

**COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS  
QUARTERLY MEETING  
December 2, 2021**

This was a virtual meeting held via Zoom.

**Members Present:** Larry Hall, Chair, Lynn Florence, Vice-Chair, Mac Carnes, Todd Freeman, Jerry Grimes, Clyde 'Buster' Mayne, Chris Miller, Justin Purvis, Cramer Schneider, Todd Stephens, and Ronnie Wheatley

**Staff Present:** Cora McNabb, OVR Executive Director, Corey Marcum, Director, Kentucky Business Enterprise (KBE), Jennifer Wright, Assistant Director, Janice Jackson and Nanci Howard, Administrative Assistants, and Jason Wathen, Food Service Coordinator

**Guests Present:** Angela Darlene Stevens, Eddie Myers, and Katherine Gore

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present.

The meeting was called to order at 5:09 pm ET.

An invocation was given by Cramer Schneider.

**Approval of Minutes**

A motion was made by Todd Stephens, and seconded by Cramer Schneider, to accept the October 28<sup>th</sup> Special Called Meeting minutes, as written. The motion carried. A motion was made by Todd Stephens and seconded by

Buster Mayne to approve the July 22<sup>nd</sup> quarterly meeting minutes as submitted. The motion passed.

### **KBE Director's Report**

Corey Marcum began by talking about the changes in vendors and locations since the last quarterly meeting. He said there had been three vendor resignations, Michael Lewis, Ron Hall, and Reni Jackson. Bids for their locations were sent out. He announced that Beverly Dickerson absorbed Mr. Lewis' Post Offices into her existing Louisville Post Office route. Angela Stevens took over the Hall of Justice upon Mr. Jackson's retirement. Mr. Hall's Ashland Prison location, and the Federal Medical Center location left vacant by Ms. Stevens' move, have not yet been awarded. The L&N Building, in Louisville, had been under renovation for nearly three years. Finally completed, the bid for that location was awarded to George Bouquet, who left his position at the Gene Snyder Federal Building. Justin Purvis' bid was accepted for that location. Mr. Marcum said that L&N was an impressive location, and it should do well. He also reported that Southern Foods is the new teaming partner with the vendor at the Wendell Ford National Guard Training Center in Western Kentucky.

Mr. Marcum told the committee that there are new machines coming for many locations including the Rowan and Carter Rest Areas, TVA, the Transportation Cabinet Building and the State Office Building in Frankfort, and the Federal Courthouse in Lexington.

Mr. Marcum reported that the agency continues to work with suppliers on gaining the supplies needed for the vendors. KBE staff and some food service vendors recently met with Clem's Meats and Performance Food Group representatives looking for new avenues for products. He hopes to collaborate with suppliers to increase available options available to vendors during the food supply chain situation.

Regarding the iBEP online setaside payment, Mr. Marcum reported that the agency is waiting for the Statement of Work, required from Kentucky Interactive, by the Commonwealth, in order to be able to use their Electronic Transfer of Funds (EFT) system.

He reported that new vendor agreements had been sent out to all vendors and 13 had already signed and returned them.

Mr. Marcum said that the agency continues to investigate more opportunities for vendors. He said he and Chair Hall recently visited Cumberland Falls State Park where there is a possibility of a vendor running a snack shop located there. A short discussion was held by the committee regarding the possible new location.

### **Chair Report**

Chair Larry Hall stated that he had spoken with the Governor's Special Assistant, Rocky Adkins, several times in the past two weeks to discuss opportunities for the Blind Vendors program. Chair Hall reported that Mr. Adkins

said that progress is being made on the prison commissaries and possibly the new car plant at Glendale, but the wheels of government turn slowly. Mr. Adkins told the Chair that the plan is to bring it up again after the first of the year.

Chair Hall stated that he had spoken with a couple of people about vending opportunities at the Toyota plant in Georgetown. He said that this could possibly be an opportunity down the road, but the program is not equipped to handle it now. He said that he was optimistic that if the program could get into a state park, like Cumberland Falls, it would open the door to others.

Chair Hall told the vendors to keep their spirits up through these rough times. He said he hopes to return to in-person meetings in the upcoming year.

### **Old Business**

Jerry Grimes asked Mr. Marcum how much it cost for AreaWide, KBE's contracted warranty and repair group, to go out on a repair call. Mr. Marcum stated he would have to get that information as he did not have the figures in front of him. He told the group that it was nearly impossible to find someone experienced, to do in-house repairs, for the salary the state has set for that position. He also said that it would not be fiscally responsible for the agency to hire a full-time repair person, at this time, as there hasn't been enough work to keep anyone working full time. He said that most of KBE's machines are newer and under warranty and we aren't allowed to work on

those. We are adding more new machines each year. Discussion was held and concerns expressed regarding repair situations.

### **Status of EFT for Set Aside Payments**

Todd Stephens said that Mr. Marcum had already covered this topic sufficiently in his report. The agency is waiting on Kentucky Interactive to provide a Statement of Work before the process can continue.

### **Discussion of Effects of Coke's Potential Pull-Out from Full-Service Vending**

Concerns were expressed regarding this topic. Mr. Marcum announced that Coca-Cola Kentucky Regional Manager, Robin Young, had accepted a new position in Florida and would no longer be working with KBE. Chair Hall said that the decision whether to go self-service with Coke is an individual business decision.

### **New Business**

Discussion of Juvenile Justice Detention Centers Vending Opportunities

Mr. Marcum stated the agency is working with the Department of Juvenile Justice to determine additional vending opportunities across the state. The question of how many facilities have potential was asked. Mr. Marcum said there are a few that have potential to be profitable, but we don't want to take a location just to be taking it. Chair Hall encouraged all vendors to bring him, or Mr. Marcum, any new location suggestions and they will be evaluated. The

Chair indicated that he is working hard with the legislature to get new opportunities.

Todd Stephens expressed the need to find opportunities other than state and federal office buildings, which have been closed since Covid began. He suggested private locations and places that must remain open due to necessity such as hospitals, doctors' offices, nursing homes and health care facilities. Mr. Marcum reported that he is working with Nicki Wright, a SCVAR member, to get the name of a contact at Baptist Health. Chair Hall indicated that he would speak with his doctors at the Lexington Clinic and St. Joe Health Care.

### **Discussion on Acquiring Bluegrass Army Depot**

Mr. Marcum provided an update on this topic. He reported that when the agency negotiated previously for a contract with the Army Depot, at the last minute, KBE was told they were going to be required to pay a commission, which would be for the upkeep of the Depot's golf course. The agency is not willing to be involved in any type of commission process. He said the vendors shouldn't have to shoulder that cost. Due to the disagreement, KBE did not move forward with pursuing the facility. Vendors asked if there were any options. Mr. Marcum stated that arbitration is the only option. Chair Hall suggested speaking with Terry Smith about it and that he would meet with Mr. Marcum to further discuss other options which might be available. This topic will be revisited at the next meeting when Mr. Marcum obtains additional information.

## **Determine a Date for January Quarterly Meeting**

The following dates were proposed for the 2022 meetings:

January 27<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm ET

April 28<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm ET

July 28<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm ET

October 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> (tentative) for a possible in-person General Assembly

A motion was made by Todd Freeman to accept the dates as proposed. Ronnie Wheatley, seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Ronnie Wheatley suggested all vendors log on to future meetings at least 15 minutes early to allow time to work out technical difficulties.

Todd Stephens commented that it was important that when meetings go back to being held in person, they should be hybrid. All vendors should have the option to still participate in the meetings via Zoom even if they can't attend in person.

## **Public Comments**

The floor was opened by the Chair to hear and discuss all comments from the floor. No comments were presented.

## **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Todd Stephens and seconded by Jerry Grimes. The meeting was adjourned at 6:04 pm ET.