



The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind

NAEPB Board of Directors and Membership Meeting

Monday, August 7, 2017

10:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon ET

Dial-in number: 1-877-860-3058

Pass Code: 925356

*****Callers should plan to dial in at least 5 minutes prior to the start of the meeting. Please place your phones on mute to minimize background noise. ******

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| 1. Call to Order | Stueckrath |
| 2. Board Roll Call | D'Amico |
| 3. Minutes for Approval
NAEPB Board and Membership Meeting (6/26/17) | D'Amico |
| 4. Treasurer's Report
NAEPB Treasurer's Report for the period ending 6.30.17 | D'Amico |
| 5. Consent Calendar Reports | Stueckrath |
| 5a. NAEPB BSC Committee Report | |
| 5b. NAEPB Public Policy Committee Report | |
| 5c. NAEPB Marketing Committee Report | |
| 5d1. NAEPB Operations Committee Report | |
| 5d2. NAEPB Operations Subcommittee Slides 6.26.17 | |
| 6. Strategic Scorecard | Mabry |
| 6a1. NAEPB Strategic Planning Committee Report | |
| 6a2. FY2017-2019 NAEPB Strategic Plan Final | |
| 7. Strategic Planning Advance | Mabry |
| 8. Antitrust Legal Opinion Request | Kerlin |
| 9. VA Amicus Status | Stueckrath |
| 10. NIB Update | Lynch |
| 11. Other Business and Open Forum Q&A | NAEPB Members and Board |
| 12. Adjourn Board Meeting | Stueckrath |



The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind
NAEPB Board of Directors Meeting
Monday, June 26, 2017
1:30 p.m.

Call to Order

The joint meeting of the NAEPB Board of Directors and Membership was called to order by President Eric Stueckrath on Monday, June 26, 2017. Following the regular Board and Membership meeting, the meeting will go into Executive Session and all guests will be asked to leave the room.

Due to the absence of Secretary Garret, Mr. D’Amico acted as Board Secretary. He proceeded with the Board Roll Call, after which he announced that a quorum was reached. Names of the NIB Staff attendees and agency CEOs attending are listed as well.

NAEPB Board Roll Call

Dave Wells	Assistant VP, Operations
David Horton	Vice President, Services
Dennis Steiner	Vice President, Ethics and Practices
Eric Stueckrath	President
Erika Petach	Vice President, Public Policy
Jim Kerlin	Vice President, Marketing
Ken Fernald	Vice President, Operations
Michael Monteferrante	Vice President, BSCs
Reinhard Mabry	Vice President, Strategic Planning
Rudy D’Amico	Treasurer/Acting Secretary
Robert Garret (phone)	

NIB Staff Present

Andrew Mueck	Vice President, Operations
Angela Hartley	Executive Vice President
Anne-Marie Wallace	Project Director, Military Resale
Ellen Najjar	Executive Administrative Coordinator
Gary Colello	Director, Customer Logistics
Harlan Erker	Director, Compliance
Heather Lyons	General Counsel
Jim Diggins	Project Manager, Military Resale
Jon Katz	Vice President, Business Development
Kevin Campbell	Senior Director, Products/Services
Kevin Lynch	President, CEO
Laura Reimers	Vice President, Communications
Mallik Balla	Senior Director, IT
Matt Klovas	Director, Agency Support
Matthew Wieseler	Director, Strategic Intelligence
Rick Webster	Vice President, Public Policy
Steve Brice	Vice President, Finance and Administration
Timothy Dudley	Senior Director, Operations Support
Tommy Thomas	Director, BSCs

Agencies and CEOs Present

Anne Jayes	Lighthouse Louisiana
Anthony Cancelosi	Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind
Betsy Loveday	Lions Volunteer Blind Industries
Brenda Bennett	NewView Oklahoma
Cindy Watson	Dallas Lighthouse
Cintha Mabee	South TX Lighthouse
CJ Lange	IB Milwaukee
David Barnwell	IFB Solutions
David Brister	Mississippi Industries for the Blind
Dennis Loney	NewView Oklahoma
Dick Monaco	Arizona Industries for the Blind
DuWayne Gilbertson	LC Industries
Fred Puente	BISM
Jacob Schmude	BISM
Janet Griffey	RLCB
Janet Szlyk	Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind
Jean-Claude Kappler	Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind
Jeffrey Hawting	LC Industries
Jerry Martin	Alabama Industries for the Blind
Jerry Whaly	RLCB
John Mitchell	Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Jonathan Fister	Keystone
Joyel Bennett	ABVI
Julie Lueck	NewView Oklahoma
Karen Bly	Center for the Blind – Chester, PA
Lauren Branch	NewView Oklahoma
Libby Murphy	LA Association for the Blind
Lou Moneymaker	Bosma
Luis Narimatsu	GA Industries
Mary Ellen Mest	IFB Solutions
Matt Koch	VA Industries
Melanie Wimmenauer	Seattle Lighthouse
Mike Chew	Mississippi Industries for the Blind
Mike Gilliam	San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind
Mike May	Seattle Lighthouse
Nicky Ooi	South Texas Lighthouse for the Blind
Pat O'Hara	Seattle Lighthouse
Renee Vidrine	Lighthouse Louisiana
Rich Weigold	IB Milwaukee
Rob Buettner	BeyondVision
Shelly Taylor	LA Association for the Blind
Stephanie Benedetti	Lighthouse Louisiana
Tammy Owen	Olmsted
Thomas Kohn	BISM
Tim Hertlein	Southern Tier Assn. F/T Visually Impaired
Trevor Sutherland	Lions Volunteer Blind Industries

