an initial meeting, so I do not have a good handle on where that system is going, or how accessibility will be incorporated. They are using Workday, which is used in other parts of State government. Workday has been responsive to accessibility enhancement requests in the past so I am optimistic. I have also been working toward establishing the Web Accessibility Testing project wherein we would have a vendor test a number of sites for accessibility and then provide remediation feedback and guidance. Because we have worked a lot with applications, this focus is on static web sites. Thus far, we have submitted a sample site to one vendor, and will meet with the Office of the CIO to discuss their findings and report not long after this board meeting. The second vendor, as of this writing, is still drafting a response to our RFP. Internally, we have an idea of the agency sites that we would like to test but do not have the specific pages on those sites to be tested. Once we determine which vendor will meet our needs, and the needs of the OCIO, we will present these agency pages to that vendor for analysis.

Employment Conference

Not long after the last board meeting, the Tech Team and I assisted with the Employment Conference. We provided exhibits for the Thursday afternoon and Friday morning portions of the conference that were hosted here at the NCBVI Lincoln office. In addition, on Friday morning, we provided a service wherein attendees could meet with a tech specialist one-on-one to discuss

a specific type of technology. Overall, the technology part of the conference went well, despite relocations made necessary by the water damage in the building.

IT and Miscellaneous Activities

A number of items have been occurring on an IT front. We continue to evaluate staff computer needs and procure items where necessary. Each office around the state now has at least 1 full-size iPad and 1 iPad Mini with related screen protectors and cases. Omaha and Lincoln now have networked Braille embossers. In the newly-renovated conference room, Lincoln now has an audio/video system with an accessible AppleTV box, DVD player, and an attachment to connect a laptop to the system wirelessly. The server that licenses all of our access technology products crashed at the beginning of July. The computer was replaced and now access technology is being licensed from a new server. We are evaluating a new typing program in the Lincoln District and the center. It is Called Typability, and it is tied into JAWS for Windows. This means students use the JAWS voices and commands early on in their training. We have some remaining licenses for the product, and can add more to our account if this is something we want to pursue. We have purchased 1 Braille display for Norfolk and 1 for Omaha. We are evaluating whether there are other Braille, computer, or technology needs across the state on an ongoing basis.

Dave Robinson, Personnel

1. Chad Weber is no longer with the agency, effective May 21, 2013
2. We opened Chad's former position internally and Ashley Pinkelman applied for and was promoted to it.
3. Ashley resumed Center training to complete her required 600 hours of training, required for Counselors. She received credit for the six weeks she spent in training, when she was initially hired as a Voc. Rehab. Tech. (Note: this initial plan has been changed so that she has 600 hours consecutive training.)
4. We prepared a job announcement to fill Ashley's now vacant Voc. Rehab. Tech. position, but before we could advertise it, our Recruiter at State Personnel referred an individual who was enrolled in the state re-employment program. The state re-employment program is a program that state employees who have been laid off can register for. Once they register, a State Personnel Recruiter looks at every job order that comes through and if someone in the program is qualified for the job, they get first rights to it.

Kyndra Baring-Gulley was laid off by the Dept. of Labor and expressed an interest in the job and will assume the duties on August 19, 2013. Kyndra worked at Dept. of Labor with Monica Tripp, so we're happy to be able to re-employ a state employee and that she will have a familiar face, to make her transition to our agency easier.
5. We have dispensed with the policy of hiring Counselors at the Counselor I pay rate, if they come to us with a Bachelor's degree and not a Master's. The previous practice was that if someone came to us with a Bachelor's degree, they were hired in at the Counselor I pay rate and

after one year, were automatically promoted to Counselor II. This practice of understaffing worked before Workday went online, but is not compatible with Workday. Now, all Counselors will be hired at the Counselor II rate.

We have a request in to get Scott Pavelka promoted to Counselor II, as he is the last individual that falls under the previous policy. As soon as we get approval from State Personnel, he will be promoted to Counselor II, retroactive to July 1, 2013

6. We've decided to make the part-time position at the front desk in Lincoln, now occupied by Joyce Thompson, as an S.O.S. employee, a permanent part-time position, so we are waiting for the necessary approvals. Once we receive those, we will advertise the position.

