

# Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired

## Board Meeting Minutes

May 23, 2017

Board Members Present: Sue Walker, Al Schneider, Sue Payne, Britt Raubenheimer (by phone)

ICBVI Staff Present: Beth Cunningham, Nancy Wise, Greg Metsker, Mike Walsh, Corey Bresina, Trina Ayres, Jackie Stallings, Merrilee Jackson, Dawn Ristau, Shane Hyde and Gayle Worthington, Raelene Thomas (by phone).

Guests Present: Guyla Tiede, Kirk, Tom, Josh, Brianna, Drew, Alana, Elizabeth and Joe

Raelene Thomas read the mission statement.

**MOTION** to approve the agenda as printed, made by Commissioner Schneider, seconded by Commissioner Payne, all in favor.

**MOTION** to approved the February 9<sup>th</sup> ICBVI Board Meeting Minutes as printed, made by Commissioner Payne, seconded by Commissioner Walker, all in favor.

### Consumer Input:

Tom H. – Coming to ICBVI and going to the Assessment and Training Center (ATC) improved his life and mobility. “It helped open my eyes to new opportunities as my blindness comes from a brain injury.”

Josh M. – He attended the ATC about 5 years ago, Shane has been his counselor. Sometimes he does not have people who can help him with his hard copy mail, which is still a struggle.

Joe T. – Has RP and his experience working with ICBVI started when he met Shane. Shane encouraged him to go to the ATC where he spent 3 months. Greg’s leadership at the ATC is outstanding and all the ATC teachers are great. He continues to be active in the Idaho National Federation of the Blind, where Shane helped folks in Moscow start a chapter. He is very thankful for all ICBVI has done for him.

Drew – Has attended the Summer Work Experience (SWEPE) and also has attended the ATC three times. The work experience showed him how to get involved and get a tasted of what the real world is like. Since attending the ATC, Drew has become better in the kitchen, like cooking meals instead of always eating frozen waffles. He has had some work experience opportunities in Lewiston thanks to Shane, like working in a retirement home and a daycare and now working in an animal shelter. He knows for sure that he does not want to work permanently in a daycare.

Alana – Has been working with ICBVI since she was a teenager and is very thankful to have this resource and the help with education. Her experience with an employer was promising, even with using assistive technology at the worksite; however days before her start date, the employer called her and felt her assistive technology would not work with theirs.

Elizabeth – Has been working with ICBVI for 15 years, starting in high school at age 16. The technology has definitely changed over the last 15 year and ICBVI has helped her with some of the barriers that

others could not. She is a personal trainer and health coach, and builds on line courses. You can look at her website at [www.elizabethsantini.com](http://www.elizabethsantini.com).

Brianna – Has been involved with ICBVI since she was 17. She wanted to become an accountant and has had a difficult time with employers regarding her sight. She attended the ATC, and it was an amazing confidence booster. She enjoyed working with Larry and learning some computer skills.

### **Lewiston Staff Overview:**

Shane Hyde – He has been working with ICBVI for 11 years and this is the first time the ICBVI Board has had a meeting in Lewiston. Thank you to some of the Boise and Coeur d’Alene staff for coming today. Wanted to thank Guyla Tiede for her 31 years in the Lewiston office as an amazing and dedicated employee. Merrilee has helped with the training of the new VRA Dawn Ristau. Sometimes people think we are so isolated; however, this area has 3-4 colleges within 30 miles of each other. We are 755 feet above sea level and the only sea port in Idaho. The big industries here in Lewiston are logging, boating and ammunition. Cost of living in Lewiston is very affordable and he believes the future is extremely bright.

Shane feels like the pre-employment transition activities are stabilizing. One of the best tools is to give transition kids a work experience; some of those in the Lewiston area have been with Head Start, the Boys and Girls Club, nursing homes, radio stations, and the animal shelter. Shane was curious how we can get more blind or visually impaired people to work at the ICBVI, referencing the Idaho NFB chapter’s resolution.

Some highlights with the VR program at the Lewiston Office have been outreach with the Nez Perce Tribe VR program, and a tour with a transition student at Lewis Clark State College. In April, Larry Henrie came from Boise to meet with students who are attending SWEP this summer.

Gayle Worthington – has been busy with technology and VR Clients and training on O&M. Lots of outreach at health fair presentations to all the activities directors in the northwest, and also working with a law student with her assistive technology on her computer. Gayle has been helping with support groups in Moscow. She feels bad for folks that live in Clarkston Washington, on the other side of the border, because their services are in Spokane and it is difficult for them to get assistance. Washington State contracts services with the Lilac Foundation, which is a non-profit organization.

Dawn Ristau – She is really glad to be a part of the ICBVI and everyone has been very helpful to her and have been very supportive. She has learned how to audit files, manage outstanding authorizations, and how a VR plan works. She has 14 people on the Sight Restoration (SR) wait list for Lewiston. They have weekly staff meetings and she is looking forward to coming down to Boise for training.