Approval of Minutes – Rudy D’Amico, Acting Secretary

Mr. D’Amico presented a motion for the minutes of the April 17, 2017 Board Meeting to be accepted. Mr. Kerlin moved, motion was seconded by Mr. Mabry. Minutes were approved.

Treasurer’s Report - Rudy D’Amico

Mr. D'Amico presented the Treasurer's Report. The financial statements ending 5/31/17 were sent to the Board prior to the meeting. The checking account value was \$910 and savings account \$240,789. Accounts receivable balance remained unchanged from February 2017 and is currently \$3,000. Collection efforts continue.

Accounts payable at the end of May were \$12,464, consisting entirely of two invoices for legal services. Accounting fees of \$680 have accrued through the end of May. Total equity is \$231,555.

Total revenue for the year to date was \$30,519, consisting of \$29,500 of membership dues and \$1,019 from other sources. Year to date expenses are \$20,491 of which \$14,760 are for legal services. The change in net assets for the period ending May 31, 2017 is \$9,928.

Mr. D'Amico asked for a vote from the Board to approve the termination of the following non-active members:

1. Delaware Industries for the Blind – for non-payment of dues;
2. Vision Loss Resources – for termination email received.

Mr. D'Amico asked for a motion to approve termination of these two agencies. Mr. Mabry moved, and Mr. Fernald seconded.

Mr. Kerlin asked why the legal services bill was \$14,000, as the Board had approved a cap of \$12,000. Due to the complexities of the issues, more hours were required.

Mr. D'Amico announced that Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind in Washington, D.C. has requested membership in NAEPB. A copy of their request letter was sent to the membership prior to the meeting. He asked for a motion to accept their request.

Mrs. Petach moved for acceptance, Mr. Steiner seconded. The motion was carried, and Mr. D'Amico welcomed Mr. Cancelosi, President of Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind.

Mr. D'Amico asked for a motion to accept the 5/31/17 financial report. Mr. Kerlin moved, motion was seconded by Mrs. Petach. All ayes, motion approved.

Consent Calendar – Eric Stueckrath, President

Mr. Stueckrath introduced the consent calendar. Reports were received from the BSC Committee, Operations Committee, Public Policy Committee, Marketing Committee and Strategic Planning Committee. Mr. Stueckrath asked for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar Report as submitted. Mr. Fernald moved, motion was seconded by Mr. Mabry. The consent calendar was approved.

President's Remarks – Eric Stueckrath

Mr. Stueckrath stated the meeting was now beginning executive session. Following a few remarks, he will ask Mr. Lynch to give an update on NIB, and the various issues that are impacting all of the agencies at this time. The group would then have an opportunity to ask Mr. Lynch questions. Following this Q&A period, Mr. Stueckrath will ask all the guests to leave the meeting. The only attendees at that time will be the appointed representative from each agency and board members.

Mr. Stueckrath welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the National Symposium and supporting the Employees of the Year. It is a great opportunity to celebrate the successes that go on at all of the agencies during the year not only through the Employees of the Year, but also the opportunity to go to the Hill and meet with their representatives.

Mr. Stueckrath explained that the various committees work continuously between meetings on issues that affect the overall AbilityOne Program. Due to these many hours of work many of the reports are not ready to send out until a day or two prior to each meeting. He asked for the group's patience in getting meeting materials out.

Mr. Stueckrath thanked Mr. Lynch and his team at NIB for the activities that have been organized during the National Symposium.

There are many issues and challenges facing all the agencies to be discussed this week and during the coming months. It is important that all understand them, know the details and what each means for the program and agencies. If there are questions, this is a good opportunity to bring them up for discussion.

Mr. Stueckrath mentioned the Federal Register notice requesting comments on information collection that expired on the 20th of June. Mr. Stueckrath had petitioned the agencies to respond and some agencies did, some did not.

He asked Jessica Abrahams to put together a position paper for NAEPB to consider as the collective response and on June 19th that paper was submitted. Some of the agencies met that action with resistance, but Mr. Stueckrath stands behind the request to comment on the federal register and he felt that Ms. Abrahams put forth valid reasons why the agencies should accept the action requested.

