

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Full Council Meeting Minutes**

January 20, 2017

Members Present

Dan Martinez, Chair
Ted Chittenden
Bob Kresmer*
Sharonda Greenlaw
Nathan Pullen
Ed Gervasoni*
Janet Fisher
Donald Porterfield*
Nikki Jeffords
Jeff Bishop*
Mike Gordon*
Amy Porterfield
Mary Hartle
Jim LaMay*
Richard Sorey
Allan Curry
Annette Reichman

Members Absent

Tom Hicks
Mike Kanitsch
Carol Barnes

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin. Assistant
Teleconferenced*

Guests Present

Kristen Mackey, RSA Administrator
Diane McElmury, SBVID Operations
Manager
Carlos Paraskevas
Dick Monaco, AIB Director
Barbara McDonald

Call to Order and Introductions

Dan Martinez, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:37 p.m. at the RSA Video Conference Rooms located in Phoenix and Tucson, Arizona. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of November 18, 2016 Meeting Minutes

Nikki Jeffords moved to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2016 GCBVI Full Council meeting as written. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by majority voice vote.

GCBVI Chairperson's Report

Dan Martinez stated the Employment Committee would be holding the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event on January 27, 2017 at the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC), and all council members were invited to attend. Dan Martinez stated the Foundation Fighting Blindness would hold their Vision Walk on February 25, 2017 at Steele Indian School Park. Mr. Martinez noted he would participate on the interview panel for the Council Staff Liaison position. Dan Martinez stated the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB) would visit the Legislature on February 27-28 and the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBAz) would visit the Legislature January 30-February 2, 2017. Dan Martinez stated the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) offered tax products and publications available for download for individuals with disabilities. Dan Martinez noted that Ai Squared learned that the digital certificate in newer versions of Zoom Text and Windows Eyes software products had been compromised and would be revoked around January 26, 2017.

Amy Porterfield thanked Dan Martinez for his diligence to the council and shared her appreciation for all of his time and effort as the Chair of the GCBVI.

Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB) Transition to Non-Profit Update

Dick Monaco, AIB Director, stated AIB had to be reclassified with IRS from a 501 C3 governmental charity to a 501 C3 public charity. Mr. Monaco stated AIB developed a Board of Directors of five members from various organizations and industries. He noted AIB had articles of incorporation and bylaws and had been approved by the Secretary of State as a new entity. Dick Monaco stated AIB would transfer from a state agency to a private non-profit agency on July 1, 2017. Dick Monaco stated AIB needed to procure medical insurance and retirement plans for AIB employees, and obtain the lease for the AIB facility from the owner. He stated AIB would need to implement Payroll, Human Resources and IT systems in order to operate. Dick Monaco stated AIB would be able to offer more employment opportunities for blind and visually impaired individuals as a private non-profit agency and would have the ability to grow as an agency. Mary Hartle

inquired whether any of the Board of Directors was blind or visually impaired. Dick Monaco stated one of the Board of Directors members was blind.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether AIB would become a contractor and offer services to Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA). Dick Monaco stated AIB would not have been able to separate from the state without the support of the blindness community, RSA, and the Department of Economic Security (DES). He noted AIB would initially partner with service providers in the community, and would not seek a contract with RSA. Dick Monaco stated AIB did not intend to duplicate current efforts, but would partner with agencies in order to provide services. Dick Monaco stated as part of the Ability One program, AIB was required to have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with RSA. Amy Porterfield inquired whether AIB had developed a Strategic Plan or goals for the next five years. Dick Monaco stated he would like to see AIB double the number of staff, maintain financial stability, and expand business in areas of growth. He stated AIB would be interested in creating more professional office positions for blind and visually impaired individuals and continue to expand the warehouse positions. Mr. Monaco stated AIB had about eleven blind and visually impaired supervisors, and he wanted to continue to employ blind and visually impaired individuals in supervisory roles.