Unfinished Business

Budget Update

Director Van Zandt noted that the current budget is moving along nicely. NCBVI did receive substantial Program Income/Social Security Reimbursement funds during this past fiscal year. The amount received was \$806,958.91. NCBVI is also receiving some memorial funds. For one individual who had been a client, NCBVI has received over \$1,000 in memorial donations. There have been others, recently; the total amount from each memorial is usually less, but is equally valued and appreciated. Federal Regulations require agencies to use Program Income/Social Security Reimbursement funds before using any grant funds.

NCBVI has made some one time purchases with the Program Income received. We are working on a project with the OCIO and contracting with some entities to conduct work on accessibility issues. The agency has purchased some ergonomic chairs and footrests for staff. NCBVI is making some purchases that will help staff with their jobs. A consultant came in a few weeks ago to meet with the Executive Director, two Deputy Directors and the Technology Program Manager. This week a financial consultant came in to meet primarily with the Business Manager and some with the Executive Director. This consultant also worked with the Business Manager on program income, the cost allocation plan and some of the items that the monitoring review focused on. Director Van Zandt reported that some new mattresses and computer desks were purchased for the Center client apartments.

Director Van Zandt noted that this is the time of the year that the Business Manager Bill Brown and Assistant Dave Robinson have to work very hard to make sure that all the expenditures are coded properly. The Program Income funds are allocated to one of the grants; the VR grant, the Basic Support grant, Independent Living Part B grant, or the Older Blind grant. This takes a lot of detail work to look at the account codes and make sure that all things are coded properly. Staff that do purchase orders need to indicate what grant should fund the purchase. They do a great job with all this!

Chairperson Johnson asked if Social Security money has to be spent before spending grant funds or if the money just needs to be allocated. Director Van Zandt stated that the Program income must be expended before grant dollars can be expended. Director Van Zandt noted that Program income can be used on payroll and such. All of the Program income that the agency has to date has been spent. The agency is now beginning to spend the grants themselves. NCBVI also had some carryover from last year, which happens every year. The agency needs to spend Program income first, then carryover from the previous grant year and then move into the current grant year.

Chairperson Johnson asked if the Lincoln NCBVI offices are still looking to move to a new location. Director Van Zandt reported that they started looking at some options for physical space to move the Lincoln District, the Center and the Administration offices to a different location. Different staff people have gone to visit some different options. Everything must go through the State Building Division who has a realtor that agencies need to work with. Earlier in the week she heard back and found out there are some additional spaces the agency can look at. To date, a number of different locations have been looked at. Some of the factors taken into consideration are: the location must be on a good bus route, preferably good parking, and good space for all our facilities.

Chairperson Johnson inquired about developing an internal agency newsletter to inform staff of agency updates and news. Chairperson Johnson noted that she receives emails and phone calls from staff who are asking questions because they do not know. Many times this may result in things getting made up and then she gets the call. The newsletter could simply be a few paragraphs. Director Van Zandt reported that the agency attempts to use email when there is news. An email will be sent to all staff and to the board when there is agency news to report. Director Van Zandt stated that she really encourages people whether it is staff, the public or clients, if there is questions about something simply ask. Director Van Zandt stated that NCBVI is above board on what it does. If someone has a question or an issue Director Van Zandt would like it if people let her know so it can be clarified.

Chairperson Johnson stated that she does not want to create extra work just for the sake of creating extra work, but there seems to be a disconnect between what people think is going on and what is actually going on. Director Van Zandt suggested that the Commission Board advise her of any issues that staff may have questions about and then she will send out an email to all staff to clarify the issue. Director Van Zandt noted that she feels that the emails would be timelier than an agency newsletter.

Bob Deaton noted that there are currently updates to staff about what is happening at the agency. He does not want the Commission Board to think that there isn't. Regular supervisor meetings are held for that purpose. Not only do they talk about issues, but the information is taken back to the Districts. There are monthly meetings in which people discuss new development, staff changes and upcoming activities.

Director Van Zandt requested that if the Commission Board receives any questions that they advise her of such. Director Van Zandt noted that she does not care who asks the question. If people are wondering about something they should inform her and she will send out an email. Director Van Zandt stated that she encourages the public, the staff, clients and the Board to inform her if there is a question and she will do her best to provide an answer.

NFB Newsline ® Update

Jamie Forbis, NFB Newsline Coordinator was present at the meeting and she gave an in-person report. Her written submitted report is below.

