

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Employment Committee Meeting Minutes**  
December 22, 2017

**Members Present**

Nikki Jeffords\*  
Terell Welch\*  
Kevin Foster\*  
Tanner Gers\*  
Jim Strohacker\*  
Jordan Moon\*

**Members Absent**

Bea Shapiro

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers, Admin. Assist.  
\*Teleconferenced

**Guests Absent**

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

Nikki Jeffords called the meeting to order at 8:32 am in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

**Approval of the December 4, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

Jim Strohacker motioned to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2017 meeting. Terell Welch seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Strategies for Inviting Employers**

Nikki Jeffords stated the Employment Committee members needed to continue to invite employers to attend the event. Ms. Jeffords stated she would follow up with a Human Resources (HR) contact from American Airlines. Nikki Jeffords stated she would also invite a HR professional from Bank of America. Tanner Gers stated he would be willing to follow up with any contacts as well.

Jordan Moon inquired whether the student internship with DES had been approved. Terell Welch stated the Scope of Work (SOW) had been approved and posted. Mr. Welch stated he would begin receiving the student applications and would choose 2-5 students each semester. Nikki Jeffords stated that the interns could assist with developing information packets that could be distributed at future E75 events. Tanner Gers stated the interns

could potentially shadow individuals working at different agencies. Terell Welch stated the SOW had been developed for the upcoming semester, although the committee could provide suggestions for modifications to the SOW for future semesters.

### **E75 Marketing Discussion**

Terell Welch stated he would modify the letter that could be distributed to potential employers. Mr. Welch noted the Department of Economic Security (DES) created another E75 video, which he had included in his email signature, which allowed individuals to play the short video. Jordan Moon suggested the committee provide information or handouts at the event as well. Nikki Jeffords stated the committee could have a table at the event with information, such as Blindness Myths.

Nikki Jeffords noted that the Employment Committee had discussed moving towards holding quarterly events and hold an event in April and at the end of the summer and focus on job ready candidates. Nikki Jeffords stated that the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) was considering offering different tracks at the next VRATE such as Student, Employment, and potentially a Corporate Track. Terell Welch suggested the committee provide information regarding upcoming E75 quarterly events at the E75 event.

### **E75 Speakers/Emcee Discussion**

Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Kevin Foster would be willing to speak at the E75 Diversity Builder Award Event. Kevin Foster stated he would be willing to speak at the event. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Tucson Electric Power (TEP) had agreed to speak at the event. Terell Welch stated that TEP had agreed to speak at the event and would potentially sponsor the event. Nikki Jeffords inquired who would be the first speaker at the event. Terell Welch inquired whether the event would still have a keynote speaker. Nikki Jeffords stated her understanding that the event would not have a keynote speaker, but would have three speakers. Jim Strohacker stated the event could have a keynote speaker, which would speak last. Nikki Jeffords stated the event needed to start at 11:00 am and end by 12:30 pm. Jim Strohacker inquired how long each speaker should speak at the event. Nikki Jeffords suggested each speaker be given about 15-20 minutes to speak. Ms. Jeffords noted the overall goal was to educate the employers on hiring blind and visually impaired individuals.

Nikki Jeffords stated that Kevin Foster could start with the welcome at the event and talk about his personal experience. Tanner Gers suggested the committee identify the message that the committee wanted to convey to the

employers and what to consider when hiring blind and visually impaired individuals. Jim Strohacker inquired whether the committee should turn off the lights during the event to give individuals an idea of vision loss. Tanner Gers recommended that the committee not do anything to highlight an individual's limitations. Kevin Foster stated he would provide a professional presentation, in which he would discuss his long career with Motorola Solutions and tie his presentation back to the employment of blind and visually impaired individuals. Nikki Jeffords stated that Kevin Foster could speak for about 15 minutes and then the CEO of TEP and Marc Ashton, Foundations for Blind Children (FBC) could speak. Terell Welch inquired whether Kevin Foster would introduce Marc Ashton, and acknowledge Marc Ashton's recent award. Nikki Jeffords stated then the committee could invite individuals to eat and show the E75 video. Tanner Gers suggested the awards be presented during the lunch and the keynote speaker could speak at the end of the event. Terell Welch inquired whether he should provide an invocation before the meal. Nikki Jeffords stated that Terell Welch could provide the invocation, which would signify that attendees could begin lunch. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether Marc Ashton should present the awards, with some members of the Employment Committee. Terell Welch stated that he could recognize the Employment Committee members after the invocation and then play the E75 event. Tanner Gers suggested that a sighted individual be able to assist with the managing the overall program. Nikki Jeffords suggested that Amy Porterfield present the awards. Jordan Moon stated that Amy Porterfield could be seated near the front of the room and be able to present the awards at the appropriate time. Jordan Moon suggested that Marc Ashton introduce the CEO for TEP. Nikki Jeffords stated that Terell Welch would introduce Amy Porterfield, who would present the E75 Diversity Builder Awards and then Marc Ashton would introduce TEP. Jordan Moon suggested that Nikki Jeffords stand at the front and shake the employers' hands with Amy Porterfield. Ms. Jeffords noted that the Ability 360 Conference Room would offer better acoustics during the event than the previous event location. Nikki Jeffords suggested that Terell Welch remain at the podium to hand the awards to the employers and oversee the overall award presentation. Jordan Moon suggested that the committee invite someone to take pictures of the event. Nikki Jeffords suggested that Jillian Seamans, DES Public Information Officer be invited to take pictures. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether one of the speakers should provide closing remarks. Terell Welch suggested that Kevin Foster provide some closing remarks.

## **E75 Program Development Discussion**

Nikki Jeffords stated that the Employment Committee had previously discussed holding a taste testing with the Phoenix Rescue Mission, although she recommended that the committee offer the same meal options as the previous year. Nikki Jeffords inquired whether the event planner had agreed to assist with planning for the event. Lindsey Powers stated she had been in contact with the event planner, and had started planning for the event. Terell Welch inquired whether the event planner would be able to attend the event and act as the program manager. Lindsey Powers stated the event planner was unsure whether she would be able to attend the event. Terell Welch stated he would be willing to act as the program manager and ensure the event was following the appropriate timeline.

Nikki Jeffords stated the event would have assigned seating as during the previous events. Ms. Jeffords noted that Employment Committee members could be placed at different tables throughout the event.

### **Agenda and Date for Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Employment Committee would be on January 5, 2018 from 11:30-12:30 pm in the RSA Conference Room, Phoenix, AZ. Agenda items are as follows:

- Strategies to Invite Employers
- E75 Marketing Discussion
- E75 Program Development Discussion
- Employment Committee OOS recommendations
- E75/Employment Committee Internship Discussion

Nikki Jeffords suggested at the next meeting, the committee discuss potentially making recommendations to the GCBVI regarding the state's decision to impose an Order of Selection (OOS) for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients returning for services. Ms. Jeffords noted that some VR clients had employment but required new technology and would be required to be on the OOS, which resulted in negative job retention rates. Nikki Jeffords stated the Employment Committee could make the recommendation to the GCBVI, which could then make the recommendation to RSA. Jordan Moon suggested that the blindness consumer groups offer the same recommendation to RSA.

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Public Comment**

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

**Adjournment of Meeting**

Tanner Gers motioned to adjourn the meeting. Kevin Foster seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:23 a.m.