

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**  
February 7, 2022

**Attendees**

**Members Present**

Bob Kresmer, Chair  
Amy Porterfield  
Nathan Pullen  
Bea Shapiro  
Ted Chittenden  
David Steinmetz

**Members Absent**

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

**Guests Present**

John McCann

**Call to Order and Introductions**

Bob Kresmer, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

**Approval of August 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Amy Porterfield moved to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2021 Executive Committee meeting. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**Executive Committee Member Update**

Amy Porterfield stated that Ted Chittenden brought forward a concern regarding a potential cut to education funding, which could affect the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB). Ms. Porterfield noted that ASDB received separate funding as a state agency, although the council should continue to monitor the situation in the event that special education programs experienced a budget decrease. Amy Porterfield stated

that SB 1487 proposed an increase of \$500,000 for the Older Independent Living Blind Program. Amy Porterfield stated the bill had support, although the council should meet with Christina Corieri, Senior Policy Advisor to the Governor, so she would have information to discuss with the Governor. Ted Chittenden stated he reviewed the draft recommendation letter to the Governor and inquired regarding number 7 and noted that it would not matter whether the Centers for Independent Living (CIL)s or RSA received the funding. Amy Porterfield stated the CILs had a separate financial structure compared to RSA, and RSA did not currently have a mechanism to provide IL services to individuals under 55. Amy Porterfield stated she would review number 7 or remove it if necessary. Bob Kresmer inquired whether the Executive Committee agreed that he should meet with Ms. Corieri or if the Full Council should vote on the matter. Amy Porterfield stated that Bob Kresmer, as the GCBVI Chair, could meet with Christina Corieri at any time. The committee members agreed that Bob Kresmer could meet with Ms. Corieri on behalf of the council.

Amy Porterfield stated the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) proposed Legislation that would allow blind or print disabled Arizonans to vote in the same manner as military members, which would allow individuals to vote online in lieu of a print ballot. Ms. Porterfield stated a bill was drafted, which had vague language, and another stand-alone bill was drafted, although it had challenges. Amy Porterfield stated the second bill would create barriers to blind or print disabled individuals to vote. Ted Chittenden stated the bill would allow towns with 20,000 or more individuals to vote using voting machines. Mr. Chittenden stated that he performed a research of various Arizona towns, and noted that a town like Show Low, had 12,000 individuals, and residents there would not be able to vote using a voting machine. Ted Chittenden stated that individuals would then need to request a Braille ballot, receive it, and send it back within the required timeframe to be counted. Amy Porterfield agreed and stated the council could cite their concerns regarding the barriers that would be created so the recommendations would be recorded. Ted Chittenden agreed that the council could cite their concerns and identify the position of the Governor's office.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether any committee Chairs would like to provide reports on their committees. Nathan Pullen stated the Employment Committee was in the process of planning an E75 event for early or late Spring. Bea Shapiro stated the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee offered one presentation through the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) the previous week and would offer the second presentation as well. Ms. Shapiro stated the committee would also offer a presentation for blindness professionals at the end of the month and would offer Continuing Education Units (CEU)s for attendees. Bea Shapiro stated her understanding that Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) would be rescheduled for April, and

presenters would be able to provide their presentations at that time. Ted Chittenden stated the Independent Living (IL) Committee would meet the following week, and he hoped to receive an update from a workgroup that was working on virtual IL services Best Practices. David Steinmetz stated the Public Information Committee had not met recently, although Janet Fisher had announced her upcoming retirement, and the committee would be recruiting additional members. Ted Chittenden noted the Public Information Committee was successful in completing the GCBVI Annual Report and submitting it. Bob Kresmer stated there were no updates from the Education Committee and noted that ASDB was experiencing a shortage of bus drivers and staff, although they continued with their recruitment efforts. Bob Kresmer stated that RSA was holding presentations for individuals interested in participating in the Summer Youth Transition Program, and that attendance for those presentations was good. Bob Kresmer stated that council members should have received the sad announcement regarding Terri Hedgpeth's passing and inquired whether there were any updates from her family. Bea Shapiro stated she had not heard any more news from her family, but she would share any news with the council.

### **Officer Elections Discussion**

Bob Kresmer stated the Full Council would be voting for the Vice Chair position at the next meeting and noted that David Steinmetz had agreed to run for the position again. Mr. Kresmer inquired whether the Executive Committee members would like to put forth other nominations. Ted Chittenden motioned that David Steinmetz be put forth as a nomination for the Vice Chair position at the next Full Council meeting. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

### **Council Membership Discussion**

This item was tabled.

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

The next meeting date of the Executive Committee would be determined.

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Public Comment**

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

### **Adjournment of Meeting**

Amy Porterfield motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ted Chittenden seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 pm.