Commissioner Hansen asked if there were any stats regarding new features. Jamie noted that they are not available at this time but they will be in the future.

Commissioner Jirak noted that Jamie had sent an email expressing concern that she is receiving calls at work regarding Newsline.

Jamie noted that staff and clients often contact her via phone and email at the North Platte office regarding Newsline issues. Jamie requested that a reminder be sent to staff that they are to contact her regarding Newsline issues at her Hotmail account or call (402) 471-8102. It was noted that Jamie's time at work is not the same as her time serving as Newsline coordinator. If a person needs to contact Newsline they need to either contact the Newsline Center in Baltimore or Jamie Forbis at her Newsline contact number or email. Director Van Zandt noted that NCBVI also has a List Serve which is used to send out agency information. A reminder could also be sent out on the List Serve.

Wes Majerus noted that there is a new stream out as it relates to Victor Stream. This new stream has built in Wi-Fi and it will be able to download the papers without the intervention of a computer. This will be available later this year.

Jan Brandt noted that when clients receive the information, after they have been signed up for Newsline, an 800 number is listed for assistance. Jan Brandt asked if someone has questions who should they call; the 800 number or Jamie Forbis?

Jamie Forbis reported that individuals can do either or both. Jamie Forbis noted that the Baltimore office is very willing to accommodate subscribers whether that be setting them up with a new account, giving them their codes, or even helping them install apps and things of this nature. Baltimore is also the office that controls all of the content on Newsline. If it is during the day and a client needs an answer immediately, they can definitely contact the Baltimore office. They are open 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday Eastern Time. If they are not available a message can be left and they will get back to you. Jamie noted that the Baltimore office is very good about returning calls.

Jamie Forbis noted that while working at NCBVI her hours are not set at 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Therefore, she cannot guarantee that she will be available from 5:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. weekdays. Jamie stated that she is available on evenings and weekends and even sometimes during the day if she has comp time. Jamie noted that she does try to get back to clients and consumers as quickly as possible.

Jamie Forbis reminded everyone that Newsline knows a person's phone number as long as they have provided the correct phone number on their application. The phone number is in the system so codes do not need to be entered the first time, or ever if they call from the phone number they provided.

Director Van Zandt noted that getting the Norfolk newspaper set up in Newsline is in the works.

Chairperson Jim Jirak reported that Jamie Forbis will attend the ACB-N convention next year to give folks an update on Newsline. Jamie Forbis stated that she was honored to be asked to attend.

Nebraska NFB-Newsline®
Jamie K. Forbis, Outreach Coordinator
August 5, 2013

The summer has flown by and thus begins another quarterly report. Last quarter I reported that subscribers were having problems accessing the Grand Island Independent and Kearney Hub. Unfortunately the problem continues and 'Baltimore is working diligently to resolve the issue. This same problem is faced by several other states and has to do with the way content is pulled from the newspaper service. I will continue to keep you up-to-date on the progress.

In more positive news I presented at the Spring For Your Independence program in May, assisted at the exhibit hall table during the NFB National Convention, and more recently talked with students of the Project Independence program about NFB-Newsline. I've been asked to present at both the NFB state convention in the fall and the ACB state convention next spring. Otherwise I keep busy answering calls and emails of subscribers, adding and updating subscriber's information and work with NCBVI staff to provide current information to their clients.

Starting in July, NFB-Newsline® subscribers now have access to up to the minute weather forecasts from the phone or through the NFB-Newsline Mobile App. Just like the emergency weather alerts; subscriber's zip codes must be current in the system to benefit fully from this new feature. Subscribers can access daily or weekly forecasts, sun and moon patterns, moisture readings and much more. The weather forecasts can be found under the local information channel, on the phone and through the app, and contain 11 different articles.

Also added in July were several new publications, two under the national publications category and three under the breaking news category. The Reuters News service and USA Today Online can be found under the national news category and CNet News, Bloomberg News and NPR News from the NPR Online service can be accessed through the breaking news category.

In other publication news; information on the National Deaf-blind Equipment Distribution Program has been posted on Newslines as well as a variety of other documents relating to the past ACB and NFB national conventions. The user guide for subscribers has been updated to contain more relevant content for the phone, web and mobile use. Last, but not least, the transportation section under the local channel is being reconstructed and hopefully the project will be completed soon.

