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 (HSCBV)

DATE: Saturday, March 23, 2024

PLACE: Ho'opono Auditorium

1901 Bachelot Street

Honolulu, HI 96817

1. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:
   * 1. Committee: Kyle Aihara, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, Steve Kim, Lespaul Naki, Donald Patterson, Wanda Takaesu, and Stan Young
     2. Licensed Blind Operators: Evelyn Ah San, Dyllon Asami, Emily Cruz, Joel Cho, Ron Flormata, Shontel Jones, Desiree Lacewell, Clifford Miyashiro, Mike Miyashiro, Thomas Morikami, Norman Ota, Jessica Parsell, Gail Sakamoto, Lynn Schempp, Jonah Sniffen, Virgil Stinnett, Myles Tamashiro, and Martha Vo
     3. Ho’opono: Temporarily Assigned Services for the Blind Administrator (TA-SBA) Gavan Abe, Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Manager Barney Higa, Vending Facilities Specialists (VFS) Bruce Chin and Tad Matsuno, and BEP Secretary Mary Jane (MJ) Andres
     4. Guests: Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Lily Young

Noting the presence of a quorum, the meeting was called to order at 11:26 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 9, 2023, REGULAR COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES: Stan Young noted that the minutes were previously mailed and asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. He also asked if there were any public testimony or discussion. Hearing none, Dane Alani moved to accept the minutes as submitted. Steve Kim seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously with Kyle Aihara, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, Steve Kim, Lespaul Naki, Don Patterson, Wanda Takaesu, and Stan Young voting in favor. There were no nays or abstentions.
2. PROGRAM REPORT: Update on Facilities by the State Licensing Agency (SLA):
   1. Opening and Closing of Facilities: VFS Tad Matsuno reported that Satomi Morioka, a recent graduate from the BEP training, accepted the Camp Smith facility and will be starting within 6-8 weeks. He also reported that Dane Waltjen opened District Court this past Monday.

B. Status of New Vendors: No report.

C. Status of Statement on Letterhead Stating that the Randolph Sheppard funding from Blind Vendors Ohana (BVO) is not a Set-Aside Payment (Federal Source), but a Contribution from a State-Source as a Result of the HIA Settlement Agreement: TA-SBA Gavan Abe believes that based on the federal definition of set-aside in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), the funds from BVO are not set-aside. He emailed the technical assistant with Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) to verify this is correct and will report back to the committee.

D. Status of Defining for Accounting Purposes the Source Funds Generated from State Sources Versus Funds Generated from Federal Sources: TA-SBA Gavan Abe noted that the SLA keeps track of this because of our annual reporting to RSA.

1. APPROVAL OF SFY 2025 BUDGET AND COMPREHENSIVE BLIND VENDOR BENEFITS PACKAGE FROM THE BUDGET & FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE FOR REFERRAL FOR STATEWIDE VOTE AT THE JUNE ANNUAL MEETING:

VFS Bruce Chin read the proposed Budget and Comprehensive Blind Vendor Benefits Package for SFY 2025 as follows:

1. 1st Quarter (July-September 2024), a $7,000 Health Benefit
2. 2nd Quarter (October-December 2024), a $3,000 Carry-over Balance of Health Benefit and a $5,000 Supplemental Health Benefit
3. 3rd Quarter (January-March 2025), a $10,000 Stimulus Plan for Inventory or Equipment (Standard Equipment only and Inventory Rated Adequate by Program)
   1. Requires compliance (invoices submitted) on previous stimulus. Any balance (no invoices) returned or added to initial inventory.
   2. Requires Profit & Loss (P&L) statement compliance, all P&L reports are up to date.
   3. Requires invoices within 60 days of start, otherwise balance to be returned or added to initial inventory.
   4. Requires ending P&L to reflect a substantial improvement in inventory (rated by the specialists) or the vendor will be barred from further stimulus program during the next 2 years.
4. 4th Quarter (April-June 2025), a $3,000 Vacation/Sick Leave (facility must remain open), and a $5,000 Retirement Benefits in June 2025

Stanley Young asked if there were any public testimony or discussion. There were none. He noted this budget will be voted on by all blind vendors at the statewide meeting in June. Donald Patterson moved to approve the budget. The motion was seconded by Dane Alani and carried unanimously with Kyle Aihara, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, Steve Kim, Lespaul Naki, Don Patterson, Wanda Takaesu, and Stan Young voting in favor. There were no nays or abstentions.

1. APPROVE FUNDING FOR A LEGAL DEFENSE FUND UP TO $300,000 BY ALLOCATING REMAINING BALANCES FROM EACH QUARTER:

Stanley Young asked if there were any public testimony or discussion. There were none. Donald Patterson moved to approve the Legal Defense Fund by allocating remaining balances from each quarter, up to $300,000. The motion was seconded by Dane Alani and carried unanimously with Kyle Aihara, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, Steve Kim, Lespaul Naki, Don Patterson, Wanda Takaesu, and Stan Young voting in favor. There were no nays or abstentions.

1. PROPOSAL TO USE ANY ALLOTMENT BALANCES TO FUND PURCHASE OF LATEST READING TECHNOLOGY FOR THE BLIND VENDORS:

Stanley Young noted there was a demonstration earlier and there will be another after the meeting. Donald Patterson moved to approve the purchase of the Orcam device from any remaining funds from the allotment. The motion was seconded by Steve Kim. Stanley asked if there were any public testimony or discussion. Hearing none, the motion carried unanimously with Kyle Aihara, Chris Akamine, Dane Alani, Ivy Galariada, Steve Kim, Lespaul Naki, Don Patterson, Wanda Takaesu, and Stan Young voting in favor. There were no nays or abstentions.

1. ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business to discuss and hearing no objections, Dane Alani moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ivy Galariada and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

GA:mra

Ho'opono/Employment Section