



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

**NAEPB Winter CEO Retreat  
Board of Directors Meeting**  
Clearwater Beach Marriott Suites  
Clearwater Beach, FL  
Wednesday, January 25, 2017

**(for those dialing into the meeting)**

8:00-8:45 a.m.

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

Pass Code: 925356

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 1. Call to Order   | Stueckrath             |
| 2. Roll Call   | D'Amico (for Garrett)  |
| 3. Minutes for Approval  | D'Amico (for Garrett)  |
| 5a. NAEPB Board Meeting Minutes_12_5_16  |                        |
| 4. Treasurer's Report  | D'Amico                |
| 6a. NAEPB Treasurer's Report, Income Statement & Balance Sheet-period ending<br>12-31-2016 |                        |
| 6b. NAEPB Annual Year-End Financial Statement 9.30.2016                                    |                        |
| 5. Consent Calendar Reports  |                        |
| 7a. NAEPB Public Policy Report (Arbogast)  |                        |
| 7b. NAEPB Services Report (Mabry)  |                        |
| 6. NIB Update  | Lynch                  |
| 7. Convene to Executive Session  | Board and Agency CEO's |
| 8. Seating of New Board Members  | D'Amico / Stueckrath   |
| 9. Officer Elections and committee Appointments  | Stueckrath             |
| 10. Other Business   |                        |
| 11. Adjournment  | Stueckrath             |



**The National Association for the **Employment** of People who are Blind**  
**NAEPB Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Monday, December 5, 2016**  
**10:30am EST**

**APPROVED JANUARY 25, 2017**

**Call to Order**

The meeting of the NAEPB Board of Directors was called to order by President Eric Stueckrath on Monday, December 5, 2016 at 10:31am EST. Secretary Garrett proceeded with the Board Roll Call, after which he announced that a complete quorum was reached. Names of the NIB Staff attendees, agency CEO guests attending were also captured below.

**NAEPB Board Roll Call**

Erika Arbogast	Vice President, Public Policy – absent
Rudy D’Amico	Treasurer
Ken Fernald	
Robert Garrett	Secretary
Jim Kerlin	Vice President, Marketing
Reinhard Mabry	Vice President of Services
David Horton	Vice President, Base Supply Chains
Dennis Steiner	Vice President, Operations
Dave Wells	Chair, Ethics
Eric Stueckrath	President
Michael Monteferrante	Vice President, Strategic Planning

**NIB Staff Present**

Kevin Lynch	President, CEO
Angela Hartley	Executive Vice President/Chief Program Officer
Steve Brice	Chief Financial Officer
Marie-France Vareilles	Vice President, Strategic Customer Partnerships
John Qua	Senior Vice President, Operations
Rick Webster	Vice President, Public Policy
Ellen Najjar	Executive Administrative Coordinator

**Agencies and CEO’s Present**

San Antonio Lighthouse	Mike Gilliam
Mississippi Industries for the Blind	Michael Chew
Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired	John Mitchell
Chester County Branch PAB	Allen Connelly
Keystone Vocational Services	Jonathan Fister
Lighthouse Louisiana	Renee Vidrine
The Lighthouse Inc., Seattle	Harry Egler
IB Milwaukee	CJ Lange
Dallas Lighthouse	Hugh McElroy
Arizona Industries for the Blind	Dick Monaco
East Texas Lighthouse	Dave Huffman
Lighthouse Works!	Terry Whaples for Lee Nasehi
Virginia Industries for the Blind	Matt Koch

**Approval of Minutes - Bob Garrett, Secretary**

Mr. Garrett presented a motion for the minutes for the September 14 Member and Board Meeting to be accepted. Mr. Kerlin moved, seconded by Mr. Mabry. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report - Rudy D'Amico**

Mr. D'Amico reported the Treasurer's Report, which read as follows – Please see the financial statements ending 9/30/16. The checking account value was \$1,557 and savings account \$218,271. Accounts receivable balance remains at \$2,000. Total equity at the end of September was \$209,627. Revenue for the year to date was \$31,163, a result of \$31,000 from dues and \$163 from interest. Expenses year to date were \$10,828, leaving net income of \$20,335.

Mr. D'Amico stated that the website maintenance has been reassigned to Intrada Technologies, Inc. at the suggestion of Bob Garrett from North Central Sight Services and the balance of accrued web site fees will need to be adjusted depending on invoices received from Bosma. Bosma has done a good job of transferring the information and there should be more information on the website. The balance sheet has accrued expenses of \$13,500. Approximately \$12,000 of this was website support from Bosma. After a conversation with Mr. Moneymaker last week he stated that Bosma would not be billing for the support and NAEPB will write off the amount of \$4,000. This will be shown in the year end fiscal year statement that will be available at the retreat.

Mr. Stueckrath asked for a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. Mr. Kerlin moved to accept, Mr. Monteferrante seconded.

Mr. Kerlin asked if a quick note could be sent to Lou Moneymaker and Bosma thanking them for their help and for donation.

**Consent Calendar – Eric Stueckrath, President**

Mr. Stueckrath introduced the consent calendar, and asked for a motion to approve the Consent Calendar Report as submitted.

Mr. Wells asked about the Operations Committee recommendation that Operations has a meeting during the Conference. He feels this takes away from the other sessions and break-outs. Mr. Steiner said this is a recommendation, and there has been some discussion.

