

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
January 30, 2018

Members Present

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

Members Absent

David Steinmetz

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Council Staff Liaison
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Ted Chittenden called the meeting to order at 2:01 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 5, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Barbara McDonald moved to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2017 Public Information Committee meeting. Carlos Paraskevas and Janet Fisher seconded the motion. The committee approved the minutes by unanimous voice vote.

VRATE Discussion

Barbara McDonald stated the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) Committee had elected new officers: Nikki Jeffords, Chair, Jordan Moon, Co-Chair, Akira St. Germain, Secretary, and George Martinez, Treasurer. Barbara McDonald stated she did confirm that individuals could express interest in participating on the VRATE Committee via email. Barbara McDonald stated those individuals would receive recommendations from other committee members and would then attend a meeting, where the committee members would vote on committee membership. Dan Martinez stated that he and Carlos Paraskevas expressed interest in joining the VRATE Committee and their memberships would be voted on. Carlos Paraskevas stated the next VRATE was tentatively scheduled for November

16, 2018 at the Glendale Civic Center. Barbara McDonald stated the VRATE Committee would welcome presentations from GCBVI members. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the VRATE Committee had identified the types of presentations they would like to see. Barbara McDonald stated the committee discussed offering tracks for older blind and visually impaired individuals, students, and employers at the next VRATE. Dan Martinez stated the VRATE Presenters Committee would request a call for presentations and would request that the GCBVI identify the types of presentations that members would like to present. Mr. Martinez suggested that Ted Chittenden contact the council committee Chairs and inquire whether the committees would like to present and what type of presentation they would like to present.

GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated that he and Carlos Paraskevas developed a draft pamphlet that included reasons for why employers should hire blind and visually impaired individuals. Mr. Chittenden noted that Dan Martinez also developed a brochure as well and inquired whether both documents could be combined into one. Carlos Paraskevas stated Dan Martinez's brochure addressed the concerns that employers would have when considering hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Ted Chittenden agreed that Dan Martinez's brochure included information. Carlos Paraskevas stated when he attended the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event, several employers indicated that they had questions regarding how a blind or visually impaired individual could perform their job. Dan Martinez stated the brochure should avoid certain language such as telling the employers what they should do, but it could demonstrate how a blind or visually impaired individual could fit on the work team. Dan Martinez noted that blind and visually impaired individuals needed to be affable and demonstrate good interpersonal skills when interfacing with a potential employer. Dan Martinez stated the social issue that many employers were uncomfortable around individuals with disabilities, therefore, the job seekers needed to overcome that resistance by redefining those preconceived notions.

Ted Chittenden inquired whether the information included in both documents should be combined into one brochure or pamphlet. Dan Martinez stated he countered some of the employer concerns rather than spelling out the concern. He stated for example, Ted Chittenden and Carlos Paraskevas's brochure indicated that blind and visually impaired individuals are dependable. Dan Martinez stated he countered the employers concern by including information regarding the lower staff turnover rate when hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Ted Chittenden stated he would

agree with Dan Martinez's suggestions and stated the pamphlet could be edited to correct some minor errors.

Janet Fisher stated the EyeKnowAZ website address was incorrect in the pamphlet and noted the correct address was <https://eyeknow.az.gov/>. Ms. Fisher suggested the pamphlet information be condensed into bullet points or that the important information be highlighted so the reader could easily read the information. Janet Fisher stated the Arizona Braille and Talking Book Library typically used thicker cardstock paper, rack cards, when developing library materials as well. Dan Martinez agreed that the Public Information Committee needed to provide information in a format that would meet the needs of the audience. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the pamphlet could include information indicating that blind and visually impaired individuals were dependable and include a picture of the council members. Janet Fisher suggested the pamphlet include a picture of blind and visually impaired individuals working and include recognizable items such as guide dogs or canes. Dan Martinez stated the pamphlet could include more bullet points, to list items, such as the types of Assistive Technology (AT) tools that blind and visually impaired persons used. Janet Fisher suggested that the brochure or rack card include the AT that blind and visually impaired individuals use to augment their jobs, rather than highlight that individuals needed to use AT to perform their jobs. Carlos Paraskevas suggested the committee address employer concerns such as including information regarding AT early in the pamphlet. He noted that employers would frequently inquire how blind and visually impaired individuals used phones or computers.

Dan Martinez requested clarification on the rack cards. Janet Fisher stated the rack cards were approximately 4 inches wide by 8.5 inches tall, which was slightly wider than a bookmark, which was printed on cardstock paper. Janet Fisher stated the library would include information on the front and the back of the card, which would give the reader important information in a condensed format. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the committee would like to develop a brochure as well as a rack card. Janet Fisher stated the brochure included important information, although she would suggest that some of the information be bulleted and in different formats to appeal to the readers. Dan Martinez inquired whether the library printed their own rack cards or had the cards printed by a print shop. Janet Fisher stated the library either printed the cards in the library or requested the items through a print shop. Ted Chittenden inquired whether employers would have the brochure or card holders in their offices. Janet Fisher stated that libraries and museums typically had brochure and card holders. Dan Martinez stated the Public Information Committee would need to consider where to reach the appropriate audience and what would appeal to them. Ted Chittenden

stated the committee could move forward with developing a brochure as well as a rack card. Dan Martinez stated another item on the GCBVI Strategic Plan stated that the council should be positioned at the same level as the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) and noted the committee could discuss that at the next committee meeting. Dan Martinez stated at the previous GCBVI Full Council meeting, the Public Information Committee requested that council members review the EyeKnowAZ website and offer feedback. Mr. Martinez suggested that Ted Chittenden follow up with council members regarding that feedback.