Mr. Stueckrath thanked the agencies and representatives attending in becoming more engaged in what is going on, and the issues that all are facing at this time, i.e. issues with the VA, WIOA, SDDI.

Mr. Stueckrath turned the floor over to Mr. Lynch.

NIB Update – Kevin Lynch, President and CEO of NIB

Mr. Lynch thanked Mr. Stueckrath and the members of the NAEPB for attending the Symposium. Due to the new format this year combining the Public Policy Forum and The Employees of the Year recognition, it will be very helpful if all attendees will complete the survey which will be sent several days following the Symposium so NIB can determine the reaction to the new format.

Mr. Lynch told the group there are 434 attendees registered, 78 of those are employees of the year, with 47 agencies represented. Wednesday will be a busy day on the Hill with nearly 200 visits scheduled with representatives. Many of the EOYs will be visiting the Hill with their agencies and Advocates and this will be even more positive reinforcement for the program.

There are several issues that are being discussed in Washington that will have a large impact on the Program, and are very important to a number of agencies. As they are discussed, Mr. Lynch encouraged questions and discussion and not to wait for the Q&A period.

The first issue is the VA. In May, NIB along with IFB Solutions and Bosma entered into a suit against the Department of Veterans Affairs. This suit is based on two issues. The first issue is the VA changed the FAR to state that anything added to the PL after January 2010 that did not go through the rule of two is no longer mandatory under the AbilityOne Program. The VA issued the FAR change without following the APA which calls for open comment.

The second issue is the VA's interpretation of the Kingdomware litigation which is that anything that is on the AbilityOne Procurement List, even if it was on before January 2010, will be subject to the Rule of Two.

PDS Consultants, the litigant in the bid protest involving IFB Solutions eyewear contracts, filed a motion to intervene in the lawsuit. NIB filed in opposition to this motion, as did the Department of Justice. The government's response to the complaint in the lawsuit is due July 30.

After NIB filed the lawsuit, the Court of Federal Claims held in the PDS case that the Veterans Benefits ACT takes first priority for all VA purchasing. As ordered in the final ruling, the VA will conduct a Rule of Two analysis for two IFB Solutions contracts that were in dispute. While this judgment is limited to the procurement that was protested, we anticipate that the VA will issue additional regulations in response to the ruling.

As we get more information we will share with the agencies.

The Commission has also had discussions with DOJ regarding a possible appeal of their decision, and we will let you know of any progress.

NIB has already had some issues where the KO has told federal agencies it is not mandatory to purchase from the AbilityOne program anymore. NIB is watching very closely the recent PDS/IFB decision to see how contracting officers are going to act. If any agency believes they have a KO acting in this way, NIB needs to know right away.

In addition to the lawsuit, NIB has Charles Cooper from Signal Group and Rick Webster working with representatives on the Hill, as well the public relations firm, Golin, developing response and position papers and messaging for social media and press releases.

There is a lot that is taking place and NIB is working hard to make sure Congress understands the implications of these acts on our employees and agencies.

NIB has also hired outside legal counsel that are working very closely with Bosma and IFB counsel.

SourceAmerica has become more active as it is having an impact on them as well. They have requested conversations with the VA, and they may take legal action on their own.

Mr. Moneymaker told the group that the VA has informed many of their staff that AbilityOne is no longer a mandatory source to purchase products from. If the VA is allowed to have a position inside the government that AbilityOne is no longer a mandatory source of supply, it will affect the entire program.

Mr. Lynch thanked Mr. Moneymaker for his comments. There are a number of other issues. NIB is growing very concerned about the impact of the WOIA vocational rehabilitation rule issued by the Education Department last year. Due to the way some states interpret the ruling, many VR agencies have discontinued working with the NPAs, and have told job seekers that if it is an AbilityOne job, it is not a good job.

NIB has been looking at a number of different actions and is working closely with NAEPB, VisionServe, and other organizations that can help determine how to address this issue, as well as congressional offices. Janet LaBreck, former RSA Commissioner, and a consultant to NIB, will be talking with NAEPB regarding this issue as well.

Mr. Lynch met with Tina Ballard and Kim Zeich last week to discuss these issues and request and encourage theirs and the Commission members' support.

The Cooperative Agreement expires in six months, and Mr. Lynch plans to begin discussions with the Commission in early September to exercise the two six-month extensions.

The agencies that have been working on the draft flow-through agreement met last week with the Commission. The agencies have told NIB that they will approve the two-page agreement; therefore this is the document NIB will submit to the Commission on July 14. The Commission will review the draft and comment back to NIB within 30 days. At that time, NIB will take the document to the agencies and has 120 days to obtain their signatures.