Consent calendar was accepted as presented.

**2016 Board Performance Evaluation – Dave Wells**

Mr. Wells sent out the evaluation forms and has received them all back. The group evaluated themselves as doing a very good job. The form will be revised for next year as it is difficult to read. The strongest area of course is the area of financial information, everyone understands the mission and responsibility. The weakest area is strategic goals compared to the other areas. Mr. Stueckrath thanked Mr. Wells for sending the evaluation out and reviewing. Mr. Stueckrath suggested that everyone on the Board needs to be more diligent in their work with the Board. Mr. Kerlin suggested that the planning is good, but the Board needs to be able to carry out the plans in a more effective manner. He suggested that this would be a good discussion point at the CEO Advance in January.

**High Level Committee Reports – Committee Chairs**

Mr. Stueckrath took a quick moment to thank Mr. Monteferrante for his work on the Committee for the CEO Retreat in January. He continues to be a driver in the process and continues to get it done and he asked Mr. Monteferrante to expand on the CEO Advance at this time. Mr. Monteferrante told the Board he sent out a draft agenda for the Advance asking that members let him know if they feel there are key areas that are not covered, or should be addressed. The Committee is Eric Stueckrath, Erika Arbogast,

Reinhard Mabry and the facilitator is Ron Morey. Based on input the Committee would like to have a full package to send out in the next week or so. There was discussion on the agenda and if there is enough differentiation in the different areas for a robust discussion. Mr. Monteferrante feels that this will be a good opportunity for the organization to come to some focused resolutions and execution process.

Mr. Stueckrath stated that there would be many conversations following this call with Tina Ballard and Kevin Lynch to discuss the agenda and their roles in the agenda. There will be areas of the retreat where Ms. Ballard and Mr. Lynch will be on the stage to talk about their programs and the direction and to take specific Q&A. Many of the agencies are very excited that they are going to be there so should make for an enriching experience.

Mr. Monteferrante asked for comments on the draft agenda and content by COB Tuesday, December 6.

**Ad Hoc Committee for Legal Review of Flow Down Agreement – Eric Stueckrath and Reinhard Mabry**

A number of agency CEOs have met with NIB and the Commission and Mr. Stueckrath thanked NIB for organizing and hosting the meeting. It was great to have that many stakeholders in the room involved in the process and it was great to have Mr. Ballard present with her staff. Following that meeting there has been conversation to discuss follow up and how all agencies can be represented in the discussions regarding the flow down agreement. The flow down agreement is essentially an agreement between NIB and each agency and it is mandatory through the Cooperative Agreement that NIB has with the AbilityOne Commission. Mr. Stueckrath stated that it was determined it would be good to have a general legal review rather than having individual agencies go out and have an analysis done. An ad hoc committee has been appointed to engage a legal review and Mr. Mabry has agreed to be the lead along with Mr. Stueckrath, Tammy Owen, and Rudy D'Amico. The charge is to have a legal firm review the agreement which should take about 25 hours. The firm will do a complete review of the document and give the committee some suggestions to respond. Mr. Mabry was asked do you have anything to add on this? Mr. Mabry responded that the most important thing is that this will be helpful to the membership for each agency to not have to spend money to have a lawyer look at it. This is going to be a service value to the membership. Hopefully there will be an agreement that everyone can agree to, comfortable with and will serve the needs of the industry. We also need to make sure that it is transparent and therefore we will be asking the board for comments and suggestions through this process. There was feedback from the earlier meeting in a document that was sent out by Matt Wieseler – thank you Matt. There will be one more round to give the agencies the opportunity to review and add input so that in the legal review all questions or uncertainty about provisions are responded to.

Mr. Kerlin asked how do you want us to give you any input. Mr. Mabry said there will be a template sent out. Mr. Kerlin asked what is the timing for all of this. NIB was pressured to get the draft out which they did and now they are waiting for the AbilityOne Commission to get back to them. Mr. Mabry asked Mr. Lynch to respond. Mr. Lynch stated that the clock does not start until the Commission has a firm document on the flow down conditions. Mr. Lynch said that Mr. Wieseler has had conversation with the Commission and what we have been told is that the Commission is working on the questions that were raised at the meeting and that we should expect to get that response at any time, which is open-ended. Requests have been moving through the Commission process a little bit better right now so it is anticipated there may be a response in the next two weeks. Once the Commission does have an approved template that they give to NIB, there will be 120 days from that point on to get the flow down out to the agencies. NIB will keep everyone informed so there are no surprises.

Mr. Kerlin asked for clarification that while the Cooperative Agreement was dictated by Congress, the flow down agreement wasn't dictated by Congress. It is an internal control thing.

Mr. Stueckrath would approval for an amount of up to \$12,500 to begin a legal review of the agreement. Mr. Mabry made a motion to approve, and Mr. Kerlin seconded. Mr. Kerlin added it is important to get this right as it is a life sentence for the agencies. An attorney has not been retained yet, Mr. Stueckrath has asked Mr. Mabry for suggestions.

Mr. Wells is opposed to the legal review because he feels it is going to be what it is, and is a restate of what the agencies are already doing.

