

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)**  
**Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes**  
May 5, 2020

**Members Present**

Ted Chittenden  
Janet Fisher  
David Steinmetz  
Dean Colston  
Michael Bailey

**Members Absent**

**Staff Present**

Lindsey Powers

**Guests Present**

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**Call to Order and Introductions**

Ted Chittenden called the meeting to order at 2:02 pm. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

**Approval of March 3, 2020 Meeting Minutes**

Dean Colston moved to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2020 Public Information Committee meeting. David Steinmetz seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

**GCBVI Annual Report Discussion**

Ted Chittenden stated that Michael Bailey received client success stories from the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC). Mr. Chittenden stated he requested success stories at the GCBVI Executive Committee meeting and noted that Bob Kresmer indicated he knew of a potential success story. Ted Chittenden stated he informed the Executive Committee members that he would like to receive the success stories by the July Full Council meeting, to allow Committee Chairs to include any July activities in their reports. Ted Chittenden stated he would remind the council members to submit their reports at the upcoming Full Council meeting as well. David Steinmetz inquired whether the Annual Report would include a report from the council Chair as well. Ted Chittenden stated he would make that request to Mr. Kresmer.

## **GCBVI Outreach Discussion**

Ted Chittenden stated the Arizona Technology Access Program (AzTAP) Conference scheduled for June had been cancelled due to COVID 19. Mr. Chittenden stated that he had heard the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) would potentially be cancelled also. David Steinmetz stated the VRATE Board continued to plan for the event but would include an addendum with the Glendale Civic Center in case the conference was cancelled due to the pandemic. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the VRATE Board had indicated the types of presentations they would like to see from the council. David Steinmetz stated he was unsure whether that committee had discussed speakers, although Dan Martinez would be able to offer more information. Ted Chittenden stated he would contact Mr. Martinez regarding the presentations. Ted Chittenden stated he had not been contacted regarding Rehabilitation Services Administration's (RSA) Introduction to Blindness Workshops and heard the agency was in the process of revamping the workshops. David Steinmetz stated RSA was meeting with the comprehensive service providers weekly to discuss new clients. Mr. Steinmetz stated that Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors (VRC) were providing information regarding the comprehensive programs to the clients and the clients were responsible for contacting the providers for more information. David Steinmetz stated there was also discussion about recording the Individual Plan for Employment (IPE) workshops and sending those recordings to the clients. He noted that on Day 2, when clients would normally visit the comprehensive service providers, the clients could attend a conference call with the providers. Ted Chittenden inquired whether David Steinmetz would be able to provide an update regarding the workshops at the upcoming Full Council meeting. David Steinmetz stated he or Brian Dulude would be able to provide that update.

## **Database Discussion**

Ted Chittenden stated that according to the statistics, the EyeKnowAZ database received more traffic in April compared to previous months. Janet Fisher stated the search results that did not yield results included searches for organizations in other states. Ms. Fisher noted that some of those searches would have been more appropriate as a Google search and inquired whether the committee should change the database to accommodate the users. Ted Chittenden stated that some users might be searching for incorrect terms or spelling the organization names incorrectly. Ted Chittenden stated that Lindsey Powers had agreed to update the database and inquired how that was progressing. Lindsey Powers stated Sara Muth, Secretary of State IT, provided a contact list of all the organizations, which

she used to send out an email to all organizations in the database. Lindsey Powers stated some emails came back undelivered and several organizations responded with information to update their information in the database. Ms. Powers noted that upon further research, some organizations' websites were no longer listed. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the committee should consider removing the organizations that did not have current contacts or websites. Janet Fisher suggested Lindsey Powers share the list of organizations without contacts with the committee members, who could perform further research.

### **Committee Membership Discussion**

Ted Chittenden stated he spoke to Jordan Moon, who had previously expressed interest in joining the committee, but had not attended a meeting. Mr. Chittenden inquired whether the committee members knew of any other potential committee members. The committee members did not know of any potential committee members.

