

Board of SBVI
Draft Minutes
September 21, 2018
Holiday Inn Express, Ft. Pierre, SD

Present: Catherine Greseth, Marcia Hultman, Roberta Ecoffey, Patrick Czerny, Cheri Knispel, Elaine Fritz, Koni Sims, Alan Vandenburg, Zay Norman, Gaye Mattke

Absent: Jill Kundtz, Cole Uecker, Connie Sullivan, James Konechne, Tana Buresch, Tami Francis

Others Present: Ronda Williams, Sandy Neyhart, Becky Blume

Catherine Greseth, Chair, called the meeting to order.

Welcome to the new Board members, Zay Norman and Elaine Fritz.

Koni Sims made a motion to approve the agenda. Catherine Greseth seconded. Motion carried.

Koni Sims made a motion to approve the minutes from the June meeting. Cheri Knispel seconded. Motion carried.

There were no public comments.

Introductions were made by all present. Gaye explained that there are 5 tribal vocational rehabilitation programs in South Dakota and they work together with SBVI. Roberta Ecoffey has been the representative for the Tribal VR Programs pending appointment of a replacement. Roberta expressed her appreciation for the relationship between Tribal and State vocational rehabilitation programs.

Prior Approval Requirements: The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) requires approval on purchases of items over \$5,000. Staff stated that there is was only one client service purchase for equipment over \$7,000 last year. Most assistive technology purchases were under \$5,000 threshold for preapproval. To avoid potential delays in client service purchases, Gaye provided a request estimating that up to three clients may need equipment in the next fiscal year with an estimate of \$7,500 each. She also requested approval for funding for Board members travel to events/conferences other than quarterly meetings and Board support of activities such as Governor's Awards, White Cane March, Disability Employment Awareness, ADA events and etc. All items included in the pre-approval request were approved by RSA.

Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Update: Ronda Williams, SBVI Assistant Director was recently appointed to the SILC and attended her first meeting in Watertown on September 18 & 19. Centers for independent living (CILS) receive federal funding and the SILC determines how those funds can be used. CILs contract with Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS) to provide Home Modifications and Adaptive Devices and other services. Bridget Wookey, DRS Counselor, informed the SILC about disability related activities happening in the Watertown community. SILC gives a Champion of Independent Living award and this year's recipient was Kelly Chandler, who was recognized during the luncheon. SILC approved up to \$1,000 for the Governor's Awards and up to \$3,000 for National Disability Employment Awareness Month activities. The next meeting will be held in December via video conference.

Committee Updates: The Executive committee consists of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Member at Large.

The Strategic Planning and Policy Committee assists with the state plan and policies that need to be reviewed.

Members are Connie Sullivan, Marcia Hultman, Cole Uecker, and Alan Vandenburg. Staff liaison is Ronda Williams. SBVI staff will work closely with the Strategic Planning & Policy committee to develop the Annual Report prior to review and approval by the full Board.

The Assistive Technology Advisory Committee (ATAC) members are Patrick Czerny, Koni Sims, Tami Francis, and non-Board members JoMarie Laughlin and Chelle Hart. The staff liaison is Ray Tracy. This committee meets periodically if assistive technology resources or policies need to be reviewed.

The Public Relations committee members are Catherine Greseth, Koni Sims, Jill Kundtz, Tana Buresch, James Konechne, and Heath Ducheneaux from the Pine Ridge Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation program. Sandy Neyhart is the staff liaison. The PR committee assists with Governor's Awards nominations. In the past, they worked to review print, television and radio ads for marketing and outreach.

Catherine Greseth is the Board representative on the larger National Disability Employment Awareness Month committee with the Board of Vocational Rehabilitation. The committee assists with approving financing and activities for a variety of events that take place around the state in October.

Cheri Knispel is the Board representative for the Governor's Awards committee which assists with the selection of award winners for the Governor's approval.

New members can notify Gaye if interested in serving on a committee.

