

Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
August 8, 2008
341 W Washington Street
Boise, Idaho

Commissioners Present:

Britt Raubenheimer, Chair; Dave Hand, Vice Chair; and Kent Ireton

Staff Present:

Angela Jones, Administrator; Raelene Thomas, Administrative Assistant; Nanna Hanchett, Rehabilitation Services Chief; Greg Metzker, ATC Supervisor; Lisa Van Ry, BEP Supervisor; Mary Quarles, Sr. Accountant; Larry Henrie, ATC Instructor; Lisa Baker, ATC Instructor; Jason Madson, ATC Instructor and Brett Winchester; Volunteer Reading Services Coordinator.

Guests Present:

Carol Baron, Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind; and Ward Noland, State of Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security

Amend/Approve Agenda:

Commissioner Hand requested to postpone the election of officers until the next vacancy is filled by the Governor.

Motion: To approve the amendment to the agenda as stated.

Made by: Commissioner Hand

Seconded by: Commissioner Ireton

Result: Unanimous approval

Previous Meeting Minutes Approval:

Motion: To approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of May 29, 2008.

Made by: Commissioner Hand

Seconded by: Commissioner Ireton

Result: Unanimous approval

Administrator's Report:

Angela Jones reviewed the 2010 Agency Budget and the requests made in that Budget. 1st request - to have an additional full time position for an Instructor for the Blind in Assistive Technology who would be able to travel around the state providing services. 2nd request - to continue with Newslines. The first year the agency subscribed to Newslines we had 73 users, and now (as of May 2008) we are at 474 users within the state. If we do not get the funding, we may lose Newslines which has an annual cost of approximately \$32,000. Angela reviewed data with the Board regarding the trends in the use of funds.

The 2009 Bi-Centennial Louis Braille coin is a 200th Year Anniversary Commemorative coin with Braille on it. The coin will be available in 2009.

CSAVR (Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation) and the NSAD (Special Education Directors) are working together on transition and the NSAD have realized how important it is to have VR receive additional funding in order to work with Transition Students across the nation.

ADA Restoration Act amended in 2008 – there is a new markup on this bill which defines that a disability is a functional or mental impairment.

In-Service Training is scheduled for October 27-30, 2008 for all staff. We will be bringing in two doctors who will discuss secondary disabilities and the functional limitations for physical and mental. We also will review with staff updates that have been made to the caseload management system, will discuss outreach, and will offer breakout sessions.

The State Plan was submitted to RSA (Rehabilitation Services Administration) at the end of June. The public review comment period was held for one week, in all regions of the state. We did not receive any comments regarding the plan. We are currently waiting for RSA approval of the plan.

Angela recently gave a presentation to the Serve Idaho Commission about ICBVI and a grant to study transportation that was received by Americorps, SILC and the IL Centers. As part of this new project we will house a volunteer position at ICBVI. This person will be working on transportation issues with other volunteers across the state. The project director will begin September 2nd. The grant will last for 3 years.

There is a new statewide policy on Telecommuting, which is either working from home or working a flex schedule. Angela is determining how to implement this policy, and she will put together an agency policy for the Board's consideration. The purpose of the policy is to reduce pollution & traffic congestion.

Angela reviewed the Comprehensive Needs Assessment that was conducted in the spring as part of the requirements of our State Plan. The results of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment indicate that overall ICBVI is meeting the rehabilitation needs of Idahoans with Blindness and Visual Impairments. The major areas of need identified were awareness of services; employment opportunities, training for clients and training for staff. Transportation, increased funding, and transition services and outreach were also identified. One area that the agency will be addressing this next year will be outreach. We will develop an informational flyer on Low Vision and will ask the BEP vendors if they will put this flyer on all of their machines and on tables in the BEP cafeterias. We also will be looking at possible public service announcements in the newspapers or radio.