Mr. Lynch mentioned the oversight panel which was established as part of the 2016 NDAA bill. The panel has been established for four years, and Shay Assad is chairing the section having to do with the AbilityOne program. The panel is working to establish a structure to go forward. They have indicated they will want to meet with the CNAs and NPAs at some point. The meetings are not open, so NIB relies on feedback from the Commission. Currently, their focus is determining the definition of disabled.

If the DOD does not accept the recommendations of the panel, then DOD does not have to accept our contracts.

Mr. Mabry asked since DOJ was very interested in integrated work settings and had convinced states across the country to shut down these settings, he is interested to know if this is getting caught up in this panel and discussion?

Mr. Lynch does not believe this has come up in the discussion yet. On a positive note, the person who was driving that point at DOJ has left, so this should help.

Mr. Lynch has met with the new Inspector General of the U.S. AbilityOne program, Thomas Lehrich. Mr. Lehrich will be speaking at the General Session on Tuesday. He wants to meet quarterly with Mr. Lynch, and wants to begin visiting some of the agencies. He will also attend and speak at the July NIB Board meeting.

Mr. Lehrich has asked NIB and SourceAmerica to give him several areas of concern to discuss and attempt to resolve. Mr. Lynch is working on those for NIB.

Mr. Lynch told the group that he wants to have a more open and frequent line of communication. With the many issues that are facing the program, it is very important that we are all working together now and not against each other. Mr. Lynch is going to put together a small group to meet with on a regular basis to discuss the issues, how they are affecting the agencies and solicit suggestions and comments on moving forward. Obviously not all information can be shared openly, but there needs to be a trusting relationship that NIB is working in the best interest of the entire group.

Mr. Lynch thanked the NAEPB for their assistance and support in all of these issues, as well as the Cooperative Agreement.

Mr. Stueckrath thanked Mr. Lynch for his remarks and asked for questions. There was some general discussion among the attendees that the agencies have to work together now to tackle these issues.

Mr. Gilliam asked how SourceAmerica was doing on their flow-through agreement. Mr. Stueckrath said they are in a wait and see mode until NIB submits, but seem to be leaning towards a similar process.

Mr. Kerlin asked what the agencies can do to help. Mr. Lynch said to take the messaging to their members of Congress and let them know that they have constituents at home who may lose their jobs if these issues are not resolved.

Mr. Moneymaker said he feels it is very important to come up with a definitive plan going forward, rather than attacking each event as it happens. Mr. Lynch agreed that the group does need to be more proactive to develop a strategy for tackling these issues.

After some further discussion, Mr. Stueckrath adjourned this portion of the meeting at approximately 3:00 p.m. and the Board and Membership continued to meet in executive session. He asked all guests to leave the meeting. See Board Meeting Executive Session Addendum.

NAEPB BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2017
EXECUTIVE SESSION ADDENDUM

A discussion was begun by President Stueckrath regarding WIOA and the challenges to our program that it presents. Mr. Mabry gave a full explanation of threats to AbilityOne and presented a motion to the membership that NAEPB retain Mr. Todd Tiahr for consultation and working with members of Congress to explain our position and gather support for the AbilityOne Program as it pertains to WIOA. Motion seconded by BISM. A discussion was held and various agencies gave input. A call for a vote was made by President Stueckrath. All Ayes except Nays from Cincinnati Association for the Blind, Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment, and The Lighthouse for the Blind of New Orleans. Motion approved.

Minutes approved August 7, 2017.

Ellen Najjar

NAEPB Treasurer's Report

For the Period Ending June 30, 2017

Please see the financial statements for the period ending June 30, 2017. The checking account balance was \$3,255 and the savings account balance was \$226,804. Accounts receivable decreased by a net amount of \$1,875, the result of \$1,000 in dues, payments and pro-rated dues billing of \$125 for Columbia Lighthouse for the Blind. In addition, Delaware Industries for the Blind and Vision Loss Resources have left NAEPB. We have charged off their respective receivable balances, totaling \$1,000, against bad debt expense. Accounts receivable balance is currently \$1,125. Collection efforts continue.

There were no accounts payable at the end of June. Accounting fees of \$765 have accrued through the end of June. Total equity is \$230,419.

Total revenues for the year to date are \$30,658, consisting of \$29,625 of membership dues and \$1,033 from other sources. Year to date expenses are \$21,866. The year to date change in net assets for the period ending June 30, 2017 is \$8,792.

