

Idaho Commission for the Blind & Visually Impaired
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
July 30, 2015

Board Members present: Britt Raubenheimer, Chair; Mike Gibson, Vice-Chair; Sue Payne; Al Schneider and Travis Beck.

Staff present: Nancy Wise, Raelene Thomas, Greg Metsker, Trina Ayres, Candy Harris, Jeff Weeks, Matthew Queen, and Rocio Gil.

Guests present: Dana Ard, Don Nepple, and Jan Gawith.

The agency mission statement was read by Raelene Thomas.

MOTION to approve the minutes from April 9, 2015 and June 10, 2015. Motion made by Commissioner Gibson, seconded by Commissioner Payne – all in favor.

MOTION to approve the agenda for July 30, 2015, as stated. Motion made by Commissioner Payne, seconded by Commissioner Schneider – all in favor.

The ICBVI Board took a moment of silence in honor of Bruce Christopherson.

Administrator's Report – Nancy Wise:

Commission update for this quarter – very busy with the end of SFY 2015 – lots of invoice paying and initialing. Our staff worked very hard to provide last minute services before the end of the fiscal year. SFY 2016 budgets have been set at what they were last year – except some additional funds to Fixed Costs because of the increase on rents in the regions and a few other areas where VR and IL split costs. Trina's upcoming fiscal report will provide additional details.

The Lewiston team is thrilled with their new office space – which has four offices that are enclosed with another room for copiers, lunch room, and open area in the center. This new/bigger space will accommodate all of Lewiston's needs into one office location instead of a separate A & A Store down the hall, and a storage unit. They appreciated Tom Duke coming to Lewiston to assist with computer system set up.

At this time Angela does not want us to fill the Rehabilitation Services Chief position. Matt Queen continues his role as the lead Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) answering VR questions, hosting counselor conference calls and approving time sheets. All invoices, p-card transactions, and training requests come to Boise, along with transition time tracking hours.

The new ILOB position will not be filled right away as Michelle Grandstaff is working limited hours weekly due to some medical issues, but we have decided to house the position in Boise which Nancy will talk about in the IL report.

Corey Bresina was hired on as the new BEP Specialist and started work on July 7th. Cory has a lot of experience in the food industry, which includes having owned and operated a restaurant for years. Cory is attending ATC several hours a day and is busy visiting locations while Gina is on vacation this week.

VR staff has been working with Raelene to organize and update the VR Policy and Procedure Manual, which Matt and Raelene will talk about later.

Managers along with VR staff have talked about some of the WIOA requirements for the Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS), including the requirement that 15% of our total federal grant, about \$368,000, is spent on these services. So far we are at about \$90,000; however, we should be able to claim all of SWEP services this summer. Trina and Nancy will be attending the Region X Meeting in September in Portland as there will be more information and discussion on WIOA. Commissioner Raubenheimer asked Trina if we anticipated not being able to spend all of the \$368,000 on PETS, and Trina indicated they are looking at about \$150,000 that will not be spent, which may cause a possible grant reduction. Trina gave the following information to the ICBVI Board about the five required activities of PETS:

- 1 – job exploration counseling;
- 2 – work-based learning experiences, which may include in-school or after school opportunities, or experience outside the traditional school setting (including internships), that is provided in an integrated environment to the maximum extent possible;
- 3 – counseling on opportunities for enrollment in comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs at institutions of higher education;
- 4 – workplace readiness training to develop social skills and independent living; and
- 5 – instruction in self-advocacy, which may include peer mentoring.

The VR counselors, Candy Harris and Jason Madsen attended the Idaho Chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association Conference here in Boise on July 23-24th.

College Days Program June 29 – July 3, 2015 was a success – there were some really great sessions full of information that Laine will report on later this afternoon.

Greg and LeAnn Starr, SWEP Coordinator, have been busy with SWEP and the new term of ATC started July 7th.

ICBVI In-Service is September 23 and 24th at the Best Western Airport Inn in Boise. Kevin, Jeff and Rocio have joined the planning committee of Raelene, Greg and Nancy to assist in finding speakers and employers for an Employer Panel session. Trina is scheduling a PERSI Retirement speaker. Our In-Service Meeting is scheduled August 13th to wrap up all details.

We have submitted ICBVI's Strategic Plan to DFM due July 1, as well as the Agency's Performance Measurement Report, which was due September 1, 2015.

Again, Nancy wants to thank the Management Team and dedicated staff that are constantly problem solving and providing excellent customer service in all areas!

SWEP Report – LeAnn Starr:

LeAnn presented to the Board about a 20 minute video of the SWEP participants who were interviewed by a SWEP Staff person about what they thought of their time in the SWEP this summer, their work experience, interacting with other students, learning to work with a team on the job, and the personal activities. There were 8 boys and 6 girls who participated this summer, some of the jobs were located at the YMCA, Computers for Kids, Parks and Recreation, Ada County Assessors, Ada County Housing, The Bridge Café, and The Galley Café. All the employers have indicated that they would like to have them back or were willing to give them a letter of recommendation.

LeAnn feels that most of the students have grown from their experience in SWEP this summer by holding down a job, which has given them better self-esteem, more confidence in their abilities, and an increased positive social interaction. LeAnn recommended that ICBVI might look into trying same sex participation one summer, like all boys one year, and then all girls the following year. Some of the Board felt this could be too competitive or clique-ish for all the same sex attendance. LeAnn is moving to South Carolina and has offered to come back next summer to help with SWEP.

Consumer Input:

Dana Ard is the president of the Idaho Chapter of the NFB and wanted us to know how much she appreciates working with ICBVI and hopes to increase the partnership in the future with different activities for the blind and visually impaired. She also thanked ICBVI for the funding that was given to the BELL program this summer. The program held in Boise had 11 students participating from ages 4-12 years old, and the Idaho Falls program had 7 kids participate this year in a six day camp. Here in Boise, the SWEP kids were mentors for the Bell kids during a scavenger hunt and then had pizza with them. NFB also assisted with College Days this year, as Dana was able to do a class on self-advocacy for them. Dana also asked that we let her know if we are asking for additional items in the budget this year, as those can be addressed through NFB at the legislative dinner.

Jan Gawith has been hearing about some very impactful stories about people who are blind losing their newborn babies because outsiders feel the baby is in danger being raised by a blind parent. How do we get more awareness out to the public about this? The Board suggested social and regular media as an outlet to educate the public.

Susan Davis is a student here at the ATC and has been taking classes since last October. She has an eye condition that is slowly deteriorating her vision and eyes, she will be getting surgery soon but this will leave her with no sight at all. She has learned over the past months here with the training at the ATC and has gained a lot of confidence and is comfortable with doing the surgery now.

Another ATC student recommended to the Board that the ATC teach students how to avoid viruses on the internet, etc and how to get through firewalls.

MOTION: To move to Executive Session 74-206 (f) at 11:45 a.m., to discuss legal issues regarding the arbitration, made by Commissioner Raubenheimer.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Raubenheimer: Yes

Commissioner Payne: Yes

Commissioner Gibson: Yes

Commissioner Beck: Yes

Commissioner Schneider: Yes

The ICBVI Board resumed into open session of the meeting at 1:20 p.m. with the following motions:

MOTION: The ICBVI Board accepts the decision of the Arbitration Panel on the case of Lynn Kneip versus the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired and will not seek an appeal. Made by Commissioner Schneider, seconded by Commissioner Payne, all in favor.

MOTION: The ICBVI Board directs the Business Enterprise Program Supervisor to better document BEP vendors' training in their vendor case files, and the Board would like an update of the changes put into place at the next Board Meeting. Made by Commissioner Payne, seconded by Commissioner Gibson.

Recommendation from Board – In the area of deficiency that causes the probation of a BEP Vendor, the Business Plan will be updated. The BEP Supervisor will consult with the Blind Merchants Council of Idaho about how to do this.

College Days – Laine Amoureux:

Similar to last year's program the focus was on experiential learning opportunities. The goal was to present participants with real-world opportunities to put skills to the test, and receive hands-on training and support if skills didn't work so well for them. There were 8 applicants, 3 female and 5 males, ages 17 – 23, from Twin Falls, Boise, Lewiston and Coeur d'Alene. Two of the participants expressed interest in the ATC, and acknowledged the need for additional training.

ICBVI collaborated with members of the NFBI to coordinate evening activities, present on a few topics, and they hired Tim Paulding from Washington State to stay in the dorms to provide added support to students. Tim presented on several topics throughout the week, including O&M, GPS, organization, and served as a student panelist for us.

NFBI also selected 3 College Days participants for the opportunity to attend the 75th annual National Convention of the NFB. We also connected with Commissioner Gibson for an afternoon at Boise State University, learning about disability student services.

Collaborated with Dept. of Labor to present an afternoon focused on career exploration and soft skills necessary for employment, and navigating education. Maggie McCormick from Simplot Co. joined us, and the DOL, to talk about interviewing skills as it relates to being the one interviewed, and doing the interviewing. She touched on the topic of disclosure.

Current and former college students, and currently employed professionals, including Commissioner Beck, joined us on the final day for some networking events, which participants prepared lunch for.

Volunteers from NFBI, IESDB and regional AT vendors helped provide training and support to students as needed throughout the week. We received donations of water from 4 BEP vendors and breakfast and snacks from The Galley.

Independent Living & Sight Restoration Program Updates – Nancy Wise:

During this FFY 2015 the RT's have served 653 older blind and 82 IL clients. The VRA's served 75 clients during SFY 2015, and are currently working with 36 individuals to provide sight restoration services.

We will be announcing soon for the OB rehab teaching position. After getting input from the rehab teachers, the position will be housed in Boise. Brenda currently covers 8 counties: Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Custer, Elmore, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka and Twin Falls. If another RT covered Elmore and Gooding it would really help out a great deal.

The regional low vision clinics held in Twin Falls, Lewiston and CDA continue providing valuable services to so many patients. Special thanks to Gayle Worthington assisting with the CDA clinic and Merrilee. Collene and Lynn contribute to the success of the regional clinics. Our Boise clinics continue to be busy and the month of August is filling quickly.

Low Vision Clinic Report-Region II, by Shane Hyde

Region II held its annual Low Vision Clinic on July 20, 21, and 22nd at the ICBVI office located at the state office building in Lewiston. Evaluations were performed on 27 clients by our Low vision specialist Dr. Dwight Hansen. Eighteen of the 27 patients receive or have participated in Vocational Rehabilitation services while the remaining 9 qualify for OB or IL services. Providing low vision evaluations at our Lewiston office gives more individuals the opportunity to participate in this service while saving dollars that it would take traveling to low vision clinics in Boise or Coeur D'Alene. At the Lewiston low vision clinic Dr. Hansen works closely with the patient, the VR counselor, the VRA and the Rehabilitation Teacher to assess and evaluate the functional limitations of each individual related to their low vision needs. The collaborative process allows us to recommend and fit specially designed low vision aids or tools and prescription glasses that are not likely available anywhere in our area. By providing these "tools" to address each individual's specific vocational needs it is our belief that clients will be more likely to experience positive results leading to increased confidence, independence, abilities and successful outcomes. The positive feedback we receive from our clients after the evaluations with Dr. Hansen is enough for us to justify the time and hard work it takes to pull off a successful clinic. It will be even better once they begin receiving their new visual aids.

The Regional Low Vision Clinics could not happen without the extra effort and dedication from Dr. Hansen, his wife Brenda, and the staff at the low vision clinic and store in Boise. The folks in Region II appreciate their willingness to help us out in an effort to provide some of the best low vision services available anywhere! The Lewiston staff has become very accustomed to the time it takes to put on a traveling clinic that includes completing intake packets, collecting eye reports and insurance information, scheduling appointments and coordinating space for Dr. Hansen. Once the clinic ends, the process of reviewing reports and authorizing for orders begins. In addition we provided transportation for 7 participants including some from Moscow over 30 miles away to serve more individuals. Another component to this year's clinic was the presence of Dr. Ilene Huh from the Nez Perce Tribe's Nimiipuu Optical Clinic, who visited with Dr. Hansen and observed a low vision evaluation as another way to foster our relationship and to learn more about our services available for tribal members.

The entire process takes several weeks from beginning to end and each year just before the Clinic begins, Lewiston wonders if all the extra work and chaos is worth it. Despite the challenges, putting on the Low Vision Clinic in the Lewiston office is one of the highlights of the year. The new and larger office space at our Lewiston location was extremely beneficial in making this year's clinic run smoothly. Our clients, their families, the employers and ICBVI staff all benefit from the low vision clinic experience. One of Dr. Hansen's favorite themes has always been "knowledge is power" and we believe that the vision clinic experience exemplifies this belief. The low vision evaluation is a very unique environment where the doctor, patient, family member, rehab teacher and counselor can teach and learn from each other. Guyla, Gayle and Shane would like to thank the Commission Board and our administration at the Idaho

Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired for continuing to support this valuable service and look forward to next year's low vision clinic.

Additional News

The Twin Falls team hosted an open house and low vision demonstration day. Invites were sent to VR, OB, IL referrals and clients, support groups and eye doctors. Twenty- three people came throughout the day – a very busy time talking to people and demonstrating. Aids and techniques were demonstrated to groups as they came. Linda Croft, a support group leader brought a van of people from the group and two other couples traveled from Burley on their own. There were two people who were referred by their eye doctor. A VR transition student came with his grandma and she is now a referral. Whenever something like this is put together – you always learn more about what to do and not to do.

Candy and Jason attended the NRA training with VR counselors July 23, and 24th at the Best Western in Boise.

“Hands Around the Capitol 2015”, celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Americans with Disability Act July 17th attended by ICBVI staff, Candy Harris reported about the event during the ICBVI Board Meeting.

Vocational Rehabilitation Program Update – Matthew Queen:

WIOA rule changes have added Pre-Employment Transition Services to the Individualized Plans for Employment for all Transition aged clients. We are awaiting additional rules and or changes following the remarks period that RSA requested. The remarks period ended June 15th 2015.

The SWEP program will be finishing this week. There was excellent participation from the various regions. Some examples of jobs that participants held were working at the Botanical Gardens, working for the City of Boise, working in a motorcycle sales and repair shop, among others.

In June the VR staff collectively worked with Raelene Thomas to organize and to update the VR Policy and Procedure Manual. The changes centered on updating the cost of services and adding services that had not been included in previous versions of the manual. An example of an addition is vehicle repairs. Policy Manual changes will be sent to ICBVI Board for approval prior to being sent to the Legislature.

The ICBVI VRC staff and some VRA personnel attended the Idaho Chapter of the National Rehabilitation Association Conference here in Boise on July 23-24. The conference allows VR personnel to obtain continuing education credits to maintain national certification.

In-service training this year for staff will be held in September 23-24 in Boise. As reported in April 2015 the In-Service Training Grant will be complete by 9/30/2015. Future training will be dependent on federal funds.

A new unified State Plan will need to be written by March 2016.

Program Statistics: Statistically the VR Program is on track with its projections. Through June 2015 listed below are the performance statistics for the VR Program; New applications – 140/178 – 78.65% of goal; Eligibilities – 117/136 – 86.02% of goal; New IPEs – 121/105 – 115.23% of goal; Successful Closures – 58/81 - 71.6% of goal; Rehabilitation Rate –79.29. Nine months into the FFY 2015 the VR Program is making progress.

Statewide Assistive Technologist update on activities:

Type	VR hours	IL/OB hours
Job site training		
Job site assessment/consultation		
Training/assessments in Boise office	10	4
In-home training	7	
In-home assessment		
Community Outreach/consulting	10	
Telephone/remote training/assessment/consultation	10	
Transition Assessment		

Social Media:

Type	Description	Number	Other
Total number of fans	Number of people who have "liked" our page	231 (+20 since last report)	
Average Daily Reach	The # of people, each day, who see content from ICBVI	35.14 (over 100 days)	Increase of 20.17 people per day reached)
Negative comments	Meaning that a viewer hid a post, or marked it as spam	.03 over 100 days	

Business Enterprise Program Update – Nancy Wise for Gina Washburn:

North Idaho Route - Bhavani has gotten settled into her location and seems to be doing very well. She has had many suggestions for improvements and development so Gina is excited to see how far she can grow her business.

National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) Fly-In - Theresia Hout and Gina attended the first NAMA Fly-in in Washington D.C. There were 200 attendees from across the country representing 35 states. Of the 200 attendees there were at least 20 from various BE Programs which exceeded expectations! NAMA set all attendees up with the members of congress from their own state and so Theresia and Gina met with staffers of each of our representatives and senators. Theresia did a wonderful job of explaining what she does and how some of the pending legislation could potentially affect the vendors.

Rule Revisions – Gina has been working with our AG representative to get these firmed up and ready to resubmit. Gina will have a summary of the revision to you no later than September 1st.

Boise City Hall - Rodney Johnston unexpectedly resigned from the program on July 1st. Due to the unforeseen and sudden need for someone to run the Café we decided to ask Tony Bridges to contract it for us for at least the next 6 months. We have also contracted half of the location's vending to him. The other half was contracted with Bill Hesseltine.

New Specialist - Corey Bresina was hired on as the new BEP Specialist and started work on July 7th. We have been trying to get him up to speed as quickly as we can, he is doing great so far!

Recommendation to BEP by Commissioner Beck that the BEP rules that RSA is currently reviewing and an explanation of why they are recommending the changes, be given to the Blind Merchant Council to review before final vote from the ICBVI Board.

Assessment and Training Center Update – Greg Metsker:

The ATC Summer term is in full swing now. It began on July 7th with 10 students, 4 full time and 6 part time. We had another full time student scheduled to attend but he had to drop out at the last minute. We also have two staff members who are participating in classes currently, Justin Fish and Corey Bressina. Justin will be going through the classes for the whole summer term to get familiar with the techniques and methods we use in the center. Greg has been working with Justin in the shop, showing him some of the non-visual skills used in there as well as the safety techniques we teach, the paperwork, and so forth and Greg is very excited for him to start working with students on a full time basis. He has great energy and is giving the training his full attention. When he has extra time, Justin has been cleaning and organizing the shop to fit his preferences and as a result the place is looking really good.

June was a busy month in the ATC. The ATC staff provided one week of training for 16 of our SWEP staff as well as 4 of the Job Coaches from CPI, we assisted with some of the College Days program and worked with the SWEP participants during their ATC training week. A couple of the ATC staff also assisted SWEP participants at their job sites for their first couple days of work. Greg thinks everyone was ready for the Summer Term to get started so we could get back to a more normal routine.

This last spring we started administering our ATC satisfaction surveys a little differently. We used to have the VRA's in the regional offices call clients who had attended the ATC and administer the survey. We are now contracting with Compa Industries, the same company that conducted surveys for the IL program a while back, to do our ATC satisfaction surveys. At the end of each term Greg sends a list of names of clients who completed their training to Rikki with Compa Industries and she calls the clients and does the surveys. To date we have received 3 completed surveys for clients who attended the winter term, and we should get results from clients who finished training during the spring term any day now. At the same time that we made this change, we modified the survey just a little bit. Instead of just asking for a comment regarding how satisfied clients were with each class in the ATC, we are now also asking them to rate each class including Discussion class and Activity Days on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent. With only 3 surveys completed, the average rating for all the classes was 4.96 out of 5. While 3 surveys is a pretty small sample size, Greg was happy with the results. Greg is anxious to receive the next group of surveys to see how the clients who finished last spring felt about their training.

Last spring we added a new role to the list of responsibilities for the ATC staff. We assigned each client an ATC Staff person to be their liaison and someone they can go to with questions and thoughts about the ATC, their schedule or anything that might be affecting their training. Greg wasn't sure how it would

work, but when this Summer Term started, Greg had several clients ask him right away that first day of classes if they were still going to have a staff liaison that they could talk to. When Greg said that we were continuing that experiment, he got several positive comments from clients who were very happy. Apparently that little change was a big hit with our clients last term.

Fiscal Update – Trina Ayres:

The end of SFY15:

			Expended:	Percentage:	
Personnel	-	General Fund	\$ 659,300	\$ 659,297.80	99.99%
		Federal Fund	1,836,300	1,753,588.93	99.99%
		Adaptive A & A	18,600	18,249.16	98.11%
Operating	-	General Fund	\$ 48,500	48,500.00	100.00%
		Randolph-Sheppard	27,600	23,138.64	83.83%
		Rehab Revenue (SSA)	34,300	1,099.86	3.20%
		Miscellaneous	28,100	14,395.40	51.22%
		Adaptive A & A	47,900	39,610.77	82.69%
		Federal Fund	576,200	585,009.60	99.48%
Capital Outlay	-	Federal Fund	19,179.79	19,179.79	100.00%
Trustee/Benefit	-	General Fund	599,200	555,637.00	92.72%
		Randolph-Sheppard	100,100	71,563.81	71.49%
		Rehab Revenue	13,000	12,902.01	99.24%
		Miscellaneous	56,300	41,107.74	73.01%
		Federal Fund	593,200	593,200.00	100.00%
Total	-		4,586,900		

Client services encumbrances totaled 43,563.00 – all from the General Fund which utilized 100% Trustee/Benefit of the fund. In the Federal Fund, 82,700 from Personnel was transferred to Operating - 31,000 for Newline, and 51,700 added to Trustee/Benefit for BEP. 11,820.21 from Operating in the Federal Fund was also transferred to Trustee/Benefit for BEP. There was a remaining appropriation balance of 3,010.61 in Operating in the Federal Fund due to invoices not being received as anticipated. SFY16 **internal** budgets were set at the same beginning budgets as SFY15. At the time of the board meeting the personnel budget was not reflecting personnel budget increases or the new older blind position.

New Business:

VR Manual Changes Discussion and Approval – Raelene Thomas:

Before the VR Rules were submitted once again to Administrative Rules for the legislative process, the VR Counselors requested of Nancy Wise and Raelene Thomas if a few of the amounts in the payment policy could be increased. This was then sent to the ICBVI Board for their review. Discussion took place about the changes or corrections the Board recommended and the input from David Jones from RSA. The ICBVI Board would like Commissioner Schneider’s corrections made in the manual, and would also like the staff of ICBVI to make the needed changes that RSA has recommended at the next rule revision. This next revision will occur next spring after we have approval from the federal government on the WIOA changes and their impact to the VR program, as these will require changes to ICBVI VR Rules.

MOTION: The ICBVI Board approves the payment policy changes in the VR manual so they can be forwarded on to the IDAPA process. Made by Commissioner Payne, seconded by Commissioner Beck, all in favor.

Next meeting date for the ICBVI Board will be on Friday October 23, 2015 here in Boise.

The ICBVI Board is expecting Angela Jones to likely be back with the ICBVI by the October meeting. The ICBVI Board also made the following motion:

MOTION: In anticipation of Angela Jones' return to ICBVI, the Board removes the restriction of communication for her to contact the managers. Communications between Ms. Jones and the managers should be in a consultant role and not an Administrative role, as all Administrative decisions will go to Nancy Wise while she is Acting Administrator. Made by Commissioner Beck, seconded by Commissioner Schneider, all in favor.

The ICBVI Board Meeting adjourned at 3:30 p.m. Minutes respectfully submitted by Raelene Thomas on 8/13/15.