



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

**EXECUTIVE SESSION OF THE BOARD**

**JULY 10, 2023**

**MINUTES**

Mr. Mittman called the executive session of the board to order and asked Ms. Watson for her report.

Ms. Watson reported that NAEPB has engaged Thorn Run Partners for a number of years. Their work has been funded with agency pledges and the BSCs. Last year it was decided to change the scope of work with TRP to reduce their costs. There have been continuous meetings with a combination of NAEPB, TRP, NCSE, Brumidi, Rick Wester and SourceAmerica. NAEPB is not getting value for our money with this limited scope of work.

Now that we are working more closely with more daylight between the various groups, we feel that one public policy group makes sense for NIB and NAEPB. We have had a conversation with NIB about the rules of engagement and working with Charles Cooper and would like to terminate our relationship with TRP at the FY end, using the 30 days termination clause. We do have to figure out how to wrap up the current work being done.

Mr. Gould asked if we had talked with them about this and Ms. Watson said no.

Mr. Mittman asked Mr. Stueckrath how this would affect the budget. Mr. Stueckrath said it eliminated \$90,000 in expenses. He commented that while there is daylight, we have to be prepared in case we need to hire someone immediately so will need to keep a reserve and should decide on what that number will be.

Ms. Watson said legal fees may be needed more than lobbying fees and Mr. Stueckrath reminded the board that there is also the ask from VisionServe Alliance. Mr. Mittman said this would be discussed after the budget is drafted and approved to decide on the amount of the contribution from NAEPB.

Mr. Mittman asked for a motion to approve ending the contract with TRP. Ms. Branch moved; Mr. Stueckrath seconded.

The board approved the motion unanimously.

Mr. Mittman asked the board their thoughts on the VisionServe Alliance request. Ms. Watson said we should gather information from the board on their anticipated future needs and priorities to consider alongside the VSA ask.

Mr. Stueckrath said the budget will be ready to be reviewed and approved at the October meeting. Ms. Branch asked if the budget is breakeven, and Mr. Stueckrath said there is usually about a \$20,000 surplus. She said this could be used for a one-time spend such as VSA.

Mr. Fernald asked if there has been discussion of collecting pledges to fund VSA and Mr. Mittman said we could. Mr. Stueckrath suggests we should get the numbers together and then discuss.

Ms. Watson said the board needs to discuss ETS and Mr. Mittman said he would like to have a discussion with Mr. Lynch before the board discussion.

Mr. Mittman asked if there was any other business to be discussed in the executive session. There being none, the meeting was adjourned.

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