

# **Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**

## **Legislative and Public Policy Committee Meeting Minutes**

April 3, 2025

### **Attendance**

#### **Members Present**

Amy Porterfield, Chair  
Bob Kresmer  
Ed House  
Jonathan Pringle

#### **Members Absent**

Donald Porterfield  
John McCann

#### **Guests Present**

Ted Vogt

#### **Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

### **Minutes**

#### **Call to Order and Introductions**

Amy Porterfield, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05 am. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

#### **Call to the Public**

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

#### **Approval of August 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

Bob Kresmer motioned to approve August 14, 2023 minutes. Jonathan Pringle seconded the motion. The motion was passed by unanimous voice vote.

## Legislative Updates

Amy Porterfield invited Ted Vogt to attend the meeting and to provide any updates regarding SB 1130. Ted Vogt stated he had been working with the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) regarding legislative efforts such as the additional funding for the Older Individuals who are Blind (OIB) program. Mr. Vogt stated the bill was currently co-sponsored and had moved through the House Appropriations with unanimous votes. He noted it would likely go through a hearing and would be negotiated into the total budget. Amy Porterfield stated the bill would be for a one-time addition of one million to the OIB program, and the council could advocate for continual funding. Ted Vogt stated he met with the Department of Economic Security (DES) the previous year to discuss the additional funding in which DES expressed the challenge of hiring and retaining staff although they were interested in growing the program. Amy Porterfield stated she had been reviewing reports from other states with the same program and noted that other states had more outreach services. She added that other states seemed to process assessments quickly, although she was unsure whether the providers were performing the assessments. Ms. Porterfield stated that SAAVI Services for the Blind was able to provide more services to individuals through group services. Ed House stated that if Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) was granted additional funding, the agency might still struggle to provide services with limited staff. Ted Vogt stated that if the council could identify rules that slowed down the process, he could mention those during his next meeting with DES. Amy Porterfield agreed and noted that the provider contracts would be under Knowledge Services, and she was unsure how that could change the process also. Bob Kresmer stated that Rehabilitation Technicians would receive the applications, and it could take time for the applications to be processed by VR staff.

Jonathan Pringle noted his recollection that VR would previously offer Introduction to Blindness orientations. Amy Porterfield stated VR did offer Introduction to Blindness orientations. She noted the orientations had been shortened and were offered virtually, although they were not required for clients to attend. Ted Vogt inquired whether Jonathan Pringle felt that other states were doing some things better. Jonathan Pringle stated he covered Arizona, Utah, Colorado, and North and South Dakota. Mr. Pringle noted that Colorado did have a more robust outreach program and Utah's Transition Youth Program was more developed. Amy Porterfield inquired whether the Committee should reach out to the Governor's Office regarding the bill. Ted Vogt stated that it be worth contacting the Governor's Office with an update on SB 1130. Ed House inquired whether the one-time allocation would end, or if the funds could be renewed. Ted Vogt stated it would be a one-time allocation for Fiscal Year 2026. Ed House stated that if RSA was granted the

additional funds, it could take time for additional staff to be hired. Amy Porterfield agreed and noted that providers might need to assist if needed.

### **Policy Discussion**

Amy Porterfield stated that council members had received information regarding updated policies. Lindsey Powers reviewed the Referral, Orientation, Intake Interview and Application policy. Amy Porterfield stated there were minimal changes to the policy. Lindsey Powers reviewed the Supported Employment IPE Development policy. Amy Porterfield stated the timeline had changed, which was a favorable amendment.

### **Meeting Date and Adjournment**

The next meeting of the Legislative and Public Policy Committee will be April 17th. Agenda items are as follows:

- Legislative Updates
- Policy Discussion

Bob Kresmer moved to adjourn the meeting. Jonathan Pringle seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 10:05 am.