SBVI Program Updates

Business Enterprise Program (BEP): Ray Tracy began his duties as the SBVI program specialist on August 9th. The vendor in Yankton is retiring and there are no candidates for the vending at Yankton Federal Prison so the BEP will be giving up the site. Depending on the age and condition, some of the vending machines will be moved to other locations and others will go to surplus. The Aberdeen vendor has a coffee shop in the Federal Building, a vending route, and she also oversees EROS cafeteria as a satellite site. The Huron vendor has vending machines in a mail sorting facility, federal building, and an apartment building. The Pierre vendor passed away earlier this year, but her employee has kept the route going until a replacement can be found. At the suggestion of Roberta Ecoffey, BEP will look at options for vending sites in federal buildings in Pine Ridge with tribal VR if there are qualified candidates to manage the route. BEP receives funding from interstate rest area vending commissions. The annual vendors meeting will be held in Sioux Falls in on October 27th.

Independent Living Older Blind: Sandy Neyhart reported that the older blind program serves people over the age of 55 so they can continue to live independently. The program is minimally funded; and Rehabilitation Teachers are located in Rapid City, Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, and Pierre. The Rehab. Teachers travel several days a week to meet with clients in their homes.

Sandy submitted an application that was selected to receive technical assistance through Mississippi State University (MSU). The MSU team will be coming to South

Dakota October 22-24 to observe the Independent Living Program and assist with ideas for improvement. There will be group discussions with staff, stakeholders, and clients. The discussions will take place in Sioux Falls with the option to call in for those who can't travel. The goal is to obtain technical assistance and training for staff.

Caseload numbers continue to decrease even though staff conduct numerous outreach activities. Consumer survey responses are positive.

The Assistive Technology Access Project is for individual with vision loss who need training to access their computers or other devices. If eligible, the individual can receive up to five hours of personalized training on their device with a technician from DakotaLink. This project has received positive feedback.

The Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) lease/loan program began in 2004 with funds donated as memorials. There are currently 224 units in circulation. SBVI contracts with DakotaLink to handle the administrative duties, and delivery of the machines, as necessary. There is a financial eligibility requirement to determine if the individual will lease the machine for \$30/month or, for those who meet need, the units are provided free of charge. All individuals pay a \$50 deposit.

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): Ronda Williams explained that VR is available to those with vision loss to maintain or become employed. Medical restoration and Assistive Technology make up about 50% of client service expenditures. VR also works with transition age students with the project skills program which provides students work experience with wages paid by SBVI for up to 250 hours. Transition students are also encouraged to attend transition week at the Rehab. Center as well as the Youth

Leadership Forum and other transition activities throughout the year.

SBVI contracts with the School for the Blind & Visually Impaired for an outreach specialist (Nichole Nelson), who provides statewide transition services.

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys are mailed out quarterly and Dr. Alan Davis from SDSU analyzes the responses and provides SBVI with a report. Results will be included in the Board of SBVI Annual Report.

SBVI held an all staff meeting August 27-29. Presenters included Dr. Porter, an Optometrist from Missouri, Dr. Alan Davis from SDSU, and an Eschenbach representative who provided a display/demonstration of a variety of devices. Recognition activities were held in conjunction with the all staff meeting.

Adam Dahlke was recently hired for the counselor position in Rapid City and is currently participating in training at the Rehab. Center.

South Dakota Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (SDRC): Amy Stabe was recently hired as Senior Secretary. Transition Week dates have been set for June 16-20, 2019. SDRC hosted 3 medical students from USD Sanford School of Medicine for a cultural diversity week. The 3rd year medical students attended Skills of Blindness training and experienced all the classes, while spending time with students in training.

The principal and an instructor from School for the Blind & Visually Impaired attended training for 2 days to gain new knowledge about GPS technology and computers and assistive technology. They also learned about the services provided in the vocational resources unit. The

Transition Specialist also attended training at the Center for 2 weeks.