**President's Remarks – Eric Stueckrath, President**

A lot is going on and he is very pleased with the strategic planning committee. He thanked NIB and Mr. Lynch for their work on the flow downs as it is a huge process for the agencies to be going through. He will work with Mr. Garrett to get the nomination slate put together and prepared for the next Board meeting. There will be some nominations coming out. He also thanked all the member agencies for attending the call today.

**NIB Update – Kevin Lynch, President and CEO of NIB**

NIB is starting the NEO program this afternoon and it will run through the week. NIB has 24 executives that are attending, and they will have the opportunity to hear brief outs from Tina Ballard and Steve Soroka.

**Business Lines**

A quick note on the closeout of FY 2016, it was a record year for overall sales from NIB's standpoint. NIB came in at about \$767 million, but due to a correction of about \$10 million because of sales from previous years there were inadvertently not reported by one of the agencies, the actual total is about \$755 million. The driver to that was of course DOD, commercial wholesalers and significant increase on the part of the VA. NIB was up about 4.5% from 2015, which is good. There will be more specifics presented at the annual board meeting and retreat in January.

**Cooperative Agreement**

NIB heard last week from the Commission that the fee ceiling has been retained as it is for the time being and they are not making any changes at the present. However that is subject to change under the Cooperative Agreement.

Mr. Lynch explained that due to the major election nationally, NIB has been reaching out to contacts that are close to the new Administration. Hopefully there will be some discussion at the annual retreat, but some of this should not be discussed with the Commission present as there are opportunities to explore in regards to influencing appointments to the Commission. Mr. Lynch also pointed out that there will be a significant change in the direction of the new Administration versus how the current Administration has operated. He will keep the NAEPB Board updated on my conversations.

NIB has also had discussions with some of the NAEPB board whether or not it makes sense to combine the EOY program with the Public Policy Forum. This is being tentatively worked on for June, 2017. This will allow modification to the annual conference to focus on business development and partner recognition. NIB has not signed any agreements with hotels yet, but needs to do that soon. Mr. Lynch asked if there was any opposition or concerns about this change. Mr. Kerlin is in agreement with the idea. Mr. Lynch confirmed there would be agency/employee recognition at each conference. Renee Vidrine as part of the public policy committee, feels this would be beneficial as it would encourage more agencies to attend the public policy forum with the EOY recognition as part of it. There is an upcoming NIB Executive Committee meeting next week and Mr. Lynch will discuss and get their approval to get an announcement out so everyone can save the date.

Mr. Lynch had a lengthy conversation last week with Tina Ballard and had the opportunity to cover a few areas. Most of you are aware that there has been a real struggle in the VA regarding some issues with our program. There is ongoing litigation with a SDV small business taking the VA and the AbilityOne Commission to court regarding the addition of the eye glass product, that is outstanding. We have been involved in providing briefs. Most likely they are looking at having oral presentations shortly. There has also been a move of items from the MAC to the SAC. There has been a prime vendor program that is being acted on in February; also other discussions on ETS, which Mr. Monteferrante has been very involved in. The Commission has gotten together with the VA and OPEE and they are very supportive of the program in

regards to this issue. Ms. Ballard has drafted two letters and sent them out but since they are government to government so she has not shared them.

Mr. Lynch also report that In the discussions with Ms. Ballard, one point made was that NIB needs to circle back and add the prime vendor programs back because it is the prime vendor programs that work with the VA to set the standards. We also talked about the addition process and she has agreed to review. I will provide more background.

NIB will also discuss the pricing process with the Commission since there have been significant changes in the program and the GAS is not buying as many items directly.

Mr. Lynch will be working on a formal request to send to the Commission to get dates to get this all processed.

There was discussion regarding John Qua's retirement, and Mr. Lynch stated there will not be a reorganization. He has been looking for someone to fill the position, but not someone to replace John.

Mr. Mabry asked if there has been any outreach to the transition team regarding the RSA Commissioner, and is there an opportunity for NAEPB to offer recommendations? Mr. Lynch agrees that it is important, but has not seen a list. Mr. Lynch suggested If anyone has an individual they believe I who would be good in the position to forward their names. Mr. Steiner asked if it would make sense for the Board to take on as a project with NIB not only looking at the RSA commissioner but other positions as well? Mr. Stueckrath agreed it is a good opportunity, and those who have more experience could help the Board to take advantage.

Mr. Lynch suggested utilizing the NAEPB Public Policy Committee since that is their functional area and he asked Ms. Hartley to sit something up with Erika.

Mr. Lynch reminded everyone that there are also many Commission appointees that will be coming up. Mr. Kerlin asked if there is a list of the ones who will be leaving. Ms. Hartley answered that while we know the terms of their positions, we don't know how quickly they will be refilled. We will discuss this on the Public Policy Committee call coming up in the next few weeks.

### **Member Open Forum Q&A – NAEPB Member Agencies**

Mr. Fernald asked if NAEPB is sending their strategic plan to NIB like the agencies will be doing. Mr. Monteferrante answered yes; we are working with Matt Wieseler to have the plan drafted.

CJ Lange asked about the slides shown at the Conference regarding a lot of data points that came out of the Cooperative Agreement like reporting requirements and other mandated requirements as a holder of an AbilityOne contract moving forward. Has there been any updates recently?

Mr. Lynch answered that he can ask Matt to put out what we know since the Conference and he would have Matt get something out. The main one was getting in your reps and certs and that has come and gone. We have quarterly reports that we have to get the data from, but it should not be a whole lot different from what you have been providing.

