

**COMMITTEE OF BLIND VENDORS
QUARTERLY MEETING**

October 19, 2024

Roll Call:

Attendance was taken, a quorum determined, and the meeting called to order at 3:30 p.m. by Chair Larry Hall. The invocation was provided by Todd Stephens.

Members Present:

Larry Hall, Chair, Lynn Florence, Vice Chair, Charles Dorsey, Katherine Gore, Jerry Grimes, Brad Holland, Buster Mayne, Chris Miller, and Todd Stephens

Members Absent:

Cramer Schneider

Staff Present:

Corey Marcum, KBE Director, Jennifer Wright and Jason Wathen, Assistant Directors, Madeleine Ancona, KBE Administrative Assistant, Aaron Christy, and Stuart Boggs, Vending Coordinators, Steve Connell and Michael Wellman, Food Service Coordinators, Shelby Glisson and Liam Goforth, Repair Techs

Guests:

Denise Carnes, Mac Carnes, Beverly Dickerson, Japera Dorsey, Sean Dorsey, Todd Freeman, Mike Hartsock, Lisa Kemp, Derrick Kromenacker, McKenzie Kromenacker, Steven Miller, Ernest Peterson, Glenn Smallwood, and Angela Stevens.

Approval of Minutes

Todd Stephens made a motion to approve the July 18, 2024 meeting minutes which were previously distributed for review. Brad Holland seconded the motion. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

KBE Director Report - Corey Marcum

Mr. Marcum reported there were four bids during the July–September quarter. They were for the four Department of Corrections Oldham area prisons, City Hall Annex, Gene Snyder and Mazzoli Buildings in Louisville, and the I-64 Rest Areas in Woodford Counties and the Shelby County Welcome Center. Derrick Kromenacker was awarded the Department of Corrections and Gene Snyder/Mazzoli routes, Buster Mayne was awarded the newly combined I-64 Rest Areas, and Steven Miller was awarded the Louisville City Hall Annex.

Mr. Marcum indicated that the agency financial information had been emailed out to everyone prior to the meeting.

This quarter no one traveled to a national conference, but there were trainings for staff, including monthly trainings presented jointly by the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind (NCSAB) and National Association of Blind Merchants (NABM). One of the most important trainings was presented by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) regarding the most recent Technical Assistance Circulars (TAC) they released, “What are Supplies” and “How to Spend VR Funds”. KBE has also attended various things this past quarter including Blindness Training at the McDowell Center in August, and visiting the Perkins Center to tour their Barista training program, in July. Vendors and KBE Staff attended vendor shows at both H.T. Hackney and Gordon Food Service (GFS).

Southern Foodservice, KBE's partner in military troop dining, had successful Program Management Reviews (PMR) this quarter at both Ft. Knox and Ft. Campbell.

Mr. Marcum announced that KBE is starting a relationship with "A Cup of Commonwealth" as an advisor for a KBE coffee program that will be piloted at the KY Transportation Cabinet building in Frankfort. If this endeavor is successful, the agency will begin adding this in-demand product to other locations.

Mr. Marcum announced that Cory Canterbury will be starting in November as the first ever Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS) Coordinator for KBE. This position is fully funded with Pre-ETS dollars. RSA requires all state VR programs to spend at least 15% of the agency budget on Pre-ETS. Mr. Canterbury will be working with youth aged 14-21 in middle and high school, as well as college, to help identify the next generation of vendors, teaching them about the KBE program and the opportunities that are available to them after graduation. One option is to have juniors and seniors start the Lighthouse training while in high school, to be ready to become a vendor as soon as they are out of school.

Mr. Marcum updated the Committee on the 2024 goals that were set at the first of the year. 1) Identify and license five new vendors - on course for completion with three new vendors licensed, one in on-the-job training, and one working on their Lighthouse training at the McDowell Center. 2) Develop a relationship with KY School for the Blind and other school systems - on course for completion as meetings have started with KSB, and Jefferson and Fayette County school systems. The new Pre-ETS Coordinator will be coming onboard next month to continue the goal. 3) Increase trainings for vendors and have at least 15 attend national trainings – this is on

course for completion as two vendors attended Sagebrush, two attended the National Automated Merchandising Association (NAMA), one attended the National Restaurant Association (NRA), and 12 are scheduled for the BLAST training in November. 4) Revise the rules and regulations - the draft proposal has been received back from legal's review and now must be revised to reflect the changes made by them, as well as additional changes that will need to be made to address the newest TACs from RSA on what is considered supplies and what is equipment. There will also have to be a policy and procedures manual developed to go along with the proposed regulations. They must be submitted to RSA together.

Mr. Marcum stated that with the new TACs there is an ongoing conversation with what are supplies and what is equipment, under the \$1000 limit. With the new TACs he said he will have to be creative in the procurement process, and added that under the new TAC, VR funds are allowable do more in the Randolph Sheppard process, but this is a "may" and not a "shall" and depends on the VR budget.

He announced that the 2025 General Assembly will be held November 21-22 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Louisville. The speaker will be Justin Patton, an executive with YUM Foods Leadership Development. Mr. Marcum asked vendors to watch for a feedback survey from Ms. Ancona on this year's General Assembly, as well as what vendors would like to see in the future, such as specific training topics or speakers.

An update was made regarding iBEP and the frustrations that have been ongoing with the software. A replacement software is in the works that will be much simpler to use. He said if any vendors are having difficulties with iBEP, to submit a paper set aside to Ms. Ancona.

Mr. Marcum reminded the vendors who are not sole proprietors that the Business Ownership Information filings were due by the end of the year. He said Ms. Ancona will send out a link with more information and to file online.

He reported that for the first time, KBE now has their own box truck, paid for by OVR funds. He said they are exploring having it wrapped to promote the program.

Chair Report – Larry Hall

Chair Larry Hall said that due to health issues, he couldn't continue as Chair after this year. He talked about how he has seen 100% improvement in the agency and its involvement with vendors. He reminded vendors that during his tenure he has, and will always be, for the program and encouraged the next Committee to do the same. He suggested looking into cleaning contracts as a way to expand the program and provide additional income to vendors.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Chair and Vice Chair Elections

Chair Hall asked if anyone had a nomination for Vice Chair for the upcoming Committee 2025-2026, Todd Freeman nominated Todd Stephens, which was seconded by Brad Holland. The Chair asked twice more if there were any other nominations from the floor. As there were none, Todd Stephens was elected by acclamation as Vice Chair for 2025-2026.

Chair Hall asked if there were any nominations for Chair for the upcoming 2025-2026 Committee. Katherine Gore nominated Lynn Florence and Buster Mayne seconded the nomination. The Chair asked twice more and there were no other nominations. Todd

Stephens made a motion to cease nominations and to elect Lynn Florence by acclamation as Chair of the 2025-2026 Kentucky Blind Vendor Committee. Brad Holland seconded the motion.

Bylaws Amendment

Vice Chair Lynn Florence made a motion to accept the amended bylaws as written and previously circulated for 30 days as required. Katherine Gore seconded the motion. The motion passed with a unanimous decision.

Dates for Upcoming 2025 Committee of Blind Vendor meetings

The dates for the upcoming 2025 meetings are January 23, April 24, July 24, with the General Assembly on November 21-22. Mr. Marcum said he was already talking to the hotel about increasing the room block for next year as there was a record turnout for 2024.

Public Comments

Beverly Dickerson asked what a reasonable response time should be expected regarding parts and repairs to machines. Mr. Marcum said there is a known logistics issue, and it may take time to get the reports. He said he will follow up with National Vending and Areawide and offered to send out a report to vendors and promises to be more proactive.

Adjournment

Todd Stephens made a motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Jerry Grimes. The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.