

GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE BLIND

STATE OF DELAWARE

February 3, 2017 MEETING MINUTES

Welcome: Lloyd Schmitz welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Lloyd asked, before we begin the meeting, to have a moment of silence for Sergeant Steven Floyd, Sr., the Vaughn Correctional Center officer, who was killed today.

Call to Order: Chair Lloyd Schmitz called the meeting to order at the Biggs Building 1901 N DuPont Highway New Castle, DE at 10:00 a.m.

Roll Call: Roll Call: Lloyd Schmitz, Chair; Ken Rolph; Patti Addison; Deidre Morris; Jillian Queen; Marjorie Deska. Absent: Jim Law.

Division for the Visually Impaired (DVI) Staff: Elisha Jenkins, Director; Dava Newnam, Deputy Director; Michele Hamilton, Administrative Specialist; Erin Weaver, Statewide Coordinator of TVI Services; Rob Schmidlkofer, BEP Director, Derek Alexander.

Guests: Rob Keller. **BEP:** Wayne Marsh, Anthony Paolini, Gary Pizzolo, Thomas Newcomb, Mike Dunlap.

NFB of DE: Kat Bottner, President. **DIB:** Wendy Lockwood.

Minutes

December 2, 2016 Minutes were read. No corrections were noted. Patti Addison made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by Ken Rolph. Motion carried.

January 6, 2017 Minutes were read. Corrections were made. Ken Rolph made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, seconded by Marjorie Deska. Motion carried. Jillian Queen will send the corrected minutes to Council Members and DVI Staff.

Director's Report Elisha Jenkins reporting.

DIB.

Employee Services. DVI Rehabilitation Team has been actively providing 1:1 services to DIB access selective placement applications since August 2016. Purpose of outside organizations presentations to employees? To inform them of the opportunities in selective placement. Resume writing outside presenter? No, presented by Employment & Training by DVI Team.

Sales. 30 orders for two weeks in January, \$20,682 sales. \$20,000 loss? yes. Neckerchiefs contract was fulfilled. Workers were temporarily laid off until the new materials arrive. Supervisor laid off? no.

Financial Statements. Can we establish a regular monthly date for Financial reports? Elisha yes. The Financial status is reviewed weekly and the report is generated ~ 15th. Elisha will check on the date the reports are ready. In 2011, Lloyd was told there was \$1.5 million in the DIB account. Reportedly there was \$3.5 million in the DIB account. Which is correct? Elisha will get this information.

BEP Open house January 11. Purpose: presenting the process of entering the program. Locations: Biggs Building, Smyrna Rest Stop, Childwatch in Milford. 16 consumers attended and expressed interest in the program. Blind vendors community, DVI VR, BEP. Lloyd said that is a good turnout. The information sent out was not an accessible document. He would like to see this improve.

Demonstrations and Training. Independent Living Service Team provided sensitivity training for new teachers hired for ILS and Education. Assistive Technology: A headworn smartglasses device was demonstrated. The device cost is \$5995. The device takes a picture of text and recognizes the print. ILS, VR, and Education staff attended. Percentage? no. Mandatory? no, due to scheduling. Video recording? no. Lunch & Learn presentation was on diversities in the workplace.

New employees? One new VR Specialist in Milford started January 23. Erin Weaver TVI, has taken new responsibilities as Statewide Coordinator of TVI Services.

New Partnerships. VR developed new partnerships Integrity Staffing. Two Men and a Truck employment in their warehouse.

DE Workforce Strategic Plan. Corporate Transformation Team focusing on transforming the culture of the One Stop. VI continues to be separate in accessing jobs available. The equipment needs to be updated and the staff provided sensitivity training to understand what is appropriate and/or needed for VI employment. One Stop are the information centers in the libraries? yes. Under Labor Dept.? Under WIOA, need to check if it is Labor Dept. Lloyd said VI adaptations, i.e. JAWS, are on the computers and if they only have ten, it is limited to the number of computers. Why not have a site license or link? Elisha believes it will be going to the Cloud. Is there a plan of completion? The Team meets in April. Are consumers informed about One Stop. Elisha will check. Forms. Lloyd heard the pdf forms are not accessible. Elisha will check to see if they are. **Training.** January 11 DVI participated in Marketing & Admissions Professionals MAPS meeting. Debbie Talley was a guest speaker.

EDUCATION.

Staff. 248 students served. 17:1 student/teacher ratio with the 14 teachers employed. How many are consultative and/or direct services? Elisha will have to get that information. That was requested before.

IEPs. Erin Weaver said TVIs are attending IEPs as part of the Educational Team when they are invited. TVIs provide instruction to the school staff concerning the students' needs, including assistive technology. Marjorie Deska asked why did DVI change as a related agency that would be invited? It is being changed back and DOE is providing training to the schools to let them know to invite DVI staff to IEPs in the future. Dec/Jan Dept. of Ed was doing spot checks with all students with IEPs, including VI. Is there a report of the reviews? Elisha said the reviews were not available.

Training. In January, DVI provided a Professional Development session on Functional Vision Assessments. All the new staff attended? yes. We will continue to use Quality Programs for Students with Visual Impairments (QPVI) Model Process. It will be interesting to see the outcome of this uniformity of practice 2-3 years out. DOE will provide professional development for DVI Ed staff. Mandatory? DVI staff will attend if their schedules permit, but unless they are providing direct services, they attend.

