

**Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
Regular Board Meeting Minutes  
March 12, 2009**

**JR Williams Building, 700 W. State Street  
Boise, Idaho**

**Commissioners Present:**

Britt Raubenheimer, Chair; Dave Hand, Vice Chair; and Kent Ireton, Travis Beck and Mike Gibson

**Staff Present:**

Angela Jones, Administrator; Raelene Thomas, Administrative Assistant; Greg Metsker, ATC Supervisor; Nanna Hanchett, Rehabilitation Services Chief; Mary Quarles, Sr. Accountant; Lisa Van Ry, BEP Supervisor; and Trina Ayres, Management Assistant.

**Guests Present:**

Ramona Walhof, Jan Gawith, Susan Bradley, Dianne Milhollin, Fred Riggers, Carol Baron (Idaho School for the Deaf & Blind), Scott Marcott, and Jeff Stark.

**Call to Order and Introductions**

Chairman Raubenheimer called the meeting to order at 9:06 am and called for introductions. Raelene Thomas read the Mission Statement.

**Amend/Approve Agenda:**

Administrator Jones requested to amend the agenda adding a brief presentation to former ICBVI Board Chairman Kelly Pearce at 1:00 pm before the Administrator's Report.

**Motion: To approve the amended agenda as stated.**

**Made by: Commissioner Hand**

**Seconded by: Commissioner Gibson**

**Result: Unanimous approval**

**Meeting Minutes Approval**

**MOTION: To approve the Regular Board Meeting Minutes of November 13, 2008.**

**MADE BY: Commissioner Gibson**

**SECONDED BY: Commissioner Hand**

**RESULT: Unanimous approval**

Program Reports from ICBVI Management Staff:

**Business Enterprise Program update – Lisa Van Ry:**

There are currently three trainees working on their one year business plan. We also have a student at the ATC who has an extensive food service background and may be interested in the program. We have placed machines at the new Meridian City Hall, which was added to an existing vending route. We also will place machines at the new Boise Police and Fire station this week. We have committed to one day a month to get out of the office and research new sites to add to the program. We toured the Nampa/Caldwell area and there are a couple of sites we will follow up on to develop.

BEP has completed the RSA 15 Report on line, which was much easier due to the new computer program from our IT Department that tracks our fiscal information. We had in gross sales in 2009-\$1,902,279 and in 2008-\$1,918,469; net profit to vendors in 2009-\$514,065 and in 2008-\$483,282; and average net per vendor in 2009-\$33,533 and in 2008-\$29,612. The program employed 31 people last year and paid \$53,054 in set aside to the agency. We currently have 16 licensed vendors with 1 working on a contract and business plan, as well as a route that is vacant in Lewiston.

We are looking at renovating the site location at Boise City Hall Snack Bar, which has been having some plumbing issues. The semi annual vendor meeting starts today and we will be hearing presentations from Greg and Nanna. On Friday, vendors will work with Larry Henrie on what is new with assistive technology and meet with Donna from the Store, who will demonstrate new portable magnifiers and CCTV's.

**Assessment and Training Center – Greg Metsker:**

The ATC has 16 students this term, all of whom have a lot of energy and motivation. We have 7 full time students with 4 living in the dorms. We are trying to be as flexible as we can to meet the needs of the clients, including the length of training. A four-week-long spring break has been scheduled due to the remodel on the kitchen areas. During this break, ATC staff will be involved in a one on one training with VR Counselors here in Boise, or will take vacation. The elevator is due to be out of order April 20<sup>th</sup> and will be down for repair for at least 6 weeks. We had one client scheduled to return to the ATC but due to the elevator work, they will not be returning until after July.

This week, 5 tours of the ATC have been given for potential VR clients. We have had as many as 23 students in the past at the ATC and we could take 15 full time. At this time we expect 17 students for next term.

Applications and information regarding this summer's College Days session have gone out to our counselors and also to staff at ISDB. The deadline is May 15th. The session will begin on July 6<sup>th</sup> and will conclude on August 7<sup>th</sup>. The students attending the College Days must be 18 or older to stay in the dorms. Commissioner Gibson suggested Greg contact the high school special education directors to get the word out on College Days. Last year was the first year we held a college session, so it could take a few years to get it going and a good number who participate from year to year.

Commissioner Gibson made a suggestion to hold during the session a presentation on accessing and using an on-line course and he would be willing to help teach this course if necessary.

The SWEP application deadline is April 17<sup>th</sup>. We currently have 16 applications and 2 more on the way. Larry will begin working on the hiring process in April and will work in conjunction with Julie from the Department of Labor to meet potential employers for the SWEP students. Larry also will be scheduling exams with the Low Vision Clinic for any SWEP students that are in need. The Department of Labor has offered to pay for some wages for SWEP this year.