Mr. Stueckrath asked Mr. Wells to report on what he has been facing in getting the code of ethics signed recently. Mr. Wells answered that one of the agencies is also a state agency and when they went to their legal team they were told they could sign the ethics form, but had to add an addendum that if we take them to court, we have to take them to court in their state, and a few other things that has nothing to do with the ethics agreement. Heather Lyons has reviewed it and agreed that this comes up from time to time. They did not change the agreement, just included an addendum. One more point it is my understanding that it is a requirement for membership in the NAEPB. Is that true? Mr. Stueckrath agreed that it is, but agreed to discuss off line to make sure it is properly handled.

Mr. Chew said it is due to the requirement that one state cannot govern another state.

There was no further business to come before the board and it was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Minutes approved at January 25, 2017 NAEPB Board Meeting held in Clearwater, FL.

Ellen S. Najjar

## NAEPB Treasurer's Report

For the period ending 12/31/2016

Please see the financial statements ending 12/31/16. The checking account value was \$1,422 and savings account \$242,313. Accounts receivable balance was \$5,000, which consisted of 52 agencies paying out of 59 for the current year. Collection efforts continue.

Accrued expenses consist of 15 months of accrued accounting fees of \$1,875 and 3 months of accrued web site maintenance fees of \$180. Total equity at the end of December was \$247,581.

Total revenue for the year to date was \$30,444, \$29,500 a result of dues and \$944 from other sources. Expenses year to date were \$4,490, which include building a new website for \$1,426, payment of D&O insurance of \$1,126 and reimbursement of travel expenses.

The fiscal year-end financial statements ending September 30, 2016 have been completed in draft form. The Audit Committee met on January 16, 2017 recommended the year-end statements for approval. Copies were sent to all Board Members. After approval of the year-end compiled statement, the Form 990 will be completed and filed. We will need a motion to accept the 2016 year-end financial statements.

Respectfully Submitted  
NAEPB Board Meeting 1/25/17  
Rudy D'Amico, Treasurer

NAEPB  
Statement of Financial Position  
As of December 31, 2016

ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash Checking	1,422
Cash Savings	242,313
Accounts Receivable	5,000
Due from NIB	<u>901</u>

Total Current Assets	<u>249,636</u>
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TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>249,636</u></u>
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LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Current Liabilities

Accrued Expenses	<u>2,055</u>
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Total Current Liabilities	<u><u>2,055</u></u>
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Equity

Opening Equity Balance	221,627
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Change in Net Assets	<u>25,954</u>
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Total Equity	<u>247,581</u>
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>249,636</u></u>
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NAEPB  
Statement of Activities  
For the Period Ending December 31, 2016

REVENUE	ACTUAL YTD	BUDGET YTD	VARIANCE	Budget 2017
Investment Income	43	25	18	100
Membership Dues	29,500	31,000	(1,500)	31,000
NIB Reimbursement	901	12,500	(11,599)	50,000
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>30,444</b>	<b>43,525</b>	<b>(13,081)</b>	<b>81,100</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
Accounting Fees	375	375	0	1,500
Website Maintenance	1,426	400	1,026	1,600
Awards / Honors	0	125	(125)	500
Insurance - Liability / D&O	1,126	300	826	1,200
Bad Debt Expense	0	750	(750)	3,000
Miscellaneous Other Costs	0	50	(50)	200
Officers Expenses	0	1,250	(1,250)	5,000
Conference Annual	1,563	5,000	(3,437)	20,000
Service Committee	0	1,250	(1,250)	5,000
Operations Committee	0	1,250	(1,250)	5,000
BSC Committee	0	1,250	(1,250)	5,000
Public Policy Committee	0	1,250	(1,250)	5,000
Annual Audit Meeting	0	125	(125)	500
CEO Annual Training	0	125	(125)	500
Miscellaneous Meetings & Travel	0	1,000	(1,000)	4,000
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>4,490</b>	<b>14,500</b>	<b>(10,010)</b>	<b>58,000</b>
<b>CHANGE IN NET ASSETS</b>	<b>25,954</b>	<b>29,025</b>	<b>(3,071)</b>	<b>23,100</b>

**DRAFT**

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR EMPLOYMENT  
OF PEOPLE WHO ARE BLIND

UTICA, NEW YORK

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

SEPTEMBER 30, 2016

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S COMPILATION REPORT

DRAFT

December 20, 2016

To The Board of Directors  
National Association for Employment  
of People Who are Blind  
Utica, New York

Management is responsible for the accompanying financial statements of National Association for Employment of People Who are Blind (a Not-For-Profit Organization), which comprise the statements of financial position as of September 30, 2016, 2015 and 2014, and the related statements of activities for the years then ended, in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. We have performed a compilation engagement in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. We did not audit or review the financial statements nor were we required to perform any procedures to verify the accuracy or completeness of the information provided by management. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion, a conclusion, nor provide any form of assurance on these financial statements.

Management has elected to omit substantially all of the disclosures and the statements of cash flows required by U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. If the omitted disclosures and the statements of cash flows were included in the financial statements, they might influence the user's conclusion about the Organization's financial position, results of operations, and cash flows. Accordingly, the financial statements are not designed for those who are not informed about such matters.

FITZGERALD, DEPIETRO & WOJNAS, CPAs, P.C.

