**Health and Human Services Agency**

**CALIFORNIA VENDORS POLICY COMMITTEE (CVPC)**

**Wednesday, May 18, 2022, Day 1 of 2**

**1:00 PM – 4:45 PM**

**Meeting Location**

**Department of Rehabilitation (DOR)**

**721 Capitol Mall, room 169**

**Sacramento, CA 95814**

**Zoom Call**

IN ATTENDANCE

California Vendor Policy Committee (CVPC) Delegates

Paul Patche, II, District 1

Denise Hudson-Mendoza, District 2

Barbara Moore, District 3

Michael Hatch, Vice-Chair, District 4

Sandy Balani, Secretary-Treasurer, District 5

Harry Begian, District 6

Max Duarte, Chair, District 7

Julie Wakamoto, District 8 (via teleconference)

DOR Staff in Attendance

Michael Thomas, Assistant Deputy Director, Specialized Services Division (SSD)

Carlene Guzman, Northern Field Manager, BEP

Emma Godinez, Southern Field Manager, BEP

Lisa O’Guinn, Location Development Officer, BEP

Laura Rasmussen, District Administrator, (DA), Blind Field Services (BFS)

Kathleen Munyer, Committee Analyst, SSD

**Members of the Public**

Priscilla Begian

Angelo Mendoza

Willie Shoemaker (via teleconference)

Michael Colbrunn, BEP Vendor, Minnesota (via teleconference)

Laura Shapleyweiss (via teleconference)

Andy Ngo (via teleconference)

MEETING SUMMARY

**CVPC Roll Call and Introduction of DOR Staff and the Public**

Max Duarte, Chair

Max opened the meeting and completed a roll call.

**Executive Committee Reports**

Chair’s Report

Max Duarte, Chair

* The Chair reported that many BEP locations are still closed. Some prisons are open and some remain closed.
* A lot of prisoners were released, severely impacting the population and thereby reducing sales.
* Max reported that he visited a couple of BEP locations in Sacramento. The vendors are excited about reopening, but it could be 3-5 years before BEP locations open completely.

**Vice Chair’s Report**

Michael Hatch, Vice-Chair

* Michael Hatch reported that there is confusion about the motion for withdrawing a satellite location and it needs to be clarified.
* A discussion ensued during which the Chair suggested that a website for the CVPC needs to be reinstated and that all motions should be recorded on that website and be available to all BEP vendors.

**Secretary-Treasurer’s Report**

Sandy Balani, Secretary Treasurer

* Sandy Balani was late arriving for the meeting due to her delayed flight from the Los Angeles area.
* **Motion:**

Michael Hatch, district 4, moved a motion to approve the minutes from the CVPC meeting of January 5, 2022. The motion was seconded by District 3.

* **Vote:** District 1, yes; district 2, yes; district 3, yes; district 4, yes; district 8, yes. The motion passed.
* Sandy Balani reported that there is still $5,301 in the training fund.
* Information is being gathered to reinstate the account to a non-profit.
* Sandy Balani reported that she was chosen by the Women’s Initiative Supporting Entrepreneurship (WISE) Organization to speak on “Going Beyond Randolph-Sheppard.”
* The WISE Organization provides information on how to apply for additional federal programs and works to enroll women with disabilities.
* She recently attended the [National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) tradeshow in Chicago and learned that many of BEP businesses are moving toward automation.](https://namanow.org/)

**Department and Business Enterprises Program (BEP) Reports**

Michael Thomas, Assistant Deputy Director, Specialized Services Division (SSD)

* Michael Thomas reported that he attended the NCSAB last week and was hopeful that some ideas would be presented on how DOR might strengthen the BEP.
* BEP vendors need to be aware that there are factions that do not want the BEP to continue. DOR and BEP need to be “on the same page” and to be aware of how money is being allocated.
* DOR needs to schedule Preferred Foodservice Taskforce meetings to work on strategies that strengthen the BEP.
* Vendors need to “put their best foot forward” in their locations.
* BEP recently submitted the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) 15 report.

**Post-Employment Services**

Laura Rasmussen, BFS, DA

* Laura greeted the attendees and introduced herself as the DA of BFS. She supervises staff in the field. There are nine BFS units throughout the State. Laura works with Peter Dawson, the Regional Director of BFS.
* There have been some changes in terms:
* Post-employment Services is a term from the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA).
* Post-Employment services is a program that allows a consumer who has been successfully employed but have not reopened their case, to receive services or equipment needed to maintain their employment.
* To serve a consumer who is in danger of losing his/her job, the consumer would contact their Rehabilitation Counselor (RC). After the consumer and the counselor have discussed the consumer’s needs, the Rehabilitation Counselor (RC) would write a Job Retention Plan.
* After the consumer has received the necessary equipment and/or learned the necessary skills, the case is closed.
* Most Post-Employment service cases are closed within 2 to 3 months.
* A discussion ensued during which BEP vendors asked specific questions about how the vendors might utilize this program, such as receiving a loan to purchase inventory and how to request retraining and adaptive technology equipment.
* Laura explained that every case is different and encouraged BEP vendors to contact a Rehab Counselor to receive specific answers.

**Building Relationships with Legislators**

Michael Colbrunn, BEP Vendor, Minnesota

* Michael Colbrunn reported that he operates a vending stand at the Minnesota State University.
* He reported that the BEP in Minnesota is discussing many of the same issues as the BEP in California.
* How to move the BEP forward during the uncertainty of the continued challenges facing the BEP.
* He has met with law makers for the first time and many of them were unaware of the BEP.
* He stressed the importance of forming relationships with lawmakers and encouraged BEP vendors of California to educate their lawmakers about the BEP and invite them for a tour of their location.
* Lawmakers should be made aware of the positive contributions of the program, and report how BEP vendors are contributing to the Vocational Rehabilitation system by providing jobs in the community, including jobs for those with disabilities.
* Encourage your lawmakers to contact you if they have questions about the program.

**Hadley Program**

Scott Cass, Hadley Instructor

* Mr. Cass reported that the Hadley Course was started about 10 years ago with the purpose of making the content relevant on a national level.
* Terry Smith, who has over 30 years of experience in BEP, was instrumental in providing the history of the BEP.
* The training is updated every 1 to 2 years to ensure that it remains relevant.
* The online training consists of four modules which addresses every aspect of operating a BEP location.
* A test is given after each model.
* A final test consisting of 100 multiple choice questions must be passed with a minimum score of 75%.
* The current cost is $3,500.
* Sandy Balani added that it would be helpful to have a module on operating a coffee cart.
* Sandy added that 33 states currently utilize the Hadley course.
* Michael Thomas reported that he and Kelly Snow, BEP Program Manager, are considering the Hadley course as well as other programs for possible use in the BEP Training program.

**Challenges facing BEP Vendors**

BEP Delegates and members of the public

* Joe Xavier, Director of DOR, joined the meeting.
* Max Duarte reported that he recently learned of a potential candidate for the BEP Training Program who was advised by the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Counselor not to consider applying for BEP Training and spoke negatively about the program.
* Max added that DOR VR Counselors do not know about BEP.
* Laura Shapleyweiss, a DOR consumer, who wishes to attend the BEP training, shared her challenges regarding learning about the BEP and shared Max’s experience that too many agencies either do not know about the program or are unwilling to provide information about the program to interested consumers.
* Joe Xavier reported that he was a BEP vendor for about 14-15 years.
* He suggested that the delegates have a conversation with the management of BFS.
* The delegates should know how VR counselors are onboarded.
* Joe exited to attend another meeting.

**Adjourn**

The meeting concluded at 4:48 PM to be reconvened the following day.

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