

# Board of SBVI Draft Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2018

Governor's Inn, Pierre, SD

Members Present: James Konechne, Cheri Knispel, Patrick Czerny, Tana Buresch, Cole Uecker, Marcia Hultman, Connie Sullivan, Gaye Mattke, Catherine Greseth, Roberta Ecoffey, Jill Kundtz, Kay Miller, Koni Sims, Eric Rippentrop

Members Absent: Alan Vandenburg, Tami Francis

Others Present: Ronda Williams, Sandy Neyhart, Nancy Hoyme, Becky Blume, Nadine Blue Bird, Lyle Cook

Catherine Greseth, Chair, called the meeting to order. Introductions were made. Welcome to new Board member, James Konechne.

Koni Sims made a motion to approve the agenda. Jill Kundtz seconded. Motion carried.

Eric Rippentrop made a motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting. Koni seconded. Motion carried.

Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act (WIOA) – SBVI was notified in January that two year Unified State Plan updates were due by March 15<sup>th</sup>. The State Plan is an overview of how SBVI will provide services in the future and a report on performance for the first two years of the four year plan. A public meeting was held via DDN at 11

locations on March 2<sup>nd</sup> with a call-in option; thirty-five people attended. The required updates to the SBVI State Plan included: Input of State Rehabilitation Council, Comprehensive System of Personnel Development, Annual Estimates, Order of Selection, State's Strategies and Evaluation & Report of Progress. The four year Unified State Plan, which is more than 200 pages, will need to be submitted in 2 years.

### Board Activities

Governor's Awards –In the past, the Public Relations (PR) Committee has nominated individuals for the Governor's Awards. It was discussed and decided that the PR committee will work on Governor's Awards nominations again this year. A conference call will be scheduled to discuss potential nominees. Board members may make suggestions for nominations to the PR committee or personally submit nominations for Governor's Awards.

A copy of the nomination packet is included with this mailing. A listing of past award winners is also included. If you nominate an individual or a business, make sure you have all the supporting documentation required. Department of Labor and Regulation may be able to recommend some employers for nomination. If Board members wish to attend the Governor's Awards, please let Becky know and expenses will be covered. The Board will be notified of the date and location of the Governor's Awards presentation when it is scheduled. The Board sponsors the Governor's Awards and Cheri Knispel volunteered to be the Board of SBVI representative on the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation committee for

Governor's Award nominations. James Konechne requested to join the PR committee.

Disability Awareness Day - Catherine Greseth and Koni Sims represented the Board of SBVI at Disability Awareness Day at the Capitol in February. They visited with several legislators and passed out information. The vision simulator cards and information on service animals were popular. Board members suggested that this continue to be an activity sponsored by the Board of SBVI.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) – October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month and activities are planned in communities across South Dakota. Catherine Greseth informed the Board that all activities/events were approved this year. Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe has an event prior to their Labor Day celebration. SBVI generally has a booth at this event. The Board will be notified of events when available. The Department of Labor and Regulation will assist in publicity of events in communities where there is a Job Service office.

Public Forums -SBVI will hold a public forum in conjunction with National Federation of the Blind (NFB) of South Dakota convention on April 27<sup>th</sup> from 4 to 6 p.m. Mountain Time. The Division will provide updates and host a discussion with members of the NFB members regarding services and priorities.

Koni Sims stated that South Dakota Association for the Blind (SDAB) is interested in a public forum in conjunction with the state convention September 7 & 8. Gaye agreed to work with SDAB to plan this event.

Consumer Stipends - In the past, the Board has approved stipends up to \$350 (no more than \$175 per individual) for people attending state conventions, with a priority placed on those attending conventions for the first time. Members supported continuing the stipends. Gaye will send the form and requirements to SDAB and NFB presidents. Board members will be reimbursed for expenses if they chose to attend a state convention as a representative of the Board of SBVI.

Other activities the Board has sponsored include White Cane March and Americans with Disabilities Act events in Aberdeen and Sioux Falls.

The Board has sponsored public forums/disability summits on tribal lands. In 2017, an event was held in Kyle in conjunction with Disability Rights SD. SBVI is interested in participating in a similar event in 2018. Joleen Lavendure, Lower Brule Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation Program Director, will be hosting a tribal/state VR meeting. Lyle Cook will be attending Consortia of Administrators of Native American Rehabilitation (CANAR) in Prior Lake, MN. Roberta Ecoffey will work with CANAR to host a conference in South Dakota.

## SBVI Program Updates

Business Enterprise Program (BEP) – Nancy Hoyme informed the Board that there are currently 3 vacancies in the BEP. The EROS cafeteria is being operated as a satellite site by the Aberdeen vendor. Marilyn Steffen is planning to retire from vending at the Yankton Federal Prison in October. The Pierre vendor passed away unexpectedly in January. Her employee continues to do the vending routes and machine maintenance. The financial information for the BEP is in the annual report. James and Koni requested information for the sites that have openings. Lyle Cook requested to be informed if BEP surpluses vending machines.

