

ICBVI Board Meeting Minutes

March 25, 2025

Meeting was called to order at: 9:05 am Pacific Time

Board Members in Attendance in Person: Al Schneider, Britt Raubenheimer, LeAnn Gelskey, B.J. Stinger

Board Members in Attendance via Teams: Mark Watkins

ICBVI Staff in Attendance in Person: Beth Cunningham, Mike Walsh, Steve Achabal, Angela Starr, Corey Bresina, Kevin Jernigan, Justin Fish, Jacalyn Stallings, Tyler Kuisti, Merrilee Jackson

ICBVI Staff in Attendance via Teams: Matt Queen, Linda Upton, Jeff Weeks, Dawn Ristau, Laurie Carlin, Laura Cortazar, Deeann Solis

Others in Attendance in Person:

Others on Teams: Dana Ard, Roberta Fencil

Motion to approve agenda – Britt moved; LeAnn seconded.

Motion to approve prior meeting minutes (December) – LeAnn moved; Britt seconded.

Administrator's Report – Beth Cunningham

2025 came in with a bang and we were off to a roller coaster start after the inauguration. In January, we received a memo “pausing” all federal spending, followed by a memo from the State indicating that state money could not be used in the absence of federal funds. The memo was rescinded a couple of days later. Now, there was talk about the US Department of Education being shut down which is where our funding falls. CSAVR has asked all of the Regional representatives to discuss with the states whether we prefer to be moved to the Department of Labor or to the Department of Health and Human Services if the opportunity arises for them advocate on behalf of Vocational Rehabilitation programs and if the Department of Education is dismantled. If RSA moves to one of these departments federally, it does not mean we need to change anything at the local, state level, and I would advocate that ICBVI remain a commission under the Governor's office and that will be the most secure place for us to stay. Everyone in our region was in agreement that should we be moved; the best place would be to Dept. of Labor.

January 15th, Corey and I attended our very brief **JFAC hearing**. We were only asking for a maintenance budget, so it was much shorter than normal. We did not get to present on the agency. Our line-item request was just a hardware refresh as recommended by ITS of 28,900. It consists of 1

switch, 4 routers, 7 wireless access points, 6 desktop computers, and 8 laptops and docking stations. In February, we went back for our budget setting.

Feb. 5th, we attended the annual **Disability Awareness Day** at the Capitol. Also, known as Fred Rigger's Day. We had a booth with our agency information and many people stopped by. Deanne, Steve, Marcie and I manned the booth, telling people about our services. Meanwhile, outside of the Capitol, people were protesting what is happening in the Whitehouse and what DOGE is doing with closing USAID at that time.

Recent Presentations - We were invited after Al's confirmation hearing to come to the Capitol and present to **the Senate Health and Welfare Committee** on Feb. 19th. Steve and I presented an overview of our services. It was a nice opportunity to provide more information about what we do and who we serve.

Personnel In December, Andrew took Rosana's position and Rosana retired. We hired Laura Cortazar to take Andrew's position. They are both doing great in their new jobs and our accounting team is working well together. Corey can elaborate if he has more to say on that. We are looking forward to our new OM specialist who will be starting in June. He is moving here from Texas. I'm really grateful that we don't have a lot of positions open. The state is creating it's own DOGE. The state has open positions that it may be eliminating.

CSAVR and RSA- next month Mike and I will attend CSAVR in Bethesda. There are 325 people registered and that is fewer than normal. We expect to hear from RSA at that time. Britt: Are there still federal travel restrictions? Beth: I'm not aware of any and we've not heard anything from RSA Mike: We do know that it's the last conference in Bethesda. Chris Pope is stepping into the RSA Acting and Deputy Commissioner position. Carol Dobak, the RSA acting Deputy Commissioner, is retiring at the end of March. Suzanne Mitchell, who is the person who sent us our grant award notifications, is also retiring.

AWARE - We have started implementing Aware. We have begun the initial "adaptation" phase which is setting it up for our agency and training which our managers and Tom and Nick (who is our Aware project manager). We are meeting 4 hours per day, 4 days per week through May.

Workforce Development- One stop meeting in February- In this meeting I learned that this July there will be work based learning opportunities for our clients to participate in work experiences through a program and DIF grant held by DOL.

NFB- This Friday, the NFB will have their Idaho Convention in Burley. We have a few staff who are attending and I will be attending Friday morning and presenting on behalf of ICBVI.

CEC- In April, we will begin working on all of our staff reviews and on our CEC Matrix, which will be for giving staff rate increases that will be effective in July. The state (JFAC) passed rate increases of \$1.05-\$1.55 depending on performance.

Update from all staff meetings - Beginning in September, I began having individual meetings with the staff. I met with all of our staff (except the drivers, temp staff and managers). I just completed this last Friday. In general, we have a very satisfied group who love what they do and who we serve. Staff are happy with their supervisors and with the jobs that they are doing. We have a number of staff who try to look for ways to improve our processes and who are motivated to find efficiencies. Many staff are engaged in the community and in improving the community to make it more accessible for people who are blind. Our staff are eager to learn and welcome training opportunities and we had a couple of staff mention wanting to participate in leadership training for their future. I was able to meet with everyone except the managers, but we meet a lot. It was great to touch base with everyone and I will begin that process again either in August or September of this year.

