

**Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (FRCB)**  
**Quarterly Meeting Minutes**  
**DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Orlando Airport**  
**5555 Hazeltine National Drive, Orlando, FL 32812**

**July 28, 2022**

**Council Members Present**

- Bateh Nancy
- Bell Howard
- Doyle Robert
- Edwards Paul
- Hernandez Jorge
- Ingram Doug
- Kelly Robert
- Lipovsky Patricia
- Mickens Donte
- Miles Bruce
- Outman Bessie
- Valkema Denise

**Council Staff**

- Brandis Hall
- Alexandra Diggs

**Adoption of Agenda**

Paul Edwards made a motion to accept the agenda. Doug Ingram seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

**Director's Report**

Director Doyle presented his report.

Director Doyle recognized each Division of Blind Services District office for an outstanding year of service. Certificates were distributed and pictures were taken.

Jay Boyle was introduced to the Council as the leading candidate for Bureau Chief of the Rehabilitation Center in Daytona Beach. Director Doyle provided the Council an opportunity to ask questions of Mr. Boyle.

### **DBS Employment Report**

Bridget Giles, Bureau Chief, presented this report.

- 941 closed cases of which 401 were successful
- 447 successfully closed cases last year
- 183 unsuccessful closures after receiving services this year
- Rehabilitation rate for closed cases was 80%
- Average hourly wage is \$17.78
- Highest wage is \$36.06
- The lowest wage is \$5.00

The top 5 reasons for unsuccessful closures are:

- Unable to locate (56 cases)
- Refused services or no further services (39 cases)
- Failure to cooperate (14 cases)
- Does not require VR services (13 cases)
- Other reasons (12 cases)

Improvements for Quarter 4:

- Timely eligibility determination
- Timely IP's
- Releases of information forms signed and dated
- More college student contact

A full detailed report has been provided to the Council.

### **New Vision for Independence, Inc. NVI**

Chantel Buck, President/CEO, presented the report.

## Mission

Eliminate barriers to independence for people with vision loss through rehabilitation, community education, advocacy, and support services.

- NVI serves Lake and Sumter Counties and The Villages retirement community which includes a pocket of Marion County.
- NVI has 7 full-time and 4 part-time employees, including 4 who are visually impaired.
- Located on the Lake-Sumter State College campus in Leesburg but will be moving by the end of 2022.
- Incorporated July 18, 2005 – celebrating 17 years this month.

## Services

New Vision Independence provides a full range of services for all ages, including:

- Blind Babies: Currently 12 clients
- Children's Program: Currently 13 clients
- Transition Program (no DBS contract): Currently 9 clients (4 graduating, 3 incoming)
- Employability for VIPs Vocational Rehabilitation: Currently 13 clients
- Adult Program (no DBS contract): Currently 5 active clients
- Older Blind: Currently 74 clients (plus 15 incoming)

## Service Updates

- New Vision offers services both in-person and over-the-phone.
- Because of the convenience and how thought-out the phone services are, clients choose phone services often.
- For all by-phone services, NVI delivers supplies in advance of the lesson, as appropriate.

## Support Services

NVI offers in-person and remote support services that clients are invited to participate in. This program has seen explosive growth because of the pandemic. These support services include:

- Weekly support group
- Mobility Matters support group/open forum

- Daily Fitness classes, seven classes every week
- Daily Meditation
- Circle of Sharing grief group
- Brain Boosters group, focusing on improving brain health with games, riddles, and other "brain fitness" activities
- Bingo

A full detailed report has been provided to the Council.

### **Employer Recognition**

Ed James, District Administrator, District 6, recognized Lighthouse Works. Kaleb Stunkard, Executive Vice President, Chief Operations Officer accepted the award on their behalf.

Lighthouse Works, an organization providing competitive job opportunities for blind and visually impaired adults, has recently experienced over 200% annual growth, adding nearly 200 new employees since March of 2020. Since October 2021, Lighthouse Works has added 131 new BVI employees to its team. In large part, thanks to the support of Division of Blind Services (DBS), Lighthouse Works was recognized for creating more than half of the nation's new blind jobs in Q4 2021.

A full detailed report has been provided to the Council.

### **Lighthouse Central Florida, Inc. (LCF)**

Kerri Marczuk, Director of Programs, presented the report.

#### **Mission**

Charting a course for living, learning, and earning with vision loss.