Respectfully Submitted
NAEPB Board Meeting – August 7, 2017
Rudy D'Amico, Treasurer

NAEPB
Statement of Financial Position
As of June 30, 2017

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash Checking	3,255
Cash Savings	226,804
Accounts Receivable	1,125
Due from CABVI	0
Due from NIB	0
Accrued Fees	0

Total Current Assets 231,184

TOTAL ASSETS 231,184

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	0
Accrued Expenses	765

Total Current Liabilities 765

Equity

Opening Equity Balance	221,627
Change in Net Assets	8,792

Total Equity 230,419

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 231,184

NAEPB
Statement of Activities
For the Period Ending June 30, 2017

REVENUE	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	VARIANCE	Budget 2017
Investment Income	132	75	57	100
Membership Dues	29,625	31,000	(1,375)	31,000
NIB Reimbursement	901	37,500	(36,599)	50,000
TOTAL REVENUE	30,658	68,575	(37,917)	81,100
EXPENSES				
Accounting Fees	110	1,125	(1,015)	1,500
Legal Fees	14,760	0	14,760	0
Website Maintenance	1,583	1,200	383	1,600
Awards / Honors	0	375	(375)	500
Insurance - Liability / D&O	1,125	900	225	1,200
Bad Debt Expense	1,500	2,250	(750)	3,000
Miscellaneous Other Costs	0	150	(150)	200
Officers Expenses	0	3,750	(3,750)	5,000
Conference Annual	2,788	15,000	(12,212)	20,000
Service Committee	0	3,750	(3,750)	5,000
Operations Committee	0	3,750	(3,750)	5,000
BSC Committee	0	3,750	(3,750)	5,000
Public Policy Committee	0	3,750	(3,750)	5,000
Annual Audit Meeting	0	375	(375)	500
CEO Annual Training	0	375	(375)	500
Miscellaneous Meetings & Travel	0	3,000	(3,000)	4,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	21,866	43,500	(21,634)	58,000
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	8,792	25,075	(16,283)	23,100



The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind

BSC COMMITTEE REPORT

Presented by Michael Monteferrante, VP BSCs

***TO THE BOARD
AUGUST 7, 2017***

The BSC Operator's Committee continue to meet on a regular basis. Here is the July subject agenda of items.

There will be a BSC CEO luncheon with the Operators at the Fall NIB/NAEPB Training Conference and Expo. All BSC CEOs are encouraged to attend.

I had an important meeting with Kevin Lynch to discuss the BSC 50 mile radius rule. There has been a lot of chatter within the agencies regarding this important subject. The operators have had a formal discussion amongst themselves. Kevin and I have agreed that NIB will draft proposed language for BSC CEOs consideration and vote. We will convene by phone within the next 4 weeks. Much has changed since the initial BSC operation at Fort Bragg. Clarification language must be addressed as well as ramifications of noncompliance that may include losing good standing within NIB. BSC CEOs will be notified of upcoming call and proposed draft upon completion soon.

NIB BSC PROGRAM UPDATE

July 2017

SUBJECT #1: New BSC Business Model Initiative

LEAD: Tommy Thomas

STATUS: Ongoing. Andy Mueck followed up directly with Mr. Pete Bechtel of G-4 Supply Policy Directorate to determine if the Army has made a decision yet on moving forward with the GCSS-A pilot initiative. Andy will forward his response when received.

Target date: TBD pending feedback from Mr. Bechtel

SUBJECT #2: BSC Assignments and 50-mile Radius

LEAD: Tommy Thomas

STATUS: NIB hosted a meeting with designated BSC operators on 29 June to explore solutions to the 50-mile territorial issue as it pertains to BSC assignments and proximity to existing stores. This meeting resulted in specific recommendations to modify and better focus the territorial competition policy. The recommendations have been provided to Michael Monteferrante (NAEPB BSC Chair). He will present recommendations to BSC operating CEOs for discussion and obtain their final decision in the form of an agreement.

Target date: 31 August for vote/resolution

SUBJECT #3: GSA Fleet Readiness Centers (FRC) Partnerships and Other 4PL Opportunities

Lead: Tommy Thomas

STATUS: Ongoing. An administrative PL addition package is at the Commission to include Naval Air Station Lemoore (Envision) as the latest GSA 4PL partnership with the BSC program. The final anticipated addition until FY 2018 will be at Rock Island Arsenal (IFB Solutions). Once added, these two will join 7 other locations that were previously added in the past 6 months.

Target Date: FY 2018 for further GSA 4PL opportunities

SUBJECT #4: BSC Compliance Initiatives on AbilityOne Sales Ratios and Staffing of Blind Labor

LEAD: Tommy Thomas

STATUS: After three quarters of FY 17 reporting (Sep 16 – 30 June), the number of stores falling below the 25% AbilityOne sales ratio target rose from 41 to 42. There were 5 stores with sales ratios below 10%. NIB continues to work with agencies to analyze causative factors, customer spending habits and explore potential ways to enhance AbilityOne sales. 4 stores are reporting zero blind labor. The overall ratio for all stores for the month of June was 30.60% and for the first 9 months of FY 17 is 29.35%, continuing the overall positive trend for the program.