In Service: We are already planning in-service, which will be held Oct. 1 and 2nd in Boise at the Riverside. We have a favorite returning speaker coming, Kristin Scroggins who provides great information on the different generations and how to work with one another which we can apply to each other and also our clients.

Summer Programs: The summer program planning is underway. Alison is back with us and has already booked a number of activities such as rafting and some of the speakers. We are happy to have Alison back and working on these programs!

2024 Clients served: We served a total of 2046 clients

VR-497

OB-700

IL – 93

SR-64

One time referrals IL 10

Older Blind one-time referrals 185

Patients seen in Boise clinic 361

Regional clinics 35

Low vision patients 101(Hansen Vision Care and Eye Care of Rigby) total clinic: 497

2024 Agency Goals

1. New employee orientation (Angela basically put that together for new staff)- **Completed in the summer and began using**
2. Continue to prepare for monitoring – look at new MTAG- **On hold for now as we work on Aware**
3. Aware Case Management System (Beth has been meeting with some legislators on this) **In progress**
4. Transition of the FTP that we have in Boise to Pocatello for a counselor position- **Completed, hired Becky**
5. Continue to work on getting the spending plan and cost allocation working in Luma

Al – Just curious why we would want to be moved to Dept. of Labor? Beth – in general it aligns better with our goal of employment. We prefer DOL because I don't want to get lost in there. Mike Walsh: It's hard to say what's going to happen at the state but we can rest assured that whatever happens at the federal level, Little will follow as he always does. We are more a labor program like DOL that actually have a federal disability program. They don't have one at DHHS.

Vocational Rehab – Mike Walsh, VR Chief

Federal Reporting:

The RSA 911 Q1 report was submitted on February 13, 2025

Data Dashboards:*Program Summary*

| | PY24 Q2 | Prior Quarter | Change |
|-------------------------|---------|---------------|--------|
| Open Cases | 435 | 444 | -2% |
| Quarterly Counts | | | |
| Applicants | 15 | 18 | -16% |
| New Eligibilities | 13 | 13 | 0% |
| New IPEs | 7 | 13 | -46% |
| Timeliness | | | |
| Eligibility | 100% | 100% | 0% |
| IPE | 100% | 100% | 0% |

Pre-Employment Transition Services (Pre-ETS)

| Number of Students with Disabilities (SWD) Reported | PY24 Q2 | Prior Quarter |
|--|---------|---------------|
| Total Number SWD | 86 | 93 |
| Number of SWD who received Pre-ETS | 18 | 40 |
| Potentially Eligible | 17 | 16 |
| Pre-ETS by type provided | | |
| Job Exploration Counseling | 0 | 8 |
| Work-based Learning Experiences | 0 | 9 |
| Counseling on Post-Secondary | 8 | 8 |
| Workplace Readiness | 5 | 15 |

| | | |
|------------------------------|---|----|
| Instruction in Self-Advocacy | 1 | 14 |
|------------------------------|---|----|

Measurable Skills Gains

| Quarterly Measurable Skills Gains | PY2024 Q2 | Previous Quarter |
|---|-----------|-------------------|
| Total number of participants (IPE) | 435 | 418 |
| Number of participants eligible for MSG | 124 | 196 |
| % of participants eligible for MSG | 29% | 47% |
| | | |
| Number of participants who achieved MSG | | 5 |
| MSG rate for quarter | % | 2.5% |
| MSG rate PY YTD | % | 2.5% |
| | | |
| Breakdown by MSG Type | Number | Percent (of MSGs) |
| Education Functioning Level | 0 | 0% |
| Secondary diploma or equivalent | 11 | 34% |
| Transcript/Report card | 17 | 53% |
| Training Milestone | 2 | 6% |
| Skills Progression | 2 | 6% |

Competitive Integrated Employment (CIE)

| SOC Title | Number of participants | Median Hourly Earnings | Median Hours Worked |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Life, Physical, and Soc. Science | 2 | \$28.00 | 40 |
| Childcare worker | 1 | \$14.00 | 28 |
| Detective/Criminal Investigator | 1 | \$28.73 | 40 |
| Teachers and Instructors | 1 | \$11.00 | 32 |
| Supervisors/Managers | 1 | \$17.00 | 40 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---------|----|
| Marketing Research Analyst | 1 | \$32.20 | 25 |
| Construction/Related Workers | 1 | \$20.00 | 40 |

AWARE

We are making good progress in our adaptation sessions with Alliance. It is a tremendous amount of work (4 days per week). There are about 6 of us involved in this process.

Rulemaking Activity

On February 14, Jim McCarthy reached out to us to address a couple of comments before bringing this process to a final conclusion. We responded back on March 6th but have not heard back from RSA.