Lighthouse Central Florida was founded in 1976 as CITE (Center for Independence Technology and Education) LCF currently has 22 employees, 7 members of the instructional team are legally blind, serving youth and adults. Lighthouse Central Florida now has a second division, Lighthouse Works.

- Lighthouse Central Florida is a Vision Rehabilitation program.
- Serving Orange Osceola and Seminole Counties

- Lighthouse Works operations employs over 400 employees in either the Contact Center, supply-chain packaging and assembly services, Contract Close-out services, and Digital Accessibility Services.

### Services Offered

- Orientation and Mobility
- Activities of Daily Skills
- Braille Instruction
- Assistive Technology
- Early Intervention Services
- Children's Program
- Transition Services
- Adjustment to Vision Loss
- Functional Low Vision Services

### Core Values

- Servant Leadership
- Inclusion
- Empowerment
- Collaboration
- Excellence

### Statistics

Last fiscal year, which ended 9/30/2021 LCF helped 852 people with vision loss and their families. In the current fiscal year to date LCF has helped:

- 100 babies ages birth through 5 years
- 28 children ages 6 through 13
- 46 Transitions students ages 14-22
- Over 100 adults seeking employment
- Over 200 non-vocational and older clients

### News

- Over the past 12 months, Lighthouse Central Florida has continued to build a strong interdisciplinary team, adding a COMS, a CATIS, a TSVI, and a second COTA.

- LCF has developed new Assistive Technology and Activities of Daily Living Curriculums and is excited to roll them out to clients beginning soon.
- Now able to bring back larger group events for youth and adult programs. Events have included a ropes course, Paul McCartney Concert, ballroom dancing, bowling, pottery making, and college tours.
- Other key partnerships and collaborations include the Division of Blind Services, Advent Health University, Orange and Seminole County Public Schools, United Cerebral Palsy (UCP), Edible Education, and various local senior living communities.

### **District Administrator Report: District 6**

Ed James, District Administrator, presented the report.

- District 6 serves 5 counties, Orange, Seminole, Osceola, Sumter, and Lake counties. Including the Villages, with an area totaling 4,012 square miles. A population of about 2,509,831, according to the 2017 census, making Orlando the third-largest metropolitan area in Florida.
- District 6 currently has 20 full-time employees, three are visually impaired.

### Performance Goals

- Despite two rounds of Covid, and unforeseen staff circumstances, District 6 exceeded its goal of 100 by 1 for a total of 101 VR successful closures.

#### SFY 2021-2022 (7/1/2021-6/30/2022) Current Open Cases

- Blind Babies: 94
- Children's Program: 96
- Independent Living Program OB/AP: 298
- Vocational Rehabilitation: 336
- College Students: 60
- Pre-ETS (Transition): 55

#### District 6 VR Expenditures by Service Category SFY 2021-2022 (7/1/2021-6/30/2022)

- ALL OTHER(INCLUDING SERVICES TO FAMILIES AND SMALL: \$118,860.26

- COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE – SUBSTANTIA: \$101,865.00
- MAINTENANCE: \$163,500.79
- MEDICAL ELIGIBILITY / NEEDS ASSESSMENT: \$51,404.71
- PERSONAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES: \$25,405.00
- PHYSICAL AND MENTAL RESTORATION: \$402,801.41
- REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY SERVICES: \$225,870.89
- TRAINING (NON-CONTRACT): \$249,310.81
- TRANSITION SERVICES: \$45,883.68
- TRANSPORTATION: \$13,913.83
- Total: \$1,398,816.38

A full detailed report has been provided to the Council.

### **Business Enterprise Update**

Bill Findley, Bureau Chief, presented the report.

The Mission of the Florida Bureau of Business Enterprise Program is to provide people who are legally blind with rewarding and profitable entrepreneurial ventures, broaden their economic opportunities and invigorate all blind people to be self-supporting while dispelling misconceptions about blind people by showcasing their abilities.

Updates SFY 2021-2022 (7/1/2021-6/30/2022)

- Vendors completed 12 months in their first facility: 100% (3)
- Business Enterprise Vendors licensed: 6
- Licensed Vendors awarded first facility: 7
- Current Licensed Vendors Total: 110
- Total Operating Facilities: 139
  - 8 Cafeterias
  - 10 Snack Bars
  - 3 Military Dining
  - 10 Micro Markets
  - 51 Non-Highway Vending/ Vending Routes
  - 55 Interstate Rest Areas
  - 2 Highway Rest Areas

## Vendor Annual Sales

- Pre-Pandemic Annual Sales: Just under 24 million dollars.
- SFY June – May 21: about 15 million dollars. (pandemic low)
  - Vendor net profit : about 6 million dollars
- SFY June – May 22: about 21 million dollars ( 41% increase)
  - Vendor net profit: 8+ million dollars (42% increase)

## Food Service Challenges

- Building populations are down
- Food costs are up
- Job vacancies

## County Courthouse snack bars making 75% of pre-pandemic sales

- Duval
- Palm Beach
- Miami-Dade
- Hillsborough
- Orange

## Future Endeavors

- New vending location in Tampa with Citibank.
- Miami Gardens new Post Office vending location.
- Brevard County vending route
- The next “on the job training” class is scheduled for September 6, 2022
- Surveillance Cameras at vending locations
- Electric car charging stations

## **MetroPlan Orlando Transportation**

Virginia Whittington, Director of Regional Partnerships, presented the report.

MetroPlan Orlando leads transportation planning efforts in Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties, they also coordinate closely with elected officials, industry experts, and the community to shape a future system that offers travel options. As the metropolitan planning organization for Central Florida, MetroPlan Orlando also set priorities and determine how federal and state transportation dollars are spent in the region.



### Quality Assurance Task Force:

- Discuss Transportation Disadvantage (TD) Issues
- TD Operations Improvements
- Validate CTC Evaluation Instrument
- Member Nominations

The Grievance Committee is responsible for processing, investigating and make recommendations, on formal written complaints/grievances that are unresolved between individual agencies/entities, including the CTC and the contract service provider and/or the contract service provider and the customer.

### **Lynx-Central Florida Regional Transportation**

Norman Hickling, Director of Mobility Services, presented the report.

ACCESS LYNX is a shared ride door-to-door transportation service provided by MV Transportation under the supervision of LYNX, the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority. The ACCESS LYNX program provides service for eligible individuals who are not able to use the regular fixed route bus service because of a disability or other limitations.

- ADA: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT PROGRAM
- TD: TRANSPORTATION DISADVANTAGED
- Runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, runs on all Holidays
- Travel Training is free personalized one-on-one instruction for people who want to learn how to ride the bus.

### LOCAL BUS SERVICE

- LYNX provides public transportation services for Orange, Seminole, and Osceola counties.
- 77 daily local bus routes (called Links) serving more than 50,000 passengers each weekday.
- Fixed route bus system is fully accessible and serves thousands of customers with disabilities and special needs each day.

- Bus passes for seniors, customers with disabilities and youth are available at a discounted rate through our AdvantAge, Access Plus and Youth Program.

### AdvantAge Program

- For Seniors: Age 65 and over; those persons of any age who are Medicare card holders.
- To receive an AdvantAge ID (ALL AGES), eligible passengers with medical disabilities, must go through a certification process to receive the AdvantAge ID card.
- To receive an AdvantAge ID eligible passengers must present a Medicare card, birth certificate or government issued ID.

### Access Plus

- Available for ADA ACCESS LYNX customers only
- ACCESS Plus ID Card will give ACCESS LYNX customers the ability to ride free on Fixed Route Buses (Must have a current ID)

### Youth Program

- Ages 10 - 18 or still in high school
- To receive a Youth ID, you must present a birth certificate or government issued ID (e.g., driver's license, state ID card or passport). Riders ages 7 - 9 are eligible for a Youth Pass (no Youth ID required).

ACCESS LYNX provides transportation under various programs. Eligibility requirements vary by program. Program determination is based on verification of the written application and may also include professional verification and an in-person functional assessment.

### Eligibility Process

- Constituents determines program that best serves their particular needs
- Application is required to qualify
  - <https://www.golynx.com/ACCESSLYNX>
  - Medical Professional verification
  - Send in completed form by fax or mail

- Application will take between 7 to 21 days to determine and finalize eligibility.
- Each passenger receives eligibility of 2 years.
  - Passengers with permanent disabilities will have a less extensive process when reapplying.

### **Client Satisfaction Survey (CSS)**

Dr. Minna Jia presented an overview of the SFY QTR 1-3 Report 2021-2022

- Survey Population: July 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022 – 728 clients
- Successful Closure – 352 Clients (102 Post Closure)
- Unsuccessful Closure – 274 Clients
- Response rate: 21%, completions: 150
- Non-Working phone numbers 23, no answer 98, answering machine all the time 214.
- Among 150 respondents, 137 DBS clients received services from both DBS and local providers, while 13 clients received DBS services only.
- Impact of COVID-19 still exists
- New codes were added for covid-19 related factors
- Local service provider responsiveness largely decreased while the accessibility improved
- Lower levels of satisfaction with DBS training, except for Independent living skills training.
- Less clients came to DBS for Employment reasons (75% to 56%)
- Current job characteristic improved
- Awareness of services after case closure increased
- 93% felt welcomed during the first contact with DBS
- Awareness and Interests to Daytona Beach Rehab Center increased while interest in service decreased
- Career counseling received 83% of satisfaction level, decreased from 95% in the previous year
- DBS provided skills necessary to conduct job search: 79% (70%, 2020)
- DBS provided services prepare for employment: 73% (71%, 2020)
- LCP provided skills necessary to conduct job search: 85% (69%, 2020)
- LCP provided services to prepare for employment: 80% (71%, 2020)
- 15% left because they obtained employment for 90 days (30%, 2020)
- 14% expressed confusion over their case closure status (22%, 2020)

- 26% left because obtained employment for 90 days

#### Most helpful services

- Training 26% (29% 2020)
- Equipment and technology support 26% (29% 2020)
- Employment: 11% (7%, 2020)

#### Program improvements:

- No improvement needed: increased from 20% to 28%
- Accessibility/Communication: 20% (19%, 2020)
- Employment: 9% (5%, 2020)
- Training: 5% (0%, 2020)

A full detailed report has been provided to the Council.

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### **July 29, 2022**

\*Chair Jorge Hernandez called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance led by 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chairman Douglas Ingram, and introductions.

#### **Council Members Present**

- Bateh Nancy
- Bell Howard
- Doyle Robert
- Edwards Paul
- Hernandez Jorge
- Ingram Doug
- Kelly Robert
- Lipovsky Patricia
- Mickens Donte
- Miles Bruce
- Outman Bessie

- Valkema Denise

### **Council Staff**

- Brandis Hall
- Alexandra Diggs

### **Approval of May 2022 Meeting Minutes**

Bruce Miles made a motion to accept May 5<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> 2022, meeting minutes. Denise Valkema seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

### **Agenda Items for October 27th - 28th 2022**

- Miami Public Transportation Update
- NCSAB and CSAVR Updates
- Sunshine Law Presentation
- Talent Acquisition Portal Update
- Library Update
- Strategies of Serving Professionals Update
- Rate Study Closure/Update
- College/University Representative
- CSNA Update
- Miami Lighthouse Tour

The Council briefly discussed having a representative at FRC quarterly meetings and having a representative from FRC at FRCB quarterly meetings.

Brandis Hall will send all FRCB meeting announcements/invitation to the Florida Rehabilitation Council Program Administrator.

Paul Edwards made a motion to have July 2023 meeting in Orlando, FL. Robert Kelly second. The motion was passed.

The dates were set for July 26th – 28th 2023.

The Council agreed to host the July Quarterly Meetings in Orlando annually.

Paul Edwards made a motion that the Chairman and Director have the discretion to not require reports from local Lighthouses and Districts, (although the meeting will be held in the District 6 area, they will not need to report annually).

Patricia Lipovsky suggested not to skip District Reports. It was confirmed that it will be at the discretion of the Chairman and Director.

Motion was second. The motioned was passed.

### **Old Business:**

Brandis Hall will send an Action Item Report within 7 days after each FRCB meeting.

### **New Business:**

The Council briefly discussed the Client Satisfaction Survey.

The Council held a discussion about reappointments and new appointments to the FCRB.

### **Open Discussion:**

Paul Edwards acknowledged Disability Rights Florida under the leadership of Howard Bell, for developing a publication called "The Transition Tool Kit". Samples have been mailed out and it has been well received.

The Florida Rehabilitation Council for the Blind By-Laws were amended.

Article IV- Membership

SECTION 3. LENGTH OF TERMS (add paragraph D.)

D. Member will continue to serve in his/her position until a successor qualifies for that position as in the Florida Constitution Article 2 Section B.

The Council accepted the amendment.

Deputy Director Trina Travis gave a brief Library / Rehabilitation Center update. This report recording was inaudible.

The Council held a discussion about Strategies of Serving Professionals.

Bruce Miles made a motion to adjourn, Robert Kelly seconded the motion. The motion passed.