

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2021

Members Present

David Steinmetz
Ted Chittenden
Dean Colston
Janet Fisher

Members Absent

Michael Bailey

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Nancy Grayson

Call to Order and Introductions

David Steinmetz called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of the November 17, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Janet Fisher moved to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2020 Public Information Committee meeting. Dean Colston seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

GCBVI Outreach Discussion

Janet Fisher inquired whether council members would be attending the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB) State Conference in April. David Steinmetz stated he had not heard that AzCB would have exhibitors at their event, although he could follow up on that. Dean Colston stated the AzCB was accepting sponsors for the event, although he could inquire whether the conference would have exhibitors. Janet Fisher stated the AzCB State Conference would be held April 16th via Zoom and the keynote speaker was Joel Snyder. Mr. Steinmetz stated he had not heard about the upcoming National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Conference that was scheduled for May. David Steinmetz stated the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) conference was scheduled for November 19th,

which would be the Silver Anniversary of the event. David Steinmetz stated the VRATE Board was in the process of obtaining a keynote speaker and was deciding whether the event would hold a virtual exhibit hall. He noted that exhibitors at the previous event did not receive many visitors and he would provide any updates to the committee. Ted Chittenden stated the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) might hold their conference during the summer. Janet Fisher stated the AzTAP website did not include information about the upcoming event yet.

Nancy Grayson stated the council and committee members might be interested in the short film, *Feeling Through*, which had been nominated for an Oscar. Ms. Grayson stated the lead actor was deaf-blind, although the blind and visually impaired populations might find the film interesting as well. David Steinmetz agreed that the council could share information regarding the film

Database/Social Media Discussion

David Steinmetz stated the council had a Linked In and Facebook page where Dean Colston and Lindsey Powers posted information relevant to blind and visually impaired individuals and individuals with combined vision and hearing loss (CVHL). Dean Colston stated he created the council Linked In page about 6-8 months prior, which currently had 308 followers. David Steinmetz stated the council had also developed the EyeKnow.AZ database, where individuals could search for different topics and resources for blind and visually impaired individuals and individuals with CVHL. Janet Fisher stated the database was hosted by the Secretary of State's office and was developed with assistance from IT staff, Sarah Muth. Ms. Fisher stated the EyeKnow.AZ database's statistics from February were not the highest, although 57 individuals visited the site, there were 62 sessions on the site, individuals visited just over 2 pages and spent about 1.5 minutes on the site. Janet Fisher stated individuals could print the entire directory or download the directory if they wanted to have a copy of the resource. Janet Fisher noted the EyeKnow.AZ database was developed from the Resource Directory that was distributed to new Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) clients, which was updated every other year. She noted that a notice went out to the organizations included in the directory requesting that they update their information to ensure the information remained current. David Steinmetz stated the committee would welcome any suggestions from Nancy Grayson, if there were any additional resources that should be included in the database. Nancy Grayson stated the database could include the iCanConnect website, which offered Assistive Technology (AT) to individuals with low vision or CVHL to individuals that qualified. Dean Colston stated he posted his EyeKnow.AZ video on the council Linked In page in an effort to

increase traffic to the database. Janet Fisher stated she could check the analytics to see whether there was an increase in traffic due to Dean Colston's post.

Committee Membership Discussion

David Steinmetz stated that Nancy Grayson would be welcome to participate on the Public Information Committee. Mr. Steinmetz stated that Carlos Paraskevas was back at the Arizona Industries for the Blind (AIB) and he would inquire whether he was interested in participating on the committee. David Steinmetz stated that Dr. Grandela had also expressed interest in participating on some of the committees as well.

Nancy Grayson stated that VR clients would benefit from knowing about resources such as the GCBVI and the committees. David Steinmetz inquired whether Ms. Grayson had attending an Orientation as a new VR client where clients received information regarding the comprehensive blindness program. Nancy Grayson stated she had not attended an Orientation. David Steinmetz stated that VR offered an Orientation to new VR clients where representatives from consumer groups such as the AzCB and the NFBA and the GCBVI provided presentations to the clients. David Steinmetz stated the next Orientation would be on March 10th, and Ms. Grayson could contact Sue Kay Kneifel regarding information about that Orientation. David Steinmetz stated Nancy Grayson would also be welcome to attend a GCBVI Full Council meeting and discuss her experiences with VR during the Call to the Public at the end of the meeting.

Strategic Plan Discussion

David Steinmetz stated the GCBVI Strategic Plan was developed for 2017-2021 and identified the key areas where the Public Information Committee could gather information and publicize events. Janet Fisher stated her understanding that the committee had completed most of the activities and had increased awareness of the council at events and conferences. David Steinmetz agreed, and noted the committee was assigned to support other committees in some of their activities. David Steinmetz stated the committee should just be aware any committee goals and how to assist other committees in their activities. Janet Fisher inquired whether the council would be developing a new Strategic Plan. David Steinmetz stated Bob Kresmer had not indicated the council would develop a new Strategic Plan, although that would be a good question at the next Full Council meeting.

Janet Fisher inquired when the committee would begin planning for the next Annual Report. David Steinmetz stated he would remind Committee Chairs at

the next Full Council meeting that the committee would be requesting reports for the Annual Report. Janet Fisher suggested that Committee Chairs be given a template that could assist them in developing their reports. David Steinmetz stated the committee could aid committees for developing their reports. Janet Fisher inquired whether there would be as many client success stories due to the pandemic. David Steinmetz stated he knew of client success stories from a provider, and he would request that those stories be included in the Annual Report.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Monday, May 24, 2021, from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Agenda items are as follows:

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

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

Nancy Grayson inquired whether she would need to apply to participate on the Public Information Committee. David Steinmetz stated that Nancy Grayson could participate on any of the committees as a community member, although she would need to apply for GCBVI membership if she was interested in being a council member.

Adjournment of Meeting

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