**Vocational Rehabilitation – Nanna Hanchett:**

During the SWEP we will be implementing a new reporting structure for communication between Larry and the VR Counselors on an on-going basis, which will include weekly reports on the students for staff.

VR staff and the Rehab Teachers attended a transition meeting with ISDB staff on February 26<sup>th</sup>. We discussed the roles of the VRCs, Rehab Teachers, and ISDB Outreach Instructors when working with transition students. Similar meetings were held in other regions of the state and everyone was connected by video conferencing.

We will continue to evaluate the success of college days and our hope is to get the word out to school districts and also to let them know the ICBVI wants to start working with students at the age of 14, which is different from IDVRs criteria.

The VR program has completed the first 3<sup>rd</sup> of its fiscal year and the VR staff are working hard to keep clients moving through the VR process. We are now giving staff a monthly report of their outcomes and we will continue to work to move the clients the best we can as our applications and eligibilities are up at this time. The VRCs need to develop good comprehensive plans in order to get the clients into employment. Commissioner Raubenheimer wanted to know if there was a way that we could track how clients are being referred to ICBVI. Nanna indicated that there was a way to track them and that outreach does help with the referrals received.

Thank you to Greg Metsker who did a presentation on SWEP, ATC, and College Days at the Tools for Life on March 2-3 in Coeur d'Alene. Sherry Oveson and Erick Heinz were at the ICBVI information booth to answer questions.

Greg Metsker and Nanna attended a training sponsored by the Washington Blind and the new TACE centers. This training was called Preferred Provider Training and it is focused on giving CRPs specific training about Blindness and Visual Impairment to increase their effectiveness with working with our VR clients. This training was an area identified in our 3 year needs assessment. The Washington Blind had a video that they use for this training and we are in hopes of obtaining a copy to use here in Idaho. One thing that we run up against here in Idaho is having enough assistive technology to help clients become successful.

**Financial Status – Mary Quarles:**

As of January 31, 2009, the agency has expended 59.4% of the budgeted funds after holdbacks. The areas of Independent Living-Older Blind, Regional Field Offices, and Special Programs (SWEP) show as expended over the goal of 58.0%.

The Independent Living-Older Blind expenditures exceeded the goal by \$8,108 or 6% due to the annual NEWSLINE support payment of \$28,832 earlier in the year.

The Regional Field Offices expenditures exceeded the goal by \$136,948 or 9% because the State Only client services for our Sight Restoration Program has exceeded the goal by \$68,276 and is currently 85% expended. This is attributed in part to the fact that the agency's procedure is to serve as many clients as we can with limited resources, so a lot of money being expended early in the fiscal year. The Sight Restoration Program will serve the person who is in danger of losing their sight, and thus their job, as a priority over someone else that may not be in that danger.

**Independent Living – Nancy Wise:**

We currently have 307 open IL cases, and have worked with 81 VR clients. From October to February the Rehab Teachers have provided information/service to over 260 one-time referrals.

Linda Upton has been accepted into the Master's of Rehabilitation Counseling Program through Utah State University, with funds available from an RSA scholarship she received in November. Shane Hyde will pursue the Master's of Rehabilitation Counseling Program at the University of Idaho, and congratulations to April Mattox for completing the class on Introduction to Braille. For additional information on activities that the Rehabilitation Teachers were involved in, please see the Independent Living Report to the Board.

The ICBVI Senior Retreat has been rescheduled to the week of September 21<sup>st</sup>, due to the upcoming remodel, but we will be collaborating with the NFB on March 27<sup>th</sup> during their state convention at the Owyhee Plaza with a Senior Program Day.

An advertisement was submitted to Idaho Senior News for their March edition of Save Your Vision Month – the ad read: We can help with your low vision problems! Visiting the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Low Vision Clinic is a unique experience.

The annual 704 Performance Report for State Independent Living Services Program has been completed and submitted to RSA. Nancy will send a copy to Commissioner Raubenheimer.

The January monthly usage report for Newsline indicates 524 registered Idaho users, with 85 individuals consistently accessing information through the telephone.

ICBVI staff Brian Jain, Brett Winchester and Dana Ard are working with groups, including the Treasure Valley Chapter of the NFB and Valley Regional Transit, to make bus route information available in a variety of media, including large print, audio via our local channel of Newsline. The Newsline system allows users to hear narrative descriptions of each route with the description of streets, travel time, and bus stop locations, as well as fare and pass information. At this time, this is the only such innovative use of Newsline in the United States.