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STATEMENTS OF FINANCIAL POSITION

SEPTEMBER 30,

A S S E T S

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Current Assets:			
Cash	\$ 219,827	\$ 195,793	\$ 167,812
Accounts Receivable	2,000	3,000	3,000
Due from CABVI	<u>1,300</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>\$ 223,127</u>	<u>\$ 198,793</u>	<u>\$ 170,812</u>

DRAFT

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

Current Liabilities - Accrued Expenses	\$ 1,500	\$ 9,500	\$ 5,500
Unrestricted Net Assets	<u>221,627</u>	<u>189,293</u>	<u>165,312</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	<u>\$ 223,127</u>	<u>\$ 198,793</u>	<u>\$ 170,812</u>

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STATEMENTS OF ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED SEPTEMBER 30,

DRAFT

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2014</u>
Support and Revenue:			
Membership Dues	\$ 31,000	\$ 30,000	\$ 32,000
Debt Forgiveness	12,000	-	-
Interest Income	<u>163</u>	<u>137</u>	<u>95</u>
Total Support and Revenue	<u>43,163</u>	<u>30,137</u>	<u>32,095</u>
Expenses:			
Accounting Fees	670	1,030	1,550
Awards	-	-	481
Bad Debt	2,000	-	2,000
Insurance	1,127	1,126	1,126
Meetings and Conferences	-	-	12,669
Miscellaneous	3,032	-	-
Telephone and Internet	<u>4,000</u>	<u>4,000</u>	<u>3,329</u>
Total Expenses	<u>10,829</u>	<u>6,156</u>	<u>21,155</u>
Increase in Unrestricted Net Assets	32,334	23,981	10,940
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	<u>189,293</u>	<u>165,312</u>	<u>154,372</u>
Net Assets at End of Year	<u>\$ 221,627</u>	<u>\$ 189,293</u>	<u>\$ 165,312</u>

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**NAEPB Public Policy and Communications Committee Summary  
Submitted by Erika Arbogast**

**The committee met on December 20, 2016.**

***Updates on Presidential Transition, 115<sup>th</sup> Congress – Signal Group***

Charles mentioned that the McBee Strategic has changed their name to Signal Group. He noted that the transition on a cabinet level is moving along fairly swiftly, most of the cabinet positions have been nominated. He anticipated that those hearings will occur during the month of January. The hearings will take place before the inauguration, the actual swearing in will take place after January 20.

There has not been a lot of progress on the sub-cabinet level – the deputies and assistants to the secretary. Some of the cabinets will wait to fill out their staff until the secretary is confirmed.

They are very behind on the policy front. We are just starting to hear on what they are doing to develop policy. The real focus is getting people into jobs and getting things up and running.

***Influencing Presidential Appointments (RSA Commissioner, etc.) – Arbogast***

There was a discussion about Presidential appointments, specifically the RSA Commissioner. IT was reported that NIB has been doing a lot of things behind the scenes. It was stressed to the group if there is someone at the state level that they felt would be a good recommendation for the RSA position or another position, that we are really trying to get together as a field to make those recommendations. What the group is trying to figure out who is to talk to make those recommendations and that is part of the work NIB has started to do.

Angela reported that some of the transition teams are just now starting to get sorted out. Kevin does have some connections with individuals who are being considered for positions or are in a position to influence some of the thinking on the positions. The most important positions from a NIB perspective are RSA Commissioner, GSA position, and the office of federal procurement policy is going to a very key position. Also the person who has been proposed to head up OMB. Finally the AbilityOne Commission appointees who will be very lower level.

The agencies would be helpful in proposing names that we could put forth to the new administration. It will be beneficial for NIB to see people who are familiar with and supportive of our program being put forward for this positions.

Rick suggested a state republican individual or lawmaker who is well known to your program, perhaps a state supplier to your agencies. Someone familiar with our program and supportive of our program. This would be a good starting point.

### ***Federal Funding (CR) Update – Signal Group***

Charles reported that the Congress at the end of the year attempted to take all the funding bills and put them together into what is called an Omnibus to finish the year off with a full funded government with new funding levels. That did not happen due to a number of reasons, primarily due to the incoming President and his team who will want to negotiate them. They have funded the government through April 28.

The administration wants to pass two budgets next year, the 2017 budget to attach health care reform onto and later in the year 2018 budget to attach potentially a large infrastructure fund. It is an interesting thing since we have had a congress that can't pass one budget, and the new administration is working to have two budgets approved in one year. Sequestration comes back in 2018 due to a deal that was done the last time it came up. There will be a lot of activity in the next year.

### ***WIOA Update –***

This is a very important issue and one that we need to keep on working on. We think there is a bit of opportunity with the new administration so we are working across many fields to bring this issue to the forefront for new ears. A group of agencies are working on this issue very hard. They are working on a white paper, which makes a lot of sense. This will be very helpful because it will make sure when talking to legislators that everyone is on the same page and hearing the same story from everyone on the same side. There is a draft that is circulating for comment.

The big issues are the same ones we have been talking about all along. NIB is contracting with Joe Abely to help stay on top of the WIOA regulations and working to develop a questionnaire to see how WIOA is affecting the agencies. We need the stories and data points to prove how it does affect agencies and what we do.

