

**KENTUCKY BUSINESS ENTERPRISE
COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS
QUARTERLY MEETING
April 28, 2022**

This meeting was offered virtually and for in-person attendance. No one chose to attend in person.

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

Members Absent: Chair Larry Hall and Ronnie Wheatley

Staff Present: Corey Marcum, Director, Kentucky Business Enterprise (KBE), Jennifer Wright, Assistant Director, Nanci Howard and Janice Jackson Administrative Assistants, Jason Wathen, Food Service Coordinator, Stuart Boggs, Vending Coordinator, and Dondra Meredith, Cabinet Counsel

Guests Present: Angela Stevens, Brad Holland, and Katherine Gore

Roll call was taken, and a quorum was present. The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm ET.

An invocation was given by Cramer Schneider.

Approval of Minutes:

A motion was made by Todd Stephens, and seconded by Todd Freeman, to accept the December 2, 2021, minutes, as written. The motion carried.

KBE Director's Report:

Corey Marcum began by discussing agency news. Effective July 1st the Labor and Education cabinets will merge and become the Kentucky Education and Labor Cabinet. No changes for KBE are expected. He continued to report that the OVR Deputy Executive Director, Becky Cabe, retired and has been replaced by Susie Edwards, a VR Administrator who has been with OVR for many years. Mr. Marcum announced the agency is ready to hire another Vending Program Coordinator soon. KBE is also trying to recruit a repair technician position, through Adecco, to help the coordinators and the vendors.

He continued by announcing that the Louisville, 'Big Route' was awarded to Reni Jackson. Cramer Schneider won the bid for the Mayo-Underwood Building. He reported there was no interest or bid made for the Owensboro route. A decision will need to be made about what to do with those existing locations. Mr. Marcum reported vending equipment has been delivered to several different locations, however, KBE is still waiting on equipment for various others.

He reported that KBE staff attended various trainings such as Sagebrush, and BLAST. He and Ms. Wright recently attended a three-day fiscal grant training conducted by

members of the VR-Tactical Assistance Center. He was happy to announce that agency staff who attended the VR-TAC training were impressed with the blind vendor, Charles Dorsey's quality of service and food.

Mr. Marcum reported agency staff attended a regional food show in Somerset to see new trends and what is available for blind vendors. He said he had not been to a food show in two years due to the pandemic.

Mr. Marcum stated the RSA-15 was completed and submitted and that he will review this at the next meeting. He said the state C02 contract is now complete. He told the committee that the information regarding the contract would be sent out to those who use that.

Mr. Marcum reported that implementation of the demo for iBEP set-aside payments will begin in about three weeks. He then discussed how inflation is affecting vendors. He stated the average food costs went up 14%, for salads 11% and hamburgers 8%. He stated KBE will continue to monitor this trend.

Additionally, he reported that Randy Hester has resigned from the Bowling Green route and a bid for those locations will be distributed soon. Mr. Marcum then informed the committee that staff are investigating opportunities for other vending locations and continues to support the vendors.

In his final comments, he said he was pleased to announce that Cramer Schneider has been chosen to speak at the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind conference on May 11th regarding his experiences with the program and to discuss ways to get younger entrepreneurs to join to the vending program.

Mr. Marcum asked for questions and there was one comment regarding the food show.

Chair Report:

Vice Chair, Lynn Florence indicated that since Chair Hall was ill and had not passed on anything to her, there would be no Chair Report.

Old Business:

Update: ETF transfer of set aside payments:

As mentioned previously by Mr. Marcum, there should be a demo ready in three weeks. No further discussion was held.

Updates: Juvenile Detention Center vending; Baptist Health vending; State Park vending:

Mr. Marcum provided an update on the state park vending. He said that the state park vending opportunity was awarded to another contractor who was going to pay commission. As for Baptist Health, Mr. Marcum explained that he could not reach a representative from that organization, so it is on hold for now. Finally, he reported that the Juvenile Detention Center and KBE are going back and forth with the contract language at this time.

**Determine course of action on Bluegrass Army Depot
- pursue with arbitration or forget:**

Mr. Marcum reported KBE was offered the facility but must pay a 10% commission. He said that vendors don't pay commissions on federal property. He stated that the committee will need to make the decision on whether to fight for the location without commission or pursue arbitration. Todd Stephens suggested continuing to engage in obtaining the location. Justin Purvis asked how many vending machines were at the Bluegrass Army Depot. Mr. Marcum stated that there were approximately 30 machines. Todd Freeman stated that he supports arbitration and believes the committee should fight for that location. Mr. Marcum said there is a golf course on the property and the 10% commission goes to the upkeep of the course. Mr. Stephens asked for numbers on what the facility makes. Mr. Marcum stated he did not have those numbers at this time and didn't feel the Depot was amenable to providing them. Mr. Purvis stated his support for arbitration. Todd Stephens made a motion to pursue the location through arbitration. Jerry Grimes, seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion passed.

New Business:

Equipment Updates:

Mr. Grimes expressed concern over the timeliness of delivery of new equipment from USI. Mr. Stephens said he understood the frustration but since COVID, there have been supply chain issues getting what they need to make machines.

It was stated that the KYTC Building, State Office Building, and the L&N Building received new vending equipment. New machines were also placed at the Roederer Correctional Camp, and some were also added to the Kentucky State Reformatory location. Since the pandemic, supply chain problems have pushed back orders. However, KBE is continuing to move new equipment as it is received.

Fort Knox Discussion:

Mac Carnes asked if Mr. Marcum had any information on military dining. Mr. Marcum said there were no new solicitations for Fort Knox.

Administrative Assistant, Janice Jackson, commended the vendors with returning set-asides on time. She said that verification of insurance is due and that there were still 10 individuals who have not submitted it. She said she will email those vendors directly.

Rest Areas/Charging Stations:

Discussion was held regarding rest areas and charging stations. Mr. Freeman said he was approached about installing charging stations at his welcome center in Paducah. Mr. Marcum said the charging stations are part of the federal infrastructure package and each state's Transportation Cabinet will need to devise their own plan on how to distribute those funds for charging stations. It was stated that the vendor program does not have anything to do with this plan moving forward unless our

state decides to put them in rest areas. Mr. Marcum asked Mr. Freeman not to pursue this with the rest area staff as we have to take our direction from the KY Transportation Cabinet.

Discussion on “Dressing for Success” by making a good impression...your personal image is a reflection on your KBE program:

Mr. Stephens encouraged the vendors to dress their best during work hours because not only do they represent their own businesses, but they also represent KBE. Vice Chair Florence, reiterated Mr. Stephens’ comments. Mr. Stephens’ announced that he has ordered logo jackets, hats and shirts for his employees as part of his business model. They have his business logo on the front and say Kentucky Business Enterprise on the back, as he wants to acknowledge that his business is part of the Randolph-Sheppard blind vendor program.

Vice Chair Florence commented that getting dirty in a food service is part of the business. She said clean clothes are important and recommended wearing aprons and having a change of shirts just to make sure the vendor looks presentable.

Food Service Coordinator, Jason Wathen, explained the importance of being presentable in front of customers and how it helps to better the program and each individual operation. Mr. Stephens was asked to share his designs for others to view. He said he will share his contact

person's info for ordering the merchandise and asked for anyone who wanted it to email him directly.

Public Comments:

Vice Chair Florence opened the floor for comments. No comments were received.

Determine a Date for July Quarterly Meeting:

The next quarterly meeting will be held on July 28th at 4 pm ET, using a hybrid model.

Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Stephens and seconded by Mr. Freeman. The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 pm ET.