

Nebraska Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Public Meeting
Omaha State Office Building, Room 226
1313 Farnam on the Mall, Omaha, Nebraska
Saturday, May 5, 2018

Draft 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.

Mike Hansen, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. The meeting began with introductions.

Commissioners present: Mike Hansen, Chairperson, Designee of the National Federation of the Blind of Nebraska, Lincoln; Robert Newman, Vice Chairperson, Omaha; Mark Bulger, Designee of the American Council of the Blind of Nebraska, Omaha; Chad Bell, Alliance; Becky Rieken, Executive Secretary, Dakota City.

Commission staff present: Carlos Serván, Executive Director; Carol Jenkins, Deputy Director; Bill Brown, Business Manager; Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant; Nancy Flearl, Omaha District Supervisor; Connie Daly, Lincoln District Supervisor.

Public Present: Jim Jirak, ACB Representative; Omaha; Ryan Osentowski, Radio Talking Book, Omaha.

It was noted that public comments are welcome during the scheduled Public Comment Periods regarding the agenda items or other relevant issues. Kathy Stephens recorded the meeting and the recordings are available on the website. Everyone was on their own for lunch.

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available. The Act was available in both print and Braille format. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, the Omaha World Herald, the State Government Calendar, NCBVI Website, NFB Newsline® and Radio Talking Book. The Notice was also sent to ACBN, NFBN, and the NCBVI List Serve.

Approval of the February 3, 2018 public meeting minutes.

Commissioner Newman moved to approve the Minutes of the February 3, 2018 Commission Meeting as amended. Commissioner Bell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and it was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Report from the Executive Director

I. Client Statistics October 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018

A. For Older Blind/Independent Living services

At the beginning of the fiscal year, 135 individuals applied for services, along with the six that applied from the previous fiscal year, for a total of 141 applicants for services. Of these, 135 applicants were accepted for services; two applicants were not accepted for services, one for "other reason" and one "withdrawn." There were four applicants remaining at the end of the period.

There were 181 active clients on hand at the beginning of the fiscal year. One hundred thirty-five clients were added to active status since the beginning of the fiscal year, making for a total of 316 clients altogether in active status during the fiscal year. Of these, 184 clients closed successful with zero clients referred to VR services, 17 clients closed unsuccessful with eight deaths, one institutionalized and eight closed for other reasons. One hundred fifteen clients remain in active status at the end of the period. Total number of OIB applicants and clients in all statuses at the end of the period was 322.

B. Independent Living under 55

Since the beginning of the fiscal year, there were 10 applicants. All applicants were accepted for service. Along with the four carried over from the previous fiscal year, a total of 14 clients were currently in active status. Of these, three clients closed successful and one closed unsuccessful due to other reasons. Ten clients remained in active status at the end of the period. Total number of IL applicants and clients in all statuses at the end of the period was 14.

C. Vocational Rehabilitation

Since the beginning of the fiscal year, there were 90 applicants for services. Of these, 74 applicants were accepted for services; six applicants were not accepted for services: three had no disabling condition, one was no longer interested in receiving services, one was unable to locate or contact and one had no impediment to employment. Twenty applicants remain at the end of the period.

Three hundred eighty-nine clients were in active status at the beginning of the year. Seventy-four clients were accepted for services since the beginning of the fiscal year, totaling 463 clients in active status during the fiscal year. Of these, 15 clients were closed as successful. Fifty seven clients were closed as unsuccessful after an IPE was developed for the following reasons: 19 were no longer interested in services, one does not require VR services, one entered foster care, three for health/medical reasons, one was institutionalized (Not Jail or Prison), 17 were unable to be located, four deaths, seven transferred to another agency, and five for all other reasons. Six clients were closed as unsuccessful before an IPE was developed for the following reasons: three were no longer interested in receiving services and three were unable to be located. Three hundred eighty-five clients remain in active status.

Total number of VR clients served in Active Statuses was 406. Total number of VR referrals, applicants and clients in all statuses at the end of the period was 490.

II. Administration

I met with some senators from the Appropriations Committee to educate them about our services and the negative impact the cuts recommended from the Governor could bring. I also talked to and worked with consumers so they could come to testify in favor of NCBVI's budget. As a result, the budget cuts recommended by the Governor were restored.

I attended meetings to help negotiate the Vending sites for the Department of Corrections, State Building Division, and a Federal cafeteria at Offutt Air Force Base. I also attended WIOA Partners meetings, the ACB State Convention, the Spring NCSAB Conference, and the National Rehabilitation Association (NRA). NCSAB and NRA sponsored my registration and hotel expenses for the NRA conference. I also met with the Executive Director of Outlook Nebraska to talk about collaboration between Outlook Nebraska and NCBVI.

In the H/R area, Cheryl Poff and Connie Carlow retired in December 2017. Bob Deaton retired at the end of January 2018. Bill Brown will retire on August 7 and Kathy Carroll (Kat) was hired in advance to have time to learn what Bill does. Kat completed her Center training and is now getting training under Bill Brown. She is doing very well on learning all aspects of the Business Office.

The Technology Manager position now reports to the Business Office rather than the Deputy Director. This position works more with the OCIO, administration, and staff computers than with clients, so this move makes more sense. We hired Greg DeWall to be the Center Supervisor and he started his training at the Center on April 30. Greg comes to NCBVI from the California Society for the Blind, where he was the Lead Orientation & Mobility Instructor, as well as functioning in other capacities.

We had a two-day training session for vocational rehab. technicians, along with supervisors and Business office staff which took place in Lincoln on April 11 and April 12, in preparation for the upcoming changes in business office practices and AWARE processes. Training was beneficial to everyone and will aid everyone to ensure consistency, accuracy, and efficiency across the state.

This was very beneficial for staff to understand better how to enter data into the AWARE system as well as the new requirements. One of the changes we are implementing across the State is to have each District support staff to process bills.

Matt Hackert is working closely with the OCIO to complete preliminary and in-depth accessibility testing with FuzioN. In addition, NCBVI has been working hard to keep involved in the new FuzioN accounting system and adapting our processes to FuzioN. Matt Hackert, Bill Brown, Carrie DeFreece, and Kathy Carrol have been attending the Class Room Pilot (CRP) sessions as much as they can since the scope of the project is large and we have few staff available to cover.

We now have a contract with Gemini Research to conduct surveys for our State Needs Assessment which is require by the Rehabilitation Services Administration, (RSA).

III. Field Services

North Platte staff had the idea to have monthly VR counselor conference calls and Connie Daly was asked to host them. The participation is voluntary and different topics that impact rehab are discussed. For the first 45 minutes of the call, the VR staff focuses on a topic and the last 15 minutes are available to share a difficult situation with a client and get suggestions from the other counselors. The first two calls have been related to employment. Continuing Educational Units (CEUs) can be earned by participating in the call which helps the counselors retain their certification.

