

IDAHO COMMISSION FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2008  
341 W. Washington Street  
Boise, Idaho

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Britt Raubenheimer, Chair; Dave Hand, Vice Chair; Dean Nielson; and Travis Beck.

STAFF PRESENT: Angela Jones, Administrator; Maggie Starkovich, Administrative Assistant; Greg Metsker, ATC Supervisor; Nanna Hanchett, Rehabilitation Services Chief; Nancy Wise, IL Coordinator; Mary Quarles, Sr. Accountant; Lisa Van Ry, BEP Supervisor; Trina Ayres, Management Assistant; Dana Ard, VR Counselor; Brian Jain, Rehab Teacher; and Larry Henrie, ATC instructor.

GUESTS PRESENT: Elsie Lamp and Susan Bradley, National Federation of the Blind of Idaho; Mary Dunn, Idaho State School for the Deaf and Blind; Aylee Schaffer, State Board of Education; Mark Van Ry, BEP vendor; Fred Riggers; Jan Gawith; Sue Payne; Ramona Walhof; Tammy Perkins, Governor's Office; and Tim Davis, Deputy Attorney General.

CALL TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Raubenheimer called the meeting to order at 9:00 am and called for introductions. Maggie Starkovich conducted the roll call and read the Mission Statement.

AMEND/APPROVE AGENDA

Mary Dunn, Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind requested 15 minutes on the agenda following the Administrator's Report. Dana Ard and Brian Jain requested to combine their reports currently on the agenda.

MOTION: To approve the amendments to the agenda as stated.

MADE BY: Commissioner Hand

SECONDED: Commissioner Beck.

RESULT: Unanimous approval.

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

MOTION: To approve the regular Board meeting minutes of November 29, 2007 and Special Board meeting minutes of January 17, 2008 as presented.

MADE BY: Commissioner Hand.

SECONDED: Commissioner Beck.

RESULT: Unanimous approval.

MOTION: To go into Executive Session under Idaho Code 67-2345(1)(d) to consider records exempt

from disclosure – attorney client privileged communication.

MADE BY: Commissioner Hand.

SECONDED: Commissioner Beck.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Raubenheimer – Aye

Commissioner Hand – Aye

Commissioner Beck – Aye

Commissioner Nielson – Aye

RESULT: Unanimous approval.

The Board reconvened back into regular session at 9:48 am.

#### ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: (Angela Jones)

- ICBVI's former optometrist, Dr. Garry Griswold passed away on March 8 from complications with cancer. Angela read a memorial statement written by ICBVI staff. He will be honored and remembered with gratitude and affection for his contributions to establishing and maintaining the Low Vision Clinic. Dr. Griswold's wife, Becky can be reached by e-mail at [luv4geneology@juno.com](mailto:luv4geneology@juno.com). Staff are sending flowers and taking donations for the American Diabetic Foundation.
- Vocational Rehabilitation Data: In 1994 the VR Program had 30 closures with 50% homemakers; in 2002, 53 closures with 60% homemakers; and in 2007, 91 closures with 13% homemakers. The agency is in the process of conducting a client needs assessment by telephone survey which is required by RSA. Results will be forthcoming. The agency is sending on average 50 students to college per year.
- Assessment and Training Center: The regional counselors are spending more time in the ATC. The dorm rooms are being utilized on a full-time basis. Currently there are 13 dorm rooms with a total of 15 beds. It is difficult getting full-time students as it requires 6-9 months of residency. The ATC is going to try a new strategy of allowing part-time students in residency for more intense training in a shorter time period. The Board requested data tracking on these part-time students and college students regarding their employment outcomes. ATC will be implementing a 5-week college training program this summer.
- Independent Living Data: Individuals served in independent living: 2002 - 5,573; 2007 - 10,468. Individuals seen in the Low Vision Clinic: 2003 – 100; 2007 - 332. Individuals served in IL under 55: 2000 - 104; 2007 - 232. Store sales: 2006 - \$137,000; 2007 - \$205,000.
- Building Update: The Alteration and Repair Project is underway. Five architects were reviewed and ranked and on January 31 three architects were interviewed. LKV was the architectural firm that was selected. DPW will put out a bid to contractors and the anticipated start date is October. The project list includes the following items: plumbing, upgrade lighting, roof, elevator, replace carpet and vinyl flooring, repair window trim, clean brick, and upgrade rest rooms to meet ADA. The Twin Falls office will be moving to another location with more space.
- RSA Conference: Angela and Nanna attended an RSA conference on March 5-6 in Seattle. Our 107 Review has been postponed for two years. Angela will be meeting with the Oregon Blind director in April to discuss their 17 Review.