As for the last quarters stats the warm beaches and cool ocean waters of Nebraska haven't kept subscribers from reading NFB-Newsline®. In May 5 new subscribers were added, 17,683 minutes were used and an average of 13.75 minutes were spent per call with 45.24% of those calls made through the local number. In May the state newspaper channel was accessed 2,696 times, the local channel 102 times and the TV Listings 452 times.

In June the numbers rose with 11 new subscribers added, 18,688 minutes used with the average call lasting 14.13 minutes and 52.52% of the calls made through the local number. The state newspaper channel was accessed 2,612 times, the local channel 108 times and the TV listings 452 times.

Like the temperature the numbers continued to rise in July with 14 new subscribers added to NFB-Newsline®. 19,211 minutes were spent reading content with the average caller spending 13.01 minutes on the phone and 44.36% of those calls were through the local number. The state newspapers were accessed a total of 2,589 times, the local channel was accessed 164 times and the TV Listings were accessed 532 times.

With three more subscribers added already this month that brings the total number of subscribers to NFB-Newsline® Nebraska to 1,680. The numbers steadily rise each month and I do my best to work with each subscriber. That being said a lot of calls and emails have been directed to my NCBVI counselor office in North Platte and I would like to discuss this issue farther with the board to prevent this from happening. This concludes my quarterly report and I will be available to answer any questions either before or during the August 10th meeting. Until then, happy reading!

Everyone present thanked Jamie Forbis for her report.

Client Assistant Program (CAP) complaints or issues

Director Van Zandt noted that there are currently no new CAP cases. There is one case wherein a client wants to know what type of equipment NCBVI can provide since their vocational goal has changed. There is also a case relating to what services can be provided to maintain or advance in employment or underemployment.

There were no cases closed during the past quarter.

At 11:55 a.m. Chairperson Johnson moved to go into Executive Session to discuss the Client Assistance Program (CAP). The Executive Session is necessary for the protection of public interest and prevention of needless injury to a person. Commissioner Walla seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

Chairperson Johnson moved to come out of Executive Session at 12:22 p.m. Commissioner Oltman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

A lunch break was taken at 12:23 p.m. The meeting resumed at 1:30 p.m.

Nebraska Business Enterprise (NBE) Update

NBE officer elections were held in May. The new committee members are:
Sandy Alvarado, Chair
Todd Shoemaker, Vice Chair
Antonio Aguilar, Secretary
Chris Nolan and Victor Ireland: Elected Members at Large
The Committee also reduced the Set-a-side from 12.5% to 12%

Carlos attended the BLAST conference with a new vendor. One of the ideas gathered from the conference is to train our blind managers on their rights and responsibilities. We also learned more about customer services and how to continue to build a business.

A new vendor is managing the new Joint Forces facility in Lincoln. He is doing very well.

The NBE team (Carlos, Don and Jan) attended a very good two day training with Susan Gashel, a lawyer from Denver Colorado, who is a nationally recognized expert in Randolph-Sheppard law and Business enterprise procedures. Jody Gittins, Assistant Attorney General from the AG office, was present one day. Director Van Zandt also attended part of the session.

We are planning the implementation of the replacement of all vending machines on I-80 rest areas. We got the approval from Nebraska Administrative Services this week. Don Ward will order machines this fall. The project will begin in the spring and run thru next summer.

NBE has a new Department of Roads master contract and agreements for all the rest areas are ready to be signed.

This week we were awarded a new contract to operate the cafeteria at the Department of Roads headquarters that will open in three weeks. This will expand our existing facilities. This is a six month contract and it will be re-evaluated after six months.

The Vendor Committee is planning the annual vendors training retreat to be held in Lincoln on September 27 and 28, 2013 in Lincoln. The agenda and menus will be finalized soon. All commissioners are invited to attend. Aaron Davis who is a motivational speaker will present on Customer Service. They will also discuss items such as accounting and how to keep records.

The commissioners thanked Carlos Serván for his report.

