

Nebraska Business Enterprises Program

**Nebraska Blind Licensees Committee Meeting
Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually impaired
4600 Valley Rd. Suite 100
Lincoln, NE 68510**

March 10, 2023

Meeting called to order at 10:08 AM by Vice Chairperson Andrea Chizek.

A copy of the Nebraska Open Meeting Act was available. The Notice of the Meeting was published in the Lincoln Journal Star, on the NCBVI website, and on NFB Newslines®. The notice was sent to Commission Staff and Commissioners.

Board Members in Attendance

Andrea Chizek, Vice Chairperson; Atty Svendsen, Secretary; Ronnie Kellogg

Absent: Sandy Alvarado, Chairperson; Alex Curtis

Blind Licensees and Trainees in Attendance

Jim Jirak; Jeremy Richey; Wiley Elmshouser

NCBVI Staff in Attendance

Eric Buckwalter, NBE Supervisor; Lizzie Heidenreich, NBE Orientation Counselor (In Training)

Guests

Amber Steet; Crystal Elmshouser

Approval of Minutes

Andrea asked if anyone had any changes that needed to be made to the minutes from the December 9th, 2022 meeting. There were three corrections reported, first the location of the meeting said 'Lincoln' and corrected to 'Omaha'. The second was the date for the March meeting said '223' and corrected to '2023'. The third mistake said Ronnie had been Absent and corrected to state he was indeed present.

A motion was made to approve the revision of the minutes by Atty, seconded by Ronnie. Motion passed.

Andrea, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Atty, Aye

Motion Passed.

Committee Chairperson Report: Sandy Alvarado; Presented by Vice Chairperson Andrea Chizek

Changes to December minutes:

Location needs to be changed and any other mentioned from others.

I have been working with Eric on the Seed Cashless Plus and all of its issues.

Because of the time and effort, the retreat has been placed on a lower priority. He will address this more in the SLA report.

I held discussions with Eric on suggestions about communications with all of us. I want everyone to understand that at the heart of it all his intentions are to help with information.

I have spoken with Dave about updates need for our P&Ls. He now has a bit more time since the RSA-15 report has been finished. If you wish to see a copy of this report, let Eric or Dave know.

I have approached Eric about some additions to our accepted deductions on our P&L's. He will address this in his report.

I continue to forward information on the monthly Zoom meetings and dates to place on our calendars.

If you attend any training, remember to report it to Dave. It is important you get him that information.

Please consider becoming a part of this committee. It is time for elections again. Eric has all the deadlines in his report. If you wish to put your name in be prepared to attend all 8 meetings. It is an important committee to be on and needs people who wish to put the best interests of all of us vendors at the forefront.

As always, if you need help with anything please contact myself or any committee member.

SLA Report: Eric Buckwalter

Vending Site Update

The SLA is working on two new sites to add to the program. One site is located in Fremont at a DHHS office. The bid for this site closed yesterday. As no vendor submitted a bid, we will be looking to subcontract this facility.

The second site is an extension of the Douglas County/City building in Omaha. This site aims to open in the beginning of May. Again, we are looking at subcontracting options should a vendor(s) not bid on this site.

The SLA is also working on the possibility of other vending locations with DHHS. More details will be released as sites become available for bid.

NBE Licensee Update

There are currently 12 licensed vendors in the NBE program. There are several individuals who have expressed interest in applying for the program.

Vending Site Complaints

There were no serious vending site complaints this past quarter.

Automatic Set Aside Payments

NBE is working with the NCBVI Business Office and the Nebraska State Treasury Office to arrange for online payments of Set Aside. Because of the small number of individuals who would be using the

service the current plan is to set it up so that Vendors can arrange a bank transfer, instead of an online portal on our website. Details on how the process will be sent to all Vendors next week.

Cantaloupe

Individuals who earned more than \$20k from sales through credit cards with Cantaloupe should now have their 1099K forms. It has taken way longer than it should have, and Cantaloupe is well aware of our frustration on the matter. If you have not received yours, please let me know. They sent a copy of all of them to NBE so that we could help with immediate distribution if there were any more delays or issues. I just received these yesterday.

SBD Pricing

The SLA will be reaching out to vendors who have machines that fall under the State Building Division contract to talk about a price increase in those facilities. This meeting will be set next week.

Operator Agreements

All new Operator Agreements have gone out to vendors. Please take the time to review them to make sure they accurately reflect the items that are listed on your individual agreements. Once you have done so please return them to Eric. Due to the nature of the document, NBE can only accept hard copies or scanned documents saved as .pdf files. Pictures of documents will not be accepted.

NBE Retreat

The SLA is now looking at holding an NBE retreat style event at the end of the summer, instead of in May. More information about this will be presented later in the meeting. However, the SLA would like to work with the Elected Committee to hold an extended training after the May meeting.

Other Training

The National Association of Blind Merchants (NABM) is hosting a BLAST event June 14th – 16th in Des Moines, Iowa in conjunction with U-Select-It (USI). USI is a vending machine manufacturer whose machines we are considering. The SLA plans to attend. More information about this training will be sent out as it becomes available. This training was previously scheduled for previously June 7th – 9th. I believe the June 14th – 16th is correct, but there update was confusing.

A reminder, some podcasts can count towards training for upwards mobility, please report your listening to Dave. These podcasts include, 'We R Randolph-Sheppard', put out by NABM; and 'Breeze', put out by Beverage Digest.

P&L Report

The new P&L forms that reflect the quarterly meters readings will be coming out soon.

Insurance Update

In October the SLA was informed that our group policy was being discontinued for workers compensation. The insurance provider gave a non-descriptive reason. They said the services that they were providing are no longer available.

The SLA worked with Nebraska Risk Management to find a different group worker compensation policy because the previous policy expired at the end of 2022.

The SLA was unable to get the workers compensation insurance in that time frame. The vendors who have employees are required to have workers compensation and liability both. Since the insurance canceled the workers compensation so abruptly it put an unplanned expense for the vendors who must have it. The SLA suggested that for the year 2023 that the vendors who experienced this unplanned expense be compensated from the unassigned funds. This includes liability and workers compensation since they are sold in a package.

After a discussion a motion was made by Ronnie that the vendors who are experiencing the unplanned expense of paying for their workers compensation and liability insurance should be compensated for that expense for the year 2023 and paid for from the unassigned funds. Andrea seconded it.

Andrea, Aye
Ronnie, Aye
Atty, Aye

Motion Passed.

New Workers Compensation Insurance

The SLA has been discussing a new workers compensation insurance policy with Nebraska Risk Management. The NRM has found a possible carrier with the cost of \$5,532.00 for the year. They had many of the same questions the other carrier had and the SLA is seeking out more information. The committee decided to wait for the information before voting on a motion.

Allowable Deductions

The SLA and Sandy, the Committee Chairperson, have been in discussion about changes in the Allowed Deductions on the P&Ls. It's been purposed that due to the difficulty in finding product that vendors be allowed to deduct more than one purchased membership. No vote was needed until we've discussed all the possible allowed deductions; planned for the next meeting in May. Once the committee has voted on the allowed deductions, it goes to the SLA for approval.

Cantaloupe

The three month Seed Cashless Plus Cantaloupe trial is coming to an end. The SLA reports that of the six vendors in the trial, some vendors find it useful and others find it isn't the solution they were hoping for. Eric said the machines that will retain the Seed Cashless Plus needed to be reported to him on March 13th. He was told by Cantaloupe that he could add the machines that were keeping their product. The three dollar fee per device is deductible on the P&L.

The State Division Contract

It is time to discuss a possible price increase for the locations that fall under the State Building Contract. Eric wants vendors to send in their suggestions on prices so he can create a list ahead of a meeting with affected vendors to discuss possible increases. The SLA would like uniform pricing with all state facilities. He will send out the final price list to all vendors. It was suggested that the SLA see if we could have the price controls for these facilities removed. The SLA will look into this, however it is a separate matter from the price increase.

NBE Retreat

The SLA and Chairperson Sandy decided in order to present valuable content to the vendors it would be advantageous to have the retreat at the end of summer instead of May. The date will soon be announced.

Elections

Andrea and Eric explained that the elections for the the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary and two committee members, would be held at the May 2023 meeting. The important dates are: All names and nominations must be in by April 30, 2023. Voting begins on May 7th and the elected committee members will be announced at the May 2023 meeting. The SLA will send out ballots by May 7th. You can select five vendors on your ballot. The term is for two years and the committee member is allowed two meeting absences.

Next Training

Eric suggested to have training on promotional techniques for vendors to use, including those all ready on the machines. Eric would try to get Greater America to come and present. The Committee discussed it and all agreed it was a great idea.

Ronnie made a motion to accept the training in promotional techniques for vendors to promote their businesses. Andrea Seconded it.

Andrea, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Atty, Aye

Motion Passed.

Set Date for Next Quarterly Meeting

Andrea made a motion to have the next meeting on May 19th , 2023 in Omaha , NE at 10:00 a.m. Atty seconded it.

Andrea, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Atty, Aye

Motion passed.

Adjourn

Ronnie made a motion to adjourn, Andrea seconded it.

Andrea, Aye

Ronnie, Aye

Atty, Aye

Motion Passed.

Adjournment Time: 11:19 A.M.

Training

Vendors staying for training:

Jeremy, Andrea and Ronnie.