### **Social Media Discussion**

Ted Chittenden stated the GCBVI Facebook usage statistics had decreased and noted that he would continue to encourage council members to interact with the account. David Steinmetz stated the council page could continue to Like and Share posts from other organizations. Ted Chittenden inquired regarding the council Linked In page. Dean Colston stated the council Linked In page did not have a lot of activity and he noted that he could add comments to the page to increase interaction on the page. Ted Chittenden stated that Nathan Pullen had indicated the Employment Committee was not planning to hold an employment event in the spring, but would consider holding an event in late summer, which could be added to the Linked In page. Dean Colston inquired whether the Linked In page could include articles related to employment and vision loss. David Steinmetz stated the council Linked In page could include content related to employment, education, or Assistive Technology (AT), although he would advise against any information related to research or treatment. Dean Colston stated he wrote an article on the 6 Tips for Hiring Managers and inquired whether that would be appropriate to share. Janet Fisher stated the committee could also consider sharing council brochures, such as the brochure regarding employment of blind and visually impaired individuals, or the GCBVI brochure that was shared at conferences. Ted Chittenden recommended that any articles shared on the Linked In page be professionally written. David Steinmetz inquired whether the committee should request permission from the council before including certain articles on the Linked In page. David Steinmetz noted that when Dan Martinez and Carlos Paraskevas wrote

the Essential Employment White Paper, Mr. Martinez requested approval to disseminate the information as a representative of the council. Ted Chittenden suggested Dean Colston contact Bob Kresmer and request permission to post the article on the council Linked In page. Dean Colston stated he would forward the article to Mr. Chittenden or Ms. Powers to be sent to Bob Kresmer.

## **GCBVI Training Discussion**

Ted Chittenden stated that some of the committee members were new, and he wanted to share some of the rules and activities of the council. Ted Chittenden stated the GCBVI was created in May of 1992 by Governor Symington. He noted the mission of the council was to ensure that the specialized needs of blind and visually impaired Arizonans were addressed effectively. Ted Chittenden stated the council was responsible for advising the Governor and the Legislature on methods that would allow blind and visually impaired individuals to live independent lives. Ted Chittenden stated the council served at the pleasure of the Governor and would therefore only support items the Governor supported or was neutral on. He noted that if the Governor opposed an item, the council could not support it, although council members could advocate through a consumer group. Ted Chittenden stated the council also followed Open Meeting Law, which required that all meeting agendas be posted 24 hours prior to a meeting. He noted the meeting laws also allowed members from the public to attend meetings, although they were not permitted to speak until the Call to the Public, in which the council was not required to respond to the public comment, but could place the item on a future agenda. Ted Chittenden stated the council used to follow Robert's Rules of Order, until Dan Martinez found Rosenberg's Rules, which were more appropriate for small groups. Ted Chittenden stated that Rosenberg's Rules allowed the Chair the authority to create a motion without asking a council member to make the motion. Ted Chittenden stated that Janet Fisher and Jim LaMay were Ex-Oficio members, and were not allowed to vote, although they could still discuss items during meetings. Ted Chittenden stated that during his time on the council, the council did not often formally vote on items, but would come to a consensus. Dean Colston inquired whether all the council members met in person, or whether they could meet over the phone. Ted Chittenden stated that council members were permitted to call into meetings if they were unable to meet in person.

Ted Chittenden stated the council could advise on services provided by VR. He noted that while transportation was an issue with blind and visually impaired individuals, the funding was controlled by the cities, and was therefore not under the purview of the council. Ted Chittenden stated that

consumer groups operated independently of the council and could address those issues. Ted Chittenden stated that when council members attended conferences and events, council members could offer general information about the council but could not offer an official declaration of the council. He noted the GCBVI Chair could offer an official position of the council or could designate another council member to offer that information. Ted Chittenden cautioned committee members from engaging in activities such as calling into talk shows and mentioning the council, which could have negative effects. Dean Colston inquired whether the council was seeking specific skill sets from potential council members. Ted Chittenden stated the council was looking for individuals with knowledge of politics, the legal framework of blindness, and education. Ted Chittenden stated his understanding that most of the council positions were filled with the exception of a National Federation of the Blind (NFB) representative, 2 members from the Blinded Veterans Association, and a parent of a blind or visually impaired child. David Steinmetz stated the GCBVI application included a Skills Matrix, which would help gauge the individual's experience in communication, writing, and knowledge of VR. Ted Chittenden stated the council positions were typically staggered, although his and George Martinez's terms ended at the same time, and they were both representatives of the Arizona Council of the Blind (AzCB). Ted Chittenden noted that Jim LaMay would be resigning in September, and he was the current Chair of the Independent Living (IL) Committee. Ted Chittenden stated that while the committees could be composed of council and non-council members, the Chair of the committees had to be a council member. Mr. Chittenden stated that the only council member on the IL Committee was George Martinez, who could potentially Chair that committee.

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

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, July 21, 2020, from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Agenda items are as follows:

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

### **Announcements**

There were no announcements.

## **Public Comment**

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

## **Adjournment of Meeting**

Dean Colston moved to adjourn the meeting; Michael Bailey seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:18 pm.