

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2020

Members Present

Ted Chittenden
Janet Fisher
Dean Colston
David Steinmetz

Members Absent

Michael Bailey

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Ted Chittenden called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of September 29, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Dean Colston moved to approve the minutes of the September 29, 2020 Public Information Committee meeting. David Steinmetz seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

GCBVI Annual Report Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated that at the Executive Committee meeting, he mentioned the Committee reports the Public Information Committee had not received. Mr. Chittenden stated that Bob Kresmer had also indicated that he would contact the Committee Chairs to request their reports. Ted Chittenden stated that he and Lindsey Powers had not received any additional reports thus far. He noted that he had given the deadline date of October 30th and suggested that if the committee had not received the reports by November 13th, to submit the Annual Report as is. David Steinmetz inquired regarding the reports that were missing from the Annual Report. Ted Chittenden stated he had not received the Employment, Legislative and Public Policy, and Deaf-Blind Committee reports as well as success stories from SAAVI Services for the Blind. Ted Chittenden stated he

would also like to receive a report from Brian Dulude as the Services for the Blind Visually Impaired and Deaf (SBVID) Program Manager or a report from Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) director Kristen Mackey. David Steinmetz inquired whether the committee could obtain information from the SBVID website and draft a report that could be submitted to Mr. Dulude for approval. Ted Chittenden stated that he would agree, if Mr. Steinmetz would be willing to draft an SBVID report.

Dean Colston stated that he would be able to add any additional reports to the Annual Report, although he would be on vacation on November 4th. Ted Chittenden stated that Dean Colston could forward the draft report to him prior to Mr. Colston leaving for vacation and Mr. Chittenden could include any additional reports that were received. Dean Colston stated he had performed some copy editing of the report and stated he had some questions regarding the verbiage in the report. Dean Colston suggested capitalizing the first letter of the words in the title. Ted Chittenden agreed with capitalizing the first letter of the words in the title. Dean Colston stated that some of the language referred to "blind seniors" or "blind entrepreneurs" and inquired whether the committee would prefer using person first language. David Steinmetz stated he was in favor of person first language. Ted Chittenden agreed that person first language would be appropriate. Dean Colston stated he would use his judgment in making changes to ensure the document flowed effectively. Janet Fisher inquired regarding the public perception if the council submitted the Annual Report without all the committee reports. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could include descriptions of the committees as place holders if the committees did not submit their reports. David Steinmetz stated the committee could include descriptions of the committees to recognize those committees.

GCBVI Outreach Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated that he and several of the Public Information Committee members attended the virtual VA White Cane Day, in which he presented on the council and spoke briefly about the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB). Ted Chittenden stated that a veteran contacted him after the webinar to inquire about transportation in which Mr. Chittenden provided him with some resources. David Steinmetz inquired whether the event was well attended. Ted Chittenden stated he was unable to see the list of attendees and was unsure regarding the attendance. Dean Colston stated that Ted Chittenden provided a good presentation of the GCBVI.

Ted Chittenden stated he had participated in the Introduction to Blindness workshop in October in which 6 clients attended. Ted Chittenden stated he

did not receive any questions regarding the council, although he did receive a question regarding the AzCB. David Steinmetz stated he received the invite for the next workshop and inquired whether Ted Chittenden intended to provide the presentation. Ted Chittenden stated that he would provide the next presentation, and David Steinmetz could provide future council presentations and Gail Wilt could provide future AzCB presentations.

Ted Chittenden stated that Bob Kresmer had requested the council have an exhibit table at the upcoming virtual Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) conference. Ted Chittenden noted that Lindsey Powers had sent out a request to council members to sign up for 2-hour time slots to staff the exhibit table and inquired whether she had received any responses. Lindsey Powers stated that Amy Porterfield and George Martinez had volunteered to help staff the table. Ted Chittenden stated he would also submit his availability and requested that Ms. Powers send the request to the Public Information Committee members as well. David Steinmetz stated that he would likely be busy with the actual event. Mr. Steinmetz stated the VRATE Board continued to plan the speakers and had started marketing the event. David Steinmetz stated Christine Tuttle was distributing information about the event to her networks. David Steinmetz stated VRATE would have volunteers who would be available via a toll-free number and would assist individuals with registering for the event or to attend the event. David Steinmetz stated that exhibitors should be able to register for the event and inquired whether the council was registered as an exhibitor. Lindsey Powers stated the VRATE webpage had an option for sponsorship but did not have an option to register as an exhibitor. She stated she had contacted Jordan Moon who indicated that he would send the link for exhibitor registration. David Steinmetz stated that some of the presentations would be pre-recorded and some would be live presentations. Ted Chittenden inquired regarding the correct VRATE webpage. David Steinmetz stated that both websites were correct, and the .com website would direct the individual to the .org webpage. David Steinmetz added that attendees would be given a link for all day participation.

