

**GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY
IMPAIRED**

SERVICES FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED

40 FOUNTAIN STREET

THIRD FLOOR

PROVIDENCE, RI 02903

MINUTES

December 11, 2006

Members Present: Donald Deignan; Raymond Dettore; Elizabeth Graves; Ralph Iannitelli; Al Williams; Charles Brown; and Richard Gaffney. Quorum requirements were met.

Staff Present: Ronald Racine, Sandy Pritko, Eileen Cermack

Guests Present: None

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the September 11th were distributed prior to the meeting. There was a suggestion that acronyms be used less in the minutes, and it was agreed this would be best for future minutes. This

was noted, and the minutes were accepted and approved.

Introduction of Guests/Agenda:

Chairman Donald Deignan began with introductions. Sandy Pritko from the Social Services Unit and Services for The Blind was in attendance, as was Eileen Cermack from The Early Intervention (EI) Unit.

Old Business:

Much discussion to place regarding the problems people encountered while trying to vote using the Automark voting machines. Don suggested contacting the new Secretary of State once he has settled into his new position. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Business Enterprises Program Program (BEP):

Ron Racine reported that the BEP program is shorthanded at the moment as one of the BEP supervisors is on an extended medical leave. Efforts are underway to fill the Superior Court Building as it appears that the court is agreeable to reinstating the permit for that

location. Other facilities have vacancies which are on the process of being put out to bid. The relocation at Fountain St. will not be completed due to the cost being higher than anticipated. (Over \$225,000) Plans are still moving forward at the McGrath location in Wakefield.

Benefits Planning, Assistance & Outreach:

Ron Racine noted that Services for Blind is in the process of hiring a new benefits specialist who will be working under the Supervision of Roberta Greene. This is in addition to the full time staff member, Jeanne Fay, who also reports to Ms. Greene.

The Social Service/Independent Living for Older Blind Unit: (Sand Pritko)

Sandy discussed the customer satisfaction survey for her unit, and it showed a very high level of satisfaction. There were also an impressive number of people who reported they had considered a nursing home prior to receiving services, who are continuing to live independently. A winter camp for children is being planned for the end of February, with the activities to be determined.

Early Intervention (EI):

Eileen Cermack discussed the Early Intervention services which are being coordinated at Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired. (SBVI) Staff from the Department of Education (Sherlock Center) are now being stationed at SBVI to foster communication and collaboration as they share many of the same consumers. These staff members are Lisa Guittiari, and Enid Ford. Eileen passed out a flow sheet and described the services being provided.

Future Meetings:

The following meeting schedule was agreed up for 2007:

March 12th

June 11th

September 10th

December 10th

All meetings will take place at Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 40 Fountain St. 3rd Fl. Providence RI 02822