Rick agreed that the two main issues are the homemaker issue and the integrated work setting. The homemaker issue is one that if we are able to attach successfully, you could do that by legislation in terms of reversing the homemaker definition being eliminated. The other issue of integrated work setting would likely take some legislation from Congress. The questionnaire will be going out to all of our agencies, and VisionServe Alliance will end to agencies that are not part of our network.

Rick would love to hear from agencies if WIOA is having any impact on them. Some agencies are more affected than others because it is how the states interpret the language.

### ***Update – 2017 Public Policy Forum and Advocates Program – NIB Staff***

Rick reported that the 2017 Public Policy Forum will take place during the last week of June. This year we the PPF and the EOY activities will be combined. Participants will

be asked to arrive on Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>, NIB's day on the hill will be the Wednesday and the event will run through Thursday at Breakfast.

NIB will be welcoming in a new class of advocates next year and it will be the fifth class.

There was discussion about the Grassroots forum and that agencies are hosting their officials much more regularly throughout the year. It might make sense for NIB to remind organizations regularly to let them know when they have legislators visit their facilities.

***Other Business***

Updated Strategic plan goals attached

## Public Policy

Strategic Plan Goal	ACTION PLAN	Measurement
<p>1. Establish proactive public policy strategy (advocating program to legislators and addressing threats)</p>	<p>* Monthly joint calls between NAEPB PP Chair, NIB L&amp;P Chair, and NIB staff * Public policy updates for NAEPB membership submitted at least quarterly * "Asks" and messaging for PP forum provided earlier and updated as things change</p> <p>*Reminders sent to NAEPB membership throughout the year about the importance of maintaining local legislative relationships</p> <p>*Communication between PP committee and Marketing and Communications committee to determine clear message *Peer to Peer contacts made for Advocate program, Grassroots forum, and PP forum participation</p> <p>*Determine who congressional members in key positions that have the most ability to assist NAEPB/NIB</p> <p>*1:1 requests for participation to organizations in those key legislators/committee leaders districts</p>	<p>1) Increased agency participation in Public Policy forum (40 agencies, 45 stretch goal) and Grassroots forum (20 agencies, 25 stretch goal)</p> <p>2) 100% Public Policy committee attendance in Public Policy and Grassroots forums</p> <p>3) 90% participation in PP forum from agencies in "Key Legislators" districts</p> <p>4) At least 95% of Public Policy forum participants report satisfaction with policy preparation for the event</p> <p>5) Initial messaging and asks provided by end of March for May forum</p>
<p>3)</p>		

<p>2. Strengthen relationships with blindness community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Committee members will engage other "blindness" organizations at the local level (NFB, ACB, AFB, BVA, VS Alliance, etc)</li> <li>* Invite the above organizations that serve the blind to participate in PP forum</li> <li>* Invite the local chapters of the above organizations to attend grassroots forum at member agencies</li> <li>* survey outside groups to determine how we can work better together</li> </ul>	<p>1) Other blindness organizations participate in Grassroots forum and Public Policy forum</p>
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<p>3. "Mandatory" support and enforcement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Develop consistent public policy message regarding ETS and mandatory nature of the program</li> <li>* Work with Marketing and Communications committee to determine our message</li> <li>* Offer training to agencies on message at October conference</li> <li>* assist agencies to secure on-site legislative training if getting to DC for training is difficult (NIB, AFB, local trainings)</li> <li>* Gather success stories that show the value of the program and distribute to agencies to share the story</li> <li>* Public Policy committee members to attend commission meetings</li> <li>* Public Policy committee members will schedule 1:1 meetings with commission staff to develop relationships</li> <li>* Coordinate message with NAEPB Operations committee and NIB staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) ETS continues to decrease</li> <li>2) People who haven't bought from us before start purchasing</li> <li>3) Increased Blind Work Years</li> </ul>
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<p>4. Establish Customer Recognition and contact program</p>	<p>*Provide training for agencies on Ability One Champion Award and recommending qualifies recipients  * Explore possibility of supplementing "Ability One Champion" award with NIB/NAEPB legislative award  *Recognize the Ability One Commission throughout the year for the work they do</p>	<p>1) Legislators who truly are Champions are honored by NIB/NAEPB annually</p>
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<p>5. Strengthen partnership/communication with NIB</p>	<p>* Continue joint NAEPB Public Policy committee and NIB Legislative and Policy committee calls  * Monthly joint calls between Chairs of NIB L&amp;P committee, NAEPB PP committee, and NIB staff  *Involve NIB marketing staff in discussions around Public Policy and messaging</p>	<p>1) Monthly joint committee chair calls  2) Joint NIB L&amp;P and NAEPB PP committee calls  3) NIB staff participating in meetings</p>
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## STATUS

- 1) Goal achieved for Public Policy forum (40 agencies attended)
- 2) Goal achieved for Public Policy forum (100% of committee attended)
- 3) 77% participation in the Senate and 61% participation in the House
- 4) 91% of survey respondents expressed overall satisfaction; there was a very low survey response rate
- 5) Initial messaging and asks were rolled out in late April. Rick has gotten excellent feedback about this timeline.

