

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
April 4, 2017

Members Present

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

Members Absent

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin. Assistant
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Ted Chittenden called the meeting to order at 2:00 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 February 28, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Dan Martinez moved to approve the minutes of the February 28, 2017 Public Information Committee meeting. Barbara McDonald seconded the motion. The committee approved the minutes by unanimous voice vote.

2017 GCBVI Annual Report

Ted Chittenden stated he forwarded an email from Frank Vance, where Mr. Vance expressed his concern regarding client confidentiality in the client success stories to be included in the GCBVI Annual Report. Dan Martinez stated the committee could include the client's names in the annual report, request that clients sign a release of information form, or use pseudonyms. Ted Chittenden requested feedback from the committee regarding whether the committee should seek permission from each client, or use pseudonyms. Mr. Chittenden noted in the past, the success stories included the client's first name, and the first initial of the individual's last name. David Steinmetz suggested the committee used pseudonyms to protect the privacy of the clients. Ted Chittenden agreed that many individuals did want to protect their privacy and would not want to be identified. Ted Chittenden noted

some of the client success stories included pictures of those individuals and suggested a committee member contact those individuals, requesting permission to use their stories. Dan Martinez stated he would follow up with the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) regarding the success stories that the organization had submitted.

Ted Chittenden stated he had not sent additional requests to the GCBVI Committee Chairs regarding the committee reports to be included in the Annual Report. Mr. Chittenden noted he had requested the committee reports at previous GCBVI Legislative and Public Policy and Executive Committee meetings. Barbara McDonald stated the committee had identified May 15, 2017 as the deadline for the Committee Chairs to submit their reports. Dan Martinez suggested that Ted Chittenden continue to remind the Committee Chairs and request their committee reports for inclusion in the GCBVI Annual Report. Janet Fisher suggested the Committee Chairs prepare reports and present them at the GCBVI Strategic Plan meeting. Ted Chittenden stated he would send an email requesting the Committee reports to Lindsey Powers, to be forwarded to Amy Porterfield.

Social Media Planning Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated the committee had discussed inviting a member from the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee to offer guidance regarding the development of a social media webpage. Lindsey Powers stated she extended an invitation to Jeff Bishop, AT Committee Chair, although Mr. Bishop indicated that he was not familiar with social media sites. Carlos Paraskevas stated the council would still require an individual to develop or host the actual social media page. Janet Fisher suggested that the individual that developed the webpage not be a government employee, and therefore not be required to adhere to government social media policies. Ted Chittenden stated he could create a social media webpage on Facebook, for example, although when his term ended with the council, the webpage would remain under his name. David Steinmetz stated the council webpage would be associated with Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), and would therefore have to be submitted to the Public Information Officer in order to be published. Barbara McDonald inquired whether other Governor's Councils had created social media webpages. Dan Martinez stated the Governor's Council on Head and Spinal Injury could potentially have a website and social media webpage. Dan Martinez stated the State Independent Living Council (SILC) might have a website and a Facebook page potentially, and suggest the committee contact Larry Wanger, SILC Director. Barbara McDonald stated she would speak with Larry Wanger regarding the SILC Facebook page. Janet Fisher stated the SILC website did

include Twitter, Facebook and Linked In accounts and noted the SILC Facebook webpage seemed to be quite active.

Outreach for Council Events

Dan Martinez stated the Public Information Committee should continue to support the Employment Committee in developing the next E75 Diversity Builder Award Event. Dan Martinez stated the Public Information Committee could support the Employment Committee's outreach efforts and requests for sponsorship. Mr. Martinez noted the Employment Committee might potentially develop employer nomination forms to be distributed to the community. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the next E75 Award Event would follow the same format as the previous years, or whether the event would follow a similar format at the Reverse Job Fair, in which clients had their own tables. Dan Martinez stated the Employment Committee had discussed different ideas regarding the format of the event. Dan Martinez suggested that Ted Chittenden attend Employment Committee meetings if his schedule allowed and offer suggestions to the committee.

