

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Employment Committee Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2020

Members Present

Nathan Pullen
David Steinmetz
Terri Hedgpeth
Jordan Moon
Bea Shapiro
Ben Fox

Members Absent

Terrell Welch

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Brian Dulude

Call to Order and Introductions

Nathan Pullen called the meeting to order at 3:05 pm. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

Approval of the July 9, 2020 Meeting Minutes

David Steinmetz motioned to approve the minutes from the July 9, 2020 meeting. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Employer Committee Event Collaboration Discussion

Nathan Pullen stated the Employment Committee would discuss how the committee could collaborate with upcoming events. Mr. Pullen invited Ben Fox to give an update on his activities. Ben Fox stated that he had moved from Arizona to New York/New Jersey and had been working with the American Foundation of the Blind (AFB) to bring national awareness to the blind and visually impaired population. Mr. Fox stated the AFB would hold their 100-year anniversary in 2021 and was asking for organizations to participate and come up with ideas for the celebration. Ben Fox stated one

of the ideas was to hold a Film Festival for blind individuals and created by blind individuals. He stated the films would show different stories and struggles by blind and visually impaired individuals. Ben Fox stated the Film Festival was scheduled for October in Washington DC. Ben Fox stated he would love to hold a similar Film Festival in Arizona.

Nathan Pullen asked that Ben Fox provide an update regarding the video that he created about topics related to employment of blind and visually impaired individuals. Ben Fox stated that when he applied for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services, he was placed on a waiting list before he could begin receiving services. He noted that others could benefit from having access to resources while they were waiting for VR services. Mr. Fox stated he developed a 12-module e-course that would be free for individuals waiting for services. Ben Fox noted that one of the topics included in the e-course was related to soft skills, which was an important skill for job seekers and were not always discussed. Ben Fox stated the video included interviews with Kirk Adams, AFB President and Nathan Pullen, and he would like to include HR professionals as well. Brian Dulude inquired regarding the wait list that Ben Fox was referring to. Mr. Dulude noted that as of March, Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA), was able to open all wait list categories and was able to provide services to individuals eligible for VR services.

Nathan Pullen inquired whether Jordan Moon could provide an update regarding Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE). Jordan Moon stated that VRATE would be held virtually on November 13th, and the VRATE Board was in the process of identifying presentation topics. Jordan Moon stated that VRATE would include an Exhibit Hall that would be accessible via Zoom, as well as presentations throughout the day. He noted that VRATE would include a presentation related to employment, which could include a presentation panel. Jordan Moon stated that any Employment Committee members would be welcome to participate in the presentation. Jordan Moon stated the National Federation of the Blind of Arizona (NFBA) State Convention would be held virtually September 10-12 and would include an employment panel discussion on September 11th. He noted that Employment Committee members would be welcome to participate on that panel as well. Bea Shapiro stated that during the employment discussions, one of the presenters should discuss appropriate and inappropriate questions to ask employers during an interview. Terri Hedgpeth agreed, although individuals that were not visually impaired also asked inappropriate questions during interviews. Nathan Pullen stated that one of the awardees at the previous E75 Event owned a staffing agency and could be a potential presenter at one of the employment panels.

Ben Fox stated he had worked with AIRA, which was providing specialized services that related to an individual's employment. He noted that AIRA would also be willing to provide presentations on their services. Brian Dulude stated that would be a great addition to VRATE. Terri Hedgpeth stated AIRA had announced that there would be free call access to any Walmart online until the end of the year.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Employment Committee will be on September 2, 2020, from 3:00 to 4:00 pm. Agenda items are as follows:

- E75 Event Discussion
- Employment Committee Event Collaboration Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Bea Shapiro motioned to adjourn the meeting. Terri Hedgpeth seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.