### **Coeur d’Alene Staff Overview:**

Jackie Stallings – This has been a real transitional year for our office. We are now working more with transition student but yet still working with the adult population. She is so proud of her young people as they are doing amazing things and building professional relationships. Jackie serves on the Idaho Health Coalition Emergency Preparedness. They want to build a transit hub in Coeur d’Alene.

Merrilee Jackson – She recently attended a transportation meeting with Jackie, and she is an amazing speaker. In the Coeur d’Alene office she has closed 13 clients in the SR Program and will close another two. Eleven of those 15 are working, so SR is helping those people keep their jobs. She will train Dawn on the Lewiston SR caseload as soon as state fiscal year 2018 begins the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. Jackie and Merrilee have both given presentations to eye doctors in their area.

### **Administrator’s Report – Beth Cunningham:**

Since we last met in February, Beth, Corey and Scott attended the Sage Brush Conference in Las Vegas. This training had a variety of topics to cover including how vendors and snack bar owners can utilize technology in their business. It was attended by 7 of our vendors, who said they enjoyed the training. It was nice to get a little extra time to talk and get to know the vendors better.

We have been working on updating our MOU’s with partner agencies. Mike and Beth met with IDVR and the Tribal VR and put together an MOU that outlines how we might work together in cases in which we might share a client.

Currently, we are working on our Independent Living funding MOU with IDVR. Over the past year things changed with our funding. The independent living grant used to be housed under RSA (Rehabilitation Services Administration) and has now been moved to HHS (Health & Human Service). With this change there can now only be one DSU (designated state unit), which is now called a DSE (designated state entity). That agency will receive all of the grant and then distribute it out to us and to the SILC and then the SILC distributes it to the CILS. In the past, we received our grant directly. At this time, IDVR is the DSE and we are about 1 year into a 3 year plan called a SPIL. When this plan ends a new one will be written. The director of the SILC has made it clear that she feels we are getting too much of the IL grant currently. Currently we receive 45% of the grant. We served 96 individuals and a total of 701 with the older blind included. It will be very important over the next few years to be involved and participate in the writing of the SPIL. Nancy serves on the SILC and Beth has been attending the meetings as a guest. Candy has recently become a member as well. One thing that would be really helpful is to try to find an accurate number of how many people in Idaho are blind. The NFB says that approximately 2% of the population nationally is blind.

Beth attended the NFB Idaho Chapter Convention in March. This was well attended by ICBVI staff with 17 of us attending. It was an informative conference and a great networking opportunity.

Tom Duke, our IT staff, has been very busy working on the new Case Management system. Mike and Raelene as well as some of Mike’s staff have been testing it out and bringing up areas to troubleshoot. We are preparing for a July 1<sup>st</sup> launch. Tentatively we are planning for training for VRCs and VRAs at the end of June.

We were able to give out rate increases to staff a little early due to some salary savings. We were able to raise staff salaries from 2.75-4.95% depending upon their performance evaluations and where they fall within the range of their pay grade. We were able to make that effective April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Beth has been meeting with all of the managers to discuss the programs that they supervise and find out what their program goals are for this year. In addition, many of them had not had evaluations for some time, so she has been doing performance evaluations for all of the managers.

New position: New Transition Project Coordinator Position, we are hoping to get this position posted within the next 2 weeks. It will be in the same pay grade as the VRC's and will be supervised by Mike. This position will be focused on developing and implementing new projects and programs for students ages 15-21 across the state.

Beth has attended a half a dozen or so meetings about the one-stop over the past few years. Beth is on a committee through the workforce development council, which was created for the purpose of providing guidance and direction and designing Idaho's One Stop system structure and developing policies and providing oversight. Idaho is creating two One Stop locations. Idaho Falls will be the first location and the other one has not yet been determined. Mike and Beth are both working on this and will keep the ICBVI Board informed on progress. DOL will be the operator of the One Stop in Idaho.

We completed our audit responses on both the single audit and the management audit. Once these are approved we will receive the final report with both findings and responses.

Mike, Trina and Beth attended the most recent Region X meeting. This is an opportunity to learn what our neighboring states are doing and how they are being impacted and learn from one another. We learn a great deal from each other and Mike has a conference call set up for us with Alaska to learn a little more about how they are calculating and tracking their Pre-ETS spending.

We had another All- staff meeting last week. Live Better Idaho presented on the website and we talked about our upcoming training in September as well as other issues such as working on establishing internal controls and new guidelines, such as one on distracted driving. During this call, Beth asked for volunteers from different programs who will help with planning the in-service.

A couple of weeks ago all of us Managers attended half day training on writing rules.

Newsline- Raelene has recently taken this over from Nancy. She has been looking at the contract and we noticed that new membership has dropped. It is costing us \$31,000 per year the way this is set up at this time. That is with us being a state sponsor. This allows local news to be on Newsline. We need to get a better feel for how many people are using it for local news. Membership is free to the subscriber but there may be a less costly way for us to contribute than at this state sponsorship level. We just need to know if people are relying on it for local news and how often etc.