Barbara McDonald inquired whether the Arizona Assistive Technology Program (AzTAP) would hold a conference in 2017. Janet Fisher stated the AzTAP Conference would be held July 23-25, 2017 at the Hyatt Regency Resort in Scottsdale. Lindsey Powers stated she would inquire whether the council could staff a table at the event under RSA.

Public Involvement with GCBVI Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated in the past, a Public Information Committee member would attend the RSA Introduction to Blindness Services and provide information about the GCBVI. Mr. Chittenden stated RSA was reevaluating the Orientation and would potentially reduce the Orientation from one week to one or two days. He noted RSA would potentially eliminate the consumer groups' presentations and the GCBVI presentation as well. Ted Chittenden stated RSA would hold a meeting with the providers and consumer groups to discuss the changes to the Orientation. Dan Martinez stated he did not have a personal interest in the Orientation tours as a representative from the Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB), which would be transitioning to a non-profit organization. Dan Martinez stated his interest was for the benefit of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients. Carlos Paraskevas agreed and noted the decision to change the Blindness Orientation occurred quickly. Barbara McDonald stated Rich Sorey, Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) Program Manager had indicated that RSA had significant staff vacancies and the agency did not have sufficient staff coverage to offer the full week of Orientation. Ted Chittenden stated Rich Sorey indicated that

RSA would be interested in hearing feedback from the providers and consumer groups, and noted the council would know more after the meeting with RSA.

Ted Chittenden stated that Larry Wanger and Bea Shapiro's council membership applications had been forwarded to the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions. Dan Martinez suggested the committee continue to request that clients attend GCBVI Full Council meetings to present their success stories. Mr. Martinez noted the importance of hearing directly from clients. Ted Chittenden stated the previous SBVID Program Manager assisted with obtaining client success stories, and suggested a committee member contact Rich Sorey regarding client success stories. Dan Martinez stated he would contact Mr. Sorey regarding client success stories.

VRATE Discussion

Barbara McDonald stated the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) was scheduled for the same day as the Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (AER) Conference on November 3, 2017. Ms. McDonald stated the VRATE Committee would discuss potentially changing the VRATE date rather than make professionals and vendors choose which event to attend. Barbara McDonald noted the VRATE Committee discussed potential keynote speakers, such as an individual that would speak about driverless cars. She stated the committee also discussed including a panel of individuals that were self-employed. Barbara McDonald stated the committee discussed including presentations regarding public transportation such as Valley Metro, Uber, and bi-optic driving. Barbara McDonald stated the VRATE Committee was trying to identify presentations that would appeal to audiences of all ages.

Janet Fisher suggested VRATE consider offering AER presentations via videoconference or a technology to allow VRATE attendees the ability to attend both conferences. Dan Martinez noted VRATE included a podcast at the previous VRATE conference, and suggested Barbara McDonald contact Larry Wanger for guidance regarding podcasts. Ted Chittenden stated the committee members had agreed to complete several tasks and requested committee members be sent a Task List. Lindsey Powers agreed to develop a list of committee members' tasks.

Dan Martinez motioned that the Public Information Committee recommend that VRATE be held on a different date as the AER Conference. Carlos Paraskevas seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

Dan Martinez inquired whether the VRATE Committee wanted the GCBVI to identify potential council presentations. Mr. Martinez noted in the past, the council offered three to four presentations to VRATE, although the invitation had not been extended to the council. Ted Chittenden suggested the council offer a presentation from successfully employed blind and visually impaired individuals, a panel of self-employed individuals, and potentially include employers to talk to job ready clients. Mr. Chittenden stated Dan Martinez could provide a presentation on the Essential Employment Skills that he developed previously. Dan Martinez stated that he and Carlos Paraskevas would provide a presentation on employment soft skills. Barbara McDonald stated the VRATE Committee discussed inviting Tom Hicks to provide a presentation on employment at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Ms. McDonald noted the VRATE Committee also discussed including a presentation regarding Transition services. Ted Chittenden stated RSA, SAAVI Services for the Blind, Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB), and Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) offered Transition services. Dan Martinez noted that Colorado Center for the Blind and World Services for the Blind offered Transition services also. Ted Chittenden recommended Rich Sorey or a provider from one of Transition programs speak about Transition services at VRATE. Dan Martinez noted that Transition could refer to a broader subject than the Summer Transition programs and noted the program offered a continuum of services for individuals interested in becoming successfully employed. Mr. Martinez stated Rich Sorey or Kristen Mackey, RSA Administrator, could potentially provide a presentation regarding Transition services.