Target Date: September 30, 2017

SUBJECT #5: Support to DLA Document Print Services (DPS)

LEAD: Jamie Huffman

STATUS: Ongoing. NIB is working to schedule a meeting with DLA to present our proposal, to include pricing structure, and gain approval to initiate the pilot which will cover Mid-Atlantic and New England area. Closest BSCs to the DLA print facilities in that region will support the appropriate site during the pilot. NIB meeting with DLA is planned for early August and agencies will be provided feedback from that meeting.

Target Date: August 15, 2017

SUBJECT #6: BSC Assignment List

LEAD: Tommy Thomas

STATUS: No change. The updated Assignment List was published in NIB This Week on 9 June. This list will appear in the publication every six month.

Target Date: December 2017

SUBJECT #7: Marketing New AbilityOne Products to BSCs

LEAD: Johnette Lee/Jamie Huffman

STATUS: Johnette Lee has conducted 3 preliminary meetings with the team of BSC Operators and several manufacturing agencies. Recent discussions have been round table in nature as we assess varying views on current, past and future best practices for not only marketing new products to the BSC Channel but also in realizing sales in a timely fashion.

Target Date: Next call scheduled for 25 July. Anyone interested in participating in this call should contact Jamie Huffman at jhuffman@nib.org.

Informational Notes.

1. **BSC Sales Trends:** BSC AbilityOne sales for the first 9 months of FY 17 (1 October – 30 June) are as follows:

AbilityOne:	\$44.21M	(+1.6% over FY 16)
Commercial:	\$106.27M	(-3.6% below FY 16)
HAZMAT:	\$14.02M	(+2.0% over FY 16)
IEE:	\$98.60M	(+22.1% over FY 16)
TOTAL:	\$263.10M	(+7.1% over FY 16)

BSC sales rose again in May.



The National Association for the Employment of People who are Blind

Public Policy Committee Report

Presented by Erika Petach, VP Public Policy Committee

To the Board, August 7, 2017

The Public Policy committee meeting was held on June 26, 2017.

Charles Cooper from Signal Group provided a legislative update and a summary is listed below.

- 1) Congress is trying to wrap up this week to leave for the July 4th week. They will then come back for three weeks and then be gone for five weeks so the ability to get anything done is basically going to be crammed into a three week schedule.
- 2) There are several issues that Congress is looking at that will affect our agencies. One is the National Defense Authorization Act that reauthorizes all spending by the DOD. You may recall that last year the bill authorized an oversight committee to review AbilityOne. That bill will be marked up in a closed session in the House and Senate this week.
- 3) Additionally, the House and Senate begin drafting the spending bills for the 2018 fiscal year. This is important for us because one of those bills funds the AbilityOne Commission.
- 4) A couple of issues could cause some instability. For example, the health care bill could potentially cause other things to slow down.
- 5) The last item the Congress will be considering is tax reform, although this may get pushed back.
- 6) There has been a lot of talk about how slowly the Administration is making nominations. There are some nominees in the pipeline, but they are slow to get to the floor as well.

A review of the Public Policy plan for 2017, which is based on the strategic plan was reviewed. The group was reminded of the priorities agreed upon at the last public policy meeting ; WIOA, the Federal Agency Compliance with JWOD/AbilityOne and the VA Issues.

There was a discussion about SSDI as a priority. A discussion occurred explaining why the committee was not ready to act on SSDI and a plan to address this in the future

was discussed. Rick Webster will be creating a two-three year plan to tackle this issue comprehensively and it will be presented at the fall conference.

A review of the Day on the Hill activities and asks was conducted.

- 1) Asking Congress to send a letter to the Education Department demanding it send a new communication to the field. This guidance would remind state VR agencies they still need to investigate every employment setting when a client who is blind asks to work at one of our agencies. VR counselors need to at least do the work the law requires them to do, and after looking at the job setting make a determination about whether or not it is integrated.

On the matter of Competitive Integrated Employment, or CIE, we have a structural issue and a conflict between our program's statutory requirement to have at least 75% direct labor input by people who are blind, and the definition of CIE.

In addition to dealing with CIE and the negative effects of state VR agency actions, the group discussed requesting that the homemaker exemption be restored.

Rick reported that he has heard from SourceAmerica that there are 18 states that have cut the relationships with the VR agencies.

The survey that went out to all NIB agencies regarding WIOA was discussed. It was sent to 140 agencies and 63 agencies replied. It was disappointing that more had not replied.

- 2) The second major issue or ask to be taken to the Hill is the issue of VA contracting and the threat to our program. There are 36 NPAs that provide goods and services to the VA, with total sales of \$116 million, providing employment for 1,000 people who are blind. NIB, along with IFB Solutions and Bosma, has filed suit against the Department of Veterans Affairs, very reluctantly, to obtain clarification on how the statutory requirement to purchase from NPAs employing people who are blind should coexist with VA's veteran-owned small business procurement policies. We do not believe Congress intended that there would be conflict between the two laws. If the courts cannot reach a reasonable outcome, we need Congress to step into this issue.