1) ACB participated in Public policy forum and NFB, VS Alliance, AFB, and AER were invited. Committee plans to push for local involvement of these organizations for the Grassroots forum

- 1) ETS infractions decreased from 166 in 2015 to 84 in 2016
- 2) Determining who has this information at NIB; Per NIB this information is not collected and is very difficult to collect; there is no information to report. The committee will need to determine if this makes sense to pursue and if it is how the data can be collected.
- 3) Although this number is best annually so far Year to Date blind work years have increased 5.7%

1) This item has not been addressed due to the many pressing legislative needs that occurred this year. The cooperative Agreement and other legislative issues that popped up throughout the year took precedence. The committee can revisit whether this is a viable option in our upcoming plan.

- 1) Monthly joint committee chair calls are occurring
- 2) Joint NIB L&P and NAEPB PP meetings are occurring when needed
- 3) NIB staff participate in the meetings









## NAEPB SERVICES COMMITTEE UPDATE

January, 2017

Reinhard Mabry

### SKILCRAFT Customer Care Solutions update

We have had great growth and momentum since our last gathering in September. Based upon the feedback and input from NIB, the group has strongly focused upon the processes and task items that would be most beneficial to NIB in order to market our group and pursue business on our behalf.

#### Process :

- We have created a “sweet spot” tiered structure that outlines the business that ideally would be a good, best, better fit for our group.
- Additionally we have created draft processes that are strong elements in proposals to outline how our collaborative group would perform for clients, i.e. hierarchy and organizational structure, quality, and communication.
- Next steps: We are now starting to focus upon the marketing of our group so that we can share the vast capabilities that we have to offer.

#### People:

- This group has been focusing on building the fundamentals of consistent representative performance across the collaborative group, by creating draft job descriptions for use by all.
- Training is the next focus, but rather than recreate, we are reaching out to agencies that have had successful training programs to then tailor them to our needs and wants.

#### CEO's:

- The CEO group has been focusing on developing and fine-tuning an assignment policy within the collaborative group, which will determine which agencies, would be chosen for opportunities based upon set criteria to be fair for all involved.
- The CEO's also continue to have communication with NIB about a potential grant, which will afford agencies financial assistance for training.

#### Technology:

- This group published a “Technology Summary” document outlining various technology systems to successfully operate a Contact Center with multiple agencies in disparate locations.
- We created a “Technology FAQ” and “VoIP Quality Testing” to serve as technical guides for agencies implementing Contact Center technology.
- Next steps include drafting more specific technical instruction on utilizing the recommended tools and publishing those guides on a Learning Management Platform.

#### Next leadership steps:

- We will be organizing and facilitating our next teleconference meeting as an entire group, so that all parties involved can hear progress updates from each subcommittee.

- We will also be discussing arrangements for an in-person summit for the involved agencies in the upcoming months.

### Strategic Initiatives Workgroup

The bulk of our efforts focused on getting proposed grant language finalized for presentation to Kevin Lynch and Steve Brice for their consideration. We have been directed to work with Billy Parker and Matt Klovas to blend the language we developed into an existing grant. Kevin would like to have this accomplished for NIB Board consideration in February. This has been a frustrating endeavor, as the group has been working on the language for the grant for over a year and has received some conflicting direction. At this juncture we simply want to make funds available but are disappointed that such a focused initiative doesn't seem to warrant focused funding. The current version of the draft language is attached.

The group is also involved in the selection process for the "Train-the-Trainer" component of the PRoMOTE program.

### CMS Workgroup

In October, we held a CMS wide conference call event featuring Jude Lucien. Jude shared his story and experiences including

- o Applying and interviewing for work with the federal government
- o The onboarding process, his relocation and experiences on the job
- o How he came to be promoted to a GS 11 in less than 18 months

In December, a security webinar was made available to CMS and other services business lines as a result of training we requested as part of the ISG

We took a break from our biweekly meetings over the holidays. We meet tomorrow and we will be discussing training for agencies regarding SCA requirements. I've already discussed this with Harlan Ercker at NIB. We will also discuss USA jobs application training. We are also working on providing CMS employees applying to the federal government experience with interview boards commonly used by the government.

The committee membership expresses its sincere appreciation to John Qua for his work to promote the service business and create new jobs for people who are blind. We wish him well.

# **National Industries for the Blind Supplemental Job Readiness Grant**

## **Background**

This project was born out of a need identified by the NIB/NAEPB Strategic Initiatives Working Group Subcommittee. This subcommittee is comprised of individuals from several different agencies; thereby, illustrating the widespread interest in this project. The consensus opinion of this committee was that a supplemental financial resource was necessary to better facilitate job readiness training to build a pipeline of qualified candidates for service-related opportunities - for example the customer care field - thereby increasing potential creation of opportunities for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The supplemental funds are needed in order to address situations where state, local or federal funding is not available to the agency. All agencies applying for this grant will be asked to provide justification for the funding; including any efforts to receive alternative funding.

## **Purpose:**

The Supplemental Job Readiness Grant was created to help NIB associated agencies develop, upgrade, customize, and implement job readiness training initiatives to increase the pipeline of qualified candidates for service-related employment opportunities with the intended outcome being upward mobility for employees who are blind or visually impaired. Funds from the Supplemental Job Readiness Grant are specifically intended to encourage NIB associated agencies to implement programs which provide skills needed for individuals to be successful thereby, expanding the pipeline of talent and promoting more upwardly mobile opportunities.

