

**Nebraska Business Enterprises Program  
Nebraska Blind Licensees Committee Meeting**

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

March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Meeting was called to order by Chairperson Sandy Alvarado at 10:06 a.m.

**Board Members in Attendance**

Sandy Alvarado, Chairperson; Andrea Chizek, Vice Chairperson; Atty Svendsen, Secretary; Board Members Alex Curtis, and Ronnie Kellogg

**Blind Licensees and Trainees in Attendance:**

Jim Jirak, Jason Thompson, Jeremy Richey, Rhonda Broughton

**NCBVI Staff in Attendance**

Dave Robinson, SLA Staff Member  
Eric Buckwalter, NBP Coordinator  
Carol Jenkins, Deputy Director of Services

**Guests:**

Oscar Alvarado, Ron Broughton

**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 Newslines<sup>®</sup> and Radio Talking Book. The notice was sent to Commission Staff and Commissioners.

**Approve Minutes from December Meeting**

Andrea Chezek makes a motion to approve the December meeting minutes. Ronnie Kellogg seconded; motion passed.

**Committee Chair Report**

Sandy announced the passing of Ron Keyes, a long time repair person for Greater America Distributing, who she feels all Vendors have met at some point.

Training opportunities with NFB Blind Merchants:

Mini-Blast trainings were held for the past three Thursdays. They should be posting the recordings to their website, [blindmerchants.org](http://blindmerchants.org). There is a meeting and possible training during the National Convention in New Orleans from July 5<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>. The Blind Merchants meetings is on July 7<sup>th</sup>. If in person,

they will require a negative COVID test seventy-two hours prior to the event. Virtual registration will be available as well.

Training opportunities with RSVA:

Sagebrush was held virtually. There will be a training day during the ACB National Convention in Omaha, NE this summer. It is a great opportunity to meet vendors from across the country in person and attend networking events. Jim has more details as he is on the board of RSVA. You can contact him with questions. The RSVA training will be on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

A new podcast for about Randolph-Sheppard is being put out. The first two went through the history of the program.

Mini-Blast highlights were on the possibility of electric vehicle charging stations at interstate rest areas. Vistar also presented on new products that were coming and their acquiring new companies under their umbrella.

Sandy was invited to a meeting with RSA Management Group. They work with Vendors on rebates with Coke, Pepsi, and Vistar. It is free to join. They have some ideas and opportunities they are pursuing. Currently, they are working on renewing their website.

Sandy had some conversations with the SLA about how to send out information on way to handle bids for the federal sites under the new RSA guidelines.

There is new information coming regarding credit card readers.

Sandy and Andrea participated in a phone call with our RSA regional liaison. Our representative is Jim McCarthy. He can be approached with issues. Sandy noted a better choice would be to approach our SLA.

### **SLA Report**

#### **VENDING SITE UPDATE**

##### *DEA-Omaha*

The DEA – Omaha site is now open in north Omaha and is being serviced by a blind vendor.

##### *GSA-Lincoln*

The SLA has been in the beginning stages of communication with the GSA about a new USDA office in the Lincoln area. Currently, this site is not scheduled to open until summer of 2023.

##### *Main Omaha PO*

The Main Omaha PO location has been awarded to a blind vendor. This is the first site to be awarded from the group of federal sites that due to new RSA regulations cannot be directly sub-contracted by the SLA.

##### *Denny Federal*

The Denny Federal Building in Lincoln, vacated by a retirement, has been awarded to a blind vendor.

##### *Federal Sites*

There were no bids placed on the other federal sites across the state. The SLA is determining next steps but will most likely put these sites out for bid again. But the SLA still has the option to assign sites. If no blind vendors bid on these sites, NBE will have to let go of these sites.

#### **4 NBE Licensee Update**

Currently, there are thirteen licensed Vendors in the NBE program.

#### **Vending Site Complaints**

The only complaint that the SLA received this past quarter was due to BevMax machines not displaying prices. The SLA is working on signage to place on the machines indicating that customers need to press the selection to view the price. These will be placed on sites covered by the State Building contract; and then will be available to other vendors who wish to have them.

