

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2017

Members Present

Ted Chittenden*
Dan Martinez
Carlos Paraskevas
Barbara McDonald*
Janet Fisher

Members Absent

David Steinmetz

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin. Assistant
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Ted Chittenden, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm in the Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB) Conference Room, 515 N. 51st Avenue, Suite 130, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of December 6, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Dan Martinez moved to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2016 Public Information Committee meeting. Carlos Paraskevas seconded the motion. Janet Fisher requested the minutes be corrected to indicate that the database statistics reflected that 67% of the users were female. Barbara McDonald noted she forwarded her corrections previously regarding the results of individuals attending the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE). The committee approved the amended minutes by unanimous voice vote.

Database Development Discussion

Ted Chittenden inquired whether committee members had a chance to review the database statistics generated from Google Analytics forwarded by Janet Fisher. Janet Fisher inquired whether the gender statistics were accurate and how Google Analytics knew how many database users were female. Ted Chittenden stated some of the database users could be vocational rehabilitation counselors, and noted that the majority of these counselors were female. Ted Chittenden stated the committee should

identify the statistics that would be useful for tracking. Dan Martinez stated the gender statistics were not necessary as the information included in the EyeKnow.az database was not gender specific. Mr. Martinez suggested the committee track the number of new individuals visiting the database and the number of returning users. He noted the majority of users must be looking for specific information due to the short time spent using the database. Ted Chittenden stated that database users spent an average of two minutes using the database and inquired whether that was sufficient time to locate information. Janet Fisher stated some users could be looking for addresses or contact information, which would be easy to locate. Ted Chittenden suggested the committee track the number of individuals using the database, the number of returning users, and the average time spent using the database. Mr. Chittenden inquired whether the database statistics should be reported at the GCBVI Full Council meetings or should the information be distributed to council members prior to the meeting. Dan Martinez stated Ted Chittenden should provide the database statistics as part of his Public Information Committee report to the Full Council. Janet Fisher stated the committee discussed distributing the statistics to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and inquired who at RSA would be receiving that information. Dan Martinez stated Ted Chittenden could inquire at the Full Council meeting whether Rich Sorey, Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) would be interested in receiving that information.

Janet Fisher inquired whether the committee would be interested in knowing whether the users were referred to the database from other websites. Ms. Fisher noted Google Analytics indicated some users were referred from websites such as Reddit, Life Hacker, Facebook, Twitter, and the Washington Post. Ted Chittenden stated the Full Council would not necessarily need that information. Mr. Chittenden stated his understanding the EyeKnow.az database had not been advertised on social media and inquired regarding the accuracy of those statistics. Ted Chittenden noted the committee would be interested in knowing whether users were directed to the database from various consumer groups' websites. Dan Martinez stated the committee could use that information internally for marketing purposes, although the Full Council would not need that information. Janet Fisher stated David Steinmetz was given access to the Google Analytics statistics as well. Ted Chittenden inquired whether anyone had requested corrections to their information included in the database. Janet Fisher and Lindsey Powers stated they had not received any requests for corrections.

Social Media Planning Discussion

Carlos Paraskevas stated he performed preliminary research regarding the development of a Facebook page. Mr. Paraskevas stated Facebook required that a webpage have an owner in order for the webpage to friend other groups and to receive likes from users. Janet Fisher stated her understanding that a Facebook page could have multiple owners that would have permission to post information on the page. Carlos Paraskevas stated the webpage could have multiple owners, although someone would have to initiate the development of the Facebook page. He stated he would review Facebook further and forward information to the committee.

Outreach for Council Events

Ted Chittenden stated he spoke with Shauna Mote from the Ophthalmologists Society who indicated that exhibitors could present their information at the Ophthalmologist Conference for a limited amount of time. He noted exhibitors could reserve a booth at the conference from 5:30-7:00 pm for \$350 for a smaller table or \$600 for a larger table. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the committee would be interested in pursuing the event due to the cost and limited time of exposure. Dan Martinez stated the conference attendees were the right audience, although he recommended the committee use the funds in a different endeavor. Janet Fisher stated that while the cost was rather high, the Arizona Braille and Talking Book Library would attend the event with Sun Sounds. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Janet Fisher could report back to the committee regarding the number of individuals attending the conference who showed interest in the blindness programs. Barbara McDonald suggested Janet Fisher distribute information regarding EyeKnow.az at the event. Ms. McDonald stated her agreement that the event was costly and the funds would be better spent in other activities. Dan Martinez stated the individuals attending the conference would be asked to share the database information with their customers, which was a difficult request to make. Ted Chittenden stated Janet Fisher could distribute the information regarding the database and the committee could discuss pursuing attendance at future conferences based upon the interest the distribution generated.

Public Involvement with GCBVI Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated he was unable to provide the GCBVI presentation during the RSA Introduction to Blindness Services in January and that Carlos Paraskevas, though not a council member, graciously provided that information. Mr. Chittenden inquired whether Dan Martinez would provide the presentation in February. Dan Martinez stated he would be unable to provide the presentation in February and suggested that Ted Chittenden present in February.

Dan Martinez stated the GCBVI would be holding the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event on January 27, 2017. Ted Chittenden inquired regarding the date that individuals should RSVP by. Lindsey Powers asked individuals to RSVP by January 13, 2017. Ted Chittenden noted the theme of VRATE for 2017 would be employment, and suggested Barbara McDonald attend the E75 award event to be able to speak to the employers at the event about participating at VRATE.

