

## **ICBVI Regular Board Meeting Minutes February 11, 2010**

**Board Members present:** Britt Raubenheimer, Chair; Travis Beck, Vice-Chair; Kent Ireton; and Mike Gibson

**ICBVI Staff present:** Angela Jones, Raelene Thomas, Trina Ayres, Nancy Wise, Nanna Hanchett, Greg Metsker, Lisa VanRy, Larry Henrie, and Melanie Hertling

**Guests present:** Jan Gawith, Ramona Walhoff, Susan Bradley, students from the ATC – Tracy, Patti, Kurt and Crystal.

**Motion** to approve minutes from November 12, 2009 Board Meeting made by Commissioner Ireton. Seconded by Commissioner Gibson - all in favor.

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

Several things are happening at the NCSAB (National Council on State Agencies for the Blind) level as reported by Dr. Fred Schroeder. During President Obama's speech he talked about consolidating several smaller grants into the Title I program. The smaller grants that are being considered are Projects with Industry, Migrant Seasonal Farm Worker, Supported Employment and In-Service Training Grants. The Independent Living (IL) grant is being looked at as well but no specifics have been given. There will be no changes with the older blind grant for IL.

CSAVR (Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation) and the NCSAB are looking to combine conferences in the future, which will help cut down on some costs, as there is overlap in speakers.

NCSAB is also looking at a waiver to the Rehab Act, which would allow older blind to be served at training centers. Currently training centers can only serve VR clients.

There are several states under review for consolidation. NCSAB has hired Brenda Cavanaugh to update information and collect data about why it is not a good idea to combine general agencies with the blind agencies. This information should be available in March or April.

As there have been many cuts at the state level, we have offered office space to the State Independent Living Council, the Commission on Aging, and the Development Disabilities Council to help them out with costs. We would have to charge a utilities expense based on square footage. We may be able to help in other ways such as fiscal or IT, depending on the situation as we are allowed to spend 10% of our time on other duties unrelated to VR.

At the direction of the Board, Angela set up another meeting with IDVR to ask for more of percentage on the VR funds split. We were told that in 2009 IDVR gave back

\$616,000 to RSA as a re-allotment amount that they were unable to spend. Angela asked why the ICBVI was not given an opportunity to match some of it and use it for client services. We were told by their fiscal person that they had contacted our fiscal person at the time and were told ICBVI couldn't use it. Angela was never told about this and believes the Administrator for IDVR needs to contact her directly. Angela also questioned why IDVR was funding two positions at IESDB and also at the University of Idaho all with VR dollars. There was no response to this question. The discussion with IDVR was very brief. It was noted that IDVR probably would be giving back \$1.9 million by the end of 2010 as they did not have enough to meet match.

ICBVI has had an 18% decrease in staff over the last ten years. We have had two positions reduced this last year due to the holdbacks. But our numbers show that we are still serving more clients from year to year even with less staff. Commissioner Raubenheimer asked for some talking points regarding these statistics and mentioned that it would be helpful if they were posted on the ICBVI website.

**Motion** the ICBVI Board would like the Administrator to continue her efforts in advocating with other agencies and the legislation regarding keeping services separate, made by Commissioner Ireton, seconded by Commissioner Gibson – all in favor.

Angela has had a brief discussion with the Commission on Aging regarding getting some state match from them to provide money for the older blind.

The NCSAB is waiting for a study done by Mathematic for the GOA and their data collection. The GOA has gathered some data on VR spending in states, including information on spending of ARRA funds.

RSA (Rehabilitation Services Administration) may grant states a waiver if they cannot meet the maintenance of effort.

ICBVI will begin their state audit review to examine our single audit findings during the week of February.

Angela gave her presentation to the Joint Finance and Appropriations' Committee on February 9<sup>th</sup>. She noted that in 2009, we served 542 people in the VR program, 714 in the ILOB program, and 108 in the Sight Restoration Program (this number has gone down due to the holdback of \$105,400). In BEP, vendors paid \$51,525 to ICBVI for set aside, the ATC served 47 clients, SWEP served 19 students, and the low vision clinic served 349 and aides and appliances stores sales were \$167,000. ICBVI is continuing to work on updates to the case management system with some of the ARRA funds. For FY 2011 the Governor's recommendation is to take an additional \$25,400 out of our budget. These funds will come from operating as we do not want to use client service dollars. The Governor also recommended \$93,000 for vehicle replacements, which would be covered with federal dollars.

At the next board meeting we will need to consider policy changes for the Sight Restoration Program owing to the holdbacks.

All agencies were given a 5% reduction in state personnel in the 2010 budget with the implementation for the cuts at discretion of the Administrators. We were able to avoid any furloughs due to the 2 positions we cut. However if more cuts occur, we may have to implement furloughs for all staff, or look at a lay off.

The RSA Federal 107 review has begun and the ICBVI team of Angela, Nanna, Raelene, Trina, Greg, and Nancy have had several conference calls in preparation for the on site visit the week of March 22<sup>nd</sup>. We also received a request from RSA for documents pertaining to audit reports, organizational charts, strategic plans, the list of CRPs we use, agencies we partner with, and types of training we have done for staff, comprehensive needs assessments of the agency, and info regarding ATC and the Low Vision Clinic.

The Developmental Disabilities Council has submitted a revision to Senate Bill 1330 in regards to some new language about referring to the person first not the disability. For example, getting rid of the word handicap and replacing it with disability.

**SILC Update by Nancy Wise:**

Robbi Barrutia previously worked for SILC on the Domestic Violence Grant, and she is now the interim director for SILC. She is optimistic and is working with the Governor's office on some of the issues at SILC. We worked in conjunction with the SILC on the 704 IL Report, for which we provided the actual IL consumer information that ICBVI has served. IDVR's participation in the report is strictly financial. They are working hard to keep the SILC separate as they will lose 25% of their general funds a year for the next four years, so that they will receive 0% general funds at the end of the fourth year.

**Business Consultant Update by Doug Raper:**

Since the first of the year we have put together two public service announcements with the help from Channel 6 in Nampa who produced these for free for us. Doug has had several interviews with local radio stations in Pocatello, Idaho Falls, and Twin Falls. He will be traveling north to Coeur d'Alene and Lewiston to conduct interviews for those radio stations. Doug will be talking to services across the state. One Nampa service club asked to do some volunteer work for us. Please let Doug know about any referrals that come in to any of the offices from the PSAs. Commissioner Gibson talked about Doug checking the federal register on jobs for students with disabilities. Doug also will meet with several human resource managers to educate them on hiring a person who is blind or visually impaired.

**Consumer Input:**

Susan Bradley gave an update on the AmeriCorps grant on the transportation for persons with disabilities. The new project director is Brooke Green. AmeriCorps will be participating in the Serve Idaho Conference, which will be held next week in Coeur d'Alene. The Secret Stopper project put together by the AmeriCorps members in the Treasure Valley area is going well. There are thirty riders participating, including some of our students from the ATC and some ICBVI staff. Six-month-long bus passes were provided by Valley Regional Transit. The riders evaluate each bus route regarding their experience and note if the bus driver is calling out the bus stops. A few of the other projects Susan and Lora Ireland are working on are the Accessible Taxi Cab Project and the Salt Lake Express project, which will be more of an education on disability awareness for their drivers. Reminder to all interested of the Idaho Chapter NFB state convention to be held on March 19-21 in Pocatello at the Red Lion Hotel. You can contact (208) 233-2200 to make your hotel reservations.

Tracey (ATC Student) – who currently lives in McCall came to the ATC in the fall for a tour of the classes and remembers Greg saying that you have been rendered blind not ineffective. She is now a full time student staying in the dorms and taking classes. She really enjoys the sense of fellowship amongst the students.

David (ATC Student) – is a part time student and feels like the things that he has learned at the ATC have helped him get his ambition back and have lifted his spirits. He is now looking forward to the remaining years of his life with new hope.

Ken Kraft – started the Blind Services Foundation back in 2001 along with Dave Hand, Kelly Pierce, and Michael Graham. The foundation is a 501C3 and has an eight member board. Ken has been with the foundation for eight years and has watched how the foundation has been able to help enhance the quality of life of Idahoans. The foundation can cover people who are not involved in the VR program. The foundation also works with the ICBVIs VR Counselors and Rehab Teachers and appreciates how extremely helpful they have been. They have received grants and donations and give an average of about \$17,000 a year in equipment.

Ramona Walhoff wanted to remind everyone about higher education scholarships that are available from the NFB for students who are blind or visually impaired. Ramona commented that the last serious threat of consolidation of general and blind agencies was in the 80's. We need to keep a close watch on this and we hope that the Governor does not recommend it. The NFB and ICBVI have worked on a couple of senior seminars together. We are hoping to hear some personal stories along with statistics about seniors.

#### **AT Update by Larry Henrie:**

Larry has visited all the regional ICBVI offices and overall he feels that the fundamental needs of all the regions are the same. The priority will be to train the VRCs and the Rehab Teachers to help with an assessment of clients' assistive technology needs. Staff will be taught the basic AT computer skills and non visual techniques beginning with Windows, Zoom Text, Jaws and then MAGic, all of which will be taught in

segments. Staff will be shown how to problem solve. They will not be taught to be computer technicians. We anticipate the basic training of staff will be completed by October 1<sup>st</sup>. Larry has a checklist to help the VRCs and Rehab Teachers provide uniform assessments. Every region has been given a laptop computer that is used for demonstrations and trainings only, and that will not be used for any storing of client information. Client information needs to be kept on staff's desktop computers as some information may be confidential. Larry also will be developing protocol for the AT assessments to be used by future staff.

SWEP applications have been sent out to staff and we have already received 4 completed applications. Boise State University has reserved the dorms for us to use this summer.

### **Idaho Commission on Aging – Kim Toryanski, Administrator:**

The Idaho Commission on Aging is implementing The Aging and Disability Resource Center Program (ADRC), an effort of the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) designed to streamline access to long-term care. The ADRC program provides states with an opportunity to effectively integrate the full range of long-term supports and services into a single, coordinated system. The ADRC programs provide information and assistance to individuals needing either public or private resources, to professionals seeking assistance on behalf of their clients, and to individuals planning for their future long-term care needs. The ADRC is a grant of \$250,000 a year.

The Idaho Commission on Aging is interested in the office space available here at the ICBVI building to help cut down on their rent expense of \$80,000 a year, as they have experienced permanent holdbacks of \$389,500. Kim realizes that both agencies work with the older age populations and that we may be able to help each other with services for seniors across the state. The Idaho Commission on Aging has an 11 million dollar budget with 5 million from state general funds and the remainder from two federal grants.

Commissioner Gibson asked what challenges the Idaho Commission on Aging has. Kim felt that they need to be a little more visible about the things that they do. She would like to see more communication between all of us (agencies), and noted that currently there is a lack of trust. Angela felt that maybe one collaborative effort between ICBVI and Aging could be to work on Senior Health Fairs together.

### **ATC Update by Greg Metsker:**

We currently have nineteen clients receiving training in the center, including ten full time and 9 part-time students. Angela, Nanna, and Greg are excited to see so many clients getting the training they need. The rest of the ATC staff may not be quite as excited as we are, since they actually do the teaching and deal with the larger class sizes. For example, the ADL and Shop really feel the crunch when our numbers go up, because

Jason and Lisa typically work with every client, and they don't share the duties like Steve and Mel do in Mobility, or Laine and Scott do in the computer classes. In January of 2008, Lisa's students attended ADL 44 times over the course of the month. In 2009 she had students 99 times in that month. In January of 2010, Lisa's students attended ADL 175 times. Having this many students is hard work, but it does make our morning announcements livelier and our discussion classes more animated. If the number of clients who are coming through the ATC on tours is any indication our numbers will continue to be very high for the next six months at least. The average number of students per year over a ten year period is 35. We could handle more students but we would be limited on the one-on-one instruction.

As reported at the last meeting, we had a few clients who came into the ATC directly from the SWEP last August. The plan was that they would get some training in the ATC during the fall and move to a combined ATC and College schedule in the spring, while continuing to stay in our dorms. Of the four clients who started down that path, two are still participating in the ATC, and they are both taking classes here part time and taking a class or two at BSU and the College of Western Idaho. With many new ideas, this transition experiment hasn't worked as expected. We found out with this group, particularly the remaining two students, which they learned most of the ATC skills very quickly and we will be hard pressed to keep them busy in the ATC all the way to the end of the spring semester. We hadn't thought about that possibility before we essentially promised them housing in our dorms until June. Next year we will be open to doing this again, but we probably will encourage counselors and clients to try and predict how much ATC training might be needed, and then suggest that clients who only need a little bit of training start the split ATC/College schedule right away in the fall, rather than wait until the spring semester. Overall this transition experiment has been valuable and will help us design even better services in the future.

We are trying to cut down on costs in the building. One idea entertained was to the heater units filter replacements throughout the building. We spend about \$1,700 a quarter for replacements and maintenance. We believe we could save significant costs by doing this as we have done more in-house maintenance and repair of heaters and plumbing, i.e. snaking out a toilet, etc. ourselves.

### **BEP Update by Lisa Van Ry:**

We took the opportunity while the Department of Labor was remodeling their basement level to do some renovations ourselves to the BEP location within this building. The Department of Labor elected to have the grill and fryer removed, and we replaced it with a Panini grill. We also removed the old wallpaper from the dining area, painted, utilized the new tables and chairs from the Willow Creek building in Idaho Falls, and hung some new decorations. It's very warm, inviting, and clean and we've had lots of positive comments.

The snack bar was reopened in January and Kevin Servatius is building up the clientele and teaching our trainee to manage the facility. He is adding new menu items each

week and management is very happy to have the service. The customers are happy to see Kevin back and it seems to be going well.

We plan to begin a remodel project in the TSA/TSB Snack Bar in Idaho Falls. It will include painting, installing some new cabinets, doing some much needed electrical work, and adding a couple of pieces of new equipment. Lynn Kneip is doing well there and this facility needs some attention to address safety issues and to bring it to a level to provide the service the customer expects from us.

A combined Rehabilitation Services Administration / BLAST conference has been planned for the beginning of June in Virginia. RSA plans to give stipends to enable the Program supervisor and chairperson to attend. I'm waiting for the letter from RSA to proceed with making arrangements.

At the last Board meeting we reported no one had bid on the Battelle Energy Alliance contract at the INL. After reviewing the results of the survey they passed out, they again issued a solicitation with the difference being for companies to submit their management fee. This means, you estimate all costs against the prospective receipts and charge in addition to a management fee if there is a prospective deficit. To provide the level of service requested and to implement all programs requested, our teaming partner asked for a management fee after completing a cost analysis. We submitted a 150 page proposal written by the Director of Operations for Nayyarson's. The proposal is complicated and responds to several Federal requirements with which we are not familiar. We did not have the expertise needed to complete a proposal of this type. It's very exciting to learn new skills and hopefully to provide new and larger opportunities for blind merchants in the Idaho BEP.

In this type of a federal contract you must first fall within the competitive range to be asked to offer an oral presentation. We were invited to make an oral presentation last week. A team of four including our selected blind merchant Scott Marcotte, our selected general manager Robert Thornock, the Nayyarson's representative Dennis Donnelly, and myself made the presentation. The presentation went well and whatever happens, we can all rest with the knowledge we did our very best. We should hear the results some time the week of February 8<sup>th</sup>. A tremendous amount of time has gone into preparing for this opportunity and it has been our focus to not miss out on this opportunity.

We also plan to check with Mountain Home Air Force base and Gowen Field to make sure we are on the proper lists to receive all solicitations for food service.

#### **IL Update by Nancy Wise:**

Nancy introduced the new Storekeeper Mike Haener to the Board.

The Annual 704 Performance Report for the State Independent Living Services Program has been submitted to RSA for FY 2009. This report is completed by SILC, ICBVI, and IDVR. The Commission provides data on the number of IL consumers

under the age of 55 served during the reporting year, which totaled 71. We also provide information regarding goals related to increased independence in significant life areas, the number whose goals are still in progress, and the number who achieved their goals as a result of the provision of IL services. Significant Life Areas include: Self-Advocacy/Self-Empowerment, Communication, Mobility/Transportation, Community-Based Living, Education, Self-care, Information Access/Technology, Personal Resource Management, Relocation from a Nursing Home or Institute to Community-Based Living, Community/Social Participation, and Other. Item 2 - the Improved Access to Transportation, Health Care, and Assistive Technology table requires that we list the number of consumers requiring access, the number of consumers achieving access, and the number of consumers whose access is in progress.

We have had several outstanding success stories. One such story relates to a young married mother of three children, ages 2-6, who experienced continuing vision loss from RP and who had yet to come to terms with her disability.

For years her family doubted her vision loss, discouraged her from applying for disability, and prevented her from being able to fully accept and adjust to her vision loss, thus hindering the natural progression one needs to experience in coming to terms with vision loss. This past summer she contacted the ICBVI in hopes that she might be able to access services. She identified a number of goals and began working on them. She is using more assistive technology and magnifiers, has had an updated IL assessment, has received training and adapted aids for the home, has received a new cane along with some orientation and mobility training, and has expressed interest in our low vision clinic this spring.

Although this woman has many challenges ahead, it is her hope that through continued participation in IL services she can significantly improve her skills and abilities, which will enable her to be the best mom and wife she can, while helping her kids be safe and productive. In the future she may apply for VR services and begin to work on and develop the skills needed for employment.

The teachers have enjoyed their beginning assistive technology training with Larry. Michelle in CDA reported that Larry provided a very valuable introduction to the newest versions of Zoomtext and Zoomtext Express, and that she already demonstrated this software with the laptop provided with ARRA stimulus funds to a VR and IL client in their home. Both clients are interested in using adaptive software on their computers.

In the Idaho Falls region – Josh developed a referral form for the eye doctors to more easily refer to us. Josh, Dr. Hansen, and Heidi presented for the Idaho Eye Center's January staff meeting and explained ICBVI services. They gave them the new form and encouraged them to use it for anyone they think could benefit from our services. Later, THE SAME DAY they received their first new referral on the new form and have been receiving them regularly ever since, resulting in six new referrals for Heidi and two for Josh...it's a huge success! They will soon visit the Teton Retinal Institute to explain the new form to them and encourage them to use it as well. So, thanks to Josh and his new

referral form, we are making it easier for the eye care specialists to refer to us. April has tailored this form for the Pocatello area as well.

Candy continues to work part-time from home, after slipping on black ice three weeks ago and breaking her leg. She contacts new referrals, takes new clients, writes reports, contacts Mike and Dana's VR clients, and helps solve problems via telephone. She hopes to return to the office on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Brian continues to meet with different committees, Ada County Highway District, and Capital City Development Corporation regarding transportation issues. Through networking and advocacy we have gotten the truncated domes installed at the corners of 8<sup>th</sup> and Idaho and 8<sup>th</sup> and Capitol where the curb level and street level are the same.

The low vision clinic business has slowed slightly in the past quarter, due to holidays, weather, and seasonal illness, which is typical for this time of year. A local optometrist, Gary Polatis, shadowed Dr. Hansen on three clinic days, to learn about low vision evaluation methods and ICBVI services.

We will be working with Larry to investigate an option for seniors to get assistance with repair on their computers in their homes; we have a meeting set up with Treasure Valley IT.

#### **VR Update by Nanna Hanchett:**

Nanna has been working with Doug, our Business Consultant, to outline an ongoing infrastructure/training for Employer/Community contacts to be used by current and future staff. It has been noted that we need to develop an employer database to support employer relationships. Doug also has been directed to work with SILC on the Medicaid Infrastructure Grant media campaign, which is a national campaign for employer awareness.

We are working with Interagency Council on Secondary Transition where we updated the Moving on Binder in preparation for the Tools for Life Conference March 1-2, 2010. Dana, Mike, and I will be presenting as well as staffing the ICBVI table. Dana and Mike are in the process of finishing ICBVI's new Transition Brochure that will be ready for the Tools for Life Conference.

Nanna has initiated a monthly meeting with Paula Mason and Brian Darcy from IESDB to increase our collaboration for stronger services and outcomes for Idaho's students with blindness and visual impairments. We have already agreed to evaluate our numerical data on transition age students to determine what % of students ICBVI is currently serving. We are analyzing the data to determine what each agency can do to increase transition age student participation for ICBVI.

We have been preparing documents and information that has been submitted to RSA as part of our federal review process. Nanna will be involved in additional telephone conference calls for the review this month.

Nanna and the VRAs are assessing how the holdbacks are impacting the Sight Restoration program and are evaluating what we will need to do for the next fiscal year. Each region has estimated that 5-15 people are waiting for services. In many of the regions, the additional resources from the Lions Club and Knights Templar are limited as these funds also are low or depleted. Some of the clients have been referred to the VR program.

Nanna will be working with the management team to put together the application for the next 5 year In-Service Training Grant.

Some good news in VR: Mike just closed a client who is making \$80,000 a year and Dana just received a social security reimbursement on a client.

**Fiscal Update by Trina Ayres:**

Our state fiscal year appropriations are as follows:

Personnel	-	General Fund	\$ 611,900
		Federal Fund	1,705,500
		Adaptive A & A	15,100
Operating	-	General Fund	60,700
		Randolph-Sheppard	7,300
		Rehab Revenue (SSA)	65,762
		ARRA (Stimulus)	403,500
		Miscellaneous	17,400
		Adaptive A & A	47,600
		Federal Fund	484,100
Capital		ARRA	191,300
		Rehab Revenue	5,000
		Federal Fund	855
Trustee/Benefit		General Fund	627,400
		Randolph-Sheppard	120,100
		Rehab Revenue	23,000
		Miscellaneous	16,300
		Federal Fund	241,500
Total			\$4,644,317

Total expenditures, grouped by category, are:

Personnel-	1,418,224
Operating-	490,465

Capital-	52,888
Trustee/Benefit -	532,705
Total-	2,494,282

66.66% of the year has elapsed and overall our expenditures stand at 53.71%. We have expended \$19,008.50 of the ARRA IL monies; \$31,460.15 of ARRA OB; and \$83,315.96 of ARRA VR. Total awards for each ARRA grant are: \$395,956 in VR; \$109,311 in IL; and \$89,539 in OB. We are anticipating another holdback in the 2010 budget in the amount of \$12,200 which will be taken from operating. It is also anticipated that this will be one-time but the governor is leaving these decisions to the legislature rather than issuing an executive order. The governor is recommending another one-time General Fund reduction to the base of the 2011 budget in the amount of \$25,400; the legislature also will make this decision.

Commissioner Raubenheimer asked if Trina would list the target percentages for all expenditures on the next report.

**New Business:**

**Motion** to change the next ICBVI Board Meeting from April 22<sup>nd</sup> to April 29<sup>th</sup>, 2010 made by Commissioner Gibson and seconded by Commissioner Beck - all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by Raelene Thomas 2/24/2010