Operators are reminded that NCBVI holds all of the contracts with various facilities, and licensees and trainees are representing themselves, other blind vendors, and NCBVI statewide.

#### **Cantaloupe**

The SLA is working on implementing the Master Agreement with Cantaloupe. Several vendor's accounts have been transferred over so far. Vendors are responsible for certain aspects of this transfer. Please be on the lookout for emails from Eric regarding steps that you, individually, need to take in order for the process to happen.

There have been some small setbacks so far, and we thank everyone for the patience.

Once all vendors are on the Master Account, the SLA will work on reassigning some credit card readers and installing readers on some machines that are still waiting on devices.

After the Master Account is set up, the SLA will also work with a few vendors on a trial of Seed Cashless Plus, the vending management software provided by Cantaloupe.

#### **New Machines**

The SLA is close to having all of the new machines installed. This process will be completed in the following weeks.

#### **Looking Ahead**

The NBE program is now actively seeking a third person to join the agency. The position is posted on the State of Nebraska jobs website.

RSVA will be holding their annual meeting in conjunction with the ACB National Convention in July in Omaha. They are looking for several SLA staff members and NBE Vendors to be part of a panel on July 2<sup>nd</sup>. More information will be forthcoming, if you are interested in being part of the panel, please let Eric know.

#### **Update on Profit and Loss Reports**

Everything is going well, nothing major to report.

### **Report On Set-Aside & Unassigned Funds**

FFY 2021 Year End Fund Balance = \$128,948.74

Breakdown:

Set Aside - \$69,140.02

Unassigned - \$65,403.08

Roads - \$-5,594.36

FFY 2022 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter ending 12/31/2021 Fund Balance = \$161,437.15

Breakdown:

Set Aside - \$47,243.77

Unassigned - \$119,349.68

Roads - \$-5,156.30

### **Risk Management > Worker's Comp. Policy Update**

Workers comp policy was audited for January and February.

After answering many questions, the SLA submitted what they hope is the final document for that group policy.

There has been no answers about the reader driver question. Responses indicated blind vendors may have to buy individual policies. SLA said no, this is not a good idea. Perhaps the blind vendors would have to cancel the group policy completely and find insurance that covers their reader drivers.

SLA requested options for if the group policy was canceled.

According to Nebraska risk management, reader drivers must have car insurance, so, that insurance covers anything while driving, so why wouldn't they be covered for all the times they weren't in the car?

Alan, who is the contact person for Risk Management is in favor of the group policy covering our reader drivers.

When the SLA made changes to the Operator Agreement, and sent it into RSA, that gave the RSA complete reign over the agreement and said BEP insurance is not an allowable expense and the SLA is not able to use match funds. As an agency they have to report set aside as match funds.

Insurance must pay it from unassigned funds.

The unassigned funds are going to be smaller once all federally contracted sites are awarded to a Blind Vendor. For now, unassigned funds have around 14 years left if the insurance policy continues to be around \$8,000.00 a year.

Since state buildings are currently not required to have a blind vendor running them, they can continue to get a commission from a subcontractor and that can go into the unassigned fund.

#### **Cantaloupe Update**

Nothing much to add except please answer your emails about transfers in a timely manner, this will help with the transition to the Master Account go more smoothly. Eric now has access to a liaison with Cantaloupe. So should you have an issue he can get answers much faster now.

#### **Availability of Upward Mobility Training Offered**

Hadley BEP courses must be done through NCBVI. NCBVI can pay for these if you have an open case.

Skill Share has plenty of courses you can take that deal with business, marketing, and MS Office products. Hadley has a free Excel class anyone can take.

Once you have your class completed email Dave right away with an explanation of what class or training it was and what you learned.

If you have questions about whether a specific training will qualify for Upward Mobility, you can contact Eric for approval.

#### **Training for Next Quarterly Meeting**

Training will be on personnel management.

#### **Set Date for Next Meeting**

Atty Svendsen made a motion to hold the meeting in Omaha at 10 AM on June 3rd, 2022. Alex Curtis seconded it; motion passed.

Atty Svendsen made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Alex Curtis seconded it; motion passed.

Meeting closed 11:34 AM March 11, 2022