Some staff members participated in the Project Search Job fair in Omaha on April 30. We paid for half of the keynote speakers expenses.

We continue to work with the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind and Visually Impaired (NCECBVI) on an ongoing basis. As a result of this growing partnership, some of their staff and students came to tour our Training Center on April 25.

Our field staff continues to meet with local school districts about the importance of aligning our Individual Plan for Employment and Individual Education Plan. This collaboration will hopefully lead to the opportunity to provide more services to students.

In February, four members of the Transition Committee attended a state-wide Transition conference put on by NDE. There were more than 100 teachers, para's, VR, NCBVI and another professionals present.

We now have a contract with NFB Career Mentoring Program. This will match successful blind adults from across the country with interested Pre-ETS aged youth in mentoring relationships based around their careers and other hobbies and interests. We will be soliciting both mentors and mentees in the coming weeks. The activities that require transportation, room and board will be charged toward the Pre-ETS reserve funds under this contract.

Our agency is also contracting with the I Can Connect program through ATP to provide training to a deaf/blind client on software that improves quality of life.

IV. Center

Currently eight students are getting training at the Center and one is from Florida. We also have two staff trainees who completed Center training: Stephanie Olson, Rehab. tech. from Norfolk, and Kathy Carrol (Kat) the new Business Manager III. Finally, two new staff trainees are in training: Greg DeWall, the Center supervisor started on April 30, and Jerry Bryan, the new CAP Director started his two-week training on April 23.

V. Nebraska Business Enterprise

We continue negotiating vending services with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS). The proposal is to allow NBE to operate as a Pilot for three months at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in the visiting areas. Staff and lobby areas could be served right away with a 30-day notice to the current vendor. This may start as early as May. In addition, there are concerns about the payment of Inmate Welfare funds into the

facility. Staff has discussed with them that the percentage and amounts should not change

In December 2017, NBE staff met with State Building Division and Purchasing staff to discuss opportunities on the state buildings contract which would include the State Office Building, State Capitol and several other smaller locations in Lincoln. Unfortunately, most of the players in the original meeting have retired or moved on to other positions. Additional meetings with DAS, State Building Division, State legal counsel and NCBVI staff have finally resulted in NBE receiving the contract to take over these locations in July. The agreement was to give the Contract to NBE without a bid for five years. After that time, the contract would be re-bid and NBE would need to bid a competitive price.

The Nebraska Capitol Commission contacted NBE regarding catering at the Capitol during construction when the cafeteria would be closed. An agreement was signed in April and a blind vendor has been assigned to begin catering service at the Capitol on May 7. This will run for approximately 18 months until November 2019.

Conversations continue with Offutt and a potential teaming partner.

Fourteen locations in Omaha were redistributed amongst two vendors, including one potential licensee.

A perspective vendor in North Platte has begun training to become a licensee and will be a likely candidate to take over the sites left by the vendor.

The Blind Vendors Committee is working with NBE staff to plan a one-day training retreat in Lincoln on June 15.

Lincoln District Activity Report – Connie Daly

We started Job class again this month. We have five attendees. This is a 12 week class to help clients focus on their career goals. We had caseload reviews. This helped us to focus and learn more about AWARE.

North Platte had the idea to have a Monthly VR Counselor Conference call. I was asked to host the call. It is voluntary. We can discuss different topics that impact rehab. The first 45 minutes of the call we focus on a topic. The last 15 minutes are available to share a difficult situation with a client and get suggestions from the other counselors. The first two calls have been related to employment. Continuing Educational Units (CEUs) can be earned by participating in the call. This helps the counselors to retain their certification.

We are part of Employ LNK. Employ LNK had a job fair and there were 30 employers present. We got some good leads for this. We are also participating in the Project Search Job fair in Omaha on April 30. We are paying for ½ of the Keynote Speakers expenses. Staff and clients will attend.

We are starting to look at summer employment for our Pre-ets clients. We are partnering with NCECBVI to place a number of students into part time employment this summer.

We had two clients come for 3-day stays. One client has started Center training. The other client is working out a start date.

We assisted clients in finding employment as assembler, interior designer and general manager. We assisted a food service worker to maintain employment.

Omaha District Activity Report – Nancy Flearl

Larry Oleson was out of the office for close to three weeks as he had shoulder surgery. We are glad he is back. I want to thank Nancy Coffman, Jan Brandt and Nancy Burdine for all their support during his absence, they were a big help.

We have been focused on developing summer work experiences for our high school students that are not participating in WAGES.

We have participated in the Vision Resource Fair at Baxter arena. This year it was a part of the Omaha Health Expo. All organizations and agencies that provide services to individuals that are blind and visually impaired were represented. It was a two day event April 14 and 15 drawing people from across the metro area. We anticipate several employment related referrals based on our contacts at this event.

We have been working with the Nebraska Center for the Education of Children who are Blind and Visually Impaired (NCECBVI) in meeting with local school districts about the importance of aligning our Individual Plan for Employment and Individual Education Plan. This joint collaboration will hopefully lead to the opportunity to provide more services to students during the school day.

Kelly has been participating in Metro Transition Team. This team is comprised of all the Omaha Metro Special Ed directors with a focus on transition. We have been able to share that we are the VR agency for students that are blind or have a visual impairment. They hope to plan training for staff that coordinate the IEP to know the important individuals that should be at an IEP and we will be a part of that training.

We have been participating in the Project Search Job Fair on April 30 and assisting with the mock interviews. We will have a table there to share information about NCBVI with students, families and business representatives.

We have been working with individuals that have been in job ready for a while. Some are individuals that have multiple disabilities, others have some additional variables. An example of one new partnership is "No More Empty Pots". It is a program that works on intensive training in culinary arts. We have a client that will be entering this program during the next session in July. She has a vocational goal of self-employed baker. Aside from the intensive training, they will work with her on developing a business plan and possible resources for starting a business. Another of our clients has interviewed and they are interested in hiring him as a dishwasher. We have been taking others for tours of businesses in their chosen field and to job shadow employees. Employers want a good match between the employee and the position. Wanting to make sure that the clients truly understand the expectations of the positions, but in doing so they are able to demonstrate their abilities. We have another client that will hopefully be offered a position next week as a result of his visit to the employer worksite.

I have been working with Tim Terrell and Monique Orrante on processing of bills. The three of us have participated in a statewide training for VR Tech's as we implement changes. We are looking at all of our practices so as to have continuity in what we do statewide.

