

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
December 5, 2017

Members Present

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

Members Absent

David Steinmetz

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers, Admin. Assistant
*Teleconferenced

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Ted Chittenden called the meeting to order at 2:07 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 October 31, 2017 Meeting Minutes

Carlos Paraskevas moved to approve the minutes of the October 31, 2017 Public Information Committee meeting. Dan Martinez seconded the motion. Carlos Paraskevas requested that the minutes be corrected to reflect the correct name of the Mayor's Commission on Disability Issues. The committee approved the amended minutes by unanimous voice vote.

2017 VRATE Follow Up

Ted Chittenden stated he helped staff the council table at the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) during the morning until Amy Porterfield, GCBVI Chair, arrived. Dan Martinez stated that approximately 500 individuals attended the conference. Barbara McDonald stated that several members of the GCBVI presented and noted that Amy Porterfield encouraged individuals to report any accessibility issues to the GCBVI during the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee's presentation. Dan Martinez inquired whether individuals attending the conference expressed interest in the council or expressed concern about any issues. Ted Chittenden stated that some individuals stopped by the council table and

took information about the council. Lindsey Powers stated an individual expressed frustration with online school accessibility and individuals expressed frustration with transportation. Janet Fisher stated some individuals stopped at the table and inquired regarding the status of their GCBVI membership applications and one individual spoke to Amy Porterfield. Ted Chittenden stated that Amy Porterfield suggested that council members encourage individuals to join committees in order to get individuals involved with the council. Dan Martinez stated the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions had additional requirements for potential members, including DPS security checks, which would delay appointments.

Mr. Martinez stated that VRATE included several breakout sessions, which were well attended. He noted that he was not pleased with the keynote speaker, although the presentations were great. Dan Martinez stated that Carlos Paraskevas's presentation was well attended by teachers and counselors, although the ideal audience would have included students. Ted Chittenden stated he attended the Social Security Administration presentation, which was well attended. Ted Chittenden recommended that VRATE not include a keynote speaker in the future as the audience was only able to hear from one person during that time. Dan Martinez stated that keynote speakers could attract high profile individuals to attend VRATE, which was a benefit. Mr. Martinez stated that the VRATE Board would be changing as several members would not be returning to plan the next conference. Ted Chittenden inquired how individuals could volunteer to serve on the VRATE Board. Barbara McDonald stated that individuals would tell the VRATE Board why they were interested in joining the Board and that there could not be more than three individuals from one organization. Ms. McDonald stated individuals were typically recommended by others. Dan Martinez inquired whether the VRATE Board would accept emails from individuals interested in serving on the Board. Barbara McDonald stated the Board would ask for references for the individuals interested in participating on the VRATE Board. Ted Chittenden stated the VRATE Board might consider publicizing the process for becoming a member of the VRATE Board.

GCBVI Strategic Plan Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated that GCBVI council members met in August to develop the GCBVI Strategic Plan goals, and the Executive Committee assigned priorities and the committees responsible for completing those goals. Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee would serve as a support committee for any committees that required publication. Ted Chittenden stated that most of the outcomes would not be completed immediately, but would take time to complete. Ted Chittenden stated the

committee had already completed one of the tasks, which was to develop an accessibility resource page on EyeKnowAZ, and he thanked Dan Martinez and Sara Muth, Secretary of State, I.T. for their work in developing that page. Barbara McDonald inquired regarding the accountability reports that were due at each GCBVI Full Council meeting. Dan Martinez stated that each committee would be responsible for submitting two reports biannually and updates at each meeting on the progress towards completing the tasks.

Dan Martinez stated that under the Employment Category, the Public Information Committee was responsible for assisting the Employment Committee in the implementation of an ongoing employer education campaign. Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee could assist by publicizing the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event and potentially the video played at the GCBVI Full Council meeting. Dan Martinez inquired regarding the meaning on an employer education campaign. Dan Martinez stated the council did not typically educate unless the council was educating on diversity training or on assistive technology. Ted Chittenden stated the lead committee was the Employment Committee and the Public Information Committee would provide support on the outcome. Dan Martinez suggested the Public Information Committee begin working on the outcome. Ted Chittenden suggested the committee develop a pamphlet that included what blind employees could offer employers. Dan Martinez inquired regarding the message of the pamphlet. Ted Chittenden stated the message would be that blind and visually impaired individuals were great workers, and had the skills and tools to perform the job. Ted Chittenden stated he would develop an outline of a pamphlet and work with Carlos Paraskevas to complete the pamphlet. Dan Martinez stated the pamphlet should address the barriers that employers had regarding employing blind and visually impaired individuals. Ted Chittenden stated employers were concerned that blind and visually impaired individuals would not be able to read or obtain transportation, both of which could be resolved. Janet Fisher suggested that the pamphlet be distributed to the committee members prior to the next committee meeting so that committee members could review and provide feedback. Ms. Fisher stated that employers were also interested in the cost involved in providing accommodations for a blind or visually impaired individual. Dan Martinez stated that employers were driven by the Return on Investments (ROI) when hiring employees. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could contact the Employment Committee and request a mailing list of employers that the committee could send the pamphlet to. Ted Chittenden stated the committee should also consider the changes at the Federal level, such as the recent tax reform, and how the committee could recommend services in place of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services. Janet Fisher stated the pamphlet could include resources where individuals could receive technology and equipment.