Dick Monaco stated AIB would partner with startup companies, such as Touch Point solutions, which developed wrist bands that would elicit an electrical impulse when an individual experienced anxiety. He noted many startup companies did not have the infrastructure to afford a distribution center, and AIB could leverage infrastructure with startup companies. Mr. Monaco stated AIB would also partner with CureVentions, a medical device that offered chest protection to an individual after open heart surgery. He stated AIB would also partner with the healthcare industry and obtain data regarding the careers that students would be interested in. Dick Monaco stated AIB would continue to offer competitive integrated employment for blind and visually impaired individuals. Amy Porterfield suggested Dick Monaco develop a survey that could be distributed to the students participating in the Summer Transition Programs. Diane McElmury stated she would be pleased to distribute a survey to the students in early June. Ted Chittenden inquired whether AIB had determined how the agency would provide insurance to AIB employees in the interim of separating from the state. Dick Monaco stated AIB employees would enroll in their new insurance plans seamlessly and would not have interim health insurance. Ted Chittenden inquired whether AIB experienced any effects from changing from a government agency to a private non private. Dick Monaco stated AIB was partnering with Ability One and did not anticipate any changes to the

current contracts with other government agencies and would ensure transparency to the customers.

RSA Administrator's Report

Kristen Mackey, RSA Administrator, stated RSA was able to determine eligibility 95-91% within 60 days (**NOTE: ATTACHMENT A**) Ms. Mackey stated RSA was able to get clients from eligibility to IPE in 73 days about 82% of the time. Kristen Mackey stated in December, RSA took 100 individuals off the wait list and had 2,800 individuals on the wait list. Ms. Mackey noted RSA received about a 40% response rate from the clients contacted, and would determine how many more individuals would be contacted. Kristen Mackey stated RSA placed 31 clients into employment and had 32 successful rehabilitations, which was in the yellow category. Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the color categories of RSA's metrics. Kristen Mackey stated RSA's metrics were color coded red, yellow, and green depending on the statistic goal. Kristen Mackey stated the Federal government required eligibility timeliness to be 100%, although RSA's benchmark was 95-100%. Ms. Mackey stated the successful rehabilitations were 404 individuals as of December 31, 2016. She stated there were 15,726 open caseloads within the agency and about 9,000 were actively receiving services.

Kristen Mackey stated RSA would begin using a new case management system, Salesforce. She noted the initial plan was for different agencies to begin using Salesforce at different times, although Salesforce determined that Vocational Rehabilitation, the Business Enterprise Program (BEP), and Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) would begin using the case management system October 2017. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Salesforce was a program vetted by other states. Kristen Mackey stated Salesforce was a new system, although the business worked with many other government agencies to develop and customize the system for each agency. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Salesforce was accessible for blind and visually impaired individuals. Kristen Mackey stated RSA was working with Salesforce to ensure that all aspects of the program were accessible. She noted Salesforce developed portions of the case management system and allowed RSA to test each portion prior to implementation. Amy Porterfield inquired whether Salesforce provided data on whether individuals could access the case management system using screen readers. Kristen Mackey stated she had heard that individuals could access Salesforce using JAWS and Windows Eyes, although individuals had some difficulty accessing the sidebars and noted RSA would request the hot keys to assist users. Amy Porterfield suggested the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee review Salesforce for accessibility. Jeff Bishop stated

Salesforce had an accessibility mode that had to be enabled. He noted the AT Committee would be pleased to assist RSA in researching Salesforce accessibility.

Kristen Mackey stated RSA was moving forward with hiring the Council Staff Liaison position. Ms. Mackey announced that Nathan Pullen had accepted the position as the BEP Manager and Ms. Mackey noted her appreciation to Mr. Pullen for assuming the role of BEP Manager until the position was filled. She stated RSA was working to fill all counselor and supervisor positions and had made significant progress.