As a part of our Community Needs Assessment, we have been contacting businesses we have worked with in the past to inform them of a short survey they will be receiving and their preference in doing this via phone or email.

The Omaha District has been working with our NBE Staff to support the work of the new vendors here in Omaha.

North Platte District Activity Report - Erin Brandyberry

The North Platte District had three clients attend Winnerfest and two staff worked the program. At the Center we had one client start in January and one client graduate Center training in March. We have three clients with severe multiple disabilities working toward their employment goals through the milestones program and our staff are gaining more experience in working with multiple disabilities. We have one client that is actively working on becoming an NBE vendor and are preparing another client to start the process.

We had five successful closures this past quarter at the following businesses: Pizza Hut, Dunkin' Donuts, a feedlot, Casey's General Store, and an agricultural insurance business.

Our staff has been active in Project Search sites in Grand Island, Hastings, Kearney, and North Platte. Staff has also been participating in the agency wide VR counselor meetings that were started this past quarter.

I participated in the quarterly Greater Nebraska Workforce Development Board meeting, and also met one-on-one with the Grand Island one-stop coordinator. This led to developing relationships with individuals from the Department of Labor where we can team up together to provide services to our clients. I have also started attending monthly meetings at the North Platte VR office and developed a relationship with the staff members there, and have received several referrals from clients that they had previously been serving, but who had underlying visual impairments.

I attended the meeting with NCECBVI which was a wonderful step in growing in our partnership. We made many connections and are following up on some students in the North Platte district that may benefit from our services in addition to working on building relationships with TVIs.

I was on the hiring team for the center supervisor. I was on the team to coordinate the training for the VR techs to implement a new business procedure in each of the local offices to ensure consistency, accuracy, and efficiency across the state.

Angie participates in the local WIOA partner meetings in Scottsbluff. She is a part of the Tri-City Active Living Council to advocate for the needs of our clients. She is graduating from the Leadership Scottsbluff program at the end of April and gained valuable connections through the program. Angie spoke with business women and professional

groups about our services. She attended an At Risk Population Workshop and a Mental Health First Aid Training.

Cristal attends WIN meetings at the VR offices in Kearney and Grand Island each month to maintain relationships with our partners. She became a member of the Foster Care Advisory group in Grand Island to further network and be present in the community.

Deanna has changed to working part-time on her OIB caseload and has started working part-time on VR cases to aid in keeping our OIB budget at an appropriate level and to meet the needs of the clients in the Kearney office area. In the past couple of months, she has completed skills training with some of Cristal's clients, and has assisted in other various VR duties. Starting in April Deanna will start carrying her own small VR caseload. She attends the Aging Coalition in Kearney, Elder Issues in Grand Island, and participated in agency fairs in Kearney, Grand Island, and Hastings.

Deanna and Cristal attend community connections meeting in Kearney. They also attended a benefits training held by VR and Goodwill. Deanna, Cristal, Fritz and Diann attended a job coach training held by VR.

Jan provided training to TVIs and Paras at Wood River and Grand Island schools for setting up/using embossers and Duxbury Braille Translation Software. Our agency is also contracting with the I Can Connect program through ATP to provide training to a deaf/blind client on software that improves quality of life.

Fritz and Diann provided an in-service on orientation and mobility to staff at a day service center that has multiple clients with visual impairments. Fritz also had a booth at the Cozad Grand Generation Center.

Diann attended the Nebraska State Transition Conference and is on the NCBVI Transition Committee. She attended Project Connect in North Platte to find out about the resources in the community that are available to our clients and networked.

Center Activity Report – Carol Jenkins

Currently: Eight Students (One student is from Florida)

Two New Staff Trainees (Center Supervisor 4/30/2018-6/29/2018 and CAP Director 4/23/2018-5/4/2018)

Two Staff Trainees Completed Training (VR Tech 1/8/2018-1/12/2018 plus 4/2/2018-4/6/2018 and Business Manager III 2/5/2018-3/23/2018)

Six Three Day Stays (One was a student from Virginia)

Two Students had a Mini Meal

Three Students had Commencement Meals

Tours: Two consumers from Kansas (rescheduled), one consumer from Virginia, and four agency consumers

Student Requested Activities: St. Patrick's Day Door Sign, Game Day, Mary Kay Make-Up Alternatives/Men's Grooming Alternatives, Grilling (gas and charcoal), ACBN luncheon, and ACBN Convention

Volunteer Activity: Children's Museum (helping to clean facility for special event)

Guest Speakers: Kiely Madhaven presented on how to work and interact with individuals with TBI's, ACBN President Mark Bulger and ACBN Secretary Jim Jirak discussed the ACBN and upcoming ACBN convention, and the CAP Director met with students to discuss CAP.

Center Staff: Some Staff continue work with the Tech Committee and attend these meetings, collaborate with the FuzioN implementation and testing project, work on projects to improve their classes, and participate in webinars to gain knowledge in working with students with multiple disabilities, and continue to take on delegated duties from the Center Supervisor.

Center Supervisor: Continues to work with AWARE issues, attends District Meetings via phone and some face to face, provides support to supervisors and staff, continues to supervise the Center and the Field, attended a meeting with NCECBVI to further the agency's partnership, participated in webinars on WIOA federal regulations, tracking and reporting requirements, attended NCSAB, completed statewide individual staff caseload reviews, attended the ACBN State Convention, and is coordinating technical assistance and training from WINTAC.

Additional Notes: NCECBVI students and staff spent a day with the Center. NCECBVI toured the Center Apartments, rode the city bus from the Center Apartments to the Training Center, prepared lunch, ate lunch with the Center students and staff, and toured the Training Center.

The Center is filling up. We have six students that need one on one teaching/training at this time due to severe multiple disabilities.

The total number of students attending the Center doesn't include staff trainees because they don't stay in the Center Apartments. We have 10 Center Apartments and so ten students can attend the Center regardless of how many staff trainees we have. Nebraska consumers always have priority when attending the Center when it comes to consumers from other states.

Transition Activity Report – Shane Buresh

Since the last quarterly Commission Board meeting, we have held the Spring Winnerfest program, begun to plan for our summer offerings and have engaged in several outreach activities, which will all be briefly highlighted below. In the latter part of February, four members of the Transition Committee attended a state-wide Transition conference put on by NDE. There were more than 100 teachers, para's, VR, NCBVI and other professionals present. On the first afternoon we hosted a panel discussion entitled: "Low Incidence Disabilities: High Expectations". We invited professionals or consumers from the world of autism, deafness and TBI, to join us to try and give greater awareness to the capabilities of

individuals who are in these lesser experienced and understood disability subsets. Kelly Coleman moderated the panel, which I sat on and we brought our message to around 15 individuals who were in attendance. We also hosted a joint session with NCECBVI on the second afternoon, which addressed how professionals could work with individuals in the transition age range on the expanded core curriculum skill areas for the blind and we particularly featured our summer employment project you learned about last month. Leslie Wagner, Transition Specialist from NCECBVI and I jointly presented this workshop which again was lightly attended but we fielded quite a few questions regarding our project, which gives us hope that others might try to replicate it in other disability areas. Beyond these two specific workshops, over the course of the two days, each of us attended a ranging mixture of breakout sessions. .

