

COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS
QUARTERLY MEETING
July 24, 2025

Roll Call:

Attendance was taken, a quorum determined, and the meeting called to order at 4:10 p.m. by Chair Lynn Florence. The invocation was provided by Cramer Schneider.

Members Present:

Lynn Florence, Chair, Todd Stephens, Vice Chair, Todd Freeman, Katherine Gore, Jerry Grimes, Brad Holland, Buster Mayne, Derrick Kromenacker and Cramer Schneider

Staff Present:

Corey Marcum, KBE Director, Jason Wathen, KBE Assistant Director, Madeleine Ancona, KBE Administrative Assistant, Stuart Boggs and Aaron Christy, Vending Coordinators, Shelby Glisson, Repair Tech

Guests:

Mac Carnes, Charles Dorsey, Sean Dorsey, Larry Hall, Darrell Keathley, Chris Miller, Steven Miller, Glenn Smallwood, Melissa Lykins

Approval of Minutes

Todd Stephens made a motion to approve the April 24, 2025 meeting minutes which were previously distributed for review. Buster Mayne seconded the motion. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

KBE Director Report – Corey Marcum

Three bids went out this quarter: one awarded (Sean Dorsey & Stephen Miller), two still pending (KSU dining and Louisville Dispatch Center).

Staff updates:

Assistant Director Jennifer Wright retired; Food Service Evaluator Steve Connell retired; Renee Jackson retired. Agency will likely refill evaluator role.

New accounts:

Kentucky State University dining (first SLA collegiate food service in the U.S., starting August 1).

Louisville Dispatch Center (24/7 location, expected to be lucrative).

Boone National Guard convenience store (planned to include hot/cold food, lottery, beer/wine/spirits).

Asset management:

Vending machines entering year six replacement cycle, improved technology and card reader connectivity.

New partnerships:

Farmers Fridge vending machines (pilot at rest area).

Youth programs:

8 students working through Pre-ETS; participation in life skills and PATH programs; Youth Entrepreneur Summit planned.

Financials:

Finished year 2% under budget (\$3.72M); next year's budget reduced by 9% (\$3.48M) but expected to be manageable.

Next General Assembly:

November 20–21 in Louisville.

Chair Report – Lynn Florence

Ms. Florence began her portion of the meeting by thanking members for their continued service and stressing the importance of strengthening the program's future through the summer youth initiative. Vendors were encouraged to host students, as it costs nothing but time and provides valuable opportunities for the next generation.

The Chair also emphasized that the program is a collective effort, reminding everyone that it is not a "me, me, me program but a we, we, we program." Each vendor's performance reflects on the entire group, and maintaining professionalism and accountability is essential to sustaining the program's reputation and opportunities.

Old Business

Vendors Failing to Meet Program Goals

Discussion on corrective action plans and enforcement.

Committee emphasized rules and regulations must define steps and consequences.

Members noted that one poor-performing vendor can jeopardize the entire state's program.

Agreement to address within upcoming rules and regs workshop.

Revisit Amount for Primary vs. Secondary Bid Locations

Current threshold: \$100,000 gross sales.

Discussion acknowledged this may be too low; suggestions to raise it to ~\$150,000.

Recognized differences between vending and food service profit margins.

General agreement for a case-by-case approach to remain flexible and accommodate varied life situations of vendors.

Concerns raised about monopolies if too many add-ons go to established vendors; emergency appointments suggested as a tool for new entrants.

Update from Appointed Subcommittee on Expansion of Duties Concerning Upward Mobility to Include Vendor Interviews During Bid Process

Consensus that brief interviews (via Zoom, ~5–10 minutes) should be included.

Purpose: give committee more insight into applicants, raise standards beyond paperwork, and reinforce entrepreneurship focus rather than entitlement.

Not intended to be intimidating, but to ensure fit and accountability.

New Business

Rules and Regulations Workshop:

To begin mid-August, every other week in manageable sessions. Goal is to modernize and refine the program framework.

Entrepreneur Code of Ethics:

Reminder to respect one another and maintain professionalism; reinforced by existing statutes.

Coordinator Role Expansion:

Proposal for coordinators to be more actively engaged in vendors' business success (pricing, budgeting, benchmarking, set-aside review, site visits). General support expressed, with emphasis on vendor openness to feedback.

Location Commitment & Site Visits:

Agreement that vendors should remain at new locations for at least 12–18 months (except emergencies). Site visits encouraged whenever feasible, though security limits them at certain facilities.

Public Comments:

Melissa suggested refresher training and grace periods for returning vendors.

Concerns raised about vendors leaving locations too soon.

Discussion on balancing opportunities for new vendors with growth for established ones.

Next Meeting Date

The next meeting date will be November 22, 2025. It will be an in-person meeting at the General Assembly.

Adjournment

Vice Chair Todd Stephens made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Buster Mayne. The meeting was adjourned at 6:08 pm.