Discuss & Act on the use of an Organizational Development Specialist

Commissioner Hansen reported that this topic came up at the May 2013 Commission Board meeting. At the meeting the commissioners voted to pursue the use of an Organizational Development Specialist. Commissioner Hansen noted that since this time there have been a lot of changes to what the original idea was. The committee (Chairperson Johnson, Commissioner Hansen and Executive Director Van Zandt) had a lot of ideas when they first started looking into this and since then they have had a lot of feedback from some staff members and from discussions they have had amongst the committee. Commissioner Hansen reported that the committee also reached out to companies who provide this service. Commissioner Hansen noted that beginning July 1 the company who services the EAP contact for the State of Nebraska changed. NCBVI did have some history with the previous company; and therefore, we will begin a new slate with the new company. The committee is strongly considering using the new EAP contract services quite a bit for this project. It is a lot more financially favorable to use the EAP contract services. The committee is planning to get together again in the next week or two via conference call with the EAP company.

Chairperson Johnson thanked Commissioner Hansen for all the work he has done on this project. Chairperson Johnson noted that she is not comfortable with the estimate from the previous company. Commissioner Hansen noted that at the beginning they talked about breaking the project up into different phases such as discovery phase, analysis phase, plan of action phase and a follow-up phase. This initial thought has changed over time. The committee discovered that they do currently have a lot of internal data because of the staff surveys that have been done in the past. Therefore,

the discovery phase may not need to take place initially. The committee is gearing toward moving forward with some of the data they already have. After this process is worked through they would do a follow-up to ensure that they have accomplished everything they were looking to accomplish. The committee did receive a quote regarding the first analysis phase from one company and it was more money than they were expecting it to be considering it would basically be an on-line survey. The company's quote was \$6,700 which was to develop a survey and provide results and recommendations based on the survey. The committee does not want to pursue with another survey at this time. The committee will move forward on the project and they will meet within the next few weeks to discuss next steps. The committee will report to the Commission Board as they move forward.

New Business

Vice Chairperson Jirak turned the Chair back to Chairperson Johnson.

Election of Board Positions

Commissioner Hansen moved to re-elect Commissioner Johnson as Chairperson. Commissioner Oltman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Walla moved to re-elect Commissioner Jirak as Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Johnson seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all were in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Walla moved to re-elect Commissioner Hansen as Executive Secretary. Commissioner Oltman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all commissioners were in favor of the motion.

The commissioners were congratulated on their appointments.

Discuss & Act on New Executive Director Evaluation Tool and the manner in which it will be carried out – Paulette Monthei, Darrell Walla & Jim Jirak

A Task Force Committee was formed to develop a tool to use for the annual evaluation of the NCBVI Executive Director. The Task Force Committee comprised of Commission Vice Chairperson Jim Jirak, Commissioner Darrell Walla and Paulette Monthei. The Commission contracted with Paulette Monthei to perform her services at today's meeting.

Paulette Monthei presented on a draft Executive Director Review Process and Assessment Tools. Monthei went over the draft process which included timing, the process, initial steps, key documents to review, information gathering, a face-to-face

meeting, a write up and dissemination and presentation to the full Board. The commissioners discussed the draft proposal.

It was decided to have the Task Force Committee and Executive Director Van Zandt meet again and develop another draft proposal for review via email between now and the November Commission Board meeting. The Commission Board will then be prepared to vote on the issue at the November meeting.

It was noted that it is up to the Executive Director if they want to have their annual evaluation conducted in an open meeting or an executive session in a public meeting.

Discuss & Act on Potential Goals for Executive Director

It was noted that on the NCBVI website under Job Description it currently lists the duty Require the Executive Director to submit her/his goals and objectives for NCBVI yearly. At the August 14, 2010 Commission Board Meeting the procedure of having the Executive Director submit their goals for the upcoming year to them in writing for the upcoming year was discussed. It was voted at that meeting to do away with having the Executive Director submit the yearly goals to the Board with the provision that this procedure can be reinstated if needed. It was the consensus that the NCBVI website should be updated and this commissioner job duty should be deleted.

Final Announcements

The next NCBVI Commission Board meeting will be Saturday, November 2, 2013 in Omaha. A location and Focus Topic is to be determined.

Adjourn

Commissioner Jirak moved to adjourn the August 10, 2013 Commission Board meeting at 3:22 p.m. Commissioner Walla seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

If you have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda of the November 2, 2013 Commission Board meeting, please email it to the NCBVI Commission Board at ncbvi.commission-board@nebraska.gov.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant
NCBVI

Julie Johnson, Chairperson
NCBVI Board of Commissioners