

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
February 21, 2019

Members Present

Bob Kresmer, Chair
Amy Porterfield
Ted Chittenden
Nathan Pullen
Bea Shapiro
Jim LaMay
Allan Curry

Members Absent

Donald Porterfield
Ed Gervasoni

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Bob Kresmer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of January 11, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Ted Chittenden moved to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2019 Executive Committee meeting. Amy Porterfield seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

SILC Meeting Discussion

Bob Kresmer stated that he, Amy Porterfield and Jim LaMay met with State Independent Living Council (SILC) representatives Melissa Santora and Sarah Kader to discuss how SILC's funds were distributed. Mr. Kresmer stated that SILC's budget was relatively small and covered staff costs. Jim LaMay stated that SILC indicated that they had no objections to working with the council and the blindness population. Jim LaMay stated that several

years prior, the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) advocated for an increase in Independent Living Blind (ILB) services, which was used to draw down federal match funds. He noted that ILB had increased funds for approximately one year, before the economic crash and those funds were swept. Bob Kresmer stated during the meeting, they also discussed potentially sharing funds for individuals under 55 that required IL services. Jim LaMay stated SILC indicated that those funds were for actual service provision. Bob Kresmer stated that SILC expressed interest in partnering with council members. Jim LaMay stated that he was interested in attending a SILC meeting, although he had not received an invitation to attend a meeting yet. He noted that Sarah Kader had expressed interest in attending GCBVI meetings as well. Amy Porterfield stated her understanding that Sarah Kader was interested in becoming a member of the council and noted that Ms. Kader previously worked for the Arizona Center for Disability Law and had advocacy experience. Amy Porterfield stated the benefit to partnering with the Arizona Disability Coalition (ADC) and to support and communicate with the ADC. She added that SILC was in the process of amending the SILC plan, and was removing the goal of increasing funding.

VR Staff Training for BVI Clients

Bob Kresmer stated that he and Amy Porterfield met with Kristen Mackey to discuss the need for training for Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) managers, supervisors and staff that worked with the blind and visually impaired population. Amy Porterfield stated during that meeting, they discussed the council's preference that the SBVID Program Manager position be a Deputy position, although the Department of Economic Security (DES) wanted the position to remain a management position. Ms. Porterfield stated the council needed to ensure that the SBVID Program Manager position retained the same level of influence as a Deputy position. Amy Porterfield stated they also discussed how counselors were not receiving consistent blindness training to work with the blind and visually impaired population. She stated they also discussed the continued challenges with the Managed Services Provider (MSP) contract under Knowledge Services. Amy Porterfield stated the counselors would still be responsible for managing the authorization hours and attending staffing, and Knowledge Service would ensure that services had been provided. Amy Porterfield stated that Kristen Mackey stated she would be interested in meeting with providers to discuss their feedback. Bob Kresmer stated that Kristen Mackey had scheduled a meeting to discuss the council's feedback regarding the training of SBVID managers and staff.

Mr. Kresmer stated the Policy and Legislative Committee would meet and present their suggestions to the council regarding the level of involvement of

the council in the training of SBVID staff. Ted Chittenden stated he would support council involvement in the training of SBVID managers and staff if the council had clear goals for those trainings. Bea Shapiro agreed that SBVID staff should be trained to work with blind and visually impaired clients. Ms. Shapiro stated that RSA should have a qualified teacher provide the training although the council could offer feedback regarding those trainings. Nathan Pullen stated the council could partner with the DES media department to develop a video or webinar that could assist in the training of SBVID staff. Amy Porterfield stated that a video would not offer the same training as one-on-one training. Ms. Porterfield stated that the council would support a subject matter expert to provide the training and the council could offer oversight to ensure that the training was sufficient. Bob Kresmer stated there were different ways to provide that training. He noted that in Minnesota, the counselors received two weeks of immersion training in the comprehensive services training centers. Bea Shapiro stated that SBVID staff used to receive quarterly trainings, although staff had not received those trainings recently. Bob Kresmer stated the Policy and Legislative Committee could consider making recommendations for the council. Amy Porterfield stated the committee could develop a general outline and she would welcome feedback from members such as Bea Shapiro.

Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the council's role in discussing comprehensive services with RSA. Amy Porterfield stated that the comprehensive services contract would be added to Knowledge Services. Ms. Porterfield stated the agreement with RSA was that providers would be given the opportunity to simplify the process. Amy Porterfield stated the counselors managed the contracts and Knowledge Services would be a third party overseeing that process. Ted Chittenden requested clarification regarding Knowledge Services. Bea Shapiro stated the Managed Services Provider was under Knowledge Services, which would oversee all services to clients such as employment and evaluations. Ms. Shapiro stated that before, the providers would work with RSA regarding client services, and under MSP, the providers would work with MSP. Amy Porterfield stated that RSA would be responsible for determining whether a vendor was qualified, the counselor would verify the authorizations of services. Amy Porterfield stated she was unsure how Knowledge Services would be able to verify services, which was the counselor's responsibility. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Knowledge Services was a private entity. Amy Porterfield stated Knowledge Services was a private company and would mediate between RSA and the providers.

Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the council's involvement in the Introduction to Blindness Workshops. Ted Chittenden stated that he would often provide

the GCBVI presentation to the clients in the blindness workshops, although there were no workshops in December or January, and he was not contacted to provide a presentation in February. Jim LaMay stated that workshops were not scheduled for December or January, although there was a workshop in February. Bob Kresmer stated his understanding that there were some communication issues in February. Amy Porterfield stated that not many clients attended the orientations. Ms. Porterfield stated the clients visited all the providers in one day and were tired at the end of the day. Amy Porterfield recognized that transportation was an issue and suggested that providers support the workshops as a community. Jim LaMay inquired how clients were told about the orientations. Amy Porterfield stated that clients were not required to attend the orientations, and more clients would benefit from attending the orientations. She noted that when counselors received training, they would be more likely to recommend clients attend the workshops. Bob Kresmer inquired regarding the council's role in coordinating activities between the providers and RSA. Amy Porterfield stated that previously, the providers met as a focus group to discuss the Introduction to Blindness Workshops and could potentially meet again to offer additional feedback regarding that process. Amy Porterfield suggested the meeting be open to the public, so that community members could offer their suggestions as well.

GCBVI Policy and Legislative Discussion

This item was tabled.

GCBVI Membership Discussion

Bob Kresmer stated the council received an application from Terri Hedgpeth and inquired whether the Executive Committee would prefer to interview Ms. Hedgpeth or recommend that her application move forward. Amy Porterfield stated that she preferred to continue the interview process, which allowed the council members to identify how potential members would fit into the council. Bob Kresmer inquired who would be willing to interview Terri Hedgpeth. Amy Porterfield and Nathan Pullen agreed to interview Terri Hedgpeth. Jim LaMay inquired whether all potential members were interviewed prior to becoming members of the council. Amy Porterfield stated the council developed the interview process and had interviewed all potential members for several years.

Agenda Items and Date for Next Meeting

Jim LaMay inquired whether the Executive Committee would have the opportunity to discuss the GCBVI Strategic Plan. Bob Kresmer stated the Executive Committee could discuss the Strategic Plan at the next meeting in April. Mr. Kresmer inquired whether a workgroup would like to revise the GCBVI Strategic Plan. Jim LaMay stated that some tasks were assigned to certain committees and lead committees, and the other committees had to wait for guidance from the lead committees. Amy Porterfield stated the council developed a great Strategic Plan, although the accountability process was complex. Ms. Porterfield stated a workgroup could easily revise the Strategic Plan to assist in completing the tasks. Bob Kresmer stated he would develop a workgroup to revise the council Strategic Plan and present to the council.

The next meeting date of the Executive Committee would be determined. Agenda items are as follows:

- Policy and Legislative Discussion
- GCBVI Membership Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Amy Porterfield moved to adjourn the meeting. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.