Commissioner Hand suggested that the ICBVI staff who work with the older blind get the word out that Ken Craft with the Blind Services Foundation can find additional monies to assist with assistive technology equipment.

### **Consumer Input:**

Bill Morgan expressed how grateful he is for Newsline and the services he has received from ICBVI.

Scot Marcott thanked the agency for the support he has received from the Idaho Falls staff, Josh and Heidi, who are great. His food costs are going down because now he can read the invoices due to the services received from ICBVI. Thank you to Angela and the staff.

Larry (ATC student) praised the ATC staff, whom he feels are phenomenal. They make it feel like a home here at the ICBVI building. Thank you for keeping the funding coming to this agency.

Carol Baron – Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind – attended a Northwest Transition Forum and discussed SWEP and transition. Many kudo's go out to Larry and ICBVI for the good work they are doing. The transition partnership meeting with ICBVI & ISDB staff went very well on February 26<sup>th</sup> and helped ISDB instructors understand that there is no entitlement to rehabilitation services, which are based on eligibility.

Dianne Milhollin is a current student at ATC taking the computer literacy classes, which are outstanding. If there were money for improvement, she would suggest adding one or two more teachers in Assistive Technology.

Jan Gawith invited everyone to the NFBI Convention at the end of March. The current president of the NFBI is Elsie Dickerson and an invitation to all ICBVI staff was sent out.

Susan Bradley noted that the NFBI Convention will be held on March 27-29 at the Owyhee Plaza here in Boise. We have mailed out 1,100 packets of information including a handout on the Braille Coin Launch, where we will be giving out chocolate Braille coins.

Romana Walhoff commented on Senate Bill 1074 (the Bureau of Educational Services of Idaho for the Deaf and the Blind) which was pulled from the floor for some additional amendments. Those amendments included the people on the board for the bureau: Two will be appointed by the Governor with one representing the blind and another representing the deaf, one parent and one teacher, one special education director and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This senate bill is expected to pass.

Debbie a full-time ATC student has been blind about 9 months and has appreciated all the services from ICBVI. Thanks to Greg and all the ATC instructors.

Another full-time ATC student is a social worker and has worked for the state in the past. She knows the funds are tight and is proud to be a consumer receiving services from ICBVI.

Fred Riggers commented on his experience with a group of recent ATC students who took a tour of the capitol with Fred. Fred commented on how well they navigated up and down the stairs and that they conducted themselves properly. Legislators were impressed with the students, all due to the teaching you are doing here at ICBVI. Teaching about blindness goes on daily.

**MOTION: To go into Executive Session under Idaho Code 67-2345(b).**

**MADE BY: Commissioner Hand**

**SECONDED BY: Commissioner Beck**

**ROLL CALL VOTE:**

**Commissioner Ireton-Aye**

**Commissioner Gibson-Aye**

**Commissioner Beck-Aye**

**Commissioner Hand-Aye**

**Commissioner Raubenheimer-Aye**

The Board reconvened into regular session at 1:20 pm

Angela Jones presented former Board Chair, Kelly Pearce, with a wooden gavel made by the ICBVI ATC wood shop. Mr. Pearce commented on his fond memories of serving on the Board. Commissioner Raubenheimer thanked Mr. Pearce for being a good mentor and role model to her.

### **Administrator's Report – Angela Jones:**

The building remodel has begun and Mary and Greg have been meeting with the contractor's weekly regarding scheduling. The plumbing and several areas of carpet are being replaced, and the library and bathrooms are being remodeled. The main elevator will be out for about four weeks beginning April 20<sup>th</sup>. The remodel is tentatively scheduled to be done the first of July.

Holdbacks started for the state on September 17<sup>th</sup>, and agencies were issued a memorandum for temporary reductions. Three separate plans were put together by each agency showing 1%, 2% and 2.5% returns of funds from personnel, operating, trustee and benefits. These returns were for 2009 and would continue into 2010 on an on-going basis. At the time, only the 1% plan was implemented. We did not want to take any funds away from the programs, thus we chose to take the holdbacks from operating.

On December 1<sup>st</sup> Executive Order 2008-05 was issued asking for an additional 3% holdback in addition to the 1% already given back, bringing it to a 4% holdback for 2009. Agencies were also to prepare for a potential additional 6-10% holdback for 2010. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, ICBVI gave back the 4% for 2009. During the Governor's State of the State address on January 12<sup>th</sup>, the agencies budget was cut 5% for 2010. ICBVI cut \$30,900 out of personnel which is on-going as we were preparing for a position that was retiring effective July 1, 2009. We also had to use \$62,200 out of operating for building maintenance, and we accomplished this by cutting down on travel, cell phone usage, per diem reimbursements, and by eliminating radio reading.

