

**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:

September 8, 2008

Members Present: Donald Deignan iV Chairperson GAC; Raymond Detorre iV Board Member; Richard Gafney iV President NFB of RI; Barbara Walsh iV GAC member; John Raymond Dettore iV Member GAC; Charles Brown - member

Members Not Present: Ralph Iannitelli; A. Alfred Williams iV Member NFB & GAC; Pimental - Consumer; Rick Costa iV SILC member/representative; Elizabeth Graves iV SILC / SRC

Staff Present: Ronald Racine iV Deputy Administrator SBVI; Linda Hughes iV Supervisor Social Services; Susan Silva iV Supervisor Region 7 Vocational Rehabilitation; Rebecca Cloutier iV Secretarial Duties

Guests: None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The quarterly meeting of the GAC Committee started at 4:05 PM on Monday, September 8, 2008 with a motion to approve the minutes of the June 2008 meeting. The motion was given by Richard Gafney and seconded by Raymond Detorre. The committee approved the minutes.

SBVI UPDATE BY RON RACINE

„X Don Deignan's appointment is over in March

o He is very reluctant to leave with the state of the State

o Wants the agency to be on an even keel before leaving

o There is a vacancy on the Committee due to Dr. Kinder's retirement

o Rick Costa would like to join the committee - he is a member of SILC

o He would be an asset to the Committee

o Ron will begin the process to for Rick to be added to the Committee

o There was a motion presented and seconded to add Rick to the Committee

„X There are 3 vacancies that are on the critical needs list.

- o 1 Rehabilitation Counselor position
- o 1 Social Worker position
- o 1 Supervisory as of 9/26 once Susan Silva leaves ;V Monica Dzialo and Laurie DiOrio will be back ups until a permanent replacement is found
- „X There has been no more cutting in the contractor areas
- „X Using Taxi Services instead of drivers ;V Checker Cab
- „X Good Will is also driving for Aleatha once a week and to Grace Pires when she returns ;V will be a total of 2 days a week
- o \$470.00 spent on cabs last month ;V tough to determine with staffing shortage
- „X Readers are going with counselors for initial intakes to take notes
- „X The test will be in the wintertime with the inclement weather
- „X Unions may have an effect on the hiring

IL / SS / EI / OB PROGRAM UPDATE ;V LINDA HUGHES

- „X Independent Living Program finishing up fiscal year ;V no results from the surveys ;V results will be here next meeting
- „X Overspent on budget ;V used some SSI reimbursements
- o \$225, 00 budgeted
- „X Spent excess monies on hearing aids
- „X 34% are visually impaired and also hearing impaired
- o Old policy pay \$1,050 for hearing aids
- o More recent updates = digital

o Now paying up to \$5,000 for each hearing aid

„X Best technology available is digital iV relatively new technology

„X The company producing the hearing aid only makes \$75.00 on each hearing aid

„X The hearing aids are recycled through a program at PARI

o Ear pieces are molded to each individual

„X Jim Healy who makes hearing aids for SBVI is involved with the recycle program for the aids

„X Hearing aids only last 2 iV 3 years with maximum use

„X New referrals are reaching people 65 and older

NEWSLINE UPDATE

„X Newsline cost has increased from \$22,000 to \$26,000

o NFB lost federal funding

„X Registered readers are up 10%

o 382 readers total

o This is good because of limited time for marketing

„X Richard Gaffney can help with funding from NFB

VISION SCREENINGS

„X Saving Sight has just started screening for children in September
„X Contracted for 12,000 children last year
„X They were able to do more than that and were able to do screenings through the summer at \$10.00 a child
„X Money is made on the vision screenings ;V there is a payment of \$10.00, and there is reimbursement of \$30.00
„X \$150,000 in Medicaid reimbursement ;V cost is about \$110,000
„X Some monies are used for adult screenings in Minority Centers

EI PROGRAM

„X Case Manager ;V Eileen Cermak
„X Teachers: Leila Guitterri (also does mobility with the children) and Enid Ford
„X Dr. Waldorf ;V Functional Vision evaluations every Tuesday ;V in clinic set up for this, and also donated the space to us
„X Social Worker ;V helps with transition ;V from before when they turn three to graduation of High School in order to ease the transition to the Vocational Rehabilitation Program
„X May 1, 2008 ;V started billing insurance companies ;V someone bumped into an ADIL position who was a fiscal clerk at DOA. She submits bills and if returned finds out why and corrects them to resend
„X Have the potential to make a lot of money ;V paying for the services at \$85.00 an hour and getting reimbursed at \$126.00 an hour
„X Monies go specifically into the Social Services Account
„X Starting to have a really good reputation with all the Early

Intervention Centers ;V Eileen is going out to all of them individually

CAMPS

„X Winter Camp in February ;V No program yet

„X Summer Camp Spring Lake ;V 20th Annual Summer Camp

„X Family Trip Day to Water Country

„X Girls had Day of Beauty at Arthur Angelo with a dance that night

„X New children age 6 ;V 8 approximately 15 children ;V some children aging out and others coming in ;V future of camp looks strong

VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ;V SUSAN SILVA

„X Grace Pires returning on Monday 9/15/08

„X Insight has a new 2 week essential skills program ;V there is a grant.

o Only charging \$350.00 for two weeks to cover food and materials

o 9 ;V 3 program ;V includes Introductory to Computer, ADL tasks

„X Providence Library Main Branch ;V Alyssa Miller spoke with Susan. Having an Exhibit of Vision Impairments

„X Opening 9/21 ;V Chris Butler will be speaking

„X Possibility of doing Vision Screenings ;V also looking for other speakers on other issues (RP, ARMD etc.)

„X Would like someone to speak about Guide Dogs ;V Susan asked Monica ;V because she can speak about Guide Dogs and going to

work, employment etc.

SILC ¡V RON RACINE

„X 10th Anniversary - Wednesday, September 24, 2008 at the Raddison Hotel, Warwick, RI

o Reservations should be made by September 15, 2008

„X Corliss Institute - Walk-a-thon

o September 13, 2008 ¡V funds collected will support Corliss Institute activities

o SILC gave \$200.00 sponsorship to support the even

„X ADA Celebration 7/26 ¡V Speeches from Representatives

o Organized by SILC and held at Corliss

o Many speeches from US Representatives and members of the community ¡V Mary Wambach spear-headed the event

„X Disability History Week ¡V Resolution present by Rep. Naughton was passed in House & Senate ¡V official copies are framed and now hang in SILC office

MISCELLANEOUS

„X Don attended the dedication of the waiting area in the SBVI 3rd floor ¡V in memory of Gerry Shapiro

„X RIRA raised \$2,000.00 from the bowling event

„X Rebecca Cloutier is accepting donations for her training for Massages ¡V both full body massages and chair events

„X Gerry's brother donated \$18,000 to the scholarship fund

„X Work First Program iV Deals with FIP people first iV puts the needs of the population first

„X VR iV different population

„X Motion for a letter to appropriate people (Gary Alexander, Adelaide Orificci w/ copy to the Governor) iV Richard Gafney motioned, and Ray Detorre seconded iV it was approved

„X PARI iV Don is an honoree @ a dinner on 10/16/08 at Rhodes on the Pawtuxet

o Ticket information 725 iV 1966

„X Fishing Tournament iV Ray Detorre came in 4th

o He caught a flounder (33-34 inches)

o About 15 Visually Impaired individuals

„X Voting concerns

o Did Jan Ruggero ever call back?

o All issues have been taken care of

o Some towns can afford the ink for Automark

„X They have allocated funds from the Community in order to purchase the ink

o Sensitivity Training & Automark iV from Election Board

„X If there are any issues or problems with voting iV Call Richard Gafney at 433 iV 2606

„X The Governor's Commission puts out a newsletter for items being put on the calendar

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 with a motion presented by Ray Detorre.

Motion was seconded and the meeting ended at 5:05 PM, with a scheduled meeting of 12/8/08.