Dan Martinez stated the Foundation Fighting Blindness would hold the Vision Walk on February 25, 2017 at Steele Indian School Park at 9:00 am. Dan Martinez noted the walk was one mile around the track.

Dan Martinez inquired whether the council had requested success stories to be presented at the GCBVI Full Council meeting. Ted Chittenden stated the council had requested success stories from the previous SBVID Deputy Administrator. Mr. Martinez stated the State Rehabilitation Council received a presentation from a former Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) client, which was invigorating to hear. Barbara McDonald inquired whether Janet Fisher had any success stories from users of the Arizona Braille and Talking Book Library. Janet Fishers stated she received short notes from library users, although some users offered lengthy stories about their experiences. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the council was interested in receiving success stories from individuals that had received VR services. Dan Martinez stated the council was interested in hearing success stories from all providers of specialized services. Janet Fisher inquired whether the council would be interested in hearing some success stories from the library as a template for others to use. Barbara McDonald stated Jim LaMay could present success stories from the Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI). Dan Martinez stated Janet Fisher could include the library success story during her Ex-Officio report at the Full Council meeting.

Carlos Paraskevas inquired whether any committee members received an update regarding a public service announcement that was to run on Sun Sounds about the EyeKnow.az database. Janet Fisher stated she forwarded the text to Sun Sounds, although she did not receive an update. Ms. Fisher agreed to follow up with Sun Sounds regarding whether the commercial was played.

Council Webpages Update

Ted Chittenden stated the GCBVI Council webpage on the Department of Economic Security (DES) website had been updated to include a date of when the Council Membership List was updated and a logo of the EyeKnow.az, which provided a link to the database.

VRATE Discussion

Barbara McDonald stated the VRATE Board met the third Thursday of each month at the Arizona Assistive Technology Program (AzTAP) building. Ms. McDonald stated VRATE would be held on November 3, 2017 at the Glendale Civic Center. She stated four members would be up for election to serve on the VRATE Board. Barbara McDonald stated the committee should identify potential GCBVI presentations for the next VRATE. Ted Chittenden suggested Barbara McDonald contact Tom Hicks, Chair of the Employment Committee, regarding the employers that would be attending the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event, who could attend VRATE. Ted Chittenden stated the committee should think about some potential GCBVI presentations for the next VRATE.

2017 GCBVI Annual Report

Ted Chittenden stated that the committee discussed potentially developing a full GCBVI Annual Report for 2017 at its last meeting and inquired regarding the committee's thoughts on creating such a report. Dan Martinez stated the council should develop a longer Annual Report to promote the council and provide more visibility of council activities. Mr. Martinez stated the council would face challenges in the future. Dan Martinez expressed his concern that specialized services could end if the council was not in the forefront to stop that from occurring. Ted Chittenden inquired who received the GCBVI Annual Reports once they were completed. Lindsey Powers stated her understanding the Annual Reports were sent to the RSA Administrator. Dan Martinez stated the Annual Report was also shared with the Governor's Office and the Arizona Braille and Talking Book Library received copies of the Annual Report, with the latter organization keeping archived copies. Ted Chittenden inquired how a longer Annual Report would benefit the council. Dan Martinez stated the Annual Reports were no longer printed on paper, although the council would be free to distribute electronic copies of the Annual Reports on various websites or social media pages to highlight the individuals making a difference in the blindness community. Dan Martinez stated the council needed greater visibility and to be the voice of blindness along with the advocacy groups. Barbara McDonald stated a longer Annual Report allowed the council to include more information and show changes that occurred over the previous year. Ted Chittenden stated the longer version of the Annual Report included updates from the consumer groups as well as client success stories.

Janet Fisher stated the Annual Report from 2008 was 16 pages, which was written in large print and included information about the council, the accomplishments of the council, the Strategic Plan, Committees' goals,

advocacy issues, state match, and VR success stories. Dan Martinez stated individuals joined groups: when asked to, they felt what they were doing was important, or they received recognition. Mr. Martinez stated the fuller Annual Report would allow the council to recognize individuals in writing. Ted Chittenden stated that in 2015, he requested reports from the council committee Chairs multiple times and did not receive responses. Carlos Paraskevas stated his opinion that the council prepare a longer Annual Report to be able to distribute information about the council. Mr. Paraskevas noted the report could be distributed electronically, which would be easy for individuals to access.

Ted Chittenden stated that the committee's consensus was to prepare a longer Annual Report. He noted he would need committee assistance in contacting committee Chairs, VR for success stories, and the consumer groups. Ted Chittenden inquired who would be willing to contact the consumer groups and request success stories. Barbara McDonald stated she would contact consumer groups. Janet Fisher suggested the committee obtain photos of the clients identified in the success stories. Dan Martinez stated he and Carlos Paraskevas would assist Barbara McDonald in obtaining success stories. Ted Chittenden stated he would begin contacting the committee Chairs to request reports regarding the committee activities.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, February 28, 2017 from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm. in the AIB Conference Room, at 515 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- Database Development Discussion
- Social Media Planning Discussion
- Council Webpage Update
- Public Involvement with GCBVI
- Outreach for Council Events
- VRATE Discussion
- 2017 GCBVI Annual Report
- E75 Diversity Builder Award Event Review

Announcements

Dan Martinez reminded council members to RSVP to Lindsey Powers with their E75 Award Event lunch choices by January 13, 2017.

Barbara McDonald stated the Arizona Disability Coalition would hold their Day at the Capitol on January 25, 2017. She noted individuals interested in attending should register for the event.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no responses forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Barbara McDonald moved to adjourn the meeting; Janet Fisher seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:28 pm.