ICBVI conducted a survey about a year ago to see who was utilizing the Radio Reading Program. Eleven people called in that they were using these services. We spend \$10,000 a year on the receiver for this program and currently the prison is doing a lot of the Brailing projects. Brett Winchester will be making a list of the current Brailing projects he is working on so we can transfer duties to other staff.

As of January 20<sup>th</sup>, we have cut 6% from our 2010 budget. For our 2009 budget we had received \$106,000 in one time capital outlay, and JFAC requested that any of this one time money that had not been used was to be given back. We gave back \$18,500 of the one time money. On February 13<sup>th</sup>, an email was received with the high importance to set aside another 2%, and an Executive Order from the Governor was issued for a hiring freeze, no overtime, no employee compensations, no out of state travel, encumbrances to be limited (including end of year encumbrances), object and program transfers limited, and purchasing limited to essential time sensitive needs. These changes are in effect immediately. In addition there is talk about another 5% cut for the 2010 budget, above the 6% already cut for 2010.

On February 17<sup>th</sup>, the Stimulus Act was passed. On February 18<sup>th</sup>, an Executive Order was issued implementing a Stimulus Committee who will review requests for stimulus money and make a recommendation to the Governor, who will then send them to the President. We were to come up with a plan and send it to the Division of Financial Management by February 27<sup>th</sup> explaining what our agency would do with the stimulus money coming through our federal program. We put in a call to RSA (Rehabilitation Services Administration) on February 19<sup>th</sup>, and RSA did not know what strings would be attached as requirements for spending the stimulus money. The directive we did receive from CSAVR (Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation) was that the money must be used for jobs and that we had 2 years to spend it, and that we should show an increase in employment. We should receive ½ of the 12% split in April

and the other ½ in October. According to CSAVR, you must follow the guidelines that will be set in place and use the money.

The following is a brief description of what we will do with the stimulus money coming through the VR program:

Assistive Technology for the Assessment and Training Center (ATC) - \$50,755  
Assistive Technologist for 2 years - \$106,000  
Equipment needed for Assistive Technologist for training - \$36,000  
Scanning software/hardware for documents into the case management system - \$5,000  
Complete ICMS (Idaho Case Management System) upgrades - \$100,000  
Job Developer for 2 years - \$83,200  
Educational materials, travel costs etc for Job Developer - \$15,000  
Total VR - \$395,955

The following is a brief description of what ICBVI will do with the stimulus money coming from the Independent Living Program:

Purchase Closed Circuit Televisions (CCTV's) for use as loaners for Rehabilitation Teachers to work with clients and also to conduct training and travel around the state to teach our blind and visually impaired clients independent living skills. \$50,000  
Traveling Low Vision Clinic - \$88,850  
Funding for Newsline for 2 year - \$60,000  
Total IL - \$198,850

Commissioner Gibson is hopeful that after the 2 years are up, that we can find the funds to keep the Assistive Technologist on at ICBVI.

**ICBVI Computer Systems Upgrade Update – Jeff Terry:**

The case management system upgrades will be different for VRCs, who will have the opportunity to see a snapshot of their case information immediately, instead of waiting weeks for it to be generated. This upgrade also will allow VRCs to work on more than one status simultaneously and will revised how we process referrals into the system and will allow better tracking of known blind.

The reporting system will work in conjunction with the state fiscal system (STARS) in transferring data. This system will decrease the time for reporting fiscal expenditures to only a few days versus a few months to process.

**Americorps Accessible Transportation Network Grant Update & ICBVI Public Website – Raelene Thomas:**

We are involved in an accessible taxi project here in Ada and Canyon county in conjunction with Valley Regional Transit. The committee meets once a month with 12 consumers currently attending. Valley Regional transit has received 1.3 million in federal obligated funds for six projects, in which one is the accessible taxi project. The goal of the committee is to purchase 2 accessible taxis by September of this year.

Susan Bradley also commented on her participation in the IMAPP program through the Idaho Transportation Department, where she has been attending meetings. One of the priorities is to examine the bus stops that are not accessible. She has also been following the study being done about a downtown Boise Transit Center.

The ICBVI public website has been updated and published for staff and the public's use. The address to the website is [www.icbvi.idaho.gov](http://www.icbvi.idaho.gov). Commissioner Raubenheimer commented on how she was able to navigate through the website and find the past Board meeting minutes with no problems.

**New Business:**

The next ICBVI Board Meeting will be held on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, location to be determined at a later time.

**MOTION: To adjourn**

**MADE BY: Commissioner Raubenheimer**

**SECONDED BY: Commissioner Beck**

**RESULT: Unanimous approval**

**Meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm**