HO’OPONO

Business Enterprise Program

Services for the Blind Branch

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

State of Hawaii Department of Human Services

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M I N U T E S

REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING of the HAWAII STATE COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS

DATE: Tuesday, April 20, 2021

PLACE: Ho’opono

 1901 Bachelot Street

 Honolulu, HI 96817

 (via Microsoft Teams or Call-in)

PRESENT:

1. ­Committee: Stan Young, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, Steve Kim, Lespaul Naki, Don Patterson, Wanda Takaesu

Excused: Kyle Aihara

1. Members: Evelyn Ah San, Dyllon Asami, Ted Chinn, Joel Cho, Ron Flormata, Flordeliza Galiza, Wilmer Galiza, Byron Jitchaku, Shontel Jones, Roxane Kaneshiro-Sasaki, Doug Moises, Norman Ota, Lyn Pasak, Mary Rupard, and Martha Vo (Trainee)
2. Ho'opono: SBA Lea Dias, BEP Manager Kathleen Fujimoto, VFS Tad Matsuno and Bruce Chin, and BEP Secretary MJ Andres
3. Guests: DAG Lori Wada, Lily Young, and Erin Yamashiro

CALL TO ORDER:

Noting the presence of a quorum, Stan called the meeting to order at 2:06 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Randolph Sheppard Financial Relief and Restoration Payments (FRRP) – Setting Guidelines for Disbursement and Supporting Documentation for the FRRP COVID-19 Relief Funds: Stan provided a short background of the FRRP – brainchild of Nicky Gacos, President NABM, intended to provide relief to blind vendors due to the COVID-19 pandemic; original request submitted to Congress was for $35 million, but only $20 million was approved; blind vendors would have had to be active on September 30, 2020; approximately 1,900 blind vendors nationwide comes out to approximately $11,000 per blind vendor.

Stan provided the following summarized plan:

First, blind vendor needs to determine average net income within a period before COVID:

Option 1 – Jan-March 2020

Option 2 – Jan-Feb 2020

Option 3 – Oct 2019 to Feb 2020

Allowable Period of Loss: April 2020 to Dec 2020 (9 months)

Estimated $11,000 (FRRP) divide by 9 months = approx. $1,200 monthly maximum

If the monthly net income before COVID was $1,200 or less, they will be entitled to that amount. Example – Average monthly income is $900, blind vendor will be eligible to receive up to $900 in relief funds for their deficit for the months from April to December 2020.

If the monthly income before COVID is more than $1,200, they will only be eligible for the maximum of $1,200 per month for April to December 2020.

Any remaining FRRP monies will be distributed equally to all blind vendors as a medical benefit and brought up for ratification at the next annual statewide meeting in June.

Following discussion, Stan called for a motion. Don moved to accept plan as submitted. Wanda seconded and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Vending Facility #66 MPO Rochefort – Discussion on Current and Future Performance: Stan gave a brief history of vending facility when it was converted from a 1-person facility to a 2-person facility and that it also operates with a teaming partner which takes a percentage of the income derived from profit earned. Since the pandemic, both facilities have remained open but neither vendors have earned any income for over a year and owes teaming partner monies that were fronted to them. Because of this and no sight of any gains for both blind vendors, he is recommending the facility revert to one blind vendor.

Don provided testimony that having a teaming partner is good but comes at a high cost.

Following discussion, DAG Lily confirmed that this item is only for discussion and not a vote as stated on the agenda.

The committee agreed to call the next meeting on May 5, 2021 at 3 p.m. to vote on this item.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for May 5, 2021.

ADJOURNMENT: There being no further business to discuss and hearing no objections, Dane moved to adjourn the meeting. Ivy seconded and the motion passed by unanimous voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

KF:mra

Ho'opono/Employment Section