Toward the end of March, we held the spring Winnerfest, which was entitled “Reality Check: The Future Is Now”. This workshop was designed and presented by staff from NCBVI. There were 27 Pre-ETS individuals who attended. Incidentally, we did move the Winnerfest to a new facility, which is Carol Joy Holling, near Ashland.

As the title indicates, this Winnerfest covered most of the Pre-ETS required areas focusing on how to help the students gather and reflect on information and thoughts about their futures. We had a speaker from the department of labor, who talked about employment trends and how to evaluate what classes to take and how to determine what you want out of your life, so you can set yourself up for success in the changing job market. We also toured the Bakers Candies factory which is local and had a very powerful presentation by second generation to the family business and CEO Todd Baker, regarding what he looks for in employees and how he saw their disabilities as a strength because of the view of the world it gave them and the subsequent unique skills that they therefore possess. The students did a volunteer work based learning activity, which was to assist the camp in preparing a newsletter mailing. We conducted a employment related scavenger hunt at the Outlet Mall near Gretna and watched bottom dollar, a documentary on sub-minimum wage employment. The students learned about how to make life choices during a giant game of life created by the Omaha office. One of the concluding take-away projects was a YouTube Video activity. The students created and filmed brief you tubes that attempt to share thoughts and or ideas with other blind peers about truths they have learned regarding blindness. These videos are currently being edited and we hopefully will be viewing them soon, stay tuned.

In March, I once again attended the meeting of the advisory committee at UNL for the grant given to both the teachers of deaf and blind preparation programs by the OSEP office entitled the Mid-Plains Professional Upgrade Partnership – Sensory Disabilities, which is designed to recruit and train educators. This Advisory Board will meet annually until the project’s completion in 2021 to review progress, evaluate program data, and provide suggestions.

Collaborations have also continued this quarter. Carol, the supervisors and I met earlier in April with NCECBVI management staff and had a full day meeting which was very positive and I believe went a long way toward clearing up misconceptions about each agency and our programs. We were invited to join several field based groups that they are starting and there are plans to enhance and increase information sharing between one another on IEP’s and IPE’s. NCECBVI also agreed to assist us in establishing better communications

with TVI's across the state. Our own internal transition committee has also continued to work with autism professionals, TVI's and NCECBVI to try and enhance our understanding and build our capacity with working with these individuals whom we serve. In fact, the transition committee is beginning a tool kit for staff in the area of transition and our first topic area is how to improve our interactions and services with those with multiple disabilities.

During this quarter much energy has also been spent on future summer based programming. There is of course WAGES which will be held June 3 through July 13. The program will look and feel closer to how it did in 2015 and earlier, as there will not be any program wide trips to the consumer conventions and it is being coordinated by me as opposed to an SOS temporary. In addition, we of course will be holding Project Independence July 29 through August 2 as well.

One new venture which will most likely be up and going before the meeting on May 5, once everything is approved contract wise, is the NFB Career Mentoring Program. This will match successful blind adults from across the country with interested Pre-ETS aged youth, in mentoring relationships based around their careers and other hobbies and interests. We will be soliciting both mentors and mentees in the coming weeks.

This summer we will continue our collaboration with NCECBVI and other TVI's, as we conduct several more of the OJE work opportunities in the home communities of several of our Pre-ETs client who both do and do not attend NCECBVI.

Until my next report know that we are very actively engaged in a summer of possibilities for the blind youth of Nebraska.

Technology Program Activity Report – Nancy Burdine

Printers: We have spec'd out printers and did some testing – Canon printers have been ordered for Omaha, Kearney and North Platte locations. The Canons have built in software to make accessible PDFs. The Scottsbluff office will get a HP multi-function device. This decision was made because there is only one person in that location, therefore, this will be more economical.

Mobile Device Security: OCIO is pushing out an app that increases security on mobile devices. This will include any mobile device that receives State email, mobile phones, iPads, etc. It has been put on hold for NCBVI until tweaks and testing can be completed. By design, it disables accessibility options. OCIO is going to see what can be done to accommodate our needs and will get back with me when a solution is available.

Hierarchy: My position will now report to Bill Brown rather than Carol Jenkins. It has been determined that I will be working more in administration than with clients so this move makes more sense.

Tech Committee: I will no longer be in charge of the Tech Committee. I will continue to attend the meetings, Nancy Flearl will lead them.

I received equipment from Bierly and passed it on to the Tech Committee members. They will get a chance to get hands on experience so they can make informed choices about products to recommend.

AWARE/Analytics: Tableau has been ordered; training will be May 15 through May 17. Dan Bartels from Alliance will be in the Lincoln office to train Julie Buren, Bill Brown, Carol Jenkins, Kat Carroll and Nancy Burdine.

Fuzion: Matt Hackert is working closely with OCIO to complete preliminary and in-depth testing.

Nebraska Business Enterprise Activity Report – Carrie DeFreece

Facilities

The NBE program is continuing negotiating vending services with the Nebraska Department of Correctional Services (NDCS). The proposal is to allow NBE to operate as a Pilot for three months at the Nebraska State Penitentiary in the visiting areas. Staff and Lobby areas could be served right away with a 30-day notice to the current vendor. This may start as early as May unless NDCS changes course. NDCS does fear that the current vendor would pull out of the facilities if this type of phasing-in takes place so they are being very cautious. In addition, there are concerns about the payment of Inmate Welfare funds into the facility. Staff has discussed with them that the percentage and amounts should not change.

In December, NBE staff met with State Building Division and Purchasing to discuss opportunities on the state buildings contract which would include the State Office Building, State Capitol and several other smaller locations in Lincoln. Unfortunately, most of the players in the original meeting have retired or moved on to other positions. Additional meetings with DAS, State Building Division, State legal counsel and NCBVI staff have finally resulted in NBE receiving the contract to take over these locations in July. The agreement was to give the Contract to NBE without a bid for five years. After that time, the contract would be re-bid and NBE would need to bid a competitive price.

The Nebraska Capitol Commission contacted NBE regarding catering at the Capitol during construction when the cafeteria would be closed. An agreement was signed in April and a blind vendor has been assigned to begin catering service at the Capitol on May 7. This will run for approximately 18 months until November 2019.

Conversations continue with Offutt and a potential teaming partner.

Fourteen (14) locations in Omaha were redistributed amongst two vendors, including one potential licensee.

Vendors (Licensees)

Kip Svejkovsky in North Platte has begun training to become a licensee and will be a likely candidate to take over the sites left by Dan Knuter.

The Blind Vendors Committee is working with Staff to plan a one-day training retreat in Lincoln on June 15th that will include several exhibitors. Exhibitors will be charged a fee to help offset the costs of meals during the day and travel for any vendors that need to come in from other communities.

Business Office Activity Report –

Bill Brown -

Training Kathy Carroll - Since 3/26 after Kat's training was successfully completed, she and I have been working together to make a smooth transition for NCBVI Financial Management after my retirement on August 7. We have taken the approach of addressing situations as they generally pop up day to day. We have also provided her with a reading list and a reference list of materials that will help her as she works with RSA, State Accounting, State Purchasing, etc. I believe this has been moving along quite well. Her previous experience has given her a good perspective on the management of all aspects of the Financial management arena and she picks up quickly the movement from one aspect to the other and is not easily confused. I think NCBVI will not skip a beat after I am gone.

Training Carrie DeFreece - Carrie and I have met a number of times and she is picking up the process and moving it forward nicely. She and Jan Stokebrand have been working to better define the contracting process and get necessary information posted in the LB 429 Public Facing Contract Data Base. She is working hard to keep all the players in the process in the loop. I hope to get Kat and her together more to better coordinate the contracting process with the budget process.

Working on new financial process and Training

Working and coordinating FuzioN - NCBVI has been working hard to keep involved in the new FuzioN accounting system and adapting our processes to FuzioN. We have been attending the Class Room Pilot (CRP) sessions as much as we can since the breadth of the project and the few staff we have available to cover. Grant Management, Procurement, and all essential aspects of the accounting and financial enterprise will be affected.

Working on a financial aspect of MOU for workforce cost sharing - We are working to fix an issue with the accounting for rent at the Omaha Workforce office to avoid duplicate payments and make sure that all parties have similar definitions of terms of the MOU.

Financial Management - Ongoing monitoring of Grant and Fund expenditures. Long range planning as monthly numbers become available.

Greg DeWall Move Coordination - Worked on contracts to provide moving services for our new Center supervisor's move from California to Nebraska. Put together agreement between Mr. DeWall and us to recover costs if Conditions are not met.

Dave Robinson -

Kathy Carroll was hired to fill the position that Bill Brown will be vacating on August 7, 2018. Kathy started with the agency on February 5, 2018 and spent 7 weeks in center training and is now working alongside with Bill, until his retirement.

The agency decided to fill the Center supervisor position. The position was opened and Greg DeWall, was hired to fill the position. Greg will begin his duties on April 30th. Greg comes to the agency from the California Society for the Blind, where he is currently the Lead Orientation & Mobility Instructor, as well as functioning in other capacities.

A training session for Vocational Rehabilitation Technicians along with supervisors and Business Office staff was conducted in Lincoln on April 11 & 12 in preparation for the upcoming changes in business office practices and AWARE processes. Training was beneficial to everyone and will aid in everyone "being on the same page."

Kathy Stephens –

I continue to work on the scanning of fixed assets for the year-end inventory.

I worked with Office Innovations and Surplus Property to surplus some items. Over the next few months I will be working with Nancy Burdine to clean out the Staging room and sending many of these items to State Surplus.

I worked on staff travel arrangements and registrations for several different conventions, conferences and trainings coming up.

The Lincoln Food Bank Drive has kicked off and is underway. I attended the kick-off luncheon. The campaign runs April 9 – April 20.

Chair Hansen asked about the change of leadership in the Blind Vendor program. Director Serván reported that Sandy Alvarado retired as Chair of the Blind Vendor program. The Vice Chair, Ross Pollpeter, became the Chair.

Chair Hansen stated that he believes that the last time that he saw a full document for the State Needs Assessment was November 2013. Since this time, there have been surveys done but not a State Needs Assessment. Chair Hansen asked about the contract NCBVI has with Gemini Research to conduct surveys for our State Needs Assessment.

Director Serván reported NCBVI use to have a contract with Mississippi State University to conduct our Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment. The other surveys NCBVI conducted were basically for our own benefit to see how we were doing with our services. When we recently contacted Mississippi State University to conduct our Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment they stated that they were not doing these anymore and they suggested we contact Louisiana Tech University. NCBVI was doing some work with Dr. Bell already and he said that Louisiana Tech University was not doing them either but that he has a separate business, Gemini Research, which does this type of work.

Therefore, we are doing our Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment with Gemini Research.

Chair Hansen asked what RSA's requirement is for how often this survey needs to be done. Director Serván stated that the requirement is every three to five years and we are going on year five.

Commissioner Newman asked about the meeting that Director Serván had with Eric Stueckrath, the Director of Outlook Nebraska, and specifically, if Outlook meets the requirement for integrated employment. Currently, anyone who works in production at Outlook Nebraska does not meet the requirement. In accordance with the federal contracts that Outlook Nebraska has at least 75% of their workers in the production area must be blind. This in itself is not integrated according to the law.

Director Serván stated that Outlook Nebraska does not meet the requirement according to RSA Regulations. Mr. Stueckrath visited to initiate some conversation with him as the new NCBVI Director. Director Serván stated that he plans to also pay the courtesy back and visit Outlook Nebraska and see how we can collaborate. We have differences, but we are going to talk about the differences as well as what we have in common. Chair Hansen stated that he would also like to attend this meeting.

Commissioner Newman reported that when Outlook Nebraska first got started he was on the Board. Commissioner Newman added that he thinks it would be a good thing to have a NCBVI commissioner on their Board again.

Director Serván stated that we need to talk about issues and make sure we are communicating because no one likes confrontation. At one time we said that we could not work with Outlook Nebraska because they were not integrated and other issues. Director Serván noted that Commissioner Newman is asking him to ask the Director of Outlook Nebraska to have one representative from NCBVI on their Board.

Chair Hansen stated that before he could make a decision on this he would need to go back and review some previous Minutes of NCBVI Commission meetings. Chair Hansen stated that this could possibly be an agenda topic for a future NCBVI Commission Board meeting.

Commissioner Bulger stated that he would caution any official Board representations. Instead, NCBVI should have a good working relationship with Outlook Nebraska like it does with the NFB, ACB, OIB, etc.

Commissioner Newman stated for the record that NCBVI supports our clients who wish to go to work at Outlook Nebraska.

Ongoing Business

Budget and Biennium Update

NCBVI got its budget cuts recommended by the Governor restored with this biennium.

Beginning in August/September we need to put together the budget for the next biennium. It is usually during this time to decide whether or not we are going to ask for more money and justify how it will be used. It was noted that unless we ask for extra money they do not appropriate for extra funds. At this time the Governor's office usually asks each agency to write a plan on how it would operate if its budget was cut 5% and 10%.

We are pleased with the results of the NCBVI staff's efforts to bring our expenditures back within the parameters of our resources. Unfortunately, this is not a one-time effort, it will need to be maintained, but it is a huge effort which has been undertaken by all staff and they have responded.

Commissioner Bulger noted there are 79 Vocational Rehabilitation agencies throughout the country and at the time 39 of those states are in Order of Selection. Commissioner Bulger asked what NCBVI is doing that the other agencies aren't doing to keep us from getting to the point of having to go into Order of Selection.

Director Serván stated that in general NCBVI is doing a good job. Also, being a Commission and the way that the structure of NCBVI works providing direct services really helps. Many agencies contract their services. We can tell our counselors to cut the cost of services. Also, NCBVI continues to receive Social Security reimbursements because people get off of benefits. NCBVI does a good job of placing our clients in good jobs. This helps us a lot.

Newsline® Update

Nebraska NFB Newsline®

April 26, 2018

Bryan Baldwin, Outreach Coordinator

In this report, I will include January's information, as the report came out before the month finished up, and will exclude April due to the timing.

Due to medical issues I wasn't as active and am currently on the upswing. I am set to give a presentation to the Center clients on Tuesday, May 1. I will also be reaching out to the districts soon to see if they would like presentations done with groups of their clients. I am still working to get every counselor to work with interested clients that don't have email addresses to work with them first on getting them an email, and continuing to get them out of the pattern of using their Commission email. In regards to having the application process streamlined to me, I haven't heard anything back and will be in contact soon. One thing I have noticed is that call rates with problems have gone down significantly. Yesterday I had my first technical issue call in quite a while. So it seems like glitches and issues are becoming less common.

Newsline has upped their game in regards to adding new publications. This spring they have released Stone Soup, a publication for kids that was founded in 1973 by college students at the University of California Santa Cruz. It contains literature and art from children all over the world. It is primarily writings and artwork done by children the ages of 8-13 and is meant to encourage children to use writing and art to talk about their lives.

They have also included Sports Illustrated Online which will give the sports junkies their fill of everything from basketball to football to hockey and more. Along those same lines they have released Sporting News. This has been a publication for quite some time, beginning in 1886, and referred to as the bible of baseball, in 1914 it was expanded to include other sports, and only became digital in 2013. Internationally, they have added Globes Israel which covers Israeli business and is translated to English for its readers here in America. A particularly interesting publication added is Science X. This publication has over 100 articles a day in regards to physics, math, Earth science, medicine, electronics, and many more news articles about the sciences you are interested in. One addition that many will find particularly interesting and useful is Medical Express. This web based publication offers the most comprehensive coverage in medical research and health news in many fields of medical sciences.

In January we had two new subscribers. Our total call time was 16,193 minutes with an average call time of 15 minutes. We had a total online access of 6,906, so we're pushing that 7,000 mark of times we're visited online. It seems many are using the web with 1,500 sessions on the web, and 500 on the app.

February saw three new subscribers and 13,605 total call minutes. The online accesses jumped to 7,116 with the web and mobile sessions staying around the same with 1,495 and 507 respectively. In Your Pocket deliveries saw 3,849 visits for those using a Victor Stream. Most readers are going to the local Nebraska news with almost 4,500 visits on Nebraska publications with national publications being visited upwards of 600 times.

March saw a jump in new subscribers with seven for the month. The total call minutes for March remained about the same at 13,274 and the total online accesses jumped to 7,982. Web sessions saw an increase to 1,832 times, and the mobile accesses remained close to the same around 481. The In Your Pocket deliveries jumped up to 4,524. Still most people are reading the Nebraska publication with almost 5,000 sitting at 4,923 Nebraska publication visits, with National publications hitting 592.

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to email or call me.

Thank you and have a great meeting!

Client Assistance Program (CAP) Complaints or issues

There were no new cases to the Client Assistance Program relating to the NE Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCBVI) during this time.

The CAP Director attended the NCBVI Supervisor Meetings. The CAP Director also met and shared information/resources regarding the Client Assistance Program and Hotline for Disability Services with the new Business Manager and also with the NCBVI Center students.

Staff Anonymous Suggestion Submissions

There were no suggestions in the Staff Anonymous Suggestion Box.

Continue Discussion of Upcoming Meeting Dates and Locations

August 4, 2018 – North Platte, Nebraska at a location to be determined and at the Norfolk NCBVI office for video conference.

November 3, 2018 – Omaha, Nebraska at a location to be determined.

February 2, 2019 – Lincoln, Nebraska at a location to be determined and at the Scottsbluff NCBVI office for video conference.

May 4, 2019 – Tentatively at Nebraska City, Nebraska. Director Serván is to reach out to NCECBVI to see if this will work with their schedule.

Public Comment

Nancy Flearl – Nancy stated that she really appreciated the dialog about Outlook Nebraska because she does think it is important that we are at the table. Nancy stated that she also thinks that Outlook Nebraska would welcome NCBVI to have a meeting at their location. As a part of the meeting the commissioners could tour their facility and get a scope of the services they provide.

Chair Hansen suggested that we ask Outlook Nebraska if this is something they would be willing to host the November NCBVI Commission Board meeting and give us a tour and talk more about what they do and what their future plans are.

Jim Jirak – Jim stated that one thing that came to mind regarding the possible meeting at Outlook Nebraska on November 3; they are having their annual banquet on November 2.

Ryan Osentowski – Ryan said thank you to whoever donated the doughnuts and coffee.

Break

A break was taken at 10:25 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 10:40 a.m.

New Business

Discuss and Act on the approval of the Executive Director's time certification

Commissioner Bulger moved to continue with the current method being used for the Director to submit her Personnel Activity Report to the Board of Commissioners. The Director submits his/her Personnel Activity Report via email to the entire Board for their review. It is an automatic approval unless a question or concern is raised by a Commission Board member.

Commissioner Rieken seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor of the motion.

Discuss & Act on the Approval of Employee in-state and out-of-state Travel

State law requires all travel of staff of state agencies to be pre-approved. This includes travel in-state and out-of-state. Currently for out-of-state travel all staff must complete a form that says where they are going, why they are going there, the cost, how it will be funded, etc. and this must be pre-approved by their immediate supervisor and by the executive director. This is done by all staff for out-of-state travel.