## **Agency Eligibility:**

To be eligible, an NIB associated agency, for the duration of each project, must: 1) be in “good standing;” 2) be current in its central, non-profit agency (CNA) fee and loan payments; 3) be current and compliant with sales and ‘direct labor hours worked’ reporting as required; and 4) pay at least federal minimum wage to all employees working on AbilityOne contracts.

## **Project Eligibility:**

A job readiness project - AbilityOne or non-AbilityOne – is defined as a project that prepares individuals for careers in customer care, and/or other fields, which will facilitate the development of a pipeline of qualified candidates for service-related employment opportunities.

# **National Industries for the Blind Supplemental Job Readiness Grant**

## **Allowable Costs:**

- Travel costs including meals, hotels, transportation, etc.
- Training expenses
  - Agencies must adhere to and utilize their state published reimbursement rate and funding when applicable. Any NPA (non-profit agency) that does not conduct training themselves must utilize a N.A.C. or C.A.R.F. accredited agency. NPA's that do not have a N.A.C. or C.A.R.F. accredited agency within their region should avail themselves of the resources within the NIB affiliate network. If there are no resources within the NIB affiliate network the agency should contact NIB directly for a list of qualified providers.

## **Funding:**

Each agency is eligible for an aggregate maximum of [AMOUNT]. Funds are limited so grants will be approved on a first-come, first-served basis.

All NIB grant, loan or incentive programs are subject to renewal, cancellation or modification by the NIB Board of Directors during the annual budget process. If a program is cancelled or modified, any specific grant incentive or loan request that met the stated requirements, was properly documented, and had been approved by NIB while the original program was in effect, will be honored by NIB.

## **Training**

The bullets below are representative of the types of training eligible for NIB supplemental funding;

- Assistive Technology Training- expenses associated with Microsoft Office Suite of products (Word, Excel, Power Point, etc.), search engine usage and functionality, screen reader or magnification software, or other assistive technology training and certifications to improve an individual's readiness for employment in customer care, or other service-related field. One example could be, the ProMOTE Training Program.
- Mobility Training - Job-related training for skills needed to be more upwardly mobile and ready for employment, e.g., travel skills using a cane or service animal, advanced exposure to mass transit for increased utilization, etc.
- General Customer Service Training - to prepare persons who already have basic skills required to work in any kind of customer service job.
- Contact Center Training - to prepare persons who are "job ready" and have some level of customer service background

## **National Industries for the Blind Supplemental Job Readiness Grant**

- On the Job Training, whether in a Contact Center or Customer Service role. Once hired by an NPA many employees need a period of on the job training, or nesting, to build familiarity, proficiency, accuracy and/or speed with the campaigns and technology they will be using in their new role.

A copy of timesheets and paid invoices must be included with the reimbursement request. Details of the program and outcomes, such as the number of individuals trained, must also be provided with the reimbursement request.

### **Application**

Agencies wishing to apply for the Supplemental Job Readiness Grant must submit a proposal as well as, providing the items listed below with the attached 'Pre-Approval Form'.

- A copy of their latest audited financial statement
- A copy of their most recent internal financial statement
- Project description
- Project budget
- Ancillary resources to be utilized
- Curriculum
- Estimated number of participants

Once the project is approved by NIB and the planned development activities have been achieved, requests for reimbursement may be submitted on the attached 'Reimbursement Request Form'. NIB reserves the right to send a representative to the agency to verify project outcomes and review affected employee productivity and compensation records.

Agencies who face financial hardships may request advance payment. NIB will request additional financial information and use its discretion in determining financial hardship.

NIB associated agencies that are interested in participating must submit a proposal by [Date]. NIB'S decision will be communicated no later than [Date]. If approved, agencies must submit receipts by [Date] for costs incurred on or before [Date] to be eligible for reimbursement. The maximum reimbursement to any associated agency is limited to [AMOUNT]. NIB will reimburse agencies by [Date]. Funds spent or (invoices dated) prior to grant approval will not be reimbursed.

Proposals and requests for reimbursement should be sent to: [CONTACT INFO].

# National Industries for the Blind Supplemental Job Readiness Grant

## Pre-approval Form

Agency Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Point Of Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please use a separate sheet to address the following:

1. Plan – Briefly describe the project.
2. Describe specific use of funds and a total cost estimate for the project.
3. Outcome - What is the desired project outcome?
4. Results - How will you measure the success of this project? (Example: new skills obtained, certifications, A.T. tools employed, etc.)

Requested by \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This form along with supporting documentation must be received by the NIB grant administrator no later than [DATE].

**Submit pre-approval forms to:** [CONTACT]

### For NIB use only

Approved by Director, Administration Services: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by Rehabilitation engineer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Conditions of approval: \_\_\_\_\_

**National Industries for the Blind  
Supplemental Job Readiness Grant**

**Reimbursement Request Form**

Name of Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Point Of Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Please use separate sheet to address the following:

1. What new skills have been obtained as a result of this project? How has this project better prepared an employee who is blind for employment in customer care, or other service-related field?

Description	Vendor	Amount Reimbursable
Training		
Total Reimbursement Requested (Maximum)		

Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form along with supporting documentation must be received by the NIB grant administrator no later than [DATE].

**Submit reimbursement requests to:** [CONTACT]

<b>For NIB use only</b>	
Approved by Director, Administration Services: _____	Date: _____
Approved by Rehabilitation Engineer: _____	Date: _____
Balance remaining for this NPA this FY: _____	