

Statutory Council on Blindness – Teleconference Meeting  
Wednesday, February 16, 2011, 1:30 p.m.

Present: Eleanor Loomans, Chairperson; Joan Wucherer, John Hartman, Kelli Hughes, Secretary; David Hyde, Roberto Torrez, Member at Large; Edward Weiss, Secretary Pro Tem; and Bill Gallik, Vice Chairperson.

Staff members: Linda Huffer and Mary Gorman.

The meeting began with a brief discussion about the utilization of sighted guides on the two legislative days. All members were encouraged to get their own guides if possible. Members who need guides should contact Mary Gorman. Mary will contact the Madison Lions Club to see if any of their members would be willing to act as guides.

### **Position Paper**

The proposed position paper was discussed. It will be presented to legislators. It would be ideal if a legislative study took place and if legislators would agree to fund an in-state rehabilitation center. One of the advantages to an in-state rehabilitation center would be serving Administration's goal of creating jobs in Wisconsin. Dave Hyde stated that under the Freedom of Choice Act, clients have the right to attend out-of-state rehabilitation centers.

Bill Gallik stated that there is a serious problem for blind people who reside in the northern parts of the state because of the lack of available in-state services and the distance to travel. The nearest center would be out of state. The group feels positive about a Legislative Study Committee to investigate these and other issues about services.

Ed Weiss moved that the proposed position paper be presented to legislators. Motion seconded by Bill Gallik. Motion carried with one abstention.

### **Talking Points**

Talking Points can be used as a tool and they will be available in Braille. An additional talking point that should be added is to establish a Legislative Study Committee. Dave Hyde stated that a Legislative Study Committee can include individuals who are not legislators. Linda Huffer suggested

requesting any legislator seen by the council to be the lead person of this committee. One of the roles of the lead legislator would be to convince other members to support a legislative study. Gary Goyke thinks Senator Luther Olsen (Finance & Education Committees) and Republican Majority Leader Scott Suder might be possible lead legislators in supporting a legislative study. Caucus Vice Chair Rep. Fred Clark might be willing to be the lead member for a bill in support of this study.

Linda Huffer suggested seeing the leadership of both houses to see if they will lend their support. Due to a short period of time for scheduled visits and the size of the legislature, the council will try to meet with the leaders of both houses, the committee chairs, the Speaker of the House, the head of the Republican Caucus, the Minority Leader and also the legislators of our respective districts.

Chair Loomans wishes to know the names of the legislators who reside in our areas so that she can compile a legislator list for scheduling all appointments.

Hearing no further business, the chair asked for a motion to adjourn.

Ed Weiss moved; Bill Gallik seconded a motion to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Edward Weiss  
Secretary Pro Tem