Beth will begin ATC training again this summer. She plans to work a little in each class to increase her skills. She is really looking forward to getting to know the students again. ATC is gearing up for summer programs that she is sure Greg will mention coming up.

Also, our management team has been doing a team activity together approximately every quarter. This past month we went to the prison to see the Braille program and the people who work there. We were very impressed and they asked us for some new software to help them with graphs and charts and pictures when they are Brailleing. We decided to go back to provide them with a surprise lunch to thank them for the work that they do. We had a few people who have used their services including Al Schneider and Dana Ard who wrote in a personal thank you that we read to the workers. We brought them a fried chicken dinner and dessert. They were surprised and over joyed with the food and the praise that they received. It was really wonderful to be able to thank them.

Beth feels like the agency as a whole is beginning to feel like a team. She thinks we have done a number of things over the past year to help create a better "team feeling." We plan to continue working on this

in the next in-service, as well as having each program continue to build stronger relationships with each other.

Trina Ayres commented on how the state hiring process works: Because ICBVI is a state agency we hire based on the guidelines of the State of Idaho Human Resources. People interested in an ICBVI position must apply on line, take a 5 of 6 question test, and upload their resume. These applications are then scored based on experience and skill set, and put into a list that is sent to the agency. The person grading the test has no idea if that person has any kind of disability.

**MOTION** to move into Executive Session 74-206 (f) to receive legal counsel regarding arbitration, made by Commissioner Schneider, seconded by Sue Payne, roll call vote

Commissioner Raubenheimer, “aye”

Commissioner Walker “aye”

Commissioner Schneider “aye”

Commissioner Payne “aye”

Let the record show that the ICBVI adjourned into Executive Session at 12:15 p.m.

ICBVI Board has reconvened into regular session at 1:35 p.m.

No motion from the Executive Session was made. However Commissioner Raubenheimer commented that a discussion on conflict of interest will occur at the next board meeting

### **Independent Living/Older Blind Program and Sight Restoration Program Update – Nancy Wise:**

IL - All the Rehab Teachers met for a very productive day and a half of assistive technology training in Boise on April 25 – 26, 2017. Topics included: a field trip to the Idaho Commission for Libraries to learn how to use the new Bard Express App on a PC presented by Sue Walker; useful teaching tools for assistive technology; basic windows commands, apple iPhone and iPad accessibility, using existing Jaws training; and a field trip to Deeann’s home to see the KNFB Reader, Amazon Echo, and Apple TV in action. Kudo’s to April for putting the training together. Brenda and Gayle provided training and handouts as well. The goal was to help RT’s develop the basic AT skills needed to succeed in an emerging world of technology.

This was also a great opportunity for Collene to show new low vision aids and get a consensus from all. Teachers also went home with inventory items that are often times difficult to mail, and several donated CCTV’s for clients who were unable to purchase for themselves.

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the training and time together!

Idaho Falls News - On April 8, Heidi attended and presented at the Spring Expo Fair at the Idaho Eye Center. Participants included eye care support staff from all local eye doctors in east Idaho. There were three separate classes (one hour each) and folks were able to try out kitchen gadgets, ADL tools and low vision aids. Mobility techniques were explained and guiding techniques were demonstrated. Following instruction, participants were turned loose to try the guiding techniques with each other, with teams of

one person blindfolded and the other guiding. Feedback received indicated that the guiding skills were very helpful, as frequently office staff need to assist patients following eye treatments. Participants also said it was a huge help to see and try out the magnifiers, as well as the ADL gadgets. One woman just had to have a double spatula for herself, so she bought one. ICBVI participation in this expo shows eye care providers that the Commission can help their patients in many ways, besides providing financial assistance. Resources were shared with all participants so referrals can be made for all ICBVI programs.

Twin Falls Outreach/Regional Low Vision Clinic - Brenda had the opportunity to present our services to a senior housing community in the Twin Falls region. Ten people attended, all but two had the beginnings of macular degeneration. They were very thankful to learn there are so many aids. Several people stated that the information helped them have hope for the future when their vision decreases.

Brenda also participated in a presentation and helped man a booth at the CSI Caregiver Assistance Conference May 18<sup>th</sup> and shared information about our agency services for people with visual impairment.

There were 25 people seen in Twin Falls - April 3, 4 and 5. Eleven were OB clients, 9 VR with 1 being a transition student, and 5 IL with 3 being students under the age of 14 attending public school and working with IESDB outreach teachers. Providing the LV clinic services to the students had two positive outcomes. The students received good recommendations and the Commission staff was able to connect with the students and parents so they will be familiar with us when they need VR transition services in the future.

All who attended the clinic were thankful for the services and received good information about their low vision needs. Collene was very instrumental in the success of the clinic. Her expertise with ordering glasses and report writing and her ultra-efficient manner kept everyone on task! It was a very busy three days but it is always a benefit to offer this service to people in their own area.

