

**Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Public Information Committee Meeting Minutes
July 21, 2020**

Members Present

Ted Chittenden
Janet Fisher
David Steinmetz
Dean Colston

Members Absent

Michael Bailey

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Call to Order and Introductions

Ted Chittenden called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm. Introductions were made and a quorum was present.

Approval of May 5, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Dean Colston moved to approve the minutes of the May 5, 2020 Public Information Committee meeting. Janet Fisher seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

GCBVI Annual Report Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated he developed a draft Public Information Committee report, which was shared with committee members. Mr. Chittenden stated the Independent Living (IL) Committee report was also distributed to committee members for review. David Steinmetz stated he reviewed the IL Committee report, which was written well. Ted Chittenden stated the committee reports could be limited to 1-2 pages, although some reports were longer. Ted Chittenden stated the committee received success stories from the Foundation for Blind Children (FBC) and the Arizona Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired (ACBVI). Ted Chittenden inquired if committee members had received success stories from SAAVI Services for the Blind or Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Lindsey Powers stated she requested a report from Brian Dulude but had not received it yet. Ted Chittenden stated

that Lindsey Powers sent reminders to the Committee Chairs as well as to Bob Kresmer for a GCBVI Chair Report for the Annual Report. Ted Chittenden stated that Dan Martinez had included a GCBVI summary at the beginning of the previous Annual Report, which could be included in the current report as well. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Dean Colston would be willing to begin drafting the GCBVI Annual Report with the reports and success stories received thus far. Dean Colston stated he would be willing to begin drafting the report. Ted Chittenden stated the Annual Report would typically include a page for each committee report and the success stories. Janet Fisher inquired whether the end of the Public Information Committee report could have a more uplifting tone and indicate the committee would work to support virtual connections due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ted Chittenden agreed and noted that he did not include a conclusion, which would summarize the committee's goals for the next year. Janet Fisher stated she did like the last sentence of the report. Ted Chittenden stated he had requested all committee reports by August 21st, which was the date of the next GCBVI Full Council meeting. He suggested the committee meet the following week to discuss the final reports and any new information to be included in the report.

GCBVI Outreach Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated his understanding that Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) would potentially be held as a virtual conference. David Steinmetz stated the VRATE Board met with a web hosting company that could run the conference behind the scenes, although the cost for that service was quite expensive. Mr. Steinmetz stated the Board was trying to identify the primary tracks that would be presented as well as speakers for the conference. Ted Chittenden stated the Assistive Technology (AT) Committee could provide a presentation if the VRATE Board so desired. Ted Chittenden stated Beverly Reghabi, who had overseen the Introduction to Blindness workshops, had retired, and the position had not been filled yet. Ted Chittenden stated he was unsure whether the workshops would continue. David Steinmetz stated RSA held a virtual workshop where the clients called each provider to obtain information regarding their programs. Ted Chittenden stated that if the clients were calling the providers, they were not given the opportunity to learn about organizations such as the various consumer groups or the GCBVI. Ted Chittenden stated that he would contact Bob Kresmer, GCBVI Chair, to inform him of the new Introduction to Blindness Workshop format.

Database Discussion

Janet Fisher stated the June EyeKnow.AZ statistics showed there were 65 sessions, 62 individuals used the database, 2.5 pages were viewed, and individuals spent less than 1 minute in the database. Ms. Fisher stated the statistics indicated that individuals were not using the database as a resource. Ted Chittenden stated that individuals might not be searching for new resources. Janet Fisher stated that individuals would not likely be sharing the database by word of mouth due to the isolation imposed by the pandemic. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Sun Sounds would be willing to run an advertisement for the database. Janet Fisher stated she would inquire with Sun Sounds and inquired whether they should use the same text as previously. Ted Chittenden stated that Sun Sounds could use the same text if it did not include any date-specific information. Ted Chittenden stated the committee continued to ensure that the organizations included in the database listed their most current information. He noted that he contacted the Navajo Nation using the number included in the database and someone answered, therefore that resource could remain in the database. Ted Chittenden inquired whether there had been any requests for updates or additions to the database. Janet Fisher and Lindsey Powers stated they had not received any requests for updates to the database.