Listed below are a few survey questions with results from the Comprehensive Needs Assessment:

Were you aware of VR service through the Commission at the time of or shortly after the onset of your blindness, or at the time you were preparing to transition from high school? No = 28% Yes = 72%

Do you feel that there was any type of services or information which could have been expanded upon or provided by the Commission that would have assisted you in achieving or maintaining an employment outcome? No = 76% Yes = 17% N/A = 7%

Did the community rehabilitation services available in your community meet your needs? No = 31% Yes = 61% N/A = 8%

Please rate the Commission staff's provision of vocational rehabilitation services:

Professional. Poor = 7% Good = 28% Excellent = 65%

Knowledgeable in vocational rehabilitation. Poor = 6% Good = 39%
Excellent = 55%

Knowledgeable in community services. Poor = 15% Good = 31%
Excellent = 52% N/A = 2%

Motivated you to participate and work toward achieving an employment outcome.
Poor = 17% Good = 24% Excellent = 50% N/A = 9%

Commissioner Hand was excused from the Board Meeting at 10 am for a personal obligation and returned to the Board Meeting at noon. The Commissioners did not propose or vote on any motions during his absence.

SWEP Report – Larry Henrie:

We had 14 participants in the SWEP this summer who arrived on June 15th, 8 female and 6 male. They started work on June 23rd and finished work on August 1st when the program ended. All fourteen have requested to return and participate in SWEP next summer. We anticipate having a minimum of twenty participants for next summer. The ATC staff helped for a week with the job coaching positions in assisting the students at their jobs. The Department of Labor was instrumental in finding competitive jobs this year (special thanks to Julie Sherry and Gordon Graff who worked very closely with the staff and students). We will see more job opportunities arise due to the partnership between DOL and ICBVI. Some of those positions that DOL assisted with were two positions with Ada County Drug Court, Boise City Parks & Recreation and the Boise City Library. Several other outside organizations that were very helpful to the students were, Dress for Success, who took eight girls into their business and gave them a complete interview wardrobe, including jewelry, shoes, makeup and perfume. The ladies came out looking great and their self esteem was boosted. Lisa Baker also donated some time and took the ladies to Dillards for a makeover session, so they could

learn how to put on their makeup for their job interviews. Toastmasters came to visit with the students and taught them how to speak properly in groups and to the public. Special thanks to Dana Ard and Ken with Toastmasters who donated their time and who did a wonderful job with the students. The program ran very smoothly and positively and students worked well together as a team, bonded quickly, and had no major conflicts. This mature behavior may have been due to them being treated as adults, and they really demonstrated that they can act like adults. All of the employers were pleased with the student's job performance. Some of the summer activities for the students included: a visit to Bruneau Sand Dunes and the Observatory; a car rally; Boise Hawkes Baseball game; Frisbee golf; rafting; tie dying and adaptive bike riding. We had a great turnout for the Banquet with a total of 103 in attendance; the catering was done by all the students, with the exception of the meat entree. We are now getting feedback from parents on how their children have grown due to being a participant in the SWEF this summer.

Mary Quarles – Fiscal Report:

Mary made the following comments in addition to her written report:

Fiscal report for the end of June 2008 was reviewed with the Board Members.

Commissioner Ireton questioned why the amount of professional support was so much higher than what was budgeted? Mary explained that they did not target that expense correctly this last year, but should be okay this next fiscal year. This question was from the Financial Status Report chart.

New Employee at ICBVI – Mary Quarles introduced Mark Johnson who will be assisting Fiscal, ATC and BEP, as well as a backup reader/driver for the agency.

Consumer Input:

Carol Baron from the Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind (ISDB) complimented Larry Henrie on his success with SWEF. There will be a number of changes taking place at ISDB, one of those changes will be to transfer a few positions from the school to outreach positions in the community. Carol invited ICBVI Rehab Teachers and VR Counselors to come and visit ISDB for the day, and expressed a desire for ISDB teachers to come and visit the ATC to observe the training center instructors. The number of outreach students in the Meridian area has doubled in the last few years. The number of currently enrolled students at ISDB is 75 with 24 who are visually impaired.

Ward Noland from the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security spoke to the Board about his responsibilities for the Emergency Alert System that runs through the television or radio stations. Mr. Noland is concerned with the abilities to notify the special needs population in the event of an emergency in Idaho. One solution would be to set up a registry on their agency website. People with disabilities could voluntarily register on this website and indicate how they would like to be contacted in the event of an emergency in the state. There will be strict access of any of the computer data to staff of Homeland Security or of Code Red Company, who will be hosting and managing the website. Mr. Noland would like to meet with Angela Jones and Nanna Hanchett to

collect ideas on how to put a plan together for ICBVI. This draft plan will be presented to the Board at the next regular Board Meeting.

Program Reports:

BEP Report by Lisa Van Ry:

Lisa made the following comments in addition to her written report:

If we receive the contract with INL for the mobile espresso cart service, the cost of a cart would be between \$8,000-\$13,000. These carts are self-contained with their own water supply. There will be a vendor training in Idaho Falls on September 12th & 13th. We are looking at 4 new sites to add to existing vendor routes at the Division of Building Safety in Meridian, Industrial Commission, Department of Labor, and Meridian City Hall.

IL Report by Angela Jones for Nancy Wise:

Angela made the following comments in addition to Nancy's written report:

Brian, Candy, Shane, Nancy and Mike all attended the AER International Conference in Chicago on July 22nd – July 25th. They attended sessions that applied to their positions and received good information regarding low vision and rehabilitation, functional assessments and O & M. Brian attended a session in which Lucas Franck who gave the main presentation on making safe street crossings. Lucas is one of the main trainers at Seeing Eye Guide Dog Schools in New Jersey. Brian approached him about becoming involved with the University of Idaho College of Engineering Research Project, which is designing a portable street crossing device that will use existing cell phone, Ethernet, and GPS technology to assist blind travelers by locating cross buttons and cross walks, indicating when the safe crossing interval is on, and assisting them in staying within the cross walk. These improvements address the main problems encountered by blind or visually impaired people trying to cross streets at traffic controlled intersections. Brian was able to help Dr. Wall and Lucas Franck make connections. Dr. Wall is excited because they have come up with a prototype that will be able to do all of the tasks on one existing cell phone device. This system will keep the devices economical and affordable. Campbell Electronics of Boise currently manufactures and markets audible crossings internationally.

Vocational Rehabilitation Report by Nanna Hanchett:

Nanna made the following comments in addition to her written report: Nanna has been working with Tim Davis, from the Attorney General's Office, regarding the proposed changes in the rules for Vocational Rehabilitation pertaining to the change of costs for tuition and books in the payment policy. Nanna read the proposed changes with the wording that the AG's office recommended. The Board recommended that instead of listing the universities and colleges, perhaps it could be changed to Idaho Public Education Entities. Nanna will work with the AG on this change.

Motion: To approved the changes in language to the VR Payment Policy as presented by Nanna Hanchett.

Made by: Commissioner Hand

Seconded by: Commissioner Ireton

Result: Unanimous approval

A transition call with the Department of Education, IDVR, and ICBVI has taken place to discuss upcoming regional Transition Meetings amongst school personnel, VR Counselors, and ICBVI Counselors. The focus will be to review the Memorandum of Understanding between the 3 agencies and to discuss strategies for working together for the benefit of the transition students. These transition meetings have been held in the past and have been highly successful.

ATC Report by Greg Metsker:

Greg made the following comments in addition to his written report: The next term in the ATC will begin September 29th, with one student starting August 18th. We have two tours scheduled in the ATC in the next few weeks. Greg will be meeting with Larry Henrie to discuss the SWEP expenses and to prepare financially for next year. Greg would like to produce a video of the ATC to give out to families and potential clients. Greg would like to get some information packets together about College Days and give that to ISDB so that they can distribute them to potential participants for next year.

Summit Discussion – Angela Jones, Britt Raubenheimer and Nanna Hanchett:

Angela, Britt, and Nanna were amongst a group of over 150 participants who attended the Summit Meeting in Boise to discuss a new delivery system of services for blind and deaf children in the state. The recommendation from the group was to separate the services for the deaf and blind. Perhaps a residential school in Boise for each might work. There were seven areas identified that people wanted to change for the new delivery system, which were: separate services for the deaf and blind; residential schools; collaboration and networking; family mentoring; professional personnel preparation; administration; and providing expertise to rural areas. Participants of the Summit are encouraged to give additional input to the State Board of Education regarding issues as time had run out to cover all of those during the meeting. During the October SBOE meeting a plan will be presented based on the outcomes of the Summit to be voted on by the SBOE board members. If accepted it will then be presented to the legislature during the session beginning in January 2009.

New Business:

The date of the next Board Meeting has been scheduled for Thursday, November 13th.

MOTION: To adjourn

MADE BY: Commissioner Hand

SECONDED BY: Commissioner Ireton

RESULT: Unanimous approval

Meeting adjourned at 3:15 pm