

DIVISION OF SERVICES FOR THE BLIND  
BOARD MEETING MINUTES  
JUNE 14, 2003

DSB BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

John Barnett  
John Becton  
Searcy Ewell  
Lindi Johnson  
Nola McKinney  
Maria Morais

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS PRESENT

Pierre Curry

DSB BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Adams

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS ABSENT

Jim Hill  
Donna Hunt  
Ramona Sangalli  
Buddy Spivey

DHS Representative: Kurt Knickrehm, Artee Williams

Attorney General's Office Representative: Tom Gay

Governor's Office Representative: None

DSB Staff Present: Jim Hudson, Katy Morris, Tanya VanHouten, Jim Pearson, Chris McKenzie, Richard, Behra, Donna Hartzell, Kim Stanfield, Charlie Cain-Davis, Kandy Cayce

CALL TO ORDER

APPROVAL OF AGENDA. Mr. John Barnett made a motion to accept the agenda. Mrs. Nola McKinney seconded the motion. Motion passed.

INTRODUCTIONS.

APPROVAL OF 03/08/03 MINUTES. Motion was made by Mr. John Barnett and seconded by Mr. Searcy Ewell to approve the minutes of the March 8, 2003 Board Meeting. Motion passed.

DSB DIRECTOR'S REPORT – House Bill HR1261 (Reauthorization) has passed the house. It reauthorizes the Work Investment Act from Washington, D.C., and it has several implications for rehabilitation services.

Some of the implications are as follows: (1) In the past, the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services in Washington has been appointed by the President of the United States. This will change with legislation, and this person will be called a Director and will be hired by the Department of Education Secretary. (2) States with a Blind agency and a General Rehabilitation agency that provides the most services would have a representative on the Workforce state board. This would disqualify all separate blind agencies being on the state board. (3) Reauthorization will give the governor of each state the power, authority and jurisdiction over part of the federal revenue coming into the state for the sole purpose of providing revenue to the ten workforce investment centers throughout the state. There needs to be stipulations to be sure that the revenue will provide services to the disabled. We are continuing to work with the workforce investment centers in Arkansas and they continue asking us for money, but, our response generally is “what services will you provide our clients if we fund you?” We cannot always get an answer to that particular question, but, we are working with, relating to and cooperating with the workforce centers. We are providing a lot of braille and inservice training to the centers in relation to blindness and visual impairment. Please contact the senate if you have any comments regarding House Bill 1261 as it relates to rehabilitation services.

Legislative Session – Being a part of the Department of Human Services, we have been quite fortunate in many ways to receive a lot of funding. Thanks to the Governor’s push and some legislators the agency will not start out, “in the hold”, July 1, 2003. The legislature approved the appropriation, but, DHS funded the \$286,000 to run the Older Blind Program for one year. DSB is working with Medicaid to determine eligibility for clients in the Older Blind program.

Help America Vote Act (HAVA) – Secretary of State, Charlie Daniels appointed the DSB Director and approximately fifty individuals around the state, to an advisory committee. John Wyvill, of the general agency is also serving on the committee as part of the state system for disabled people. The committee has provided a lot of input. Several individuals visited the Pulaski County Administration Building for a demonstration of the AVATRON voting machine. The machine features consist of a touch screen for sighted and blind individuals, a voice, including earphones and four buttons. Hopefully the machines will be distributed throughout the state. The state voting commission will give a presentation to a blind consumer group at Sims Barbeque immediately following the board meeting. Federal revenue is available for the state of Arkansas for purchasing these voting machines.

Governor Huckabee presented a Deaf-Blind Proclamation for Helen Keller week. The recipient this year was Karen Hughes. The presentation was special because Karen is a deaf-blind consumer and DSB client from Hughes, Arkansas, who also attended public school. Karen is employed in a summer job at Pizza Hut.

DSB has contracted with Opinion Research. They were granted an award to survey at least 500 older blind and vocational rehabilitation active clients throughout the state regarding services that are currently provided by DSB. As of last week, Dr. Oakley had conducted 200 surveys within a two day period. The independent survey should be completed by the end of the year. All vendors, snack bar operators and food operators will also be surveyed. The survey will determine new goals in certain areas and hopefully Dr. Oakley can report the results during the September board meeting.

Doug Lawton, RSA representative from Dallas, will conduct a federal 107 review August 18 to August 22, 2003. He will review our administrative procedures, interview consumers, review cases and finances, visit workforce centers to discuss the partnership which is a comprehensive review. The agency did well last year.

The Arkansas Radio Reading Service is currently downsizing their board. The board is being downsized from eighteen members to seven or nine members. The Radio Reading Service has moved to AETN in Conway which has worked out and received very good feedback.

Reorganization did not occur during the last session. The Governor has recommended reorganization before he leaves office and there is a possibility that the general population may vote on this issue.

Governor Huckabee has chosen not to reappoint the DSB Director to the Workforce Board. The position was in a disabled person position which has been abolished and according to federal guidelines the division director must be a member of the Workforce Board.

## **BREAK**

ANNOUNCEMENT OF OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEES – Board Personnel Committee Chairman John Barnett announced the individual and overall winners of the DSB Employee of the Year for 2003. Winner in the DSB Clerical Category was Glenda Reding; Direct Services Category: Chris McKenzie; and Administrative Support Category: Lyndel Lybarger. Chris McKenzie was also named the overall DSB Employee of the Year. All three individuals will be awarded plaques for distinguished service at the DSB Statewide Meeting October 8, 2003.

CASE MANAGEMENT PANEL – Lyndel Lybarger, Tanya VanHouten and Chris McKenzie served on the panel. Lyndel Lybarger discussed the Field Services Program. The Vocational Rehabilitation program is ranked at the top nationally and statically which includes blind and general agencies, and Arkansas has one of the best Older Blind programs. Chris McKenzie discussed the Older Blind Program. The program provides services to individuals 55 and older.

The program consist of an intake process, referral, initial assessment, complete and sign application and voter registration, release of information for visual report, certificate of eligibility, service plan (IPE) determines specific services needed to reach goal. Once services are provided, forms are signed stating that the goal has been completed and the case is then closed.

Tanya VanHouten discussed the Vocational Rehabilitation program. The rehabilitation process begins with referral, application, visual information, vocational rehabilitation assessment, eligibility process, additional assessments and evaluation information, service planning, service delivery or rehabilitation process which includes providing services to assist the client in achieving vocational outcome, job search status, job placement, job follow up, closure status.

The Order of Selection assures that priority is given to those who are the most severely disabled. The four priorities are: 1. Most severely impaired which consist of 4 or more functional limitations and require three or more services in order to obtain an employment outcome; 2. Individual must have three functional limitations and require three or more services in order to achieve employment outcome. 3. Individual must have two functional limitations and require at least two services. This determines who we serve based on their priority level. Some of the services we provide are assessment, counseling and guidance, placement services, training, physical restoration, interpreter services, reader services, rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility instruction, technology services, transition services, and supportive employment. The mission statement of the Division of Services for the Blind states: "The Division of Services for the Blind is committed to providing specialized quality rehabilitation services to blind and visually impaired Arkansans creating opportunity for individuals to achieve maximum personal and economic independence." The agency serves individuals who are totally blind and legally blind which consist of individuals whose visual acuity is 20/200 with best correction or field restriction of 20% or less. The third population served are individuals who are visually impaired or partially sighted. These individuals have a progressive condition whose visual acuity is 20/50 or less or they have a progressive condition with corrective lenses.

Chris McKenzie discussed the rehabilitation teaching process and how it impacts the vocational rehabilitation process. The rehabilitation teacher is responsible for maintaining the older blind caseload and rehabilitation teaching caseload.

The rehabilitation teaching process includes referral, application, rehabilitation assessment, orientation and mobility, self care that includes medical issues, reading, writing, braille, magnifiers, and recommended technical assistance.

DISABILITY RIGHTS CENTER REPORT – The Disability Rights Center is the protection advocacy systems for Arkansas. The agency’s primary goal is to assist individuals with disabilities to obtain the service that they need and deserve. The agency offers five different programs with four attorneys on staff. The programs are the client assistant program, development disabilities program, mental health program and the Protection and advocacy for individuals with disabilities that covers anything that the other programs does not cover. The center is in the process of filing several lawsuits regarding children with developmental disabilities and employees who have been fired because of disability situations. The Disability Rights Center can be contacted locally at 296-1775, or 1-800-482-1174.

Arkansas Independent Living Council Report (AILC) – The report was submitted with the Board packets.

CONSUMER INPUT – The Alumni Chapter of the Madison Battery Street School are sponsoring a TEA, which will consist of entertainment and refreshments, June 22, 2003, 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., in Little Rock, at Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, 14<sup>th</sup> and Ringo.

Susan Inman from the Pulaski County Election Commission and Jill Belin from the Secretary of State office will speak to consumer groups regarding voting machines that Pulaski County has purchased for the blind and visually impaired. The meeting will be held at Sims Barbeque located at the Rivermarket immediately following the board meeting.

The American Council of the Blind (ACB) state convention will be held May 1 – 2, 2004, at the Laquinta Inn at Otter Creek and Interstate 30 in Little Rock.

Mrs. Nola McKinney will represent the Division of Services for the Blind at the 2003 National American Council of the Blind (ACB) convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, July 5 – July 12, 2003.

Mrs. Maria Morais will represent the Division of Services for the Blind at the 2003 National Federation of the Blind (NFB) Convention in Louisville, Kentucky, June 28 – July 5, 2003.

QUARTERLY SUCCESS REPORT - JUMPSTART 2003 – The summer program consisted of 18 students on campus at the Arkansas School for the Blind campus and 2 students off campus. The off campus students are phrase III students who work in the community, work the same number of hours, and earn the same salary as the on campus students. Each student works four hours five days of the week at \$6.00 per hour.

The job sites are Library Services for the Blind Book Depository, Bale Elementary, ADEQ Waste Management Recycling, Little Rock Zoo, Lions World Services for the Blind, Arkansas School for the Blind, Little Rock Boys and Girls club, Arkansas School for the Deaf, Doctor's office, and Rhea Drug store. A daily routine is breakfast and work 8:00 a.m., until noon. The activities included menu planning, grocery shopping, recreational activities, field trips, laundry, cooking, visiting the tech Lab, orientation and mobility classes, and job readiness classes. Five employees were hired to work the program that included DSB staff.

Mr. Searcy Ewell made a motion to hold the September board meeting in conjunction with the State National Federation of the Blind convention in Northwest Arkansas the third weekend in September. Mrs. Nola McKinney seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nola McKinney  
Secretary