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 MEETING of the HAWAII STATE COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS

DATE: Saturday, May 7, 2022

PLACE: Ho'opono Services for the Blind

1901 Bachelot Street

Honolulu, HI 96817

1. CALL TO ORDER:
2. Committee Members:  Stanley Young, Donald Patterson, Wanda Takaesu, Steve Kim, Kyle Aihara, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, and Lespaul Naki

1. Licensed Blind Vendors:  Evelyn Ah San, Dyllon Asami, James Chinn, Ronald Flormata, Flordeliza Galiza, Wilmer Galiza, Roxanne Kaneshiro-Sasaki, Desiree Lacewell, Michael Miyashiro, Douglas Moises, Thomas Morikami, Norman Ota, Gail Sakamoto, Lynn Schempp, Justin Shim, Myles Tamashiro, and Martha Vo

1. Ho'opono:  SBA Lea Dias, VFS Tad Matsuno and Bruce Chin, VR Counselor John Zamarra, and Secretary MJ Andres

1. Attorney General Office:  Erin Lau

1. Other Guest:  VRA Maureen Bates, Steve Parcell, Jessica Parcell, Emily Cruz, Douglas Denney

1. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM:

Noting the presence of a quorum, Chair Stan called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

1. DECISION MAKING TO APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING ON 7/28/2021:

Stan asked if there were any discussion or correction to the minutes.  Dane moved to approve the minutes and Ivy seconded.  Hearing no discussion or correction to the minutes, the minutes were approved with Kyle, Chris, Dane, Ivy, Steve, Lespaul, Don, Wanda, and Stan voting yes.

1. STATE LICENSING AGENCY (SLA) REPORT:

1. Randolph Sheppard Revolving Account Balance:  SBA Lea reported that the balance of the RSRA as of 5/6/22 was $2,138,456.

She noted the agency is facing challenges with staffing.  Positions available include BEP Manager, Vending Facilities Specialist, and Account Clerk III.  We are hopeful to be fully staffed soon and thanked everyone for their patience.

She congratulated the addition of two new vendors to the program, Jonah Sniffen and Isaiah Leui, and the return of licensed blind vendor, Tony Fuimaono, now at Kalanimoku Building.

She also welcomed two new participants for the next training class and noted that we are still accepting participants if anyone is interested.

RSA-15 Report Highlights for SFY 2021 (10/1/2020-9/20/2021):

▪ Gross Profit $16,410,522

▪ Operating Profit $8,420,825

▪ Average BV Earnings $259,255

▪ Median BV Earnings $27,202 – SBA Lea noted the median earning would’ve have been much lower without the FRRP income reported

Re-opening – she stressed the importance to reopen facilities especially if their buildings have reopened; make sure insurance and food service requirements are updated; be aware of the going-ons in your building and change in business practices since pandemic so that the Randolph Sheppard program survives.

Advocacy - VR supported the program with over $400 thousand in attorney fees to assist with Schofield and Marine Corp contracts; accessible financial reports to blind vendors prepared in-house by BEP Secretary; FRRP funds received and distributed thanks to the efforts and hard work of various consumer groups and the agency; expansion of permits to amend work hours and products sold.

Farmers Markets – the agency reached out to the City to provide understanding of the Randolph Sheppard priority and have a better relationship which may lead to more discussions for opportunities for the program.

Kalanimoku Building – sink was finally installed at this facility, thanks to the team effort of VFS Bruce working with building management, at no cost to the program.

SCORE – available to provide services to assist BV with development or update of business plans.

Profit & Loss Statements – clarified and reminded all BV to submit profit & loss statements even if their income is zero; reports are important to track business, for RSA filing, Promotion & Transfer, application for financial relief, etc.

Odom Corporation (Coke) and Pepsi – Tad reported that the rumors that Coke will not repair their vending machines if BV are filling it themselves is false.   Keri Sanders is leaving Pepsi at the end of the month, but BV can still contact Pepsi and they will forward to someone to assist you.