Ted Chittenden stated under the Independent Living (IL) Category, the committee was responsible for providing assistance on completing the outcome: Under 55 ILB funding is established and sustained. Dan Martinez stated the committee would also be responsible for assisting with the outcome: Public service agencies receive regular feedback regarding accessibility. Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee should be aware of any comments from the community regarding accessibility issues. Janet Fisher inquired whether the committee would be responsible for warning businesses about accessibility issues prior to a lawsuit. Ms. Fisher inquired whether the committee would develop a "Did You Know" newsletter or reminders to check for website accessibility. Ted Chittenden stated his understanding that the outcome was aimed more towards government agencies. Dan Martinez agreed and noted that the GCBVI would be able to help government agencies to become compliant with accessibility laws.

Ted Chittenden stated under Council Integrity and Function, the committee would assist with the outcome: GCBVI is recognized as a critical council in Arizona that is equal to that of the State Rehabilitation Council for blind services. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could publicize to the state that the GCBVI represented the blind, visually impaired and deaf-blind communities. Mr. Chittenden noted that the Public Information Committee would potentially need to recruit more committee members in order to accomplish all of the Strategic Plan goals. Carlos Paraskevas suggested that council members encourage Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients to join the council. Ted Chittenden stated that he typically did not encourage VR clients to join the council, although he could when presenting at the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) Orientation to Blindness.

Ted Chittenden stated the committee would also be responsible for assisting in the outcome: GCBVI is recognized as an information and referral resource for both consumers and agencies and businesses that serve blind consumers. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could develop information promoting the EyeKnowAZ database. Dan Martinez suggested the committee review the current council brochure and whether the brochure identified the GCBVI as an information and referral source. Janet Fisher stated the GCBVI brochure stated the council "was a public information and referral source on blindness and deaf-blindness". Ms. Fisher stated the committee needed to identify methods for reaching individuals that did not know about the council or attend blindness conferences and events. Dan Martinez inquired whether the EyeKnowAZ database was publicized in the Arizona Braille and Talking Book Library newsletter and whether the information could be permanently featured in the newsletter. Janet Fisher stated the database was included in the newsletter several times and stated

that individuals were more likely to pay attention to information that was new or different. Dan Martinez suggested the committee find an individual that used the database and could recommend it to the community. Barbara McDonald stated she would try to find an individual that had used the database. Dan Martinez stated that Barbara McDonald could write something for the GCBVI Facebook page.

Ted Chittenden stated that the committee would be the only committee to complete the outcome: Public awareness of the GCBVI is raised and positive outcomes are common knowledge. Dan Martinez stated the committee should saturate the news with information about the council and the council's achievements. Ted Chittenden stated one of the outcomes included the need for a budget for the council, and the committee could use some of those funds to secure media spots.

Dan Martinez stated under the Employment Category, the committee could assist with the outcome: VR services are funded by utilizing all methods available. All blind Arizonans are receiving services, and Comprehensive Programs are available to all blind consumers. Dan Martinez stated he had recommended that RSA develop a ROI study, which would identify the value of VR services in reducing the costs of programs. Dan Martinez stated the committee could enlist the assistance of a college to perform the ROI study, which would highlight the benefit of the VR program. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the committee should begin working on the outcome. Dan Martinez stated the committee could review the process for developing a ROI. Barbara McDonald stated the document could include information on individuals that completed the VR program and became employed. Ted Chittenden stated the document should include specific amounts on the costs of VR and the amounts that those individuals paid back in taxes once employed. Ted Chittenden stated the council received some statistics at the GCBVI Full Council meetings such as the average wages earned by clients that became employed. Janet Fisher stated she was able to locate examples of ROI studies online, and noted the council could suggest that RSA conduct a similar study. Janet Fisher inquired whether the study would include information for one agency or be statewide. Dan Martinez stated the ROI would include information for the VR program, which would not include IL services.

Outreach for Council Events

This item was tabled.

GCBVI Outreach Materials Discussion

This item was tabled.

Public Involvement with GCBVI

This item was tabled.

Database Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated he noticed that the database listing for SAAVI was incorrect as the organization name had changed. Dan Martinez suggested the committee send emails to the organizations instructing the organizations to inform the committee of any changes. Carlos Paraskevas stated he had the contact information for the organizations and could request updates. Janet Fisher suggested the EyeKnowAZ include an attachment that individuals could print and share with other organizations or individuals.

Social Media Discussion

This item was tabled.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, January 30, 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
- Outreach for Council Events
- GCBVI Outreach Materials Discussion
- Public Involvement with GCBVI Discussion
- Database Discussion
- VRATE Discussion
- Social Media Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

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