

Governor's Council on Blindness and Visual Impairment (GCBVI)
Employment Committee Meeting Minutes
September 23, 2020

Members Present

Nathan Pullen
Terell Welch
David Steinmetz
Bea Shapiro

Members Absent

Jordan Moon
Terri Hedgpeth

Staff Present

Lindsey Powers

Guests Present

Sue LeHew
Mark Nelson
Elizabeth N.

Call to Order and Introductions

Nathan Pullen called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm. Introductions were made a quorum was present.

Approval of the September 2, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Bea Shapiro motioned to approve the minutes from the September 2, 2020 meeting. David Steinmetz seconded the motion. The meeting minutes were approved by unanimous voice vote.

VRATE Presentation Discussion

Nathan Pullen stated the Employment and Assistive Technology (AT) Committees would be providing a joint presentation at the Vision Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Expo (VRATE) and had been discussing potential presentation topics. Nathan Pullen stated the presentation would be focused on the employee and how job seeking ties into the pandemic. Bea Shapiro stated the committees had discussed presenting on how to interview using different virtual platforms and how to

ensure one's technology was set up correctly, such as cameras. Nathan Pullen stated that a committee member had mentioned a template of a previous presentation that the committees could use. Bea Shapiro stated her understanding that Terell Welch had the questions used during the employment panel at the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) State Conference. Terell Welch stated he would locate and forward the questions to the committee members. Nathan Pullen stated the committees could focus on the do's and don'ts of virtual interviews. Mr. Pullen noted the committee members could provide the presentation as a panel and discuss how some individuals would feel comfortable disclosing their disability and some individuals would request a different platform for the interview. Bea Shapiro stated the committee members could also discuss when to use the phone to call into an interview, when to mute and unmute one's phone and when to raise one's hand. Sue LeHew stated the committees could begin the presentation discussing the new year 2020 and what is new is this new era. Nathan Pullen agreed and stated the committees could discuss how technology could be used as an equalizer for individuals with disabilities and created a level playing field for everyone as most items were electronic rather than paper documents. Bea Shapiro stated that appropriate camera placement was important as well as a working microphone. Nathan Pullen inquired whether the committee members would each discuss a topic, or whether the committees would prefer to offer a panel discussion with a moderator. David Steinmetz stated he liked a panel presentation with a moderator to guide the conversation. Bea Shapiro agreed and suggested the Power Point presentation be limited to about 10 slides. Nathan Pullen inquired whether any committee member would like to be the moderator. Bea Shapiro stated that Sue LeHew would be a great moderator. Sue LeHew stated she would be willing to click through the slides but would not prefer to be the moderator. Nathan Pullen stated he would be willing to be the moderator and inquired whether any committee members would like to assist in developing the Power Point. Bea Shapiro stated that she and Sue LeHew would develop the Power Point presentation. Ms. Shapiro noted the committee members had about 2 weeks to prepare an outline for the presentation and submit it to the VRATE Board.

Sue LeHew inquired whether any committee members had any suggestions for ensuring that one's camera was appropriately positioned. Bea Shapiro stated that she would call someone and ask them to verify that her camera was positioned correctly. Nathan Pullen inquired whether an individual could use a service such as Aira to ensure one's camera was properly placed. Bea Shapiro stated that Aira no longer offered 5 free service minutes, and not everyone had Aira services. Terell Welch stated that should be part of a VR client's job readiness services. Sue LeHew stated that individuals should practice turning their cameras on and off and mute and unmute their phones

in preparation for an interview. Ms. LeHew stated the committee could also discuss how a job seeker could prepare for an interview and ensure the environment was quiet and eliminate noise such as barking dogs. David Steinmetz stated that most individuals were participating in virtual meetings and background noise was not necessarily detrimental, although an individual should ensure they have a quiet environment. Terell Welch inquired whether an individual could use a tape measure to measure the distance to the camera or computer. David Steinmetz stated an individual could use a service such as Aira, or Facetime to connect to someone that could assist. Terell Welch stated the committee members should also discuss how an individual should be dress as professionally as one would during an in-person interview. Sue LeHew stated that she once forgot to logoff of a meeting, and individuals could be reminded to exit a meeting or interview once over. David Steinmetz stated the committee could suggest that individuals not eat or drink during a meeting and ensure one's background is appropriate. Bea Shapiro stated a laptop or computer with a camera needed to be placed on a flat surface. Nathan Pullen stated the committee members had identified great topics for the VRATE presentation and inquired whether the committee members wanted to leave time for questions as well. Bea Shapiro stated she would be willing to answer questions after the presentation. Terell Welch inquired whether the committee intended to invite employers to attend the presentation as well. Bea Shapiro stated that employers could attend the presentation and learn how an employee might advocate for him/herself. Sue LeHew stated an individual should focus on how their skills meet the job requirements and not feel obligated to discuss the required accommodations during the interview. Ms. LeHew stated there could be a smart way to disclose that information to an employer. Terell Welch stated that not all employers would require an individual to interview virtually or using a camera. Bea Shapiro stated she knew many clients that had to interview using a camera, although it would depend on the employer's requirements.

E75 Event Discussion

This item was tabled.

Agenda and Date for Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Employment Committee was scheduled for October 14, 2020. Agenda items are as follows:

- VRATE Presentation Discussion

Announcements

There were no announcements.

Public Comment

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

Adjournment of Meeting

Terell Welch motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bea Shapiro seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:58 p.m.