Nancy made a visit to the Twin Falls Office on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, to discuss Judy's Sight Restoration case load, and office processes, and after the last clinic appointment, we all went out to dinner to celebrate and recognize Judy's 7 years with the Commission.

VRA/Sight Restoration Program - The VRA's are working hard to finish up services for this fiscal year. Thanks to Merrilee who assisted the Lewiston office and provided training to Dawn Ristau. Merrilee will make another visit to Lewiston June 21 – 22nd for SR intake (she will train Dawn on SR, and fiscal year end paperwork.

Thank you to Dawn Scott, our VRA in Pocatello who provided training and support to Amy in Twin Falls as well.

Both Merrilee and Dawn Scott finished up services that Guyla and Judy had started before they retired.

There are 37 referrals throughout the regions for follow up calls in July to determine eligibility.

Both Dawn Ristau and Amy Zapata our new VRA's will be coming to Boise the week of July 10<sup>th</sup> to meet staff, attend ATC, and observe Dr. Hansen and clinic/store processes.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation Update – Mike Walsh:**

Federal Reporting - RSA-113 report was completed and submitted on April 19<sup>th</sup>.

WIOA Update/WIOA Convening - Beth, Trina and Mike attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> WIOA Convening in San Diego, hosted by the Department of Labor. Mike attended the Performance Measures track. These are the 6 new common measures on which the states will be measured. Some states have begun collecting baseline data (UI data); several states are in the same position as us (waiting for Labor). The ever important take-away: The new performance measures highlight the alignment and co-enrollment of programs (IDOL, IDVR, ICBVI, CTE, Aging).

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment (CSNA) – University of Washington has begun work on our CSNA. Questionnaires for the 3 groups (clients, employees, stakeholders) have been approved. Tom has provided UW the data they need; including contact information.

Common Performance Measures – There has been no movement on the data sharing MOU since last quarter. While we keep pushing, we continue to wait for Labor.

One Stop Systems – Most of this past quarter has been focused on the MOU, which has to be completed July 1. “Branding” has also been discussed. The national One-Stop brand is “America’s Job Centers.” Since we are a core partner in the One Stop system, we will likely have to include this logo on our materials.

Customized Employment – Mike attended another meeting at IDVR. They have identified the school districts for the pilot (West Ada, Idaho Falls, Kellogg). Counselors and providers (CRP’s) will need to attend Discovery Training. I have not decided which (if any) of my staff will attend.

For more information on Discovery:

[http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/docs/FCIC\\_FactSheets/FCIC\\_FactSheet\\_Discovery.pdf](http://flfcic.fmhi.usf.edu/docs/FCIC_FactSheets/FCIC_FactSheet_Discovery.pdf)

MOU’s – We completed the MOU with IESB, and it has been signed by both Beth and Brian.

Public Comment Meetings – Public comment meetings are scheduled and will be held at all of our regional offices this month and early June. Mike will attend (in person) all of these meetings. Two items are on the table for comment:

- 1) Our revised VR Manual
- 2) Client rights and responsibilities form

Negotiated Rule Making – Raelene and Mike have submitted the proposed rule changes for the VR program to our Attorney General for review. A summary of changes include:

- 1) Updating Legal Authority / Title and Scope / Incorporation by Reference;
- 2) Added definition of MSD;
- 3) Updated IPE to reflect 90 day federal policy;
- 4) Updates to payment policy: changed tuition rate from 90% to 100% / increased cap on low vision follow-up appoints / increased cap on OJT’s.
- 5) Added Order of Selection policy.

Case Management System – We have a name for our new case management system; Orion.

Jackie Stallings gets dinner on the Chief! We have a training scheduled for the VRC's and VRA's June 28-29 in Boise.

#### Special Programs / Events:

Tools for Life - Matt, Linda, Rocio attended the conference in Pocatello on March 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> with several of their clients.

Work Readiness Camp - ICBVI is working in collaboration with Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind in creating and facilitating a 3 day summer program geared toward transition aged students who are blind. This camp will implement several of the pre-employment transition services into a fun and hands on experience. This summer 9 of our clients will be participating in this program. The program is utilizing older blind students as mentors. We are also incorporating a variety of activities, such as ropes course, interactions with the department of labor and an interactive discussion about the financial and emotional benefits of work to allow our students an opportunity to gain skills while interacting with peers and developing improved skills of self-advocacy. The program will be held in Gooding, on the IESDB campus from June 11<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup>.

#### College Days -

- Scheduled for 6/11 – 6/16 2017
- The agenda is tentatively set
- Speakers have been, or are being, identified for each session and tentatively include:
  - Lance Kaldor (IDOL),
  - Larry L Lewis, Founder/CEO of Flying Blind LLC,
  - Josh Loya, a nationally recognized AT specialist and martial arts expert
- App have been submitted – had 15 applications and 2 participants withdraw already
- Counselors are working with participants to complete the acceptance packets
- Staff members are working with presenters on adapting and making accommodations for any/all presentations

#### Assistive Technology and Social Media -

##### Assistive Technology

- Total Training: 68 hours
  - Re-ETS: 10 hours
- Assessment: 12 (2 Pre-Employment Transition Student)
- Job Sites:
- Three Rivers Insurance
- Technical Assistance (includes staff, clients and community members): didn't track this quarter
- Provided Professional Development: 6 hours
- Public/Community Events:
  - Attended the quarterly Idaho Assistive Technology Project Advisory Council meeting in April
  - Continued discussion RE web accessibility with DRI, Dept of Admin and Lt. Gov. Littles' office.
  - Presentation to guidance counselors at Frank Church and Weiser High Schools

Social Media - We have hired Nick Rudow to help with managing our Social Media accounts and content this summer. He starts May 22<sup>nd</sup>. He will work closely with the College Days, SWEP and Work Readiness Camps to get timely content posted. We will work on YouTube content as well – taking ideas.

Type	Description	Number	Other
Total number of fans	Number of people who have “liked” our page	310	+11 from last report
Average Daily Reach	The # of people, each day, who see content from ICBVI	18.57 over 97 days	Previous report = 29.08 over 84 days
Negative comments	Meaning that a viewer hid a post, or marked it as spam	5	Increase of 4 since last report
Average daily Engagement	On average, the number of people who engage with the page daily.	1.32	2.79 last report
Total video views		8	decrease of 7
Number of people talking about ICBVI on Facebook	“Talking about” includes people liking the Page, posting to the Page's timeline, liking, commenting on, or sharing one of the Page posts, answering a question posted, responding to an events, mentioning the Page, tagging the Page in a photo, or checking in at our location.	65	Decrease of 67 from last report

Transition students and pre-employment transition services – The Summer programs are set to go! We currently have around 60 students eligible for PETS.

Business Services and Engagement - Business after Hours (Twin Falls)

Linda attended BAF April 27 with new Vocational Rehabilitation Assistant Amy Zapata. Amy has past employer connections with Department of Labor, Family Health Services, and Chobani Yogurt, to name a few. Amy’s contacts will be very beneficial to the VR program in Twin Falls because as we all know sometimes it is not what you know but WHO YOU KNOW! Happy to network with Amy and her connections!

Program Statistics - Current Caseload numbers as of May 2017 (Total of 473 active clients)

	17-Jan	17-May
CDA	41	60
LEW	67	63
TV 1	75	93
TV 2	71	86
TWF	32	47
POC	30	41
IF	58	83
	374	473

Other Regional Updates:

Treasure Valley - Jeff has done a great job of managing his caseload of over 200!

Twin Falls - VRC provided transportation and attended Aim High; Rise Above hands-on tour of Idaho Air National Guard A-10 fighter jet at Gowen Field in Boise with three blind high school students.

Idaho Falls / Pocatello - The Idaho Falls Transition team sponsored and held a Reality Town experience for 40 students with disabilities. The ICBVI regional office was involved in this activity.

VR Spotlight – ICBVI Intern (Marya Bruning) – Mike read letter from Marya to the ICBVI Board –

Dear ICBVI Board Members,

This letter is to express my thanks to ICBVI for the outstanding counseling practicum experience that I just completed in Boise. I am a first-year graduate student in the University of Idaho’s Rehabilitation Counseling and Human Services program, which is located in Boise and Coeur d’Alene. One of the requirements of my program is to complete a 100-hour practicum during the third semester. Since I am new to the field of vocational rehabilitation, my advisor, Dr. Bryan Austin, suggested that the Commission might be a good place for me to learn. He was absolutely right; I could not have found a better place or a better group of teachers.

I spent my first block of time in the ATC. At first, just the thought of putting on the eye shades was nerve-wracking. When I met Greg Metsker’s staff and observed their interactions with the ATC students, though, I felt at ease. I realized that I could trust the teaching methods and the people around me, even if I did feel vulnerable and naive. The teachers encouraged me to be curious and ask any question I could think of, which led to several memorable conversations about the meaning of blindness and disability in our culture. When I left the ATC each day, my mind was exhilarated and exhausted.

Next, I spent a day in the Low Vision Clinic with Dr. Hansen, Lynn Vaughn, Collene Kroenke, Deeann Bauer, and volunteers. It was clear that this team of people are *the* experts on guiding people to live well with low vision. All day long, patients received the time and attention they needed to talk about their changing vision and to experiment with different aids until they felt comfortable moving forward.

In the next phase, I shadowed Steve Achabal and Laine Amoureux to understand what kinds of services ICBVI provides in the community. These experiences stand out to me for two reasons. First, I appreciate how ICBVI delivers services to people in their homes and workplaces. Not only does it help the providers understand the true needs of their clients, it also shows clients that ICBVI is serious about building relationships and tailoring services. Second, I now have a clearer picture of how VR counselors can work in partnership with other professionals. *Multidisciplinary teamwork* is a phrase that I often read about in rehabilitation textbooks, but Steve, Laine, and the staffs in the Low Vision Clinic and ATC showed me what it means and why it matters.

