

**COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 25, 2021
4:00 P.M.**

The meeting was held via Zoom

Roll Call – Attendance was taken. A quorum was present.

Members Present:

Mac Carnes, Lynn Florence, Vice Chair, Jerry Grimes, Larry Hall, Chair, Buster Mayne, Chris Miller, Justin Purvis, Cramer Schneider, Todd Stephens and Ronnie Wheatley. **Member Absent:** Todd Freeman

Staff Present:

Corey Marcum, KBE Director, Jennifer Wright, KBE Assistant Director, Janice Jackson, Recording Secretary, Jason Wathen, Food Service Coordinator, and Stuart Boggs, Vending Coordinator.

Vendors Present:

George Bouquet, Martin Caldwell, Randy Hester, Reni Jackson and Angela Stevens

Chair Instructions and Discussion

The meeting was called to order at 4 p.m. by Chair Larry Hall. He instructed members that there was only one item on the agenda and that was all that could be discussed. He said the reason for the special called meeting was to get Active Participation from the Committee on the distribution of funds from the Randolph Sheppard Financial Relief and Restoration Payments Appropriation, recently passed by Congress.

He stated that only Committee members would be allowed to speak until the Public Comments portion of the meeting.

The Chair said he wanted every Committee member's thoughts to be heard so he called on each member individually and asked them to give their ideas on how the funds should be distributed. Then he called on those with public comments.

There was discussion and the consensus was that the money should be distributed so that every vendor got money in an equitable way. The majority said payments should be built on a tier system similar to the formula used to determine payments for the Inventory Relief funds, which was based on sales and set aside payments.

It was mentioned that despite rumors, the new appropriation money couldn't be given as an \$11,000 payment to each vendor. That plan had already been submitted, by another state, and rejected by RSA as being inequitable.

When it was noted that the Inventory Relief funds received previously must be deducted from this disbursement, there were a couple of questions from members who thought this meant the Inventory Relief money had been a loan to be repaid. It was asked if they could pay it back in installments. Chair Hall explained that it was not a loan, but that amount must be deducted from the Randolph-Sheppard Act Financial Relief and Restoration Payment because it was required in the Congressional bill. He said the agency has no choice but to deduct the amount that was given, as it was reimbursement for lost inventory. However, he told the group, the agency will put that money back into the blind vendor program. He said that the SLA is on their side but must meet the mandates of the law.

Asked when the Committee would vote on a plan, the Chair said he would get together with Corey Marcum and have a plan ready to vote on as soon as possible, hopefully next week. The plan would

then go to the SLA who would send it on to RSA for final approval.

A motion to adjourn was made by Todd Stephens and seconded by Vice-Chair, Lynn Florence.

The meeting was adjourned at 5 p.m.