1. Facility Updates:

1. Airport Post Office – Square system has been installed in the cafeteria.
2. DPAA – Trainee Jonah is waiting for background clearance.
3. Kapolei Hale – Trainee Isaiah has been placed and Square system installed.
4. Kona Airport North – SBA Lea has been in contact with DOT Airport Transportation to see how they can work together and address renovation project.
5. NSA Kunia Tunnel & Rocherfort Whitmore – More staff was hired.
6. Kinau Hale – New air conditioner to be installed by DAGS at no cost to the program.
7. Kalanimoku Building – New sink installed, appliances fixed, Square system installed, slat wall fixtures to be replaced, and returnee Tony Fuimaono placed and to open this month.
8. Ho’opono Snack Shop – Gerry Lonergan is scheduled to reopen this week.
9. Keelikolani Building – There’s a water issue with the building to be resolved. Scheduled to reopen by mid-May.
10. Hilo Airport – Square system installed.
11. Maui Memorial Hospital – Broken appliances replaced and repaired, scheduled to reopen within the next 2 weeks.
12. Kahului Airport – 2nd location completed and operational.
13. Hilo County Building – Byron Jitchaku has been operating at Hilo County Building while Hilo Hospital undergoes a remodel, which is estimated to be completed in October 2022.
14. Vacancies – State Office Tower and District Court on Oahu; West Hawaii Civic Center and Hilo County Building on Big Island.
15. Proposal for Interested Blind Vendors to Serve as Work Experience Sites for Vocational Rehabilitation Consumers:

VRS John Zamarra introduced a Vocational Work Adjustment Training Services (VWATS) contract which provides work-based learning experiences to VR participants which is not job-training, but a service to help participants figure out what career they want and where they want to work. The participant is not an employee and will be limited to only 90-120 hours of work-based learning experience with a company, pursuant to the Fair Labor Standards Act. The agency will help place participant with an employer and pay for their salary if the work is appropriate for them, unless they are job-shadowing. He noted that there are a lot of participants looking for a wide variety of jobs and our program has vending facilities that may not have the resources to hire but can offer opportunities for various learning experiences such as stocking, cashier, accounting and business – could help to prepare profit and loss statements, for example. John proposed to work with the BV and to partner with the winner of the VWATS contract bid to develop a system to offer their sites where participants can gain work-based learning experiences; in turn, the BV will benefit with the help participants can provide. The goal is to help VR participants gain work-based learning experiences which will help them to find employment.

1. STATE FISCAL YEAR (SFY) 2023 BUDGET & BENEFITS:

1. Discussion on the SFY 2023 Budget and the Related Benefit Package to be Approved & Proposed to All Licensed Blind Vendors at the Statewide Meeting in June 2022:
	1. Stan noted that the committee wants to provide the same benefit package of $7 thousand for medical, $5 thousand medical supplement in the Spring, and $3 thousand at the end of the year for retirement, for a total of $15 thousand per blind vendor. He proposed that the SFY 2023 Budget and Related Benefit Package be recommended to at the Statewide meeting in June.

* 1. Decision-Making on the SFY 2023 Budget and the Related Benefits Package to be Approved & Proposed to All Licensed Blind Vendors at the Statewide Meeting in June 2022 (Vote):

Don moved to recommend the budget of $1.1 million which includes a benefit package of $7 thousand for medical, $5 thousand for a medical supplement in the Spring, and $3 thousand for retirement to be proposed to all blind vendors at the June meeting. Steve seconded the motion.

SBA Lea asked if there were any testimonies from the public. There were none.

The motion passed by a majority with Chris, Dane, Ivy, Steve, Don, Wanda, and Stan voting yes. Kyle and Lespaul were not available for vote.

1. Discussion on the Contingent Funds from Blind Vendors Ohana to be Paid to Benefit the Vendors and Their Facilities to be Proposed to All Licensed Blind Vendors at the Statewide Meeting in June 2022:
	1. Stan recommended the contingent funds from BVO to be paid to benefit the vendors and their facilities and propose to all licensed blind vendors at the Statewide meeting in June.

Stan asked if there were any public testimonies at this time. There were none.

* 1. Decision Making on the Contingent Funds from Blind Vendors Ohana to be Paid to Benefit the Vendors and Their Facilities to be Proposed to All Licensed Blind Vendors at the Statewide Meeting in June 2022 (Vote):

Dane moved to recommend the contingent funds from BVO to be paid to benefit the vendors and their facilities and propose to all licensed blind vendors at the Statewide meeting in June.

The motion carried with Chris, Dane, Ivy, Don, Wanda, and Stan voting yes. Kyle and Lespaul were not available for vote.

1. INFORMATION ON NEW REHABILITATION SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (RSA) REGULATIONS REGARDING UNASSIGNED VENDING MACHINES ON FEDERAL PROPERTY:

Stan reported that the RSA has a new ruling stating that the unassigned vending machine income from federal properties which has been going to the RSRA needs to go to a blind vendor, so the committee will need to come up with a plan to distribute this income to a blind vendor.

1. NEXT MEETING:

Statewide Annual Meeting, tentatively June 25, 2022

Stan asked if there were any public testimonies at this time. There were none.

1. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss, Don moved to adjourn the meeting.  Dane seconded and the motion passed by a majority with Dane, Ivy, Steve, Don, Wanda, and Stan voting yes. Chris, Kyle, and Lespaul were not available for vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

LD/mra

Ho’opono