My final phase of practicum was centered on VR counseling. Rocio Gil and Jeff Weeks kindly allowed me to observe their work in the office, in clients' homes, and in the schools. Then, when Rocio left on maternity leave, Mike Walsh offered me the chance to work on her caseload with Jeff. Had someone told me in January that I would be in this position by late March, I would not have believed them. I worked in the office for seven weeks alongside Jeff and assisted by Laurie Carlin, and though I only scratched the surface of VR counseling, I learned more than I thought was possible. To summarize this incredible learning experience, I would say that to be a VR counselor is to be caring, knowledgeable, resourceful, discerning, hopeful, and hard-working.

I am not sure what lies ahead for the rest of my counseling education and career, but I feel more prepared as a result of my time at ICBVI. I feel so grateful for the time and energy everyone at the Commission devoted to my education. You have made me a lifelong advocate for ICBVI and the people you serve. With appreciation, Marya Bruning.

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

There are currently 11 students on the ATC roster. We started the term on April 4<sup>th</sup> with 12 clients in the center, and one of them completed her training and is now pursuing work in the restaurant field. Of the 11 students in the center right now, 4 of them are part time, with the remainder of the students taking at least 4 classes 5 days a week, which is the distinction between full and part time. Five of the ATC students are living in the dorms this term, and they are from Boise, Eagle, Pinehurst and Nampa. Since Larry is focusing 100% of his time on SWEP at this point, we are fortunate to have Alison Steven helping out this term in the Braille classroom, so that Scott can devote his time to computer students. It is always a treat to have Alison in the center. She is a great instructor and like the rest of the staff, she totally believes in the skills we teach and the potential of our students. The last three student activity days since the last board meeting in February were a wagon ride and BBQ lunch in Garden Valley, a trip to Wahooz for some laser tag and miniature golf and a trip to Shoshone Falls on the Snake River. As always, the students come up with the activities and do the planning to make them happen, which for some students is their first chance to coordinate something like this and to gain a consensus and lead a group of people in this sort of endeavor. In addition to the organized activities during the ATC term, clients who are living in the dorms often go out in the evening and on the weekends to experience other fun and interesting things. It seems like trips to Walmart, Winco and the mall are always happening and trips to the downtown bars and clubs seem to be a popular destination. Occasionally we get a group of

students who will get monthly memberships to the Downtown YMCA for swimming and exercise. Julia Davis and Ann Morrison parks are a popular destination in the warmer months. During the summer months as well it is common for students to attend the Alive after 5 or First Thursday activities after classes a few evenings a month, and to go stroll through the Farmers Market on 8<sup>th</sup> street on Saturdays. We have even had a couple groups of students in the recent past that enjoyed attending concerts at the Knitting Factory and other venues around town. While we as a staff don't organize these after-hours activities, we often let students know about them, and when their confidence and skills are up to snuff many students will participate. Of course the skills they are learning in class during the week enable them to participate on their own without any instructors around. In addition to the training provided to students this term, we have been able to provide some introductory blindness training to the family of one of our students, to a BSU student who is making a film about a blind character, and to Marya, the University of Idaho Counseling intern who spent the spring semester at the commission. In addition to that we have hosted visually impaired high school students from around the valley for the IESDB ADL classes in February, March, April and May, the most recent session being on May 12<sup>th</sup>.

Raelene completed the latest round of ATC satisfaction surveys recently. These were surveys of clients who completed ATC training last fall. There were 6 clients to survey; unfortunately we were only able to get in touch with 2 of them. The respondents are asked to give each class a numerical rating between 1 and 5, with 5 being excellent. Each class is rated individually, as well as the ATC staff as a whole. The average rating for all the classes combined was a 4.06, with the staff being rated a 5 by both respondents. The comments were positive, with the exception of one of the respondents who was disappointed that we were not able to teach them how to use accounting software such as Quick Books or Accomplished Cash Manager. Unfortunately, JAWS is only compatible with the Cash Manager program, and none of us are accountants or bookkeepers, so our attempt to delve into that arena was not as successful as the student was hoping. This particular client was a whiz at computers and JAWS before arriving at the ATC. His primary goal as it turns out was to learn how to do bookkeeping for his home business. Unfortunately none of the ATC staff are qualified to teach accounting.

The summer term in the ATC could be another busy one. In addition to the 7 or 8 students who will be returning, we have 9 more clients who want to come in for a month or so during July and part of August. Most of them are college students who wish to improve their alternative skills a bit before they go back to school in the fall. This trend has been growing over the last few years, and I think we have been able to contribute a great deal to the recent success of some of our clients who are in college.

