

# **Board of Service to the Blind & Visually Impaired**

## **Draft Meeting Minutes**

**June 10, 2016**

**Sioux Falls, SD**

Members Present: Eric Rippentrop, Gaye Mattke, Koni Sims, Bruce Micheel, Alan Vandenburg, Catherine Greseth, Julie Briggs, Lynda O'Connor-Ohayon, Connie Sullivan. Ken Rollman and Patrick Czerny attended via DDN in Rapid City.

Members Absent: Teresa Nold, Kay Miller, Marcia Hultman, Tim Neyhart

Others Present: Twyla Eggers, Dawn Backer, Becky Blume, April Schulte, Kellie Hauglid

Eric Rippentrop, Chair, called the meeting to order. Introductions were given.

Several Board members attended a tour of the Braille Unit at the State Penitentiary. The Braille unit started with Perkins Braille writer in 1983. In 1991, graphics were implemented into program. One history book contains 50+ volumes in Braille and the initial cost is over \$10,000. Inmates with longer sentences work in the Braille unit due to the training that is required. The Yankton Federal Prison has a recording studio. Another tour of Braille unit for SBVI staff and Sioux Falls Board members who were unable to participate will be scheduled when Connie Sullivan is in Sioux Falls.

Bruce Micheel made a motion to approve the agenda. Ken Rollman seconded. Motion carried.

Koni Sims made a motion to approve the minutes from the February meeting. Catherine seconded. Motion carried.

Public Comments: Eric Rippentrop was honored by the Helpline Center for his volunteer work at Lutheran Social Services. Over 650 people were in attendance at the awards presentation.

Board members Eric Rippentrop, Koni Sims, and Lynda O'Connor-Ohayon, along with some staff and students from the Rehab Center attended the Sir Paul McCartney concert in Sioux Falls. A number of

tickets were provided by Sir Paul McCartney. Reports were the concert was awesome!

Discussion was held on talking ATM's. In the near future, talking ATM's will be available. This came about due to a lawsuit ACB filed against Wells Fargo.

Membership Update: Gaye has not heard anything from the Governor's office on appointments for those nominated to replace members whose terms expire at the end of June 2016. Patrick Czerny and Lynda O'Connor-Ohayon agreed to reappointment. Ken Rollman has served the maximum terms and suggested Sheri Knipsel for his replacement. Teresa Nold has served one term, but due to scheduling conflicts, Elaine Roberts, Director of Parent Connection, nominated Tana Buresch to replace her. Tim Neyhart resigned from the Board and nominated Cole Uecker as the Client Assistance Program representative on the Board. Lyle Cook also resigned from the Board and nominated Roberta Ecoffey to be the Native American Tribal VR representative.

Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) Activities: The new regulations are scheduled to be released in June. SBVI is working to implement activities referenced in the WIOA. Updating the management information system to capture data required for WIOA reporting is in development. The Department of Labor and Regulation (DLR) is hosting core partner meetings around the state. Alan Vandenburg attended in Huron and shared it was great to meet with all of the WIOA core partners. Gaye will be attending Core Partner meetings in Sioux Falls and Yankton later this month.

Gaye and Twyla as well as fiscal staff and the Rehabilitation Services Assistant Director attended the Region VIII meeting in North Dakota where the main topic of discussion was the WIOA and impending regulations. Representatives from the Workforce Innovation Technical Assistance Center (WINTAC) spoke at the meeting and they are available to help states with the roll out of activities related to WIOA. Gaye shared that the WINTAC is developing their website which will be a useful resource for addressing activities related to WIOA.

SBVI will reissue several Memorandums of Understanding to be in compliance with WIOA. South Dakota is required to spend 15% of their vocational rehabilitation allotment on pre-employment transition services (PETS). This requirement includes both the Division of Rehabilitation Services and SBVI. Time studies for staff have been implemented which to track staff time spent on activities that will count towards PETS. Gaye is contacting other state directors to see what services they are counting towards PETS. In September, Gaye will be attending RSA training regarding WIOA regulations in Chicago. Once the regulations are released, the Strategic Planning and Policy committee will meet on the new policies.

SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind Tour: Bob Smith, the former Orientation and Mobility (O&M) specialist, spoke to Board members about activities that students at the Rehabilitation Center participate in. These activities occur in the home, outside, in the mall, etc. They also learn to cross streets, use public transportation, orient themselves on a block, using GPS, and winter travel safety.

Cherie Gerry, Rehabilitation Counselor at the Rehabilitation Center spoke about the Peer Support meetings. Cherie explained that this is a confidential, judgement-free time where everyone has a chance to talk.

Board members present were given a tour of the Rehab Center for the Blind and visited with the instructors and students.