Independent Living (IL) – Sandy Neyhart, IL Program Manager, reported on an opportunity for training and technical assistance for the older blind IL program which will be provided by Mississippi State University (MSU). SBVI has submitted the application along with information about the service delivery model in South Dakota. The application required information on our definition of eligibility, and that partners be identified who are interested in the value of services that contribute to independence of citizens with vision loss and other disabilities. The process will begin with teleconference calls, some work group activities, training opportunities along with MSU staff visiting South Dakota in order to achieve our goals. The goal is to get assistance with metrics, improving total caseload numbers, and strengthening service delivery.

The CCTV lease/loan program was able to purchase 10 new units. This addition will result in 229 units in the program. Approximately 28 units are 10 years old. Gaye explained to board members the overall design of the program which includes the lease payment at \$30 per month for those who do not meet financial need criteria. The \$30 lease is waived for those who meet financial need. The agreement to lease or loan the unit is reviewed annually. If a client's financial situation changes, the lease can be switched to loan at any time. The amount of \$30 was selected as it was affordable, but also helped cover administrative costs.

Rehabilitation Center for the Blind – Gaye shared a report provided by Dawn Backer, Manager at the Rehabilitation Center. Bob Smith provided basic Orientation & Mobility training to the SBVI field Rehabilitation Teachers. Rehabilitation Center staff received CPR and AED training. First Friday classes continue, the topic for April is new technology. Staff and students hosted a Dining in the Dark for students' families in February. The experience helped family members to better understand skills needed for those with vision loss. Transition week is scheduled for June 10-14. There are currently 8 students registered to attend.

Vocational Rehabilitation – Ronda informed the Board that the annual Case File Review (CFR) is scheduled for April 24-26 in Pierre. The CFR instrument has been revised so it aligns with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements. Dr. Alan Davis has analyzed the client satisfaction survey results. The

satisfaction level was high. The form for Post-Secondary was revised to address confusion in how it was being interpreted. Fall conference will be held in Aberdeen October 9-11. The theme is "Back to the Future...the next 100 years." If Board members are interested in attending, please let Becky know for registration and lodging purposes. Ronda plans to attend the AER conference in Aberdeen April 18-20.

DHS will be holding a Cultural training for all staff. Gaye is organizing training with Center for Disabilities. The trainer has been in contact with tribal VR. More information will be released as it becomes available.

Board Terms/Nominations - The Board of SBVI is seeking nominations to replace Eric Rippentrop's and Kay Miller's positions on the Board. Kay's position is representative of business & industry. The federal requirements include a representative of an individual who is blind and has multiple disabilities and has difficulty representing himself or herself due to disabilities. Nomination packets were mailed out. Information is also on the SBVI website. Packets will also be included with the Board minutes.

Koni Sims and Catherine Greseth have agreed to reappointment to the Board. Marcia Hultman and Roberta Ecoffey also agreed to have their names submitted for reappointment.

The deadline for nominations is April 13th.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Update – Sandy reported that the SILC met on March 21<sup>st</sup>. The territory map has been updated since the Native American Advocacy Program is no longer serving tribal lands. Western Resources for Independent Living (Rapid City) and Independent Living Choices (Sioux Falls) are currently covering all areas of South Dakota. This coverage is temporary as there will be a request for proposals for some areas of the state.

The SILC is also seeking nominations and has specific requirements for members that need to be considered when selecting new members. There will be no training for IL staff this year. The next meeting will be June 19 & 20 in Sioux Falls.

Director's Comments – The Department of Human Services is providing training on Native American Culture in conjunction with the Center for Disabilities. Directors of the state American Indian vocational rehabilitation programs will be contacted to assist with the training. The Fall Conference will be in Aberdeen in October. SBVI is planning an all staff training this summer with topics specific to blindness. Drivers for SBVI are required to complete an anti-harassment training, and SBVI will be in contact with drivers if they have not completed the required online training. Bureau of Human Resources (BHR) notified SBVI that drivers must be 18 years old to drive. New hire drivers' pay rate will be \$9.80/hour. Pay raises will be given based on years of service. All drivers will receive paperwork on an annual basis which must be completed and returned to BHR to remain on payroll.

2018 Legislative Session recently ended. SBVI received \$100,000 in other fund authority which was needed in order to spend Ticket to Work payments. State employees received 1.2% salary increase. DHS' Strategic Plan rollout will be scheduled in the near future.

Eric Rippentrop made a motion that the next meeting be held in Sioux Falls on June 18 & 19 with a DDN option for those in Rapid City. Tours of the braille unit at the penitentiary and the SD Rehabilitation Center for the Blind will be held in conjunction with the meeting. Cherie Knispel seconded. Motion carried.

Cole informed the Board of a website to help prepare transition age students for IEP meeting. The website is <http://www.itransitionsd.org/>. The website content focuses on self-advocacy for transition students and their parents.

Catherine Greseth adjourned the meeting.

Minutes submitted by Becky Blume, Senior Secretary