Staff. 13 merit teachers, 6 credentialed TVIs, 7 special education teachers working on TVI courses. Enrolling in the process, but the program doesn't start until June. There is a program for the 2-year limit? yes. If a teacher starts employment in August and the program doesn't start until June, so that is a problem to finish within the 2-year limit.

TVI Program. Marjorie asked about the proposed TVI program in Delaware. Discussions with University of Delaware, but not this Fall. Discussions with University of Nebraska. Summer Institute and comprehensive program in the summer 4-6 weeks, up and down State, and Bell Academy.

Braille. Erin said a pilot program in Bookshare started to get our books in UEB. Options are in UEB or EBAE. Lloyd's concern UEB format, students 1-3 learning braille, are we teaching both, being pro-active? yes. Elisha one of the teachers attended Pennsylvania Assistive Technology Resource workshop explaining the difference between the two braille codes. Delaware doesn't have a transition plan. DVI is working with Pennsylvania.

Orientation and Mobility. 178 consumers actively on caseloads. Youngest is 1 and the oldest is 96. Jill said the O&M Department should be commended. She's heard nothing but good comments. Lloyd is concerned about the number of active consumers and ratio of 4.5 to 1. Erin said that some consumers are scheduled once a month.

Vacancies. 6 positions vacant and 1 position contractor vacancy. Special educators are very interested. Principal's position. Elisha said they are reviewing the criteria of principal. School for the Deaf doesn't have a principal, but has a supervisor of Special Education. Inquiries to Management/ Budget to see how those requirements are applicable to the needs of the role. Erin Weaver has been a TVI for 23 years and AT knowledgeable. She has the authority to make those changes. **O&M staff?** Applicants for the O&M position? One applicant in the HR phase. Reminders for recruiting: Regional AER is coming up in April. Graduation is soon. Those two positions, locations? Will be determined by caseloads. DOE require certified teacher? O&M specialists have to have a degree. VI Education? Erin believes yes. Components are within the certification for O&M. Certification is based on that credential.

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Student Opportunities. Lloyd said Downs Syndrome of DE sent an email out saying there is a Meet Your Legislature this month for an opportunity for family members to talk to legislatures. Perhaps that would be a good opportunity for our students. He will send it to BlindSight DE to consider becoming the non-profit to advocate. Kent General Hospital was recruiting summer interns. Other hospitals may have opportunities. Erin said applications have been given to TVIs for students. How many students in the transition area? Elisha will check on that.

BEP. Dava Newnam reporting.

Dava is researching the January 2016 \$8073 BEP expense and will report her findings when it is completed.

Carvel Cafeteria Rob, Dava, and Elisha said minor things came up that had to be fixed in plumbing, electrical, and another refrigerator needed to be replaced. Who is doing the work? Facilities. DVI moving forward? yes. The final health inspection is coordinated. Anticipated start date? soon. Lloyd reviewed the BEP contract. RFP? The contracts need to be in the agency's name. Dava is already looking into it.

Smyrna Rest Stop. Rob Schmidlkofer is training the manager. Same manager? yes. Vending machines? yes, new machines just came in. Scheduled to start April 3. Elisha said she did not know about new developments in the vending machines. Wayne Marsh said Fox hasn't been able to schedule, he hasn't brought in Score. That is anticipated as soon as it can be scheduled. Shop open how often? Fri-Sun. Construction is hurting business. Lloyd requested a monthly date for fiscal reports schedule.

BEP unassigned vending contract. Lloyd, Elisha, and government support services were involved in these discussions. This is concluded.

Posting public meetings. Elisha said the public meetings announcements are current on the Governor's State of Delaware meetings calendar and a link to DVI, but not on the DVI calendar directly. Lloyd is not satisfied with the accessibility of the documents.

Meeting Announcement. House concurrent resolution on March 14 1-4. The notice needs to be accessible and the visually impaired need to be represented. Lloyd suggested to put the event on the DVI Calendar.

Public Comments.

Patti Addison thanked Lloyd for sending out the information about the DABA cruise. BlindSight DE is expanding throughout the state, working with DVI. ILS and DATI have been very visible as well. Patti said that she is available to anyone who needs her. Feel free to contact her. Lloyd requested the ILS Mission statement. Patti will get it.

Peer Support. How do we make visually impaired Delawareans aware of services and encourage them to use them. The networking needs improvement. New brochure is being developed. NFB listed? yes. Need referral? no. Time frame? Hope to have it done by the end of this month. Announced in the DVI newsletter? possibly.

DIB concern: Wendy Lockwood brought a concern about the layoffs and limited hours. She reported hours are being reduced for VI people, but not sighted people. It appears to Wendy that the sighted have more opportunities, higher wages, and more hours than the blind. Lloyd said it was agreed that layoffs and reductions would be even across the board and asked Elisha if this were the case. Elisha said no. Wendy said she went to her supervisor, but it was not resolved. Lloyd said that Elisha needs to look into this. Elisha agreed, but she feels it was not appropriate to bring it to this forum. There is a protocol in Labor Relations and a process. Lloyd suggested a detailed process of escalation to follow, but also a mechanism for employees' concerns to be heard and resolved in an expedient manner.

Life Conference. Rob Keller and Patti Addison attended the Life Conference. Rob Keller shared that former Governor Jack Markel was there.

Adjournment. Patti Addison made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Marjorie Deska. Motion carried. Lloyd Schmitz adjourned the meeting at 12:26 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,

Jillian H. Queen

Jillian Queen,
Council Member