- Recruitment: Hiring qualified counselors is an issue. There are not enough rehabilitation counselors graduating to meet the demand. Staff will be working with colleges on recruitment and Dr. Jerry Fischer from the University of Idaho has been invited to bring rehabilitation counselor students down in the fall to visit the ATC and observe blind instruction.
- NCSAB Conference: Angela will be attending the NCSAB conference in April. The major topics for discussion will include special education rehabilitation, reauthorization of the Rehabilitation Act, transitioning of youth, 107 reviews, and veterans affairs.
- Idaho School for the Deaf and Blind: Angela and Nanna attended an Advisory Board meeting on the ISDB campus. The function and intent of the new Board is to look at current programs and services. Nanna will be sitting on this Board. Angela reviewed information from the meeting regarding staff positions and program highlights.
- Budget: The Governor's recommendations were as follows:
  - \* 5% merit increase
  - \* Increase to cover benefit costs
  - \* Increase to full-time for rehab teachers in Idaho Falls and Pocatello
  - \* \$100,000 for direct services
  - \* \$48,000 for software licenses and computer upgrades
  - \* \$106,000 for replacement items (2 cars and 2 vans)

The JFAC recommendations were as follows:

- \* A part-time VRA position
- \* Increase to fund full-time for rehab teachers in Idaho Falls and Pocatello
- \* 3% merit increase
- \* \$106,000 for replacement items (2 cars and 2 vans)
- \* \$62,000 for direct services
- \* \$48,000 for software licenses and computer upgrades

- Governor's Office/Legislature:

- \* Angela introduced Tammy Perkins who is our department liaison with the Governor's Office. She is also filling Karen McGee's position as special assistant to Health and Welfare following her resignation.
- \* Travis Beck appeared before the Senate Health and Welfare Committee on February 11 and his Commission term was confirmed on February 12.
- \* Under the Governor's Energy and Conservation plan, the vendors under the BEP are being asked to install vend misers to their machines. However these devices ruin the machines' compressors. Since the vending machines are leased from Coke and Pepsi we are working with them on this issue.
- \* Nanna presented the Policy and Procedures Manual and it was passed into law.

- Training: Training was provided for staff on the aids and appliances and computer upgrades. Counselors and instructors will be coming together for assistive technology training. Training for seniors will be conducted in Boise the week of March 17.

- Long Term Goals:

- \* Computerized management system
- \* BEP - Caseload vendor locations, vendor filing and survey tracking
- \* ATC – staff reports built in, client data tracking

- \* IL – separate from VR and SO and identify separate funding sources
- \* Streamline all data needs
- \* Fiscal – payroll, automated receipts/recording receipts process, P-Card
- Boise Peace Quilt Project: Angela gave a brief overview of the project. The designs for the quilts for ICBVI have been started. There will be four quilts with tactile seasonal designs to be hung in the ATC with Braille descriptions.
- Change in Employee Compensation CEC: This year legislators passed a 3% salary increase. Due to salary savings an average of 7.8% increase was given in June last year. Due to salary savings this year an average of 4.5% increase will be given.

### BLIND TRANSITION UPDATE (Aylee Schaefer, Transition Coordinator, State Board of Education)

Currently there are no proposals on the table. Aylee is in the process of developing a summative report which is a new direction to provide the Board with current information. The goal of the report is to a) identify and answer outlying questions, and b) to synthesize the work done over the past several years. As part of the transition the Task Force for the Education of Blind Children was formed in 1999 and the report came out in October of 2002. The summative report includes national best practice, standards recently adopted, and explanation and more thorough understanding of what is least restrictive environment. It will also include all the data that has been collected up to this point including the Office of Performance Evaluation report, recommendations from the sub-committee and work groups, ISDB data and recommendations on what to do now regarding service delivery. When the report is completed it will be submitted to the Board. The Board will then request that a summit be conducted, possibly in July. The purpose of the summit is to have an open facilitated meeting whereby anyone can attend and contribute. Participants will be asked to bring any information they want to share, be prepared to be active in the process, and to attend the entire summit meetings. All participants will work through a process to develop a plan. Aylee will then take the plan and the findings from the summit and present it to the Board.