Kristen Mackey stated RSA was fully matched for 2017, although RSA was over obligated for 2018. Ms. Mackey stated RSA would determine how to offer services most effectively and efficiently. She stated RSA had undergone several LEAN processes to eliminate waste and to streamline processes in order to reallocate funds. Kristen Mackey stated RSA developed a current map of all VR processes that a client would go through in seeking VR services. She stated RSA then developed a future map, or Value Stream Improvement Plan, which she would share with the council once completed. Kristen Mackey stated RSA completed most activities from the RSA Strategic Plan and would include those activities in the Value Stream Mapping process. Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the percentage that RSA was over obligated for 2018. Kristen Mackey stated in 2018, RSA was short about 20 million in funds. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the shortage of funds was due to reduced matched funds. Kristen Mackey stated the shortage of funds was due to an increase in service expenditures. Ms. Mackey stated RSA would review every process within the VR process such as staff time spent on completing certain tasks. She noted RSA would also review whether all tasks are required, such as assessments. Amy Porterfield inquired whether Kristen Mackey had received the Governor's budget for RSA. Kristen Mackey stated RSA and Independent Living Blind (ILB) would not receive any increases or decreases in funds according to the Governor's budget. Kristen Mackey noted the budget did not include any increases to state employees either. She stated RSA was working to increase staff salaries, which did contribute to the high turnover rate. Nikki Jeffords inquired regarding the allocation of funds towards Transition services. Kristen Mackey stated the previous year; RSA spent 9.9% of the 15% reserved funds for Transition services. She stated when RSA received technical assistance; the team was pleased with how RSA was progressing towards Transition services.

Kristen Mackey stated the Division of Employment and Rehabilitation Services (DERS) and RSA underwent a Sunset Audit, which was completed. Ms. Mackey stated the audit indicated that the department should enhance

processes for managing rehabilitation services costs and the clients' progress. She stated RSA received 9 recommendations with 18 subcategory recommendations to meet the requirements of the audit. Kristen Mackey stated she would share the audit with the council, once it had been completed. Kristen Mackey stated the audit compared the 911 Federal reporting data across the nation and determined that RSA's client costs were about triple the costs of other states with a lower rehabilitation rate. Kristen Mackey stated the recommendations centered on establishing expenditure timelines, reasonable expectations for an individual receiving services, management reports, provide guidance to counselors, and researching comparable benefits when available. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the Sunset Audit compared the services for different disability groups. Kristen Mackey stated the Sunset Audit reviewed all client service costs.

Kristen Mackey stated RSA received a technical assistance visit and Ms. Mackey anticipated receiving that report shortly. Ms. Mackey stated RSA was able to ask questions about the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and how to implement various aspects. Kristen Mackey stated RSA did not receive any findings or corrective actions although RSA was encouraged to enhance the policies surrounding the Pre-Employment Transition Services, supported and customized employment. She noted the federal partners did request information regarding the third party agreements, which RSA did provide. Kristen Mackey stated she anticipated the new contract to be solicited within the next three weeks. Jim LaMay inquired how the upward mobility and job improvement requirement of WIOA related to the Order of Selection (OOS). Kristen Mackey stated that states could choose to exempt individuals that were already employed from the OOS. She noted that because RSA would not receive adequate funds for 2018, the agency chose not to exempt clients. Kristen Mackey stated she did not want to jeopardize the services of the clients currently receiving services by opening up an additional OOS.

SBVID Program Manager's Report

Diane McElmury, SBVID Operations Manager, stated as of Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 17:

The total number of individuals in the VR program was 855

The total number of individuals in the OOS was 99

The total number of individuals in Priority Two was 79

The total number of individuals in Priority Three was 20

The number of VR applications was 69

The average number of days from application to eligibility was 37.9

The eligibility determination compliance within 60 days was 85.7%

The number of new plans written was 69
The average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 80.1
The median number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 65
The IPE implementation compliance within 90 days was 83%
The highest hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$22.91
The average hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$12.53
The number of clients placed was 12
The number of clients closed successfully was 7

The FFY 2016 Deaf Blind Population statistics:

The total number of individuals in the VR program was 48
The total number of individuals in the OOS was 1
The total number of individuals in Priority Two was 1
The total number of individuals in Priority Three was 0
The number of VR applications was 2
The average number of days from application to eligibility was 137
The median number of days from application to eligibility was 137
The number of new plans written was 2

Diane McElmury stated a Purchasing Technician was reposted for the ILB office, and an Assistive Technology Instructor and two Rehabilitation Instructional Services Specialists would be posted. Ms. McElmury stated she was able to hire a Supervisor for the Tucson office and a Supervisor to replace Paul Howell's position. Diane McElmury stated the 16th Street office would hire three counselors and a Purchasing Technician for the Tucson office. She stated the 3rd Street would hire one supervisor, one Counselor and one Rehabilitation Technician.

Diane McElmury stated Transition Week would run from January 30, 2017-February 2, 2017. Ms. McElmury stated she liked to review Best Practices and surveys received from vendors and students in order to determine the next steps. She stated she would hold workshops at the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) and through the RSA Videoconference sites. She stated representatives from the Colorado Center, World Services, SAAVI Services for the Blind, FBC and all new SBVID staff would attend the Transition Week. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether counselors could tell students that were not VR clients about the Transition Summer Program. Diane McElmury stated that counselors could inform students not enrolled in VR services.

Diane McElmury stated RSA published the RSA Needs Assessment for Combined Vision and Hearing Loss (CVHL) previously. Ms. McElmury stated Cathy Kirscher from Helen Keller National Center (HKNC) contacted her

inquiring about the next steps in the process following the completion of the needs assessment report. Diane McElmury stated a small team would attempt to hold a workshop for up to one week for individuals with CVHL.

Diane McElmury stated the OIB statistics were:

For individuals 55 and older, OIB served 805 individuals
For individuals 54 and younger, OIB served 55 individuals
17 internal ILB staff and 8 contractors providing services
The wait list for 55 and older was 108, and 9 for 54 and younger
Served 76 VR clients through the Introduction to Blindness Workshop

Diane McElmury stated ILB had been participating in the Arizona Falls Prevention program and collaborating with Hadley in distributing information to clients with low vision. Ted Chittenden inquired whether any of the individuals on the wait list were blind or deaf-blind clients. Diane McElmury stated those statistics would have been separated. Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the goal for the successful closures to be in the green category. Diane McElmury stated the successful closures goal was 139-169 for one year, and she reported 12 successful closures from October – December. Amy Porterfield stated ideally, the successful closures rate should be about 40 quarterly to get to the green goal status. Rich Sorey stated the successful closures were low for the quarter, which was typical in the first quarters. Mr. Sorey stated he looked at the internal statistics and reviewed whether individuals were entering into employment. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the providers could do anything to help keep track of those statistics. Rich Sorey stated he would like to enhance the communication between providers and counselors and for everyone to focus on the employment outcome. Dan Martinez inquired whether SBVID tracked the time that a client was job ready and seeking employment. Rich Sorey stated Libera, the case management system, was not most effective as tracking client information. Mr. Sorey noted that some clients moved through the process quickly, while some individuals required more assistance with providers or counselors. Rich Sorey stated he would like to educate Human Resources individuals about hiring blind and visually impaired individuals and offer information rather than ask that those companies hire blind and visually impaired individuals. He noted through those conversations, RSA could build relationships, and then increase in job placements. Amy Porterfield stated all providers used to meet regularly with RSA, and inquired whether Rich Sorey would be interested in meeting quarterly and work towards proactive solutions. Rich Sorey agreed that SBVID should meet more regularly with providers and strategize about improving employment outcomes. Mike Gordon inquired regarding an email regarding authorizations for extensions for the comprehensive program. Amy

Porterfield stated the email indicated that providers could make authorizations through the end of June for comprehensive services and not supported education. Diane McElmury stated the Scope of Work (SOW) had not been developed yet although she was uncertain about the email that went out to providers. Mary Hartle inquired whether RSA had considered requesting additional funds to assist the increasing need for Independent Living services for older blind or deaf-blind individuals. Ms. Hartle stated 10,000 individuals turned 65 each day, and noted the RSA Needs Assessment for CVHL indicated that individuals with the most need for services were in their 70's and 80's. Kristen Mackey stated the RSA budget did not go to the Governor's office although she did present to the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) regarding the need for funds for blind, visually impaired, and deaf-blind individuals. Ms. Mackey stated RSA did allocate some MAG funds to the ILB programs. She stated RSA also supplemented the federal funds of just under \$700,000 with Social Security Reimbursement funds. Kristen Mackey stated she would also work on supplementing the services for individuals 54 and younger as well. Rich Sorey stated while funding was an issue, the other issue was filling staff vacancies, which would allow the clients to receive services. Amy Porterfield suggested Rich Sorey meet with providers that served older individuals with visual impairments and learn some of their best practices.

Nathan Pullen stated he would distribute the RSA 15 report to be shared with the council. Mr. Pullen stated the gross sales for the year were just under 16 million, merchandise purchased increased about 150 thousand from the previous year, and payroll expenses increased while operating expenses decreased. Nathan Pullen stated the vending machine income increased by over 250 thousand and the set-aside funds was up by 110,000 thousand. He stated the average vendor earning was just under \$150,000 a year, and noted that some vendors worked with large facilities, which skewed the average income. Nathan Pullen stated the median vendor earning was \$79,800, which was a record for BEP vendors. Nathan Pullen stated the number of employees was down, although the number of employees that self-reported a disability had increased.

Nathan Pullen stated BEP was pursuing an opportunity for a dining facility in a Marine Base in Yuma. Mr. Pullen stated the Department of Defense was historically opposed to honoring the Randolph Sheppard Act, and put out a solicitation for a regional bid attempting to circumvent BEP. Nathan Pullen stated BEP in Arizona was working with California BEP to partner with in order to develop a bid. He stated if BEP was able to obtain the bid, the Marine Base would offer \$250,000-300,000 net income, with a minimal cost impact.

Nathan Pullen stated on January 9, 2016, BEP opened the Kahala Coffee Shop in the Capitol, and noted the blind operator was actively operating the facility. He stated the cafeteria in Durango would be remodeled. Nathan Pullen stated he was contacted by Tucson Electric Power regarding vending services and potentially cafeteria services. He stated BEP was also working on a potential bid with the Phoenix Center for the Arts, which was soliciting for a concessional bid. Nathan Pullen stated the BEP all operators meeting would be held on Monday, and all council members were invited to attend. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the number of BEP staff and operators. Nathan Pullen stated there were ten BEP staff, of which three were consultants, and about 30 operators operating 35 facilities. He noted the Arizona Participating Operators Committee (APOC) previously identified the ideal ratio of consultants to operators as one to eleven. Nikki Jeffords inquired regarding the number of active BEP licensees. Nathan Pullen stated there were currently three individuals completed training and were licensed, but not yet in a facility. He noted there were several rural facilities that were open due to their remote locations.

Rich Sorey stated his goal was to fill the 20% counselor vacancy rate and to provide training for all new counselors. Rich Sorey stated he wanted to provide services to clients in a timely manner. He noted his concern that ILB had a wait list, although he understood there were currently three Rehabilitation Instruction Services Specialists vacancies. He noted the ILB program was unable to serve the referred clients due to the decrease in staff. Rich Sorey noted that RSA would be moving client cases from Libera to Salesforce, which would allow staff to effectively manage case files. He stated he was pleased thus far with Salesforce in ensuring that the system was accessible. Rich Sorey stated he met with some of the consumer groups and clients in order to obtain an accurate account of the VR process from the client's perspective. Rich Sorey stated he was reviewing SBVID critically to ensure that clients received adequate services while still adhering to the budget and manage resources prudently.

Dan Martinez inquired regarding the training program between BEP operators and SAAVI Services for the Blind. Amy Porterfield stated SAAVI Services for the Blind was currently revising their curriculum and placing more emphasis on the vending training. Ms. Porterfield stated the curriculum would be submitted to Nathan Pullen for review and then to APOC. She stated SAAVI Services for the Blind was able to provide individuals with cafeteria training and would work with Nathan Pullen to provide more vending experience. Amy Porterfield stated SAAVI Services for the Blind wanted to offer more real life scenarios to assist operators with learning the daily operations. She stated there were two operators that had completed their training. Amy Porterfield stated the challenge in offering

experience using all the different types of vending machines and to create a real world experience.

GCBVI Elections

Dan Martinez stated the Executive Committee, put forth the following nominations:

