

Oregon Commission for the Blind  
Regular Meeting – October 2, 2020 - 1:00 pm  
Approved Minutes

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 1:05 pm by board Chairperson Scott McCallum via Zoom.com for a regular meeting of the Oregon Commission for the Blind. Members in attendance were:

Chair Scott McCallum  
Christie Closson, MD  
Lillian Goodman  
Laurel Hudson  
Vivian Carlisle Smith  
Sharon Zenger  
Michael Babcock

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – July 31, 2020 (Action Item)**

Dr. Closson made a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Lillian Goodman seconded, and the motion passed.

**AUDIENCE INTRODUCTION**

Each audience member introduced themselves.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one submitted public comment.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT**

Executive Director Dacia Johnson presented the Executive Director report.

**Introduction of new CFO, Kathleen (Kat) Martin**

Dacia Johnson introduced the Agency's new CFO Kat Martin who started with us on August 3, 2020. Kat comes to us with a background in finance, most recently with Portland State University.

**Donations and Financial Report**

Kat Martin presented the Donations and Financial Reports.

**Donations Report:** Our cash balance in the fund is \$346,840 as of August 31, 2020. Our remaining obligation is \$22,234, and the remaining unobligated donations balance as of August 31<sup>st</sup> is \$325,000.

**Financial Report:** Kat Martin reported we are projecting a surplus of 1.5 percent compared to the Legislatively Approved Budget (LAB) for the biennium, totaling \$361,855. This is before General Fund reductions of \$415, 497, an additional \$500,000 approved in other fund limitation, and an additional \$2.552443 million in federal fund limitation, which were all approved as part of the summer special session.

### **Business Monitoring**

Clay France, Internal Auditor, is now responsible for Business Practice Monitoring Reporting, and a review of Client Payments was shared with commissioners.

Director Johnson added that the 4-Cs Report (Cars, Cell phones, Computers, and Credit cards) was not prepared for this meeting to allow Kat Martin, new in her position, to adjust to the role and its requirements. With Clay's work on the coming Risk Assessment, we expect to present a new plan of business monitoring soon. There were no questions.

### **Case Management System Update Status Report**

The report was shared with Commissioners before the meeting. Director Johnson asked commissioners if the current report was adequate, or if they would benefit from the project lead, Barbara Lloyd, delivering a verbal report at the meetings. Chair McCallum replied that the written report is adequate at this time.

### **COVID-19 Emergency Update**

State offices remain closed to the public through December 31, 2020. The Agency has provided remote services via telephone and Zoom, whenever possible, as well as permitting some physically-distanced instruction (traveling to client locations and using personal protective equipment), and very limited in-office contact, when necessary, to support clients receiving their initial services.

Services delivered remotely by telephone and Zoom conferences have included many of our traditional face-to-face activities including our Living with Blindness class (offered by the Career Center). The remote version of this class allowed increasing enrollment to two classes each term. Remote delivery allows students to participate from where ever they live in Oregon, avoiding travel to Portland and living temporarily in student accommodations.

Distance services have included dropping-off and picking-up materials for Older Blind Independent Living Services Program participants, as well as providing physically-distanced lessons in driveways and garages. A mobile low vision assessment has also been provided, and the Older Blind group has a weekly support call they may participate in.

Limited in-person services have been provided when absolutely necessary - face-to-face interaction is necessary for some cooking and meal prep instruction and low vision assessments. These are scheduled in advance at the Portland office, and careful physical-distancing practices and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) are strictly followed.

Technology support for a small number of client worksites has also been provided, as needed, so clients may retain employment and adapt to employers' needs.

Commissioner Babcock asked how the public may learn about remote services like the Living with Blindness class. Center Director Jason Clary described the process by which Vocational Rehabilitation

clients are referred based on their individual assessment results. Once referred, the student attends three hours-a-week for 12 weeks.

Commissioner Babcock also asked about the public's response to our remote services? Director Johnson answered that we have observed older clients deferring services until in-home services can be resumed. Those clients who have received physically distanced services have been appreciative.

### **Legislative Budget Update**

The Agency Request Budget (ARB) for the biennium beginning July 1, 2021, was approved by commissioners and submitted to the Legislative Fiscal Office July 31. Several steps remain before we learn the contents of the Legislative Adopted Budget (LAB) May-June 2021. We anticipate we can share the Governor's Budget at the December 4, 2020, meeting.

Director Johnson concluded her report by acknowledging the Leadership Team and the staff for remaining focused on our mission during the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **REVIEW OF ANNUAL PERFORMANCE MEASURE PROGRESS REPORT**

This report was shared with commissioners prior to the meeting. Angel Hale offered to answer commissioners' questions, if any. There were no questions.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW AND UPDATES**

Angel Hale reported that Oregon Administrative Rules the Agency operates under are being reviewed. Working with the Attorney General's staff attorney, we are updating the rules to comply with the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act; also, to align with other State and Federal model rules; revising to include person-first language; and to ensure that processes described in the rules are appropriate for Agency business practices. We plan to issue revised rules soon.

### **OVERVIEW OF AGENCY INTERNAL AUDIT/QUALITY ASSURANCE PROGRAM**

Director Johnson introduced Clay France, the Agency's internal auditor. Clay presented the Quality Assurance (QA) Manual that was shared with the commissioners, documenting the Agency's internal control processes.

Dacia Johnson reinforced that the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act places greater emphasis on performance and accountability, which aligns with this work and our commitment to solid business practices. The Internal Auditor position gives us the capacity to make sure that our performance reporting and our accountability are all aligned to meet our expectations at the federal and state levels.

Clay reported that the next step in his work would be to work closely with the leadership team in performing a risk assessment for the Agency to identify all of the risks facing the Agency, prioritizing those risks and then using that information to create an audit plan for the next year so that we have a

strong risk-based audit plan going forward. The goal is to present both of those documents, the risk assessment and the audit plan, to commissioners at the December 4, 2020, meeting.

## OLD BUSINESS

### **BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM UPDATE**

Business Enterprise (BE) Program Director Eric Morris presented the BE Program Update to the commissioners.

#### **Vending Machine Initiative**

This project is beginning to fall into place.

Commissioner Babcock inquired about the number of machines BE hopes to install this and next month. Director Morris estimated that 45 of 50 promised machines are ready for installation on the initial route, as well as an additional five or six machines to install in one of the prisons. Commissioner Babcock reiterated to confirm that BE plans to have these installed by early November.

#### **COVID-19 Pandemic and Impact to Business Enterprise Program**

Some buildings are beginning to reopen: DMV headquarters, the Employment Division building, and a DHS location have reopened on a limited basis. Cafés there have converted to contactless serving, although on a smaller scale until businesses reopen fully. A new Multnomah County courthouse is expected to open soon, as well.

#### **Business Enterprise Program's Administrative Rules**

We are awaiting final approval of revised rules from (Rehabilitation Services Administration) RSA, having resubmitted them following feedback from the Business Enterprise Consumer Committee.

#### **Staffing**

Tom Pileggi, BE Operations Manager, has retired, and we are recruiting to fill the position. A new Vending Facility Manager (VFM) has also been licensed in BE, bringing us to 16 Vending Facility Managers.

Board Chair McCallum inquired whether the new VFM has been assigned a route? Director Morris described how geographic location of available vending locations often does not match individuals' geographic preference.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further agenda items, the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.