### ISDB UPDATE (Mary Dunn)

Mary commented on the summit report reminding the group that it is not based on the opinion of any one individual but rather a summary of information gathered from all individuals and groups involved. ISDB is existing to meet the needs of the students, families, schools, and community. All teaching positions both on campus and in outreach are currently filled. ISDB continues to enhance services for blind and visually impaired students: all bulletin boards on campus are accessible, all access is inclusive, and blind and visually impaired students participate in all aspects of activities on campus including student government and sports.

### ACHD ADA COMMITTEE REPORT (Dana Ard)

The Committee was formed out of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan. The goal of the plan is to make the highways bicycle and pedestrian friendly to enhance livability of the community. Composition of the Committee includes ACHR constituents, consumers from various disability groups, representatives from the Commission on Aging, the ADA Task Force, and private citizens with disabilities. Dana represents the blind consumer and Brian Jain represents orientation and mobility on the Committee. The Committee functions in an advisory capacity only. The main topic of discussion has been on the color, design, and placement of truncated domes, which are mandated by the ADA. A subcommittee was

appointed to evaluate the most efficient color for the domes and it was decided that the bright yellow worked the best. The Committee has also researched and discussed audible traffic signals. At their next meeting the Committee will discuss the vertical displacement lifts on sidewalks.

### STREET CROSSING DEVICE/TRUNCATED DOMES/GRANT POSSIBILITIES

(Brian Jain)

Brian has been working with the Regional Coordination Council which was established by the Valley Regional Transit. The Council has developed a transportation plan for the valley. Brian has been asked to serve on the Council and is in the process of submitting an application. One of the new requirements is implementing fixed bus stop stations which can be problematic for blind people. Brian is investigating the possibility of ICBVI obtaining a grant to assist with transportation. Brian and Dana are serving on an advisory council for the University of Idaho College of Engineering. The College of Engineering is developing a prototype street device that will use existing technology in crossing lights with a hand held device. This device will indicate to the blind person when the walk sign is on and using GPS technology will also keep them in the cross walk when making crossings. It is much cheaper and more user friendly to implement than existing audible traffic signals. Brian felt that his contribution to this was involving a local auditory crossing manufacturer in this development process. It will be very interesting to see if this device has potential to be implemented nationally or even internationally.

### FINANCIAL STATUS REPORT (Mary Quarles)

Mary reviewed her written summary as of January 31, 2008.

### AGENCY COMPUTER SYSTEM UPDATE (Trina Ayres)

Trina reviewed an e-mail report that Jeff Terry sent out to all staff regarding IT updates. The computer system is now a complete Microsoft shop which means that we have statewide support. Jeff is currently in training for PHP and Java Script which will enhance his ability to collect data.

### PROGRAM REPORTS:

#### Vocational Rehabilitation (Nanna Hanchett)

- We are in the process of conducting three needs assessment surveys to meet RSA requirements. The first is a telephone survey of randomly selected VR clients. The second is also a telephone survey which includes advocacy groups, community rehabilitation programs, state agency representatives, and consumer organizations. The third is an in-house survey of staff. This data will be incorporated into the State Plan.
- Nanna participated in an RSA conference call where the State Plan developed was discussed focusing on data. Nana attended the Rehabilitation Services Chiefs' meeting in Seattle where there were discussions on the 107 review process, promising practices, standardizing the definition of severely disabled, and development of a marketing tool.
- Nanna commended Mike Blackaller and Dana Ard for their assistance in upgrading the VR brochure and development of the new employer brochure.

- Nanna briefly reviewed the context of the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) centers.
- Nanna sits on the Secondary Transition Council. They sponsored the Tools for Life held in Idaho Falls last week. Idaho Falls and Pocatello staff manned a booth.
- Nanna is working on the ICMS upgrade. The criteria includes program needs, federal requirements, evaluation from staff perspectives, best practices, and IT feasibility.
- One of Dana Ard's clients was highlighted in Sunset magazine. Nanna read the article.

#### Independent Living (Nancy Wise)

Nancy reviewed her updated report. She made the following additional comments:

- Nancy clarified that the Independent Living Program is for those individuals under the age 55. The Independent Living/Older Blind Program is for those individuals age 55 and older.
- The Idaho SILC has applied for a 3-year grant from Americorp to develop available, accessible, affordable transportation within the State of Idaho. ICBVI will provide office space for one Americorp Researcher.
- Brenda Knight has completed the Store Instruction Manual for all Storekeepers. There are a few bugs to work out, but an overall smooth transition.
- The Senior Retreat Workshop will be conducted next week, March 17-21. Nancy distributed the agenda.
- We have made many changes to our Newsline database to correct addresses, remove deceased and non-active individuals and have identified 454 registered individuals with 100 consistent users. In July, 2006, 544 folks were registered, with only 37 consistent users. We now have more accurate information and an increase of 63 users over the past two years.