Amy Porterfield-Chair
Bob Kresmer-Vice Chair
Secretary – no one was nominated

Dan Martinez called for nominations from the floor for the Chair position. Nikki Jeffords stated while Amy Porterfield was a tremendous leader, she wished to nominate Allan Curry as Chair. Allan Curry accepted the nomination as Chair. Mary Hartle seconded the nomination for Allan Curry as Chair. Sharonda Greenlaw motioned that nominations cease for the Chair position. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Dan Martinez requested that Lindsey Powers conduct a verbal election for the council Chair position. Lindsey Powers conducted a verbal election, and the majority of council members chose Amy Porterfield. Dan Martinez stated Amy Porterfield was elected as council Chair by majority vote. Mr. Martinez thanked Allan Curry for accepting the nomination for the Chair position and noted the importance for all council members to be involved and to build leadership within the council. Amy Porterfield stated her excitement in leading the council and noted she was aware of the upcoming work of the council. Amy Porterfield stated the council was facing many issues including budgets and youth in schools. She stated the importance in building relationships with elected officials and policy makers and to ensure that the GCBVI continued to advocate for the specialized services for blind and visually impaired individuals. Amy Porterfield stated she was aware that Nikki Jeffords had expressed some concern regarding Ms. Porterfield's potential conflict of interest in becoming the Chair. Amy Porterfield stated she did not participate in negotiation meetings regarding SAAVI Services for the Blind contracts with RSA. Ms. Porterfield stated the Procurement process was very guarded and RSA always adhered to the policies surrounding Procurement.

Dan Martinez stated the Executive Committee put forth the nomination of Bob Kresmer as Vice Chair and requested any nominations from the floor. Amy Porterfield motioned that nominations cease and that Bob Kresmer be elected by acclamation. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Dan Martinez stated Bob Kresmer had developed many relationships with the community and had created a great environment within the blindness community.

Dan Martinez stated the Executive Committee did not put forth a nomination for the Secretary position and requested nominations from the floor. Ted Chittenden nominated Jeff Bishop as Secretary of the council. Amy Porterfield seconded the motion. Jeff Bishop accepted the nomination. Sharonda Greenlaw motioned that nominations cease and that Jeff Bishop be nominated by acclamation. Amy Porterfield seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Policy and Legislative Updates

Donald Porterfield stated he met with the Interim DES Director, Henry Darwin and Michael Wisehart, DERS Assistant Director to discuss the role of the GCBVI in advising the Governor and Legislature on issues that affect blind individuals in Arizona. Donald Porterfield stated during the meeting, he, Mr. Darwin and Mr. Wisehart discussed the privatization of AIB, support for the RSA budget, and potentially partnering with DES in the future. Mr. Porterfield stated Henry Darwin indicated that he was the Interim DES Director until the position had been filled.

GCBVI Committee Reports

Public Information

Ted Chittenden stated the EyeKnow.az database had received considerable traffic and noted he had statistics from September 12, 2016 to present. Ted Chittenden stated from September 12-September 30, 2016, the number of individuals visiting the site was 207, the number of pages viewed per visit was 3.28, the average time spent on the database was 2.04 minutes. Ted Chittenden stated from October 1-October 31, 2016, the number of individuals visiting the site was 218, the number of pages viewed per visit was 3.14, the average time spent viewing the database was 2.12 minutes. Mr. Chittenden stated from November 1-November 30, 2016, the number of individuals visiting the site was 333, the pages viewed per visit was 2.64, and the average time spent viewing the site was 2.41 minutes. Ted Chittenden stated for December 1-December 31, 2016, the number of individuals visiting the site was 147, the number of pages viewed was 2.48, and the average time spent on the site was 1.25 minutes. Ted Chittenden stated he Public Information Committee was inquiring whether RSA was interested in receiving the EyeKnow.az database statistics regularly.

Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee would be developing a full Annual Report and he would be contacting the committee Chairs requesting a report of their past activities and the committee's future goals. Sharonda Greenlaw requested the full address for the EyeKnow.az website. Ted Chittenden stated the database address was <https://eyeknow.az.gov/>

Dan Martinez inquired whether Diane McElmury knew how many Resource Directories were distributed in the past. Diane McElmury stated she did not have exact numbers, although RSA staff distributed the Resource Directory at the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) in print, discs, and thumb drives for individuals. Dan Martinez stated the information could be useful when determining the success of the database.

Committee on Deaf-Blind Issues

Mary Hartle stated the Governor included \$192,000 to supplement Support Service Provider (SSP) services. Ms. Hartle noted on January 31, 2016, there would be a hearing in the Health and Welfare Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee. She encouraged deaf-blind or individuals with combined vision and hearing loss to attend the hearing in support for the supplemental funds. Dan Martinez inquired whether the Subcommittee would take comments from the public during the hearing. Mary Hartle stated the Subcommittee would not take comments, although Sheri Collins, Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ACDHH) would testify at the hearing. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the funds could be matched with federal funds. Mary Hartle stated the funds would go to the ACDHH, which would distribute to the current providers of SSP services. Ed Gervasoni stated the ACDHH was making the budget request to utilize the TRS, tax allowance fund, for supplying communication services for the deaf and hard of hearing. Mr. Gervasoni stated the ACDHH is requesting to utilize the excess of funds as a pilot program to expand current SSP services.