Supervisors manage in-state travel by getting itineraries from staff and reviewing them on an on-going basis. However, staff is not required to check with their supervisor every morning to get an okay for in-state travel as this would not be manageable. Discussion was held with Administrative Services to determine how the agency could comply with the law regarding in-state travel. Administrative Services recommended that each year the Board of Commissioners would have a motion to pre-approve travel that is related to the purpose of the staff person's position.

Commissioner Bell moved:

The Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Board of Commissioners approves all employee in-state business travel and/or out-of-state business travel within 60 miles of the border of Nebraska in any adjoining state, which relates directly to the provision of services to a client, i.e. employer visit, medical appointment, service referral, employment interview, etc. All other out-of-state business travel is approved if granted approval by the Executive Director of the agency. This motion is in effect until the next meeting of the Board of Commissioners after April 1, 2019.

Commissioner Newman seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and all commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

Discuss and act upon the request to reinstate the agenda item "Commissioners Report."

Chair Hansen noted that previously the Board of Commissioners had an agenda item called "Commissioners Report." During this time, commissioners would state the types of activities that they had done during the past quarter regarding services of NCBVI, staying in touch with the blindness community, personally educate themselves and other such topics. In recent history, the commissioners had done away with this agenda item. There was a request made by Jim Jirak and Julie Johnson to have this agenda item reinstated. Chair Hansen read something that he wrote and shared with the Commission Board a while back regarding his position on the matter and then he will open the item up for discussion by the Board.

Fellow board members,

At our last meeting Jim Jirak and Julie Johnson approached me and commented on how disappointed they were that we did not have a Commissioners Report on the agenda. They said that they missed hearing what we as board members had personally done to serve NCBVI since our last quarterly board meeting. A few of us have also spoken up

stating that they like having that as a regular topic. I fully welcome and applaud the discussion. It is these discussions that make us better.

Robert has helped to get the agenda of our next meeting put together. I will forward that around in the next day or so. On it will be time to discuss this further. Below are a few of my thoughts regarding the matter. I share them with you today not to start the discussion now (let's do that on May 5) and not to sway your opinion. but to just state my opinion and why I sought to have it removed in the first place. I likely will just read these thoughts out loud during our next meeting as a way to start the discussion. Seeing these now I hope just lets you know some of the logic in my head related to this topic and if it is a topic you feel strongly about that you would have an insight to my view point ahead of time.

To be frank and honest, most of the time I personally think that all any of us could say during the "Commissioner's Report" is that we have done our best to stay abreast of NCBVI business through email correspondence. Personally In the last three months I have had a discussion with Carlos about how the evaluation process works and recently about the legal matter he brought to our attention. I did contact the State Department of Administrative Services and asked what State employees are contracted to receive this year in a raise and I have asked some of you to help prepare for Carlos's evaluation or plan the upcoming meeting. Oh my goodness stop the presses, who would have ever thought that I read my email, created an agenda and prepared to conduct the annual evaluation of the Executive Director. As for the legal matter I am not going to bring that up. Do I or any of us need to get up and spend time stating this?

Notice above, I did say most of the time. I realize that at times we trek to Lincoln and participate in budget hearings and I have from time to time accompanied Carlos to a senator's office to discuss a topic, but these things do not happen on a regular basis.

If we had a myriad of activities that we were always doing on a weekly/monthly basis for NCBVI then I would say that yes certainly we should report on it, but that isn't the case.

If those seeking to have this topic put back on the agenda are taking the tact that we need to continue to show how we are qualified to serve in the positions we have been appointed to every time we meet we are going to be stating how we continue to advocate for the blind via our work through the ACB or NFB, how Becky and Chad work every day to improve the lives of blind children by providing the highest quality education, how Mark works to provide resources for the blind through the Omaha Association of the Blind, how Robert works to provide additional resources for NCBVI clients through his work with the Friends of the Commission, how I serve on a committee to bring awareness to the topic of accessibility related to the technology the University provides for its students and staff and how we all live with blindness as part of our lives on a daily basis. Do we need to state this every time we meet?

I personally don't see the need to state the obvious or to restate things that should just be in our bios.

I do realize that by reporting some of the things that we do isn't necessarily bragging or one-upmanship, but informing the public of things we have taken part in, experiences we have had or knowledge we might have. If things like this occur that relate to NCBVI

business that we would like to report that we actively took a role in we can easily do this either by comments during the executive directors report or if the Executive Director wasn't involved by making it its own item on the agenda (ie. a Board retreat). If they are things in our personal lives then I don't think they have a place in an official open meeting.

I look forward to you thoughts during the May Board meeting.

Thanks
Mike

Chair Hansen opened the discussion up to the NCBVI Board members.

Commissioner Bulger stated that when he attended the NCBVI Board meetings as a member of the public, he always found it to be an insight to know what the Board was doing. NCBVI is supposed to be a consumer driven agency and hopefully the people that serve on the NCBVI Commission Board have demonstrated by their past experiences and past services that they are engaged in what the consumers are, what their needs are and how we can best serve them. Commissioner Bulger stated that he sees this as an opportunity for the commissioners to talk to the public. When the Board travels to different areas for meetings they have a different public in attendance. The Commissioners Report is a chance for the Board to talk to future potential leaders and give an insight on what the Board does. Each commissioner brings different skills and experiences to the Board.

Commissioner Newman stated that he feels that the agenda item should be reinstated because the public that comes to the NCBVI Board meetings wants to know how engaged the commissioners are. Commissioner Newman stated that he does often have items that he would like to share during a NCBVI Board meeting. For example, he belongs to the Employment Committee for the National Federation of the Blind and they receive job listings and notices of job fairs. He will forward those to the NCBVI deputy director. Whenever he receives information on technology he will forward that on to a technology specialist. Commissioner Newman reported that he is also a member of "Friends of the Commission". As a part of "Friends of the Commission" he works with the seniors of Nebraska. They recently had a referral from Angie, our Scottsbluff counselor and the "Friends of the Commission" are going to work with a client who recently finished Center training and he will work with someone in getting eye devices. It is the special things that he feels that the commissioners should report on.

Commissioner Bell stated that his thoughts on the topic are in the middle. He feels that as long as the commissioners are doing the job that they were appointed to do that is the important thing. Commissioner Bell stated that he is not involved in a lot of blindness groups as Commissioners Bulger, Hansen and Newman are, but he mostly represents the consumers. Commissioner Bell stated that he goes to work every day to help a fourth grade girl who was born blind. He works with her so she can become an independent blind person.

Commissioner Rieken stated that she works with students and overall any time of the year, except summer, she is too busy to be involved with too many other things. Professionally and personally she has a connection with the blind and this keeps her life busy.