Barbara McDonald stated the VRATE Committee had not distributed all of the speaker requests. David Steinmetz stated he had not attended VRATE in several years, although in his experience the audience that attended VRATE was an older crowd. Barbara McDonald stated VRATE was trying to attract younger individuals to attend VRATE. Dan Martinez stated the VRATE demographics were changing and noted in 2016, the three age groups of youth, middle age individuals, and older individuals were represented almost equally.

Database Development Discussion

Janet Fisher reviewed the March database usage statistics:

March 1 -31, 2017

Number of sessions (visits) 116

Number of individuals visiting website 96

Pages viewed per visit 4.39

Time spent visiting the database (minutes) 2:52
New visitors 75%
Returning Users 25%

Barbara McDonald inquired whether the new visits to the site were from individuals new to Arizona and were researching the local services available. Janet Fisher stated she was unsure, although committee members such as Carlos Paraskevas had discussed the database with the public, which likely increased awareness.

Carlos Paraskevas stated he selected some ophthalmologists at random from the list of the ophthalmologists the committee developed previously, and visited their websites. Mr. Paraskevas stated from his research, the ophthalmologist's websites included information regarding procedures, eye exams and current research and would not be the best place to include the EyeKnowAZ database. Carlos Paraskevas stated the EyeKnowAZ database could be included on the Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI), SAAVI Services for the Blind, FBC, and View Finder websites, which offered resources for blind and visually impaired individuals. Janet Fisher stated she spoke to the Arizona Braille and Talking Book Outreach Librarian, Christine Tuttle, who had submitted a blog article on the Barnet Delaney Perkins Eye Center website previously promoting the library. Ms. Fisher suggested the committee develop a brief post to be included on an ophthalmologist's website. Barbara McDonald stated she could understand why various websites would not include information for blind individuals, as the doctors would not want to include information that could potentially scare their patients. Ted Chittenden agreed with Barbara McDonald, although the purpose of the Public Information Committee was to provide outreach for individuals that would benefit from the resources in the database. Janet Fisher stated the resources included in the EyeKnowAZ database were for individuals with different levels of needs and suggested the committee develop a blog post that expressed the wide range of services available to entice more individuals to view the database. David Steinmetz stated the blog posts would allow the committee to build a rapport with the various ophthalmologist's offices and individuals. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Carlos Paraskevas would contact the various websites listed previously and request the EyeKnowAZ database be included on their websites. Carlos Paraskevas stated he would contact those organizations and promote the database. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Janet Fisher would follow up with any ophthalmologist websites regarding an EyeKnowAZ blog post. Janet Fisher agreed to research the various websites and noted that Sara Muth, Secretary of State I.T. staff could potentially send out an email blast to all organizations listed in the database, requesting they include the database information in their websites. Ted Chittenden agreed

to develop the language to be distributed to the organizations listed in the EyeKnowAZ database. Dan Martinez stated he forwarded some resources to be included in the database, although he was not sure if those resources had been added. Lindsey Powers stated she had entered those resources into the database.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, May 16, 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 Discussion
- 2017 VRATE Discussion
- Public Involvement with GCBVI
- 2017 GCBVI Annual Report
- Outreach for Council Events
- Social Media Planning Discussion

Announcements

Dan Martinez announced that he participated on the interview panel for the Council Staff Liaison position on March 10, 2017, and noted that a candidate had been chosen.

Ted Chittenden stated the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB) would hold its annual membership meeting on April 22, 2017, at ACBVI. Mr. Chittenden noted the meeting was only open to members, although attending individuals could become members at the door.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

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