Outreach for Council Events

Ted Chittenden stated the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) Conference would be held from July 8-10, 2018 at the We Ko Pa Resort and Conference Center in Scottsdale. Mr. Chittenden recommended that committee members attend the conference to continue outreach efforts to the community. Barbara McDonald suggested the committee identify whether regional transit would provide transportation for individuals interested in attending the conference. Ted Chittenden noted that the GCBVI would also attend the upcoming VRATE conference in November. Dan Martinez stated he attended the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event and noted that the Employment Committee Chair, Nikki Jeffords, indicated that the committee would hold smaller quarterly events during the year. Ted Chittenden stated he would contact Nikki Jeffords and inquire how the Public Information Committee could assist the Employment Committee.

GCBVI Outreach Materials Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated the committee had discussed the types of documents that the council should distribute at conferences and events and noted that the previously discussed brochure and rack card could be included. Ted Chittenden inquired regarding the types of information that the council should distribute during events. Dan Martinez stated the Public Information Committee needed to reevaluate the council materials distributed to recruit new council members. Dan Martinez stated the council was successful, however, in enhancing the image of the council. Ted Chittenden stated that council information was distributed in print and Braille, although not all blind or visually impaired individuals read Braille. Ted Chittenden suggested that the information be included on CDs instead. Janet Fisher noted that most new computers did not include CD drives and suggested that the information be added to the council webpage. Dan Martinez stated that council information could be added to the GCBVI Facebook webpage. Carlos Paraskevas suggested the EyeKnowAZ website include a link to the council webpage, which was included on the Department of Economic Security

(DES) website. Janet Fisher stated she could request that Sara Muth, Secretary of State I.T. staff, include a link to the council webpage on the EyeKnowAZ website. Ted Chittenden noted that the council had suggested the inclusion of headers on the council webpage, which would help users to navigate the website. Carlos Paraskevas agreed that the council webpage was not easy to navigate using JAWS, a screen reader.

Public Involvement with GCBVI

Ted Chittenden stated he presented at the previous Introduction to Blindness workshop attended by ten individuals. He noted that he received questions regarding how often the council met and how individuals could join the council. Ted Chittenden stated he neglected to inform the individuals that they could participate on committees without becoming a member of the council. Ted Chittenden stated he presented the information included in a Power Point presentation previously developed by Dan Martinez and Carlos Paraskevas. Mr. Chittenden stated that Barbara McDonald had suggested that he send a list of the committee Chairs to the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB) Phoenix Chapter members, so they could contact the Chairs if they were interested in participating on a committee. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the committee Chairs had the authority to appoint committee members. Dan Martinez stated his understanding that the committee Chairs could recommend the appointment of committee members, although the GCBVI Chair had authority over all committee member appointments. Dan Martinez noted that several GCBVI committees were comprised of non-council members to include experts in those fields.

Database Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated the committee had previously discussed contacting all businesses and organizations included in the EyeKnowAZ website and request any corrections to their information. Carlos Paraskevas stated he contacted all organizations included in the website and forwarded all corrections to Lindsey Powers. Mr. Paraskevas noted that several emails were returned undelivered and he was researching the correct emails in his spare time.

Social Media Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated the GCBVI currently had a Facebook webpage and inquired whether the council should consider using another social media platform. Barbara McDonald stated she had been tasked with locating an individual that had used the EyeKnowAZ website for a post on the council Facebook page and she would reach out to individuals that had used the

website. Dan Martinez stated that Ted Chittenden should encourage council members to like the council Facebook page and/or to follow the webpage.

GCBVI Annual Report Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated at the GCBVI Full Council meeting, he inquired whether the council would like the Public Information Committee to develop a full Annual Report or a shorter version. Ted Chittenden stated Amy Porterfield indicated that the Executive Committee would discuss the Annual Report at its next meeting.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, March 13, 2018, 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:

- GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion
- GCBVI Annual Report Discussion
- Outreach for Council Events
- Outreach Materials for Council Events
- VRATE Discussion
- Public Involvement with GCBVI Discussion
- Database Discussion
- Social Media Discussion

Announcements

Ted Chittenden announced that Lindsey Powers had accepted the position as the Council Staff Liaison for the GCBVI.

Carlos Paraskevas stated the Foundation Fighting Blindness would hold their Vision Walk on February 24, 2018 at Steele Indian School Park. Mr. Paraskevas stated that the Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB) would have a team of individuals that would walk.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Barbara McDonald moved to adjourn the meeting; Carlos Paraskevas seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:30 pm.