#### Business Enterprise Program (Lisa Van Ry)

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

- RSA has proposed a new federal report for the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Program. The old reports asked for data in groups for vendors, snack bars, and cafeterias. The new form asks for specific information such as names, installation, and net worth of vendors on military bases. This causes two major problems; 1) confidentiality and 2) unfair advantage to competition. As a group, the Blind Entrepreneurs Alliance is being asked to comment on this and force RSA to change the form.
- The Vendors' meeting was held March 7-8 in Boise. This meeting focused on training on the new, user friendly set-aside computer program. The new BEP Manual was distributed along with a BEP logo.

#### Assessment and Training Center (Greg Metsker)

Greg made the following comments in addition to his written report:

- The next term begins March 31 with 14 new students, 8 being full-time. The dorms are now open to part-time students.
- SWEP update: Larry Henrie will again be the coordinator for this program. Students will be housed at the Boise Bible College. To date 11 students are confirmed with 8 pending. Larry is working with the Department of Labor navigators to obtain more competitive jobs. This year the

program will focus more on independence, assistive technology, IL skills, and responsibility, therefore phasing out the job coaches.

### CONSUMER INPUT:

Elsie Lamp: Elsie made the suggestion that since the Board conducts a working lunch and now the staff also has their lunch at the meeting, it would be convenient if lunch could be catered for the attendees, if they wish at their own expense. Elsie noted two locations in violation of the Randolph-Sheppard Act; the State Legislature and Flying J.

The NFBI convention is scheduled for March 28-30 in Idaho Falls. Pre-registration is due tomorrow but they will accept through next week. The Salt Lake Express provides good transportation to and from eastern Idaho. Mark your calendars for the NFBI convention in 2009 the last week of March in Boise at the Owyhee Plaza. In 2010 NFB will celebrate its 75<sup>th</sup> year.

Ramona Walhof: Ramona expressed her concern that there continues to be no separation between the education of blind and deaf children by the State Board of Education. Ramona discussed two pieces of legislation. The first was congressional funding of the digital talking books transition. The amount appropriated last year was \$12.3 million. She encouraged the group to contact Senator Simpson who is on the Appropriations Committee to support the full funding for the National Library Service and to participate in the Dear Colleague letter to push through this legislation. Senator Simpson can be reached at 202-225-5531. The second piece of legislation is in regard to state public transit and a local option tax. Representative Mike Moyle is holding back on this legislation stating there should be a congressional amendment. Ramona urged the group to contact Representative Moyle to push through this bill.

Susan Bradley: Susan attended three forums on transportation and the discussions there were that the local option tax bill would be blocked. The House passed a grocery tax bill that would allow individuals making less than \$25,000 per year would be eligible for a grocery credit. This still needs to go through the Senate. The NFBI state convention will be awarding two scholarships (\$1,500 and \$1,000) to legally blind students. There are 30 scholarships available nationally with a deadline of March 31, 2008.

Joyce Pywell: Joyce is a current ATC student in her second term. She expressed her appreciation for the attention to detail by the staff. This has given structure and normalcy to her life since losing her vision. She will be attending for one more term and going into job readiness to prepare her for a career in medical transcription.

Fred Riggers: Fred commended Elsie Lamp on her presentation to the House Education Committee. She did an excellent job and received positive comments from the legislators. Fred returned to the center as a part-time student for computer training and commended Larry Henrie on his instructional skills. Fred also commended Melanie Hurling on her instruction skills in orientation and mobility.

### KNFB READER (Elsie Lamp)

Elsie described the newest technology for blind and visually impaired, the K-NFB reader, developed by

Ray Kurzweil and the National Federation of the Blind. This device combines a digital camera with character-recognition software and a text-to-speech conversion technology uploaded on a cell phone. The cost runs around \$1,595 for the software, \$600 for the cell phone, and \$495 for cell phone accessibility. The unit will be demonstrated at the upcoming NFBI state convention. Elsie reported on the Youth Slam that took place last summer. Three students and two mentors participated from Idaho. They are currently looking for funding for next year.

#### NEW BUSINESS

The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, May 29 and Friday, May 30, 2008 to include one day of ethics training, pending the availability of a trainer.

MOTION: To adjourn.

MADE BY: Commissioner Hand.

SECONDED: Commissioner Beck.

RESULT: Unanimous approval.

Meeting adjourned at 3:34 pm.