



## **Statutory Council on Blindness Quarterly Meeting Minutes**

December 4th ,2023  
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Via Zoom: [Join Zoom Meeting](#)

Conference Call Access Information:

USA Toll-Free: 669-254-5252

Meeting ID: 160 201 1541

### **Action Items and Motion Items**

#### **Motion Items:**

- 1. Motion Item:** Kate Coerper called for a motion to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Patty Zallar motioned to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Kathi Zoern seconded. The motion carried.
- 2. Motion Item:** Kate Coerper called for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 31st, meeting. Patty Zallar made a motion to approve the minutes with correction to Kathleen Enders name. The motion was seconded by Kathi Zoern. No discussion. Motion passed.
- 3. Motion Item:** Patty Zallar made a motion for Kate Coerper to be the new Vice Chairperson, Brenda Brunet seconded, motion passed.
- 4. Motion Item:** Kerry Robinson made a motion for Chuck Fehl to be the new Secretary, Patty Zallar seconded, motion passed.
- 5. Motion Item:** Aaron Schuh made a motion for Kerry Robinson to be the new Member at Large, Brenda Brunet seconded, motion passed.
- 6. Motion Item:** Kate Coerper made a motion for Patty Zallar to be new Chairperson, Connor Kane seconded, motion passed.
- 7. Motion Item:** A motion to adjourn was made by Aaron Schuh and seconded by Kerry Robinson. Hearing no discussion, this motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 2:06PM.

## **Action Items:**

1. **Action Item:** The Executive Committee will meet mid-January to identify a date for the next quarterly meeting and draft an agenda.

## **Meeting Minutes**

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Kate Coerper, Chairperson greeted everyone.

#### **Council members present:**

Kate Coerper, Patty Zallar, Kathi Zoern, Aaron Schuh, Connor Kane, Chuck Fehl, Kerry Robinson, Brenda Brunet, Jennifer Marchewka

#### **DHS staff support present:**

Ann Sievert and Amber Mullett Department of Health Services, Bureau on Aging and Disability Resources.

**Guests:** Theresa Taylor, John Fritz, Jim Denham, Denise Jess, Jacki Borchardt, Karen Odegaard, Mark Thompson.

### **II. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:02a.m. by Kate Coerper. This meeting was available via zoom link and teleconference.

Kate Coerper called for a motion to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Patty Zallar motioned to approve the agenda for today's meeting. Kathi Zoern seconded. The motion carried.

Kate Coerper called for a motion to approve the minutes from the August 31st, meeting. Patty Zallar made a motion to approve the minutes with correction to Kathleen Enders name. The motion was seconded by Kathi Zoern No discussion. Motion passed.

### **III. Public Comment on Issues Affecting Wisconsin Residents Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired.**

John Fritz & Theresa Taylor from the Blind Enterprise Program (BEP) shared concerns regarding communications with the program and declining operators and vendor contracts.

Noted that they are working with Kathleen Enders and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD). SCOB supports BEP continuing to have open conversations with DWD leadership.

#### **IV. Council Summit: Debrief and Lessons Learned.**

Council members who participated in the summit shared their experiences. They were surprised by how passionate and knowledgeable people were; found it eye opening to see how many individuals were facing similar barriers, and they were impressed by the commitment and perseverance of every individual at the summit.

#### **V. Council Roles and Expectations of the Secretary's Office**

Karen Odegaard, External Affairs Liaison, Office of the Secretary described her role working with councils and boards as part of her position. She talked about her relationship with the department and where she saw opportunities for councils to engage. She said councils have many opportunities to engage with the department and work collaboratively to find solutions and drive change. Karen stressed the importance of council members and thanked them for their service.

#### **VI. Office of Legal Counsel Training:**

Mark Thompson, Attorney, Office of Legal Counsel said his primary responsibilities in this role is to work with administrative rules, draft bills and interpretation of state statute. Using a power point presentation he provided a high-level overview of open meetings law, and records retention.

#### **VII. Overview of Department of Health Services and Programs**

Amber Mullet gave an overview of the Department of Health Services (DHS) and programs. She described all the major offices in the hierarchy of DHS.

#### **VIII. Overview of SCOB Community Conversations**

Amber Mullett provided an overview of community conversations that SCOB conducted in May. She provided an overview of the process, the partners involved and the results of the conversations. She read some examples of comments made by consumers during the community conversations. She also talked about how the community conversations were valuable information to inform the Department of Public Health State Health Assessment and State Health Improvement Plan.

#### **IX. Presentation Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired Denise Jess, Executive Director, Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired**

Denise Jess and Jacci Borchardt, CEO of Vision Forward provided an overview of the Wisconsin's Big Data Report findings and implications. The report provides state level data on prevalence of blindness and low vision among people aged 65 years and over and provides county level estimates of the prevalence of blindness and low vision in each state. They spoke about the scarcity of data on individuals who are blind or have severe vision loss

and how important this data is in impacting key change makers in Wisconsin. They provided some examples of how SCOB could support their efforts including: Building relationships with state legislators, meeting with key vision leaders, meeting with state agency groups to make sure individuals who are blind or have severe vision loss are included in state program plans (e.g., State Aging Plan) and advocating for funding.

#### **X. Council Elections/Next Meeting Date**

The council had elections on Chairperson, Vice chairperson, Secretary, and Member at Large. Kate Coerper nominated Patty Zallar for Chairperson, Patty Zallar accepted the nomination. There were no other nominations. Kate Coerper made a motion for Patty Zallar to be new Chairperson, Connor Kane seconded, motion passed. Patty Zallar nominated Kate Coerper for Vice Chairperson. There were no other nominations. Kate Coerper accepted nomination. Patty Zallar made a motion for Kate Coerper to be the new Vice Chairperson, Brenda Brunet seconded, motion passed. Brenda Brunete nominated Chuck Fehl for Secretary. Chuck accepted. No other nominations were made. Kerry Robinson made a motion for Chuck Fehl to be the new Secretary, Patty Zallar seconded, motion passed. Kerry Robinson nominated himself for Member at Large. Aaron Schuh made a motion for Kerry Robinson to be the new Member at Large, Brenda Brunet seconded, motion passed.

The Executive Committee will meet mid-January to identify a date for the next quarterly meeting and draft an agenda.

#### **XI. Adjourn**

Kate Coerper entertained a motion to adjourn. A motion to adjourn was made by Aaron Schuh and seconded by Kerry Robinson. Hearing no discussion, this motion passed, and the meeting adjourned at 2:06PM.