On-site Orientation & Mobility (O&M) has been beneficial for people who are unable to attend the Center or need specific training after they have left the Center and returned home but need specialized instruction in their home area. Between October 1, 2017, to present - Bob Smith, Program Specialist, worked with 21 people in 83 visits, for a total of 373 hours of training.

Kellie Hauglid, Program Specialist, is studying for the Certified Low Vision Therapist (CLVT) exam by taking online training from Dr. Stephen Whittaker at Vision Education Seminars and shadowing Dawn Backer, CLVT, and Dr. Greenfield, OD, during Low Vision Clinic days.

Board Representation at Joint Activities/Events

Governor's Awards: The Governor's Awards will be held on September 25th in the Capitol Rotunda. A reception will follow at the Casey Tibb's Rodeo Center. Catherine Greseth, Board Chair, is being recognized as the Outstanding Citizen with a Disability.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM): October is designated as NDEAM. The national theme is Empowering All. There are numerous events taking place throughout the state this month. A complete listing is included with the minutes.

Blind Organization Conventions: Board members are encouraged to attend South Dakota Association of the Blind (SDAB) or National Federation of the Blind (NFB) conventions if possible. Costs for attending may be covered for those representing the Board at the conventions. SDAB held their convention in Sioux Falls in September. SBVI hosted a public forum in conjunction

with the convention with 26 people in attendance. The timing of the forum does not meet the timeline for the state plan public meetings, but SBVI works with consumer organizations to offer the opportunity for input as requested. The topics included program updates, outreach for independent living and purchasing computers.

The Board offers stipends for individuals to attend conventions. The form and requirements are forwarded to blind organization presidents. SBVI also pays the organizations for supporting public forums to help with costs.

Fall Conference: The Fall Conference will be held October 9th-11th at the Best Western Ramkota in Aberdeen. There are a variety of topics to be presented on at the conference. Board members can attend training events offered by the Department with approval. The Fall Conference will be held in Sioux Falls in October 2019.

The Board approved a request for funding to pay for electronic billboards to promote the White Cane March in the amount of \$600. The White Cane March will be held in Sioux Falls on October 13th.

Director's Report:

The Annual Report is due by the end of the year. This report includes performance data and success stories. SBVI staff will provide a draft copy to be reviewed prior to the December meeting.

SBVI will follow the Department of Labor and Regulation's (DLR) State Plan timelines. The 4-year State Plan is due in 2020. Following is DLR's timeline: March 2019, develop the vision and goals; May 2019, approve the final goals; November 2019 provide updates. January or

February 2020, public comments will be received. March 2020 the State Plan will be submitted. SBVI will be meeting with DLR in early October future to begin planning for the 2020 Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Unified State Plan submission. Dates will be determined for hosting public forums for input into the state plan.

The 2019 Legislative Session will begin on January 8th. SBVI will not be asking for expansion in the budget. The Department meets daily to discuss bills and Gaye will let the Board know if any vision related bills arise. The last day of session is March 13th. Veto day is March 29th.

The Lions Club donated \$10,000 to the Division. The funds are to be used for hand-held video magnifiers for visually impaired individuals in Lincoln and Minnehaha counties who meet eligibility.

The Board received a renewal notice from South Dakota Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities (SDCCD). Organizational dues are \$100 for the year. Catherine Greseth made a motion to continue Board membership with SDCCD. Koni Sims seconded. Motion carried.

The Department of Human Services held Diversity Training featuring Native American culture in 4 locations around the state. DHS partnered with Centers for Disabilities Oyate Circle to lead the trainings. Future trainings for new staff may be web based.

Dakota At Home is a valuable resource to find services for aging individuals. Gaye will contact Dakota At Home to see about a presentation at the next meeting.

Koni Sims made a motion that the next Board meeting be held in Pierre on December 7th. Cheri Knispel seconded. Motion carried.

Catherine Greseth adjourned the meeting.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Becky Blume,
Secretary.