Rick then gave an update on the National Symposium and the Advocate Programs. There are 47 agencies that attended this year. 41 agencies went to the Hill on Wednesday with almost 200 meetings were confirmed. This was a new record.



**The National Association for the Employment of People who are
Blind**

**Marketing Committee Meeting
National Symposium – Crystal Gateway Marriott
Monday, June 26, 2017**

**Presented by Jim Kerlin, VP Marketing Committee
To the Board August 7, 2017**

Attendees

Beyond Vision - Jim Kerlin, Bill King, Diana Voigt
NIB - Laura Reimers, Catherine Schultz, Mike Johnson
ABVI – Joe Kells
Bosma - Lise Pace
IB Milwaukee – C.J. Lange
NewView Oklahoma - Lauren Branch
Kaleidoscope - Alex Smith, Phillip Soutar

Welcome and hellos

Agenda overview – J. Kerlin

- Status update on NIB Long Term Impact/labor to revenue gap
- Overview product promotion e-content/NPA engagement
- Overview SKILCRAFT and Services Branding Project update
- Kaleidoscope branding options – SKILCRAFT branding project
- NPA feedback/discussion on branding
- Meeting wrap-up/close

Status update on NIB Long Term Impact/labor to revenue gap – J. Kerlin

- Two message platforms – one for internal audiences and one external.
- Internal messaging will show that sales-to-mission job growth gap is fueled by automation using multiple legacy product examples.
- External messaging is being refreshed – all media/tactics are on the table.

Overview product promotion e-content/NPA engagement – J. Kerlin

- Cross-sell, cross-promote SKILCRAFT products on e-commerce platforms with goal to drive mission.
- Bosma and Beyond Vision created and tested pilot with sharing of e-commerce content.
- Next step to engage more NPA's particularly BSC operators.

- Later phase will extend to AbilityOne distribution network.
 - Question: How do we direct people to this portal?
 - Question: How are materials provided? Independently posted.
 - Question: How is this different?
Better to share and put in public place for more user-friendly accommodation and access.

Overview SKILCRAFT and Services Branding Project update – L. Reimers

- Why we're here
 - Critical junction in NIB's branding efforts.
 - NIB entering 80th anniversary.
 - SKILCRAFT is a 65-year old brand.
 - Services – area of growth in need of brand identity.
 - Need to think strategically about the future of NIB's brand architecture.
 - AbilityOne branding not the focus of this project; will be incorporated as needed once NIB's branding direction is finalized
 - Agency input important.
- How we got here
 - Started with re-energization of SKILCRAFT.
 - Feedback indicated SKILCRAFT perceived as dated. Many associate only with office products.
 - 2014 SKILCRAFT Brand Equity Survey
 - High awareness/favorability in federal marketplace. SKILCRAFT is well known (69% familiar) and well-regarded (70% favorable) and compared to other companies, ranks fifth in a list of eleven brands.
 - Opportunity to strengthen brand.
 - Established Ad-Hoc Marketing group
 - Many members of Ad-Hoc group are now part of the NAEPB marketing committee.
 - Cross-functional including products, services and BSCs.
 - Secured branding experts Kaleidoscope via comprehensive RFP process.
 - Explored initial ideas with Ad-Hoc Marketing Group
 - Feedback
 - ✓ "What's the plan for services?"
 - ✓ "What's NIB's equity in the marketplace?"
 - 2015 NIB Brand Equity Survey
 - Strong brand equity in marketplace comparable to SKILCRAFT. NIB has strong brand equity (71% familiar) and well-regarded (78% favorable) on par with SKILCRAFT.
 - Connection to mission important.
- Today: Three Options
 - Developed three options for NIB's brand architecture.
 - Options developed by branding experts and informed by:
 - Survey data – (hand-outs available after meeting with topline survey results)

- Industry best practices
- Ad-Hoc Marketing Group
- NAEPB Marketing Committee
- NIB leadership