Database/Social Media Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated the EyeKnow.AZ statistics for August and September remained at about 70 searches. Ted Chittenden stated the council Facebook page had not increased in usage either, although both platforms continued to be active. Janet Fisher inquired whether Department of Economic Security (DES) staff should be reminded of the EyeKnow.AZ database as they continued to work from home. Ms. Fisher stated that she compared the database usage from two years prior, which had greater usage numbers and inquired what the committee was doing differently at that time. Lindsey

Powers stated she could remind RSA staff regarding the database as a resource. David Steinmetz inquired whether the database was mentioned during the Introduction to Blindness workshops or through the outreach efforts of the Talking Book Library. Ted Chittenden stated he did mention the database during his presentation to the Introduction to Blindness attendees. Janet Fisher stated that library staff did mention the database, although she was unsure regarding the extent of the discussion. Ms. Fisher inquired whether the committee had sought comments from the community to inquire about any additions or suggested changes to the database. Ted Chittenden stated his recollection that the committee received the suggestion that the database include theater listings. He noted his reluctance in including that information, which would need to be updated regularly. David Steinmetz suggested the database include a phone number so that individuals could be directed to an appropriate resource. Ted Chittenden stated the database could include a FAQ page with contact information for common resources such as VR. Janet Fisher noted that if the committee included contact information for one resource, other organizations could request their information be listed as well. Janet Fisher stated the database could highlight a new resource once a week or month and include information about that resource. Janet Fisher stated the database did currently include a phone number as a contact. David Steinmetz stated search engines such as Google had ad grants where non-profit agencies were given marketing funds. Mr. Steinmetz stated those agencies would be listed at the top of the search list. Ted Chittenden inquired regarding the cost for that service. David Steinmetz stated his understanding that the service would be free for non-profit agencies, although he was unsure whether the GCBVI would be considered non-profit. Ted Chittenden stated that more individuals attended the last Introduction to Blindness workshop, and if that continued, the database usage could increase. Janet Fisher stated she also wanted to ensure that individuals returned to the database. Ted Chittenden stated he thought that most individuals using the database were newly blind and had not considered that individuals would return to the database. Dean Colston stated he could create a post or a short video about the database which could be shared on his Linked In and Twitter pages, as well as the council social media pages. Ted Chittenden stated that would be helpful and appreciated.

Dean Colston stated the council Linked In page currently had 225 followers, which was an increase in 14 followers. Dean Colston stated the total number of views was down 62%, although the post impressions was up 231% and the reactions was up 800%. Dean Colston stated the page had one share, which was the article titled "Proposed Online Accessibility Act in US Congress is Bad for Digital Inclusion". Dean Colston noted that recently, the engagement rate ranged from 2.5%-19.51%, although most were on the

upper end. He added that overall, the content was above 2% engagement rate, which was the best metric for determining the quality and relevancy of the content. Dean Colston stated the page did not have any comments, although David Steinmetz's interaction on the page was helpful. David Steinmetz stated that committee members were doing a great job adding content to the page.

Committee Membership Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated that Michael Bailey was the Chair of the Verde Valley AzCB chapter and had not participated in an AzCB Board meeting since May. Ted Chittenden stated Michael Bailey had gone to Canada in the summer and might have decided to stay due to COVID-19 travel restrictions. Ted Chittenden stated he sent emails to Carlos Paraskevas using two email addresses, and both emails came back undeliverable. He noted that he would contact AzCB President, John McCann to inquire whether he had a different email address for Mr. Paraskevas. David Steinmetz stated he sent an email to Carlos Paraskevas inquiring whether he was still interested in participating on the committee, and the email did go through.

GCBVI Rules and Procedures Follow Up

This item was tabled.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, November 17, 2020, from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Agenda items are as follows:

- GCBVI Annual Report Discussion
- GCBVI Outreach Discussion
- Database/Social Media Discussion
- Committee Membership Discussion

Janet Fisher inquired whether the GCBVI continued to discuss the Strategic Plan. Ted Chittenden stated the GCBVI Chair had not expressed interest in working on the Strategic Plan activities. Janet Fisher inquired whether the committee had received any direction or areas the committee could be promoting. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could focus on reaching out to the general public in addition to the blindness community. Mr. Chittenden noted the Public Information Committee had worked with the AT and Employment Committees, although other committees had not requested assistance in promoting activities.

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

A call was made to the public with no response's forthcoming.

Adjournment of Meeting

Janet Fisher motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dean Colston seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.