

NCBV Meeting Minutes

April 16, 2015

3:30pm

I. Roll Call and Confirmation of a Quorum

A Quorum was present at this meeting

Richard Saperstein, Chairman

Bert Hansen, Vice-Chairman

William Schley, Secretary & Northern Nevada Representative

Kawana Pohe, Southern Nevada Representative

Mikie Yamada

Dustin Varnell

Benita McHenry

Nels Brown

Beth Perring

Carol Ewing

Lee Weiss, Trainee

April Smith, Trainee

Staff Present:

Drazen Elez, Bureau Chief, Rehabilitation Division/BEN

Susie Park, BEO II, Rehabilitation Division/BEN

Russell Smith, BEO I, Rehabilitation Division/BEN

Andy Chao, BEO I, Rehabilitation Division/BEN

Janette Parish, AA IV, Rehabilitation Division/BEN

Jeanne Clark, AA II, Rehabilitation Division/BEN

Robert Whitney, Deputy Attorney General/State of Nevada

II. Verification of Posting, Jeanne Clark

Jeanne Clark stated that the agenda was posted in a timely and correct manner was currently on file.

III. First Public Comment Session, Richard Saperstein

Drazen Elez announced his recent trip to Northern Nevada sites describing the productive meeting he had with William Schley and his partner and with Richard Saperstein thanking them all for hosting him during that time.

3:35 pm Kawana Pohe joined the meeting

IV. For Possible Action- Vote to Accept the Agenda, Richard Saperstein

Bert Hansen made a motion to approve this agenda; William Schley seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

V. Welcome and Introduction of Guests, Richard Saperstein

There were no guests present.

VI. For Possible Action- Approval of the minutes for the Nevada Committee of Blind Vendors Meeting, February 24, 2015, Richard Saperstein

Bert Hansen made a motion to approve these minutes as written and Kawana Pohe seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

VIII. Old Business

A. Discussion-Update regarding Strategic Planning Project, Drazen Elez

Goals:

- ✓ **#1- Training-** BEN's Annual In-Service Meeting is planned for Friday, June 26, 2015. In preparation, the same format will be used as that of 2014 with video conferencing for those Northern Nevada Operators who cannot travel to Southern Nevada-Westbay office. Travel reimbursement is offered to those who wish to attend in person in Las Vegas noting that the videoconferencing is their other option. Terry Smith has accepted an invitation to speak at this meeting at no additional charge as part of BEN's NFBEI subscription.
- **Policies & Procedures Training-** Communications regarding policy and procedure training has been sent out to all Operators. There was a National conference conducted with the participation of the RSA with the U.S Department of Education staff. Randolph-Sheppard representatives from Washington were also there. Deanna Jones was present to help explain how policies and procedures are approved and how the committees can work within their roles with the agencies to discover how these can be approved. No BEN operators attended that conference but were able to receive a recording of the entire conference via email. Some Operators reported not receiving the recording; therefore it will be resent to make sure everyone has access to the discussions and proceedings.
- ✓ **#2- Recruit additional qualified applicants- 8 current trainees-** Four (4) Northern Nevada & four (4) Southern Nevada trainees now in that process with an additional 4 more individuals who are currently working with their counselors to become candidates for initial training later this year. There are a few in the south and some folks in the North also.
- ✓ **#3- Increase the number of manned vending facilities-** In February Dustin Varnell took over the operation of BEN #07 replacing a partner, Opportunity Village. Mikie Yamada also transitioned from her partnership to operating the Henderson Park Pavilion, BEN #19, on her own with one successful event and others upcoming.
- ✓ **#4- Manage Resources Efficiently with appropriate reserves to be maintained-** A budget for systemic replacement and purchase of new equipment has been approved by the State legislature to include items which will reach their useful life in 2015 or 2016. In the event that the equipment is still in good/operable condition then BEN will wait for subsequent repairs to become in excess of its worth. Those items cycled out of use will be sent to storage and on to auction in order to recuperate funds which are returned to the Program.

Kawana Pohe asked which site/Operator occupied BEN #07, the Clark County Government Center (Pyramid Café) and BEN Site #09- the Federal Court House to which Drazen Elez answered that both properties were operated by Dustin Varnell

B. Discussion-Update of new, waived and in progress sites, Drazen Elez

Drazen Elez directed this discussion to Susie Park who directly oversees all of these locations and their related projects.

Potential New sites

- Ms. Park initiated this discussion with the explanation of the **Southern Nevada Health District** giving background as to the first contact and the subsequent site survey determinations. The former Target Building on N. Decatur near I- 95 was recently purchased by the SNHD who invited the BEN Program to establish a snack bar. According to this survey, the return on this investment is estimated to be paid in approximately 5 yrs.
- **Sunset Park** was moving closer to becoming a BEN site with the development of the Inter-local Agreement with Clark County. The anticipation of ordering large equipment would follow in the next two months. Jeff Schumacher will work with the BEN team on the planning of this site.

Existing Sites with Challenges:

- As stated earlier Dustin Varnell is currently operating the BEN#07 **Clark County Government Center Snack Bar** and has seen a \$7000 increase in sales the first full month compared to that of Opportunity Village's partnership with Benita McHenry. While providing a lower price point he also offers a full service coffee bar using his own recipe of Frappuccino. Mr. Varnell has also been asked by the host agency to participate in a "Bring Your Children to Work Day" menu as well as other upcoming events.
- Benita McHenry is working with her partner, Carletha Windom, at the **Department of Energy** has realized an increase of about \$3,000 in her first full month compared to the previous partner. This increase is primarily attributed to the catering opportunities that Ms. McHenry and her partner, Ms. Windom, attract and obtain.
- Mikie Yamada is anticipating her second event at BEN #19, the Henderson Park Pavilion. The **Clark County Family Courts**, BEN #38, renovation plans were approved on 4/13/15 for this site through its recent Building Committee Meeting and BEN will continue to work with the architect and contractor until completion and re-opening within the next four months.

C. Discussion-Update on new Retirement Policy and Health Care Reimbursement Policy, Drazen Elez

To reduce the questions and increase understanding regarding this item, Drazen Elez launched an overview of the revision process to change the regulations. Around the middle of last year it was determined that we would go in the direction of changing the language in the NAC to not include a dollar amount to retirement. The timeline process is as follows:

- ✓ Submit all necessary information to State Legislative Bureau for approval on development of revisions
- ✓ Working on developing the policies and procedures related to those revisions.
- ✓ Correct language proposed for approval
- ✓ Scheduled public meetings held as necessary with changing the Administrative Code.
- ✓ Submit documents to the RSA and the Randolph Sheppard Program in Washington DC
- ✓ More public meetings scheduled
- ✓ Final documents sent to RSA in September 2014 for final approval; approved the beginning of February 2015
- ✓ Send Administrative Codes to Legislative departments to approve the changes

- ✓ Anticipating changes we would then have legal authority to get the work program submitted for the distribution of the retirement & medical reimbursements as it's written in the policies & procedures

Current timeline

- ✓ Due to complications, revisions are currently waiting for approval from the Legislature of the administrative code
- ✓ After approval communications to be sent to all Operators
- ✓ Apply for the work program in order to go in front of the Interim Finance Committee for approval for the distribution amount
- ✓ After approval distribution checks sent to the Operators on the amount decided upon.

Mr. Elez finalized his presentation stating that the medical reimbursement policy will hopefully take effect as soon as administrative code is approved.

Richard Saperstein inquired about the aforementioned "difficulties" whereby Mr. Elez replied that there were no difficulties *per se*, but the Administration could not find a clear process to follow in order to get those revisions approve and was reaching out to certain individuals for guidance.

When Kawana Pohe asked Drazen Elez how long until this entire process would be completed Mr. Elez answered that the Administration was hoping that it would be concluded by the end of the year for the participation of the Interim Finance Committee which is a couple month process. If approved, he judged that by the end of the month checks will be distributed within 3 months. Mr. Elez then reminded all that the administrative code changes must be approved at which time the work program can be submitted. He added that the work program has already been completed and ready to be joined with all the other documents in order to be in the forefront of the process and at this period only waiting for the approval in which the requests for these budget funds can be sent that same day, the agency does not have legal authority any sooner.

Mr. Pohe asked when legislative approval would be finalized and Mr. Elez said he could not predict that answer but would share the information when available. Mr. Pohe questioned the amount to be distributed; Drazen Elez replied that the monies would be distributed in accordance with the new policies and procedures- \$25,000 for those individuals who are in the program 25+ years; for other individuals \$1,000 per year. Regarding the cutoff date for the distribution of checks it was explained that this date would be decided by the approval date of the Administrative Code. (i.e. If the Administrative Code is approved on April 30th then this will be the cutoff date, therefore anyone who began the BEN Program April 30th of whichever year and forward then it will be used to calculate on that date as a full year.)

He reminded all that the medical plan will be increased to \$15,000 so that you will be reimbursed up to that amount from the time the policy goes into effect.

D. Reports from subcommittees listed below:

1. Finance, Carol Ewing

Ms. Ewing indicated that her Subcommittee was ready to meet anytime there is a need for a finance meeting asking only to be advised. Richard Saperstein responded that the Committee's participation was holding in abeyance of these Legislative Counsel approvals of the two policy revisions discussed earlier.

2. Policies & Procedures, Harold Petrofsky

Mr. Petrofsky was absent from this meeting.

3. Training, Bill Schley

Bill Schley referred to Drazen Elez's earlier mention of his meeting with his partners during his last visit to Carson City and reported that Joe and Suzanne Piece, his partners and the owners of *Joe's Good Java*, were not only great partners but have enthusiastically agreed to participate in on the job training at one or more of their Northern Nevada sites for trainees. Mr. Schley spoke highly of the Pierces' firm business ethic training. All who are hired are also trained to manage a site. For reasons of practicality and life changes, Joe's staff was trained and qualified to be ready to step in and know how to manage a site.

o My Sierra Perks.com

Bill Schley described a great built-in incentive system instituted by his partner called *My Sierra Perks* (mysierraperks.com) who provide the mechanisms for his sites. It is a small 5-inch digital station perched on the counter where customers can input their personal information so that the system can track their purchases at all of the coffee carts between Mills Lane, Reno City Hall and the DMV-Reno through the site's *WiFi*. This tracking gives the system material in which to honor customers for their birthdays and various other incentives through a text sent to the customer thereby building a loyalty program at a very cost effective price of \$25 per month per site. Mr. Schley was not sure if this system was available to those Operators in Southern Nevada.

Drazen Elez expanded the description on this loyalty system by labeling it as impressive and detailing the set up without the need of punch cards and its various choices of customizing options each Operator can select whereby the system would respond by offering to the customer either specials or incentive-Operator's choice. Mr. Elez confirmed that this system was available in Southern Nevada and best for those sites with repeat customers bringing this service into the 21st century. Carol Ewing asked if it was driven by the telephone line or Internet to which Drazen Elez answered that it was driven by the Internet line so that if there was an existing Internet connection it can be utilized by linking it directly into it with the customer simply entering their cell number.

Mr. Schley then mentioned that these partners were also utilizing an Internet site which offers hormone and steroid-free meats at all their sites. Mr. Schley declared that these sites offer the best food from a sandwich shop. Though this pure meat is a bit more expensive the preferred taste is obviously benefitting the site through increased sales while giving the customer the positive message that the establishment is concerned about the quality of the product being served.

Mr. Schley informed the Southern Nevada Operators that for class credits UNR's broadcast journalism students are adopting one company per set of students per month offering *free* advertising for that business location over all broadcast media. Reno City Hall was adopted in this way for the month of April with commercials released on radio, print advertising, etc. in exchange for a class grade. Mr. Schley suggested that other Operators contact UNLV to see if this offer was available in the Las Vegas area. Bert

Hansen warned that the subject of this free public advertising should be approved first in those sites with the government entities or landlords. Drazen Elez assured everyone that he would send this information to all operators to gauge their interest, possibly gather a list of interested vendors in order to realize stronger buying power with a group discount. He also invited individuals to contact UNLV for more information.

4. Legislative Watchdog, Kawana Pohe

See Second Public Comment

5. Future Planning, Bert Hansen

No report

VIII. New Business

A. For Possible Action- Possible new site at new Southern Nevada Health District location, Drazen

Elez

Drazen reported that BEN had been working with the Southern Nevada Health District for approximately a year as they signaled a move from their current location to a new site. Mr. Elez described SNHD's optimistic and positive attitude in having the BEN Program as part of their building. The Health District finally chose a site, a former Target Building which is a one-story building, containing an approximate 2000 sq. ft. snack bar located in the front of the building next to the entrance door similar to what one might see at any current Target location. Mr. Elez reported that some of the construction work for the snack bar will be completed by the Health Department, therefore what the Program has requested and budgeted for are minor construction work and equipment.

In order to sum up his future expectations of this new site, Mr. Elez expressed his anticipation that this site had the potential to become one of the largest BEN locations outside of the Dam Sites.

Susie Park began this discussion with a description of the building, population, services and its outlying area as outline in the 3 agenda attachments sent to all Operators in advance of this meeting which contained: 1) Survey of Location 2) Cost Estimate 3) Snapshot).

Southern Nevada Health District Project

- SNHD purchased a former Target Building located right off of the I-95 & N. Decatur Blvd.
- Subway, Taco Bell and Arby's and a private *taqueria* nearby, but no coffee service or burger service in that area within 500 ft.
- All inner connections and hook-ups for gas etc. existing offering blank slate for planning
- 425 employees on staff and on site each day
- Upward of 700 customers per day
- Office offers immunization services, dispense of health cards and a volunteer community outreach table events throughout the year.

Revenue/Cost Projection:

- Potential gross sales over 4 weeks is about \$30,000
- Potential gross profit over 4 weeks is about \$9,000
- Potential set-aside contribution over 4 weeks will be \$2,000 per month
- Estimated cost of equipment and minor construction about \$125,000
- Estimated 5 years to recuperate this investment

Operation:

Open Monday-Friday 8:00am-4:30pm
Cafeteria-style operation
Serving artisan sandwiches, salads, etc. and coffee service

When Bert Hansen asked the size of the building itself, Drazen Elez answered approximately 100,000-130,000 sq. ft. as with most large retail locations so we are asking for the approval of \$125,000 for the construction of this site . Richard Saperstein questioned if this location would be issuing health cards and all other related health items. He envisioned the potential of having a backup of people waiting in line for services. Drazen Elez explained that the service was such that the customer cannot simply come in, pay for an item and leave as with retail locations. Instead most customers must wait for a least 15min-2 hrs. for service even beyond that of the DMVs. Bert Hansen remarked that this site should be viewed in a positive light by the Health Department and as such, under the scrutiny of the Health Department, the snack bar area should always be clean and tidy and employees looking sharp. Richard Saperstein was in full agreement adding that staff uniforms should also be in order.

Bert Hansen made a motion to spend about \$125,000 for this new BEN location inside the Southern Nevada Health District. Bill Schley seconded this motion and it carried unanimously.

*Subsequent to this motion Bert Hansen requested the BEN Staff to advise the Committee for their approval if they would be exceeding this \$125,000 approved amount during future planning, construction and revisions of the Southern Nevada Health District site. Drazen Elez agreed to Mr. Hansen's request adding that the request would be accompanied by documentation substantiating the added request.

XI. Second Public Comment, Richard Saperstein

Related to his Legislative Watchdog Subcommittee Kawana Pohe asked if anyone had been watching the Legislature schedule because aside from the DETR budget he reported seeing no mention on their agenda this year pertaining to the BEN Program. Mr. Pohe wondered if he had missed an item that another member may have spotted. Richard Saperstein commented that he had not noticed anything either. There was no other mention from the Committee members regarding any indication regarding BEN in the Legislature site.

X. Discussion-Date for Next NCBV Meeting, Richard Saperstein

Thursday, June 18th at 3:30pm was chosen.

XI. Adjournment, Richard Saperstein

Kawana Pohe made a motion to adjourn; Bert Hansen seconded this motion and it carried unanimously.

This meeting adjourned at 4:28 pm.