Kaleidoscope Presentation-Branding Options – SKILCRAFT and Services – Alex Smith

- Overall
 - Eighteen months of work with many stakeholders.
 - Description/explanation of “mission lockup” tied back to research – “brand equals mission.”
 - Options capitalize on the strengths of the SKILCRAFT brand.
 - High-level look at the development with images as placeholders.
- Brand Role & Hierarchy
 - Definitions
 - Brand Hierarchy: Brands within a system fall into natural hierarchy.
 - Driver Brands: Brand that drives the purchase decision and represents value proposition central to purchase and user experience.
 - Endorser Brand: Brand provides support and credibility to driver brand representing people, culture, values and program.
- Options
 - Option 1 – Endorsed (All in with SKILCRAFT)
 - What this means
 - SKILCRAFT is the brand that represents both products and services.
 - Why it’s a viable option
 - Capitalizes on the strength of the SKILCRAFT brand in marketplace.
 - ✓ Consolidation to one lead brand identity; one brand story communicated.
 - ✓ Leverages brand equity by including “mission lockup”.
 - ✓ Consistent brand visual identity across touchpoints.
 - ✓ Drives internal operational/marketing efficiencies.
 - Option 2 – Split (NIB Services & SKILCRAFT 2.0 - Mission Lockup)
 - What this means
 - SKILCRAFT remains exclusively the product brand & services are formalized under NIB brand.
 - Why it’s a viable option
 - Recognize/maintain SKILCRAFT brand equity for products while capitalizing on NIB’s strong brand equity for services.
 - Mission is present across all touchpoints.
 - Option 3 – Split (NIB Services & SKILCRAFT 2.0 - No Mission Lockup)
 - What this means
 - SKILCRAFT remains the product brand & services are formalized under the NIB brand.
 - Why it’s a viable option
 - Recognize/maintain SKILCRAFT brand equity for products while capitalizing on NIB’s strong brand equity for services.

- No significant impact on SKILCRAFT brand efforts as they stand today.

Discussion/NPA feedback on branding

- Question: Are these the actual logo sizes on the examples?
No. These are placeholders for example only. The presentation today is concerned with the topline branding development using graphics only for examples, not final choices.
- Question/request: Please go through options again as a refresh. Simplify to understand all three together.
- Question: Why use the “mission lockup?”
All research and surveys pointed repeatedly to the tie between the brand and mission as an important element in customer recognition and value. Survey specifically confirmed the strong link between the mission and the SKILCRAFT brand. Between SKILCRAFT and NIB, the mission is reinforced over and over.
- Discussion: Consistency and familiarity are two most important brand successes.
- Question: Was their more equity in SKILCRAFT or NIB?
The tie-up between the two was noted as the most important element in the surveys/research. Equity was equal in each which was discovered in the NIB equity survey in 2016.
- Discussion: NPA weigh-in is most important and project keys on the approval of the NPAs.
- Question: How does AbilityOne fit into this?
This project has focused on SKILCRAFT and NIB brand equity. These are branding elements which we can control. AbilityOne branding is under the auspices of the Commission and not under our control.
- Question: Who owns SKILCRAFT?
SKILCRAFT is owned and licensed by NIB. NPAs can request to be licensed to use SKILCRAFT.
- Question: How and when do we use SKILCRAFT?
SKILCRAFT is a product brand used by licensed SKILCRAFT NPAs. This includes 48 NIB associated agencies and twelve SourceAmerica agencies.
- Discussion: Difference between SKILCRAFT brand and AbilityOne brand.
 - A lot of confusion in the marketplace. AbilityOne denotes items are on the procurement list.
 - Examples of lack of brand clarity are on many online websites that tag products incorrectly.
- Discussion: Options
 - NPA participant does not like NIB used as corporate brand and services brand together. Prefers the clarity of using SKILCRAFT across the board

leveraging SKILCRAFT reputation to reinforce services. (Votes for Option 1).

- When thinking of SKILCRAFT, customers may think only of products not services. They may not connect the word “SKILCRAFT” with services since the word “craft” indicates making or creating an object. Suggests a new name for services branch such as “SKILSERVE”.
- Question: What does our customer like (for branding)?
The surveys show that either or both options using SKILCRAFT and/or NIB are viable pathways that reinforce our customer base.
- Question: Are there examples of companies using two different brands - endorser brand and a spin-off of brand not endorser?
Starwood group used as an example.
- Discussion: Decided to take a show of hands to vote for the three options.
 - Results:
 - Option 1 – All in with SKILCRAFT – 5 votes
 - Option 2 – Split (NIB Services & SKILCRAFT 2.0 - Mission Lockup) – 3 votes
 - Option 3 – Split (NIB Services & SKILCRAFT 2.0 - No Mission Lockup) – 0 votes
 - Option 4 – (added option; SKILCRAFT for products and, for example, “SKILSERVE” for services) – 4 votes

Next Steps – L. Reimers

- Report out to NIB leadership
- Regular updates through NAEPB Marketing Committee

Meeting wrap-up/close

2017 NAEPB Supplier of the Year Awards Timeline

Action	Target Date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small and Large Supplier of the Year Nominations request sent to NAEPB members 	August 7, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nominations due in to Stueckrath from Members 	August 11, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAEPB Selection Committee chooses Winners 	August 15, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAEPB Small and Large Supplier Winners Announced 	August 15, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Plaque Language provided to Coms for review and editing 	August 16, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edited draft language provided to Eric for review and approval 	August 17, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eric approves final plaque language 	August 18, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final approved plaque language sent to AHP engravers for production 	August 22, 2017
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final proof of plaque from engravers for approval 	August 29, 2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plaques arrive at NIB 	September 12, 2017