Employment Committee

Nikki Jeffords stated the Employment Committee would hold the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event on January 27, 2017 at the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) and all council members were invited to attend. Ms. Jeffords encouraged council members to extend invitations to Human Resources individuals and increase awareness of employment for blind and visually impaired individuals. Dan Martinez stated anyone interested in attending should forward their lunch choices to Lindsey Powers.

Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB)

Annette Reichman stated she had aggregated data regarding the Merit scores of students. Annette Reichman stated 45 students took the 2015 English Language Arts test; 40 students failed and 5 passed. Ms. Reichman stated 27 students took the 2016 English Language Arts test; 24 failed and 3 passed. Annette Reichman stated 35 students took the 2015 Math test; 32 failed and 3 passed. Annette Reichman stated 36 students took the 2016 Math test; 34 failed and 2 passed.

Amy Porterfield inquired regarding the name of the test administered to students. Annette Reichman stated the test was the Arizona Merit Assessment. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the tests were based on Common Core tests. Annette Reichman stated the tests were no longer based on Common Core state standards, although the tests were similar. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the scores could be compared to the scores of students attending the co-op schools. Annette Reichman stated ASDB had requested that information, although she had been denied that information in the past because ASDB stopped asking for that information. Amy Porterfield inquired whether any of the school districts separated out their blind students' scores. Annette Reichman stated the schools could separate out the information, although she was uncertain whether the schools did so. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether the students had additional disabilities. Annette Reichman stated about half of students had additional disabilities. Jeff Bishop inquired whether ASDB had an explanation regarding the low test scores of students. Annette Reichman stated her opinion that the school had been held accountable and had not held the teachers accountable. She noted that ASDB was in the process of changing that and would focus on teaching methodologies. Annette Reichman stated the school would know whether the new methods were effective, once the school received new data. Mr. Bishop inquired whether the issue was the effectiveness of the curriculum, or the lack of accountability. Annette Reichman stated she felt that the majority of students did not have cognitive disabilities and should be performing the same as their sighted peers. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the tests were administered in Unified English Braille (UEB) or the earlier Braille version. Annette Reichman stated ASDB had not started using UEB, although the school was making that transition. Amy Porterfield suggested that Annette Reichman partner with community organizations that worked with the ASDB graduates and other organizations that would gladly offer assistance. Nikki Jeffords stated she heard that school districts were determining whether students were eligible to attend ASDB. Annette Reichman stated that ASDB received referrals from school districts, which would determine whether a student was eligible to attend the

school. Ms. Reichman stated the parents could advocate for their children, which had varying degrees of success.

Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the GCBVI Full Council will be on March 17, 2017 from 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm. in the Video Conference Room, at 515 N. 51st Avenue, Phoenix, AZ.

- GCBVI Strategic Planning Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Call to the Public

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

Adjournment

Bob Kresmer moved to adjourn the meeting. Nikki Jeffords seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

FFY 2016 as of December 31, 2016 for BVI:

Total number of individuals in the VR program was 855
Total number of individuals in the OOS was 99
Total number of individuals in Priority Two was 79
Total number of individuals in Priority Three was 20
Total number of VR applications was 69
Average number of days from application to eligibility was 37.9
Median number of days from application to eligibility was 35.5
Eligibility Determination Compliance – within 60 days was 85.7%
Number of new plans written was 71.
Average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 80.1
Median number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 65
IPE Implementation Compliance – within 90 days was 83.0%
Highest hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$22.91
Average hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$12.53
Number of clients placed was 12
Number of clients closed successful was 7

The FFY 2016 statistics as of December 31, 2016 for D/B:

The total number of individuals in the VR program was 48
The total number of individuals in the OOS was 1
The total number of individuals in Priority Two was 1
The total number of individuals in Priority Three was 0
The number of VR applications was 2
The number of new plans written was 2
The average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 137
The median number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 137
The IPE implementation compliance within 90 days was 50%
The number of clients placed was 0
The number of clients closed successfully was 0