Committee Membership Discussion

Ted Chittenden stated he attended the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and the American Council of the Blind (ACB) national conferences and indicated the Public Information Committee's recruitment efforts. He noted he had not spoken to the AzCB state organization recently regarding recruitment efforts.

Social Media Discussion

Dean Colston stated the council Linked In page now had 160 followers and he continued to encourage individuals to follow the page. Mr. Colston noted the highest viewed post was the post about EyeKnow.AZ. Dean Colston stated the Linked In page could increase followers by actively engaging in the community and he had been commenting on other individuals' posts. Dean Colston suggested the committee post more often and to potentially add videos to the page. Dean Colston stated he would also recommend the council develop a Twitter page to increase engagement with the community. Ted Chittenden inquired whether the Linked In page could include videos from SAAVI or GCBVI videos that were created during VRATE. David Steinmetz stated that some of those videos were likely shared on the Department of Economic Security (DES) Facebook page. Mr. Steinmetz

stated he used Google alerts, and would use keywords such as “blindness” or “Valley Metro” to pull articles with those keywords to be potentially used in social media platforms. David Steinmetz stated he located a recent article about a visually impaired tax preparer that was able to volunteer to assist individuals in preparing their taxes.

Ted Chittenden inquired regarding the council Facebook statistics. Lindsey Powers stated the council Facebook usage remained the same, with not a lot of activity, but continued usage. Dean Colston stated he recently developed a Twitter account as part of a professional organization, and suggested the council consider developing an account as well to continue to reach individuals in the community. Dean Colston stated he attached videos as well as posts to his Twitter account. Ted Chittenden inquired whether Twitter allowed for an organization to develop an account and for more than one individual to be a moderator. Dean Colston stated he was unsure, although he thought Twitter would allow for more than one person to have administrative rights. Ted Chittenden stated that if Dean Colston would be willing to research Twitter, the committee would consider developing an account. David Steinmetz stated his understanding that the different accounts could be linked, so that an individual or organization could post an article on several accounts. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could create a Twitter account and could then share the same information on all platforms. Dean Colston inquired regarding an appropriate email for the Twitter account. Ted Chittenden stated Dean Colston could use the GCBVI email at gcbvi@azdes.gov.

GCBVI Rules and Procedures Follow Up

Ted Chittenden inquired whether any committee members had any questions regarding the GCBVI policies and rules discussed during the previous committee meeting. The committee members indicated they did not have any questions. Ted Chittenden stated he forwarded the Public Information Committee action items included in the GCBVI Strategic Plan for the committee’s review. Ted Chittenden stated the committee was responsible for assisting the Employment Committee with the implementation of an ongoing employer education campaign. Ted Chittenden stated the Public Information Committee was also charged with supporting the Legislative Committee in the Outcomes: Under 55 ILB funding is established and sustained and that public service agencies receive regular feedback regarding accessibility. Ted Chittenden stated the committee was responsible for supporting the Executive Committee in Outcome: GCBVI is recognized as a critical council in Arizona that is equal to that of the State Rehabilitation Council for blind services. Mr. Chittenden stated the committee was also responsible for supporting the Executive Committee in

Outcome: GCBVI is recognized as an information and referral resource for both consumers and agencies and businesses that serve blind consumers. Ted Chittenden stated the committee was responsible for Outcome: Public awareness of the GCBVI is raised and positive outcomes are common knowledge. Ted Chittenden stated the committee could consider more outreach to the general community once the pandemic restrictions had been lifted. Ted Chittenden stated the committee was also responsible for ensuring that EyeKnow.AZ includes an accessibility resource page, which the committee had completed. David Steinmetz stated the GCBVI Strategic Plan had a good structure and noted the value in revisiting the council's activities.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Information Committee will be on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, from 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm. Agenda items are as follows:

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

Announcements

Ted Chittenden stated he attended the AzCB and NFB National Conferences, which were held virtually and noted that both conferences worked well. Mr. Chittenden stated the next AzCB local chapter meeting would be on Saturday.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Dean Colston moved to adjourn the meeting; Janet Fisher seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting stood adjourned at 3:05 pm.