

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
DeafBlind Committee Meeting Minutes
June 8, 2022

Members Present

Andrew Cohen, Co-Chair
Jonathan Pringle, Co-Chair
Megan Mogan
Sue Kay Kneifel
Mary Hartle

Members Absent

Julie Stylinski
Virginia Thompson

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Terry Hayes, ASL Interpreter
Melanie Anania, ASL Interpreter
Brian Dulude
Bob Kresmer
Adam Bailey

Call to Order and Introductions

Andrew Cohen, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 pm. Introductions were made, and a quorum was present.

Approval of February 16, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Bob Kresmer moved to approve the minutes of the February 16, 2022 Committee on Deaf-Blind Issues meeting. Megan Mogan seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by majority voice vote.

Public Comment

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

Chair Report

Jonathan Pringle stated that he had accepted a promotion as the Regional Representative for Region 8 of the Helen Keller National Center (HKNC). Mr. Pringle stated that HKNC had modified the regions and that Arizona was previously under Region 9. Jonathan Pringle stated that Julie Stylinski and Virginia Thompson had indicated that they would be unable to attend the meeting and inquired whether anyone had contacted someone at the Valley Center for the Deaf (VCD). Lindsey Powers stated that she was given a contact at VCD and could invite to the next meeting if the committee would prefer. Andrew Cohen stated the DB Committee would meet quarterly and the 1st and 3rd meetings would cover Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Legislative issues, and the 2nd and 4th meetings would focus on the community and advocacy issues.

Bob Kresmer inquired whether Brian Dulude could give a brief update regarding the DB services. Brian Dulude stated that as of March 31st, the statistics were:

The total number of individuals in VR was 46

The average number of days from application to eligibility was 49.4

The eligibility compliance was 100%

The number of new plans written was 21

The average number of days from eligibility to IPE implementation was 160.9

The IPE implementation compliance within 90 days was 75%

The highest hourly wage of successful employment outcomes was \$13.48

The number of clients placed in employment was 3

The number of clients closed successfully was 2

Adam Bailey inquired regarding the types of employment that individuals were being placed into and whether the hourly wage was typical of clients. Brian Dulude stated he did not have the information regarding the types of employment that individuals obtained. Mr. Dulude noted that the wages varied according to the type of employment or the work experience of the individual. Sue Kay Kneifel stated that if the DB Committee could let her and Brian Dulude know the type of information they were interested in, she and Mr. Dulude request that information. Brian Dulude noted that the DB population was small, and SBVID always wanted to maintain clients' confidentiality regarding individual's employment, although the Committee could find ways to share that information. Bob Kresmer inquired whether SBVID had the number of individuals that were participating in higher education. Sue Kay Kneifel stated she did not have that information, but she could request it from the Data Unit. Jonathan Pringle stated the HKNC was

interested in working with the AZ DeafBlind Project to identify what is meant as DB and to identify individuals in the community.

Andrew Cohen stated that DB individuals in the community had difficulty finding other DB individuals and inquired whether VR/SBVID offered any social or networking opportunities for the community. Mary Hartle stated the DB Community Group met once a month and would sometimes meet for lunch and activities. Ms. Hartle stated the President of that group could potentially attend a meeting and provide an update. Mary Hartle stated there was also the DB Retreat for individuals that were interested. Andrew Cohen stated his understanding that the President of the DB Community Group would be invited to attend the 4th meeting to provide an update. Mr. Cohen added that the DB Retreat would occur in July for one week, and was open to anyone, although it was currently full.

Usher Coalition Update

Adam Bailey stated the Usher Coalition was currently participating in family outreach efforts and would be participating in a conference in Austin, TX the first week of July. Mr. Bailey noted the conference would discuss genetic research regarding a cure for Usher's Syndrome as well as tactile signing. Megan Mogan stated the conference would be held virtually also if anyone was unable to travel and individuals could send their accessibility needs prior to the conference. Jonathan Pringle stated the HKNC recently met with the leadership at the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and Blind (ASDB) and discussed the mandate that children with recognizable hearing loss would be genetically tested for Usher's Syndrome.

NFB Update

Bob Kresmer stated the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) would hold their Annual Conference in New Orleans. Mr. Kresmer stated the DB Committee would also meet during that time, and they typically had a good turnout. Bob Kresmer stated anyone could learn more about the Conference by going to the NFB website at www.nfb.org and scroll down to the bottom to the lists of the associations, which included information about the DB Association and the Officers. Bob Kresmer noted that Mary Hartle had been a member of the NFB for a long time and could also offer information about the organization. Jonathan Pringle stated the HKNC also had a very active DB list serve and individuals were encouraged to check it out.

DeafBlind Connections in AZ Update

Mary Hartle stated the DeafBlind Connections in Arizona had been dissolved in 2019 and was no longer active.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meetings of the DB Committee were scheduled for August 17th. Agenda items are as follows:

- ACBVI/iCanConnect Update
- VR/SBVID/OIB Report
- AHCCCS/ALTCS Update
- SAAVI Services for the Blind Update
- FBC Update
- VCD Update

Announcements

Jonathan Pringle stated that HKNC was actively recruiting for the DB Employment Specialist position. Jonathan Pringle stated that he had met with representatives from Utah, which offered a SSP program that was sponsored differently from Arizona. He noted that he would also be going to Colorado to discuss their SSP program and would be presenting at the Association for People Supporting Employment First Conference. Jonathan Pringle stated that he would be working towards development of a Youth Services Coordinator to work with the increasing number of Transition age youth.

Mary Hartle inquired whether there were any Legislative updates. Bob Kresmer stated the potential bill to increase the Independent Living Blind (ILB) funding had failed. Mr. Kresmer noted that a bill had passed that would allow blind, visually impaired, or print disabled to vote online similar to military or citizens that were abroad.

Adjournment of Meeting

Bob Kresmer motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mary Hartle seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 p.m.