Commissioner Rieken stated that she really has no strong opinion as to whether this item gets put back on the agenda.

Chair Hansen stated that he has nothing to add to the comments that he read previously. Chair Hansen stated that he appreciates what the other commissioners have stated. Chair Hansen stated that he would like to entertain a motion to add the item "Commissioners Report" back to the agenda or not.

Commissioner Bulger moved to add the item "Commissioners Report" back to the quarterly agenda of the NCBVI Commissioners meeting.

Commissioner Newman seconded the motion.

Voting yes was Commissioners Bulger and Commissioner Newman.

Voting no was Chair Hansen.

Abstaining was Commissioners Bell and Rieken.

The motion failed.

Public Comment

Carol Jenkins – Carol stated that she has had a chance to sit on both sides of the table in that she has been a consumer, a commissioner and an employee of NCBVI for a number of years. There is one thing that she would ask for the Board to consider regarding the Commissioners Report. Carol stated that she does not necessarily think there needs to be a full report from each commissioner at each meeting, but maybe commissioners could report on their extra highlights. As an employee and as a consumer she would like to be aware of special things that the commissioners are doing.

Jim Jirak – Jim thanked the Board for putting the item "Commissioners Report" on the agenda for today's meeting. Jim noted that he and Julie Johnson did not conspire to have this item on the agenda. Jim stated that when he saw this item on the agenda he did not think that it would pass, but not in the matter in which it happened. Jim stated that he did not expect Commissioners Bell and Rieken to abstain from voting, but he thought they would vote no. Jim asked each of the commissioners to give an update on what they have been doing since the last meeting.

Commissioner Bulger stated that one thing he is working on for fun is that a group of blind people are taking a bus to see "The Miracle Worker" on June 10. They are chartering a 45 passenger bus and for \$25 you get to go see "The Miracle Worker" in Manly, Iowa. Dinner is also included.

The ACB State Convention was held on April 21 in Omaha, Nebraska. This was a one day event which helped keep their costs down. Budget wise the convention was a success, but they lost a little bit on the connections that can be made over a weekend event.

Commissioner Bulger reported that he continues to serve on the Statewide Independent Living Council. They deal with some of the same problems as other organizations getting more public to come to their meetings. The response he heard was "what do we have to offer to the public." Commissioner Bulger would like to see meetings be more engaging to make them truly consumer driven.

Chair Hansen stated that since the February Board meeting, as he read in his statement, he has been working with Director Serván on the evaluation process so he becomes familiar with it. He worked with fellow Board members to ask for their assistance in putting today's meeting together. He reached out to Administrative Services inquiring what state employees are contracted for a pay raise this year so this information would be available in determining a possible raise for the executive director. There was a legal matter that Director Serván discussed with the Board. At the University of Nebraska, where he works, he serves on a group that tries to promote accessibility in software is made available to the students, faculty and staff at the University. The person at the University who held the position of ADA Compliance Officer passed away and the position has not yet been filled. He has been speaking to the interim person and getting a feel for her position on the topic of hiring someone who will promote and help provide accessibility and do testing of software. They feel that this is an important position for the University to fill in order to ensure that the University is compliant.

As for NFB, Commissioner Hansen stated that he continues to serve as a Board member. He was not able to attend their last Quarterly Board meeting because of a personal commitment. He has been working to plan the NFB annual Walk-a-thon fund raiser. As a part of the NFB, he serves a technology role. There have been some needs to do some website code updates and he is preparing to do this.

Commissioner Newman reported that Carol Jenkins had asked if the Friends of the Commission could help pay for some of the activities for Center clients. The Friends had informed her that they would be willing to assist. Commissioner Newman stated that if this something that she would still like to pursue she will need to send something in writing to the Friends regarding what the activity is and the cost. The Friends of the Commission had a meeting last week.

Commissioner Newman reported that he attended the ACB Nebraska convention in Omaha and he gave a short presentation on the history of NCBVI that Bob Deaton had written.

Commissioner Newman stated that he also responded to emails, etc. during this last quarter.

Commissioner Bell stated that during this past quarter he corresponded with other commissioners, the executive director and Kathy through emails. Commissioner Bell stated that he has also been busy with everyday life with his family and animals. Commissioner Bell reported that he also goes to work every day and works to rehabilitate a blind fourth grade student.

Commissioner Rieken reported that she reached out to Director Serván last month asking him to help her find a mentor for one of her students and he willingly found a mentor. This was very helpful. Commissioner Rieken and her daughter Kayde went NCECBVI and spoke at a Transition to College workshop for parents and students. Commissioner Rieken noted that she works with blind students everyday as a teacher of the visually impaired.

Chair Hansen added that he put in his application to the NFB for a partnership with the NFB for a mentoring contract.

Typical Final Announcements

The next NCBVI Commission Board meeting will be Saturday, August 4, 2018 in North Platte, Nebraska. The Focus Topic will be 511 Developmental Disability Changes. The Commission Board elections will also be held.

Executive Session to Discuss a Legal Matter

Commissioner Rieken moved to go into Executive Session at 11:29 a.m. to discuss a legal matter.

Open Meeting Act: Section 84-1410. Closed session; (c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct.

Commissioner Bell seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and all Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bell moved to come out of Executive Session at 11:55 a.m.

Commissioner Bulger seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and all Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

Lunch

A lunch break was taken at 11:55 a.m.

The meeting resumed at 12:47 p.m.

Executive Session to conduct the Executive Director Annual

Commissioner Newman moved to go into Executive Session at 12:47 to conduct the evaluation of the Executive Director.

(Ref. Open Meeting Act; 84-1410. Closed session; (d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting.)

Commissioner Bell seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and all Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bell moved to come out of Executive Session at 2:01 p.m.

Commissioner Newman seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken and all Commissioners voted in favor of the motion.

Act on the Retention of the Executive Director and his Salary

Commissioner Bell moved to retain Carlos Serván as the Executive Director of NCBVI. Commissioner Newman seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor of the motion.

Commissioner Bulger moved to give the Executive Director a 1.5% raise effective July 1, 2018.

Commissioner Bell seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken and all voted in favor of the motion.

Chair Hansen asked the commissioners to submit to him in writing their comments regarding the executive director's performance for the past year. He will then share the comments with the entire Board and then forward them to Director Serván. The comments will be placed in the Executive Director's personnel file.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

If you have an item that you would like to have placed on the agenda of the August 4, 2018 Commission Board meeting, please email it to the NCBVI Commission Board at ncbvi.commission-board@nebraska.gov.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Stephens, Administrative Assistant
NCBVI

Mike Hansen, Chairperson
NCBVI Board of Commissioners