The preparations for the SWEP and Work Readiness Camp are well under way. We will have 15 participants in SWEP this year who will be coming from all over the state. Larry has secured more than enough jobs for the kids. We had over 50 applicants for SWEP staff positions this summer and we hired 32 of them. We had to pull the job posting from the DHR website after only a couple of weeks because we had so much interest in the program this year. We hired our own Job Mentors this summer instead of using a CRP to provide coaches. Our intent is that by hiring our own mentors, we can be more efficient in how we use them. For instance we can use one mentor for 2 clients if the clients are going to work at the same place. If a client needs more mentoring than we originally predicted, it won't be a problem to keep one of our mentors around longer to work with the client. We can also leverage off of our weekend shifts and have some of those staff do job mentoring during the week. That makes the weekend staff positions more attractive and easier to fill since the staff will be getting more than just 24 hours of work a week. Hiring our own mentors should also make the accounting and paperwork easier to deal with, especially given that the kids' jobs will be bridging two fiscal years this summer. We can also more easily control when time sheets are submitted and invoices are paid as needed to make the end of year accounting work out nice and clean. By doing it this way, the VRA's and Counselors won't

have to authorize for mentoring services either, which will help reduce their paperwork, especially at fiscal year-end. Kevin is the ATC representative on the Work Readiness Camp Committee this year, taking over for me. They have a draft agenda put together and are finalizing plans for the camp, which runs June 11<sup>th</sup> through the 14<sup>th</sup> at the IESDB campus in Gooding. I believe there are 7 participants on board so far. Some or all of the ATC staff will be assisting with the program each day as needed.

### **Business Enterprise Program Report – Corey Bresina:**

BEP Spring Training - The Randolph-Sheppard Vendors of America Sagebrush National BEP Training Conference was held the week of February 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> in Las Vegas, Nevada. Operators in attendance were Kevin Servatius, Tony Bridges, Travis Beck, Lynn Kneip, Theresia Hout, Bhavani Jorgens, and Daniel Solis. We all had the opportunity to hear from a multitude of speakers on topics ranging from assistive technology to management skills to personal accountability. Each day there were various breakout sessions for BEP vendors and SLA staff members, and these gatherings allowed the participants to meet new people and continue to network with other R-S vendors. This conference proved to be a valuable experience for all of us and an opportunity to get a better understanding of how other states and vendors run their operations.

Additional Seminar for BEP Staff - After returning from the Sagebrush conference we attended a one-day Fred Pryor seminar, which was focused on strategies, tips, and techniques for fighting frustration in the workplace. The goal was to gain the communication skills needed to de-stress all challenging relationships. The ability to handle contrary and difficult people with determination and diplomacy is a valuable skill for everyone. Learning these communication skills will help us understand each other better and the Program vendors who we work with. Through this path to enhanced interpersonal skills and improved morale, we hope to have a new mood of cooperation among all stakeholders. With these new skills and techniques we have the ability to become a tighter, more effective, and more productive all around team.

National Council of State Agencies for the Blind: Spring Training Conference 2017 - BEP Supervisor, Corey Bresina, traveled to Bethesda, Maryland in early April to attend the NCSAB spring conference. The conference was centered on 'Best Practices for Implementing WIOA in the Blindness VR Context' and there was a full day of 'Managing today's Randolph-Sheppard Program Effectively' training. Topics covered included: Micro-markets, Cash vs Cashless Payment Systems, Identifying Future Candidates, New Administration (White House), New Congress, New Times: What do They Mean for Randolph Sheppard?, and Growing Your Program and Adding New Facilities.

BEP Specialist - Scott Lind has been taking Program inventory while doing weekly ride-alongs with the operators in the local vicinity. Spending time with the vendors while they work their routes/locations has given him a better idea of the day-to-day struggles of running their businesses with a visual impairment. Through this process he has also been able to forge healthier personal and professional rapport with each of these vendors. Scott did travel up to Lewiston with me yesterday and will be out with Bhavani on her route today. We will head up to Coeur d'Alene this afternoon and continue to work with Bhavani on Wednesday and Thursday. Also, Scott just recently added a new vending site to Bill Heseltine's vending route. He was able to successfully facilitate the installation of a vending machine in the new location and assigning the location to the proper vendor. This was his first experience with a new site location installation and has learned a lot from this involvement.

NAMA D.C. Fly-In 2017 - BEP vendors Theresia Hout and Bhavani Jorgens are looking forward to attending the NAMA Fly-In on July 25th-26th in Washington, DC (BEP Specialist Scott Lind will also be going with). They will have the opportunity to speak to our Idaho Congressmen on behalf of the blind vendors around the state, and network with other vending and micro market industry professionals from all over the country.

Disposal and Moving of Equipment - Scott and Corey have continued to be busy with the disposal of damaged and useless BEP equipment. For about the last 7-8 months we have been getting rid of the unused and old items we have in the Boise storage unit. Some of this equipment was scrapped at the local junk yard and most was sold at an auction house in Nampa. Like Corey mentioned in the last report, the State Board of Examiners authorized the disposal of these surplus assets. The unit is much more manageable now and we hope to finish this project by the end of this summer. We have also been able to properly move/install/uninstall some equipment for a few vendors and feel this helps to lower some of these operational costs to the Program.

Vending Machine Repair Technicians - Locating a vending machine technician (and machine mover) in eastern Idaho, especially ones with INL security clearance, is still proving to be very difficult. The BEP vendors in this region have been doing some of their own repairs, but some repairs are just too mechanical for even the most technically savvy of vendors. Currently they are getting major repairs done by a company out of Salt Lake City and this isn't always ideal. We hope to partner with a more local company in the near future and make this less of an issue.

Financial Snapshot from Q1 and Q2 - 2017

2017	OCT-DEC (Q1)	JAN-MAR (Q2)	APRIL- JUNE (Q3)	JULY- SEPT (Q4)	Total
Total Operator Sales	\$ 517,817.96	\$ 686,229.69			\$ 1,204,047.65
Total Net Income	\$ 106,223.06	\$ 165,348.34			\$ 271,571.40
Set Aside Collected	\$ 12,152.00	\$ 16,534.83			\$ 28,686.84
Average income %	23.37%	27.52%			25.44%

**Fiscal Report – Trina Ayres:**

Status of the SFY17 budget as of May 17, 2017:

		Appropriation:	Expended:	Percentage:	
Personnel	-	General Fund	790,600	656,591.43	83.04%
		Federal Fund	2,020,000	1,721,599.38	85.22%
		Adaptive A & A	20,400	18,318.47	89.79%
Operating	-	General Fund	65,700	51,852.86	78.92%
		Randolph-Sheppard	27,600	2,393.21	8.67%

	Rehab Revenue (SSA)	13,718	8,094.92	59.00 %
	Miscellaneous	28,100	2,025.71	7.20%
	Adaptive A & A	47,900	36,634.26	76.48%
	Federal Fund	619,800	462,668.25	74.64%
Trustee/Benefit -	General Fund	599,200	455,505.29	76.01%
	Randolph-Sheppard	100,100	13,350.00	13.33%
	Rehab Revenue	43,582	43,486.82	99.78%
	Miscellaneous	56,300	25,290.06	44.92%
	Federal Fund	541,500	508,400.94	93.88%
Total	-	4,964,500		

Update on the 15% reserve requirement for pre-employment transition services:

Yesterday (May 16, 2017) the March 31<sup>st</sup> SF-425 (Federal Financial Report) was filed. In order to accurately reflect pre-employment expenditures after the myriad of changes at the federal level, all expenditures back to October 1, 2015 were reviewed for allowability. As of March 31<sup>st</sup>, as reported earlier, the FFY15 15% reserve requirement was met – this amount was \$368,666. The 15% reserve for FFY16 is \$379,110; of this amount \$250,337 has been expended, leaving a mere \$128,773 to be expended prior to September 30, 2017. Expenditures for SWEP and College Days, in addition to the counselors' and rehab teachers' time, will easily account for the remainder of the FFY16 reserve. The current FFY17 reserve is \$219,220. Once we receive the final grant award after July 1<sup>st</sup>, that amount will increase.

The SFY18 appropriation is as follows:

		Appropriation:	Expended:	Percentage:	
Personnel	-	General Fund	796,500	-0-	-0-%
		Federal Fund	2,106,800	-0-	-0-%
		Adaptive A & A	20,600	-0-	-0-%
Operating	-	General Fund	65,900	-0-	-0-%
		Randolph-Sheppard	27,600	-0-	-0-%
		Rehab Revenue (SSA)	34,300	-0-	-0-%
		Miscellaneous	28,100	-0-	-0-%
		Adaptive A & A	47,900	-0-	-0-%
		Federal Fund	620,000	-0-	-0-%
Trustee/Benefit -		General Fund	599,200	-0-	-0-%
		Randolph-Sheppard	100,100	-0-	-0-%
		Rehab Revenue	13,000	-0-	-0-%
		Miscellaneous	56,300	-0-	-0-%
		Federal Fund	470,300	-0-	-0-%
Total	-	4,986,600			

Spending authority from the Federal Fund Trustee/Benefit in the amount of \$69,900 was transferred to Personnel to fund salary and benefits for the new transition coordinator position. The majority of the costs for this position will be applied to the 15% reserve for pre-employment transition services.

The governor recommended a 3% increase for state employees based on merit. JFAC approved the recommendation so ICBVI was able to implement FY18 increases in mid-April. The governor has not yet addressed increases for any administrators. Employees will see an increased cost for benefits this year. The cost for insurance has increased a minimum of 10% per employee since the implementation of the Affordable Health Care Act; this year the increased cost is \$1,220 per employee raising benefit costs for the state to \$13,460 per eligible FTP.

Also included in the on-going budgets for agencies is the cost of Cybersecurity Insurance. ICBVI's portion is minimal – only \$200 per year at this point.

**New Business:** The next ICBVI Board Meeting has been proposed to be held in Pocatello on August 10<sup>th</sup>. UPDATE: due to conflicts in schedules, the August Board Meeting will be held on Tuesday, August 15<sup>th</sup> in Boise.

Adjourn at 3:10 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Raelene Thomas on 6/14/17