### Program Updates

*SD Rehab Center for the Blind:* Student numbers are up. Several transition age students are attending the Center during the summer. Community Training is becoming a more formalized part of training. The objective states: "Students at SDRC will participate in evening and weekend activities where they will utilize the skills of blindness gained in classes at the Center, develop new skills, socialize with other students and people in the community, and broaden their scope of interests in the community." Some events will include: learning how to grill, orient the bike path, shopping independently at the Empire Mall. Tickets were provided to the Sir Paul McCartney concert and students expressed that they enjoyed participating in this activity. Transition week will be June 26-29. Stepping into the Future is the theme. There are 5 young men

registered to attend this year. The lower numbers of students for transition week is due to summer jobs. First Friday's assistive technology training was cancelled for July due to the Fourth of July holiday but will continue in August.

*Vocational Rehabilitation:* Rapid City counselor, Gary Frenz is retiring June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Caseload numbers are lower than previous years. Outreach continues and Kellie Hauglid, SBVI Senior Rehabilitation Counselor will be creating an information power point presentation for staff to use when educating agencies and families about SBVI services. Steve Kelsey is the Transition Specialist at the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Aberdeen and is an asset to SBVI as he knows VR and statewide services. He is currently working with 40 students and of these, 21 are receiving VR services. Case File Reviews were held in April. Staff reviewed 100 cases and staff training will take place for areas which lower scores were received.

*Independent Living Older Blind:* There have been upgrades to the CCTV program. Acrobats have been purchased to replace the Clarity machines. Two Davinci units were added to the program that provide both video magnification and scan and read text. Two Clear Reader text to speech units were added to the program for people who are totally blind to access print. There is currently no waiting list.

### Board Priorities

*Governor's Awards:* The nomination deadline has passed. Committee members are currently reviewing the nominations. They have a meeting on June 21<sup>st</sup> to discuss and decide on the recipients.

*National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM):* The listing of events in various communities in SD has not been completed yet. The Sioux Falls event will be October 5<sup>th</sup> and Rapid City will be October 13<sup>th</sup>. Gaye will send a complete listing of events when available.

*Youth Leadership Forum (YLF):* YLF wrapped up on June 9<sup>th</sup>. There were no SBVI participants this year. Julie Briggs attended the luncheon.

*ADA Event sponsorship:* Gaye read a thank you that was received regarding the Board's contribution to Barrier Awareness Day in Aberdeen.

The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) hosted a public forum in conjunction with the annual convention. Patrick Czerny, Catherine Greseth, Ken Rollman, and Connie Sullivan were present to represent the Board of SBVI at the forum. Assistive technology was the main topic of discussion. Approximately 25 people were in attendance. The next NFB convention will be May 5 and 6, 2017, and NFB is interested in hosting another public forum.

South Dakota Association for the Blind (SDAB) will hold their annual convention September 16 & 17 in Aberdeen. SDAB may be contacting SBVI to host a public forum in conjunction with the convention.

Once Roberta Ecoffey is appointed to the Board, SBVI will work with her to set up a Disability Summit in Pine Ridge.

The Fall Conference is scheduled for October 18-20 in Deadwood. There will be many speakers covering a variety of topics. Board members are invited to attend, please contact Becky or Gaye to make arrangements.

Election of Officers: The Executive committee also serves as the Nominating Committee and has recommended Lynda O'Connor-Ohayon as Chair, Bruce Micheel as Vice-Chair, and Catherine Greseth as Member At-Large. There were no other nominations from the floor. Eric Rippentrop made a motion to accept this slate of officers. Ken Rollman seconded. Motion carried.

Director's Report: The Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) recently held a State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL) public meeting. Sandy represents SBVI on the SILC and assisted with drafting the SPIL. Catherine Greseth has been nominated to represent the Board of SBVI on the SILC.

The Assistive Technology (AT) workgroup had their initial meeting on Thursday, June 9th. Marilyn Kinsman, Eric Weiss, Steve Stewart, and Gaye met and will serve as the core group to explore options for South Dakota citizens with disabilities to access assistive technology devices and services. A larger group including stakeholders will meet and Ken

Rollman volunteered to be on this workgroup as a representative of the Board of SBVI. He agreed to serve in this capacity even after his term expires. The Board was in agreement of this representation.

Gaye acknowledged outgoing members, Ken Rollman, Teresa Nold, Lyle Cook, and Tim Neyhart, for their service to the Board of SBVI.

The next meeting will be held in conjunction with Board of Vocational Rehabilitation (BVR). The BVR is meeting on June 20<sup>th</sup> so we will wait until their meeting to schedule the next SBVI Board meeting.

Catherine Greseth made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Koni Sims seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned.