

Nebraska Business Enterprises Program

**Nebraska Blind Licensees Committee Meeting
Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually impaired
1313 Farnam St., Omaha
Lincoln, NE 68510**

December 9, 2022

Meeting called to order at 10:14 AM by Chairperson Sandy Alvarado.

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, on the NCBVI website, and on NFB Newsline®. The notice was sent to Commission Staff and Commissioners.

Board Members in Attendance

Sandy Alvarado, Chairperson; Andrea Chizek, Vice Chairperson; Atty Svendsen, Secretary; Ronnie Kellogg

Absent: Alex Curtis

Blind Licensees and Trainees in Attendance

Jim Jirak

NCBVI Staff in Attendance

Carlos Serván, NCBVI Executive Director; Eric Buckwalter, NBE Supervisor;

Guests:

Cheryl Livingston

Approval of Minutes:

Sandy asked if anyone had any changes that needed to be made to the minutes from the September 19, 2022 meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes by Ronnie, seconded by Atty. Motion passed.

Sandy, Aye

Andrea, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Atty, Aye

Committee Chairperson Report: Sandy Alvarado

At the end of September I made a decision on approving the general liability insurance and to pay the premium by the end of the month. Since then there have been some changes and Eric will address them during his report. There will also be an update with worker's compensation insurance from him as well.

I sent out a message to the vendors around the middle of October. I asked if any of them were having any type of issues with getting assistance from our SLA and if so, what were they. I had several responses and have held conversations with Eric to inform him of some of these concerns over the past couple of months.

The most common issues seemed to be about Cantaloupe and issues with access issues since the master list was finished.

Other questions and concerns:

- Sharing of updates on the Seed Cashless+ trial.
- Feelings of being not listened to and feeling micromanaged.

We all understand that we now only have Eric and Dave to assist us and other issues can arise. I would like to see if a discussion could be started to help resolve some of these issues and feelings.

- The release of commissions from the third party sub-contractors.
- Operator Agreements
- New P&L templates

Eric has shared with me that there has been applications received for the third person for our NBE program. He should have some type of update in his report.

As always, Eric and I speak often when either one of us needs to inform or ask questions on how to proceed when issues arise.

I have also continued to work with Eric on the planning of our retreat for the spring. We are still open for suggestions from anyone on topics of training specific issues or possible presenters.

Sagebrush is in Vegas from Feb 6 – 10th.

Monthly call ins are also available with both RSVA and NABM.

SLA Report: Eric Buckwalter

Vending Site Update

Machine installs have been scheduled for next week to replace and or place machines at several locations in the Lincoln area. One site was waiting on a remodel to take place. One site is replacing older machines. One site is adding an additional machine. And, one site is getting a replacement machine for a temporary one that was placed this fall when we needed a new machine for the beverage contract at CCCL.

The SLA is aware of several sites that are interested in having machines placed in 2023. More information will become available as those details are firmed up.

NBE Licensee Update

There are currently 13 Licensed Vendors in the NBE program. Last quarters SLA Report mistakenly listed only 12.

Vending Site Complaints

No serious complaints were received this past quarter regarding NBE machines.

Cantaloupe

The trial of SeedCashless+ will start soon. The SLA is waiting on information from Cantaloupe at this time. Training is self-paced with support available as needed. If the training is inaccessible, I will schedule time to work with individuals either individually or in a group setting. An email was received from Cantaloupe indicating that contracts for signatures were going out by the end of business on 12/9/2022.

Other Updates

Vendor Requests

The SLA is still working on getting caught up on some of the asks that Vendors have submitted. We again apologize for taking so long to get to some these asks for smaller, less time sensitive, items.

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

There is no new information to report on the status of electric vehicle charging stations at Interstate Rest Areas.

Additional Money Distribution

There is no new information to report on the request from NABM and NCSAB to RSA to make an additional disbursement of funds to SLAs for the purpose of one-time program expenditures to improve BEPs.

Crane Vending Machines

The SLA learned this week that Crane has produced their last 186/187 and 471/472 style machines. Apparently, they can no longer source the boards used in these machines. Crane 186/187 and 471/472 new machines that are purchased will now all be touch screen models. A 'talker' feature is available for the touch screen machines. Access to boards for replacing/repair on existing 186/187 and 471/472 style machines should be available through existing stock and third parties for the foreseeable future.

This is something that the SLA knew was coming 'sometime in the future' for about a year now, so it is not a huge surprise to us.

More information and training on the talker feature will be coming as machines are purchased and installed.

New Hire

We are happy to announce that we have someone inline to be hired for the NBE Orientation Counselor II position. We are waiting on paperwork to be signed to release anymore information. But, if things go well they will most likely start Center Training in January and be in the field by the beginning of May. The SLA is super happy to have this person come on board, they will make a great asset to the agency as well as to the support we are able to offer to Vendors.

National Vending

Vendors who have sites sub-contracted through National Vending will only receive checks four times per year – at the end of every quarter. Typically, NCBVI does not receive the checks from National until one or two months after the end of every quarter. This means, that there will be some delay between the end of the quarter and Vendors receiving their commission payments.

Communication

Eric and Dave will be working with Committee Chairperson, Sandy Alvarado, to identify ways in which the SLA can better communicate with Vendors regarding important details.

Looking Ahead

The SLA, in conjunction with the NBE Committee is planning a retreat-style event in the spring, most likely in May.

Sandy mentioned the vendors need their operator agreements, so they can sign them.

Sandy asked if vendors could receive a copy of RS15 and Eric said yes if requested.

Insurance Update

In October we received a request to renew our general liability insurance. There was an increase in the payment due to the increase in revenue.

Initial amount \$3635.61. The increase is \$1151.

This makes the total: \$\$4786.61.

Atty made a motion to approve the increase of funds for the general liability insurance paid out of our unassigned funds. Ronnie seconded it.

Sandy, Aye

Atty, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Andrea, Aye

Motion passed.

Workers compensation insurance will not be renewed.

Nebraska Risk Management continues to try to find an insurance company to fill this need.

The workers compensation insurance does not cover reader-drivers.

Discussion of Training for Next Quarterly Meeting

Atty made a motion to discuss what we've learned during our exploration during our SeedCashless+ ninety day trial. Andrea seconded it.

Andrea, Aye

Atty, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Sandy, Aye

Motion passed.

Set Date for Next Quarterly Meeting

Andrea made a motion to have the next meeting on March 10, 2023 in Lincoln, NE at 10:00 a.m. Ronnie seconded it. The motion passed.

Sandy, Aye

Andrea, Aye

Atty, Aye
Ronnie, Aye

Motion passed.

Date: March 10, 2023
Location: Lincoln, Nebraska
Time: 10:00 a.m.

Other Business

Jim asked about being able to pay set-aside online and the SLA agreed to look into it.

Carlos expressed how far the vendors and the SLA have increased communication and efficiency. He explained how helpful it would be if vendors would send to Eric how useful the Commission has been in our lives, education and businesses, so the legislators will understand how important funding is to us.

Adjournment

Atty made a motion to adjourn, Andrea seconded it. The motion passed.

Sandy, Aye
Andrea, Aye
Atty, Aye
Ronnie, Aye

Adjournment Time: 11:19 a.m.