

**Nebraska Business Enterprise Program
Nebraska Blind Licensees Committee Meeting Minutes**

Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
4600 Valley Rd., Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68510

September 18, 2020

Meeting called to order by Chairperson Sandy Alvarado at 10:05 AM.

Board Members in Attendance:

Chairperson Sandy Alvarado, Secretary Andrea Chizek, Vice Chairperson Chris Nolan, and Board Members Alex Curtis and Atty Svendsen

Blind Licensees and Trainees in Attendance:

Jeremy Richey, Jason Thompson, Jim Jirak, and Ronnie Kellogg

NCBVI Staff in Attendance:

Executive Director Carlos Servan, Deputy Director of Services Carol Jenkins, and NBE Staff Eric Buckwalter

Guests in Attendance:

Bob Welch and Oscar Alvarado

Logistics:

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, on the NCBVI website, NFB Newsline®, and Radio Talking Book. The notice was sent to the ncbvi.everyone email list.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Atty to approve the minutes from the meeting on June 26th, 2020 as distributed. Chris seconded it. Motion passed.

NBE Committee Chair Reported: (Presented by Sandy)

Sandy talked about the BLAST training availability on the blind merchants website and how it can still be used for upward mobility. The Licensee will need to write and submit a brief summary for it to count as training. She also talked about the training from the RSVA group. She is not sure if it is available for review yet on the RSVA website.

Sandy talked about the importance of appropriate behavior with everyone, especially with those you are conducting business with. If you are very emotionally reactive, take the time to step back before charging in with rude words or written words. And, to place yourself in the other person's shoes and think about how you would feel if someone approached you in a rude manner.

Sandy finally talked about how to communicate with the SLA; if you are having issues of any type. They are here to help but can't help you if you don't let them know.

SLA Report: (Presented by Eric)

Vending Sites Update

Nebraska State Building Division

The Nebraska State Building Division contract price list has been approved. If you fall under this contract and have not already changed your machines to reflect the new prices please do so ASAP. If you need a reminder of the price changes, or need training on changing prices, please contact Eric Buckwalter for assistance.

Nebraska Department of Transportation

Work will begin on installing credit card readers at Interstate 80 Rest Areas at the end of September or early October and continue through the end of October. Currently, the plan is to start with the eastern most Rest Areas and work toward the west. Eric will be working with vendors who do not already have accounts setup with USA Technologies. Vendors will be responsible for activating the readers on their machines.

US StratCom Cafeteria and Vending

Limited services in the cafeteria are still being provided as per COVID-19 restrictions. Vending services at StratCom continue to increase as more individuals return to work in the building.

Omaha VA-ACC Building

NBE's newest site has been open for approximately one month. Since this is a new vending site in a new medical facility, it is still too early to know exactly how busy the site will be. However, vending sales appear to be steady.

NBE Licensee Update

There are currently 15 licensed vendors operating vending facilities. We have one trainee in the NBE program who is currently operating a facility. The NBE staff successfully interviewed a new vendor at the end of July. That person will begin training soon.

Vending Site Complaints

The categories for complaints that have come into NCBVI this quarter include: vendors not keeping machines clean, having expired product, and having machines not properly stocked. NBE Vendors are reminded that NCBVI holds all of the contracts with the various facilities, and licensees are representing themselves, other licensees, other blind consumers, and NCBVI statewide.

Additional Information

Credit Card Readers The

credit card readers have been installed on many machines in the last month and a half. NBE has many more credit card readers that are going to be installed soon. Even though NBE owns the machines themselves, each vendor is expected to activate and keep track of the machines on their own USA Technologies account.

Seed Cashless Plus

Two NBE Vendors will start a trial period of the Seed Cashless Plus program this fall. The Seed Cashless Plus program is a vending management tool that allows vendors to track inventory and other aspects of their machines remotely. Upon completion of the trial period, NCBVI will have a discussion with active participation with the NBE committee to decide whether to implement this program statewide.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

NBE purchased two products for NBE Vendors to use in cleaning and sanitizing their machines. The SmartTouch sanitizing cleaner is to be used to clean machines. BIOPROTECT RTU is to be used for long-term protection of the vending machine against bacteria and germs. Detailed information about how to use this product has been distributed to vendors. Bottles of both SmartTouch and BIOPROTECT RTU will be distributed. Please contact Eric to arrange a time for delivery.

Worker's Compensation Group Policy

Carol Jenkins continues to work with Nebraska Risk Management to get the blind vendors under NCBVI's Worker's Compensation policy to once again lessen the costs for blind vendors. The Worker's Comp policy is still in draft stage of the process where all of the details are still being finalized for accuracy. Carol will keep licensees informed as information becomes available.

COVID-19 Agency Support

The deadline for submitting receipts for COVID-19 restart assistance for many vendors came due in mid to late August. Each vendor is expected to be aware of their own deadline for turning in receipts and other documentation. If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Dave.

NBE Vendor and NCBVI Staff Training

NBE staff Eric and Dave spent half of a day in Omaha at Greater America Distributing receiving training on the new snack and beverage machines. Tips on cleaning, maintenance, and preventative measures will be distributed to vendors.

Operator Agreements and Fixed Assets

NBE Staff worked diligently to update the fixed assets statewide. Despite difficulties due to COVID-19, machines and equipment were accounted. Dave Robinson will update each licensee's operator's agreement, which will include the newly approved Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) operator agreement. These will be distributed to vendors for signatures.

Looking Ahead

Currently NCBVI has no plans to expand the NBE Program at this time. However, NCBVI will continue to work on previously agreed to projects for the NBE Program. The only exception to expansion would be if NCBVI was approached by an agency looking for vending options. With the purchase and installation of new machines, NBE staff will be placing an emphasis on clean, well maintained, and properly faced machines due to

the public concerns over COVID-19 as well as the health and longevity of the machines. Training on cleaning, maintaining, and facing machines will be provided to vendors as needed.

Update on Licensees and New Trainee(s):

Presented above in the SLA Report

Jeremy Richey completed his training and became a Licensee. He was presented with his certificate.

Update on Profit and Loss: (Presented by Eric)

There were a few errors for the month of July. It is very important that you get all of your paperwork in on time so Dave Robinson can complete the end of the year reports. Also, if you are struggling with something don't hesitate to reach out and get help.

Discuss Training for Next Quarterly Meeting:

There were a few topic suggestions. We decided to do the next quarterly training on money management.

Set Date for Next Quarterly Meeting:

Andrea made a motion to have the next quarterly meeting on December 4, 2020 in Omaha, Nebraska at 10:00 AM. Atty seconded it and the motion passed.

Date: December 4, 2020

Location: Omaha, Nebraska

Time: 10:00 AM

Facility: TBA

Adjournment Time:

The meeting adjourned at 11:52 AM

Training:

Training was presented on how to submit a bid to the Commission for a new/open site, Operator's Agreement(s), and a section of Title 192 Chapter 3.

Attendance for Training:

Sandy Alvarado, Andrea Chizek, Alex Curtis, Atty Svendsen, Jason Thompson, Jim Jirak, Jeremy Richey, and Ronnie Kellogg