Later this summer, I will be drafting another rulemaking notice for the 2026 legislative session. My proposal will be to include our Financial Needs Assessment (FNA) back into statute. I would also like to remove the 3-day follow-up requirement (for new referrals) out of statute.

IDVR

IDVR continues to have all categories closed. Fortunately, we have not been significantly impacted by their OOS (yet). They are expected to keep all categories closed for another year and a half. If JFAC approves the appropriation that will probably speed up the opening of categories. Beth – WA state is closing two categories and Oregon general agency is going to OOS too. Al – I’m not sure what closed categories means? Beth – It means we can’t take on any new clients. Mike - The majority of our clients are in the MSD category. The categories are in our policies.

Pre-Employment Transition Services

The contract with IESDB for the Ready, Set, Go program has been fully executed. Alison is back with us under contract! We currently have 16 applicants for VIEW and 3 applicants for College Days. Both programs are at BSU this year. We are starting to recruit for program staff. We will be participating in BSU Job Fair in the near future, as this has been an effective recruitment strategy in the past. The recruitment notice is also posted on our website. We have an intern with us from ISU (Natalie), and she will be helping us with our summer programs this year.

You can read Earl’s report on Assistive Technology and Services to Businesses. He is still working hard with Luma accessibility. We appreciate his ongoing efforts.

Independent Living (IL) Program, Independent Living Older Blind (ILOB) Program, Sight Restoration (SR) Program, Low Vision Clinic, and ICBVI Stores – Steve Achabal, IL Program Coordinator

IL/ILOB Program:

Since the fall and winter quarterly reports usually go into more detail about state and federal fiscal year numbers, for the spring Board report I would like to showcase the actual work that is being done with clients in the field.

Below are three illustrations of clients (actual names have been changed for this report) receiving IL/ILOB services throughout our state. They are just three examples of the wonderful work our Rehabilitation Teachers are doing, and how ICBVI is making a substantial difference in improving the lives of not just these three individuals, but hundreds like them.

Twin Falls Region - Becky, a 60-year-old female, was diagnosed with optic nerve damage, resulting in legal blindness. She reported that she had been struggling with depression for the past several years. Becky faced significant challenges in engaging with services, largely due to her depression. She initially desired assistance with learning better ADL's and felt unsafe when traveling unassisted.

After many months of utilizing a patient and supportive approach from RT Diana Lerh, Becky began to show signs of progress. One key turning point was helping Becky accept the use of assistive devices in her daily routine. She was initially hesitant in using a white cane, not wanting to be seen in public. After many training sessions and repeated encouragement, the client realized that the white cane would provide her with greater safety and mobility. Last six months, she has made impressive strides in O&M and is now thriving with her cane.

Becky faced numerous challenges with ADL's due to her vision loss. Simple tasks like meal preparation felt overwhelming, and she struggled with kitchen safety. To support her, we provided a black-and-white cutting board, bump dots, double spatula and gloves, which have helped her stay safe while cooking. Alongside meal prep and kitchen safety training, these adaptations have empowered Becky to become more confident in her abilities and productive in the kitchen.

ICBVI provided Becky with a Smartlux Digital Magnifier, which has helped her read mail and manage bills independently. This has been a significant step in rebuilding her sense of control and independence. She continues to receive training to increase her other AT skills.

Recently, Becky participated in the Silver Bells through The National Federation of the Blind, marking another major milestone in her path toward independence. Becky reports that there is no way that she would have participated in such a program before her work with ICBVI.

Becky continues to benefit from Assistive Technology, O&M, and ADL training. As her confidence grows, she is taking greater ownership of her life, and her progress is truly inspiring. Becky's journey is a testament to the power of perseverance and personalized support.

*Side note - ICBVI assisted Idaho's NFB by encouraging potential candidates throughout the state to apply and participate in the Silver Bells programs, as well as providing three Rehabilitation Teachers to assist in curriculum development and facilitation throughout the program which was located in Boise Idaho from February 16 – 19, 2025.

Pocatello Region – Bear is an ILOB client who is also a Fort Hall Tribal member. He lost his vision very rapidly to glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy about 8 months ago. To complicate matters, Bear has multiple medical and family issues that make living with blindness even more challenging. Regardless, his nature and character as an individual has been dauntless in the pursuit of self-care and independence. Bear received training from RT, April Mills, in O&M, ADL, assistive technology, medication management and communication.

In terms of aids, Bear purchased multiple items to help around his home, and ICBVI provided and trained him with an Apple iPhone, a Micro Speak Plus and talking blood pressure cuff and a donated Clearview Reader to scan and read longer documents.

Bear has said many times that the discussions about his recent vision loss have been invaluable. Each 2-hour session usually includes a combination of discussion and training. Discussion topics covered range from the grief and loss cycle, goal setting/progress reflection, advocacy, and changing family dynamics.

April reports that she is incredibly impressed with Bear's listening skills, memory, tenacity, courage, and incredible patience regarding cultural differences. As he has made progress, he acknowledges the need to go back to work and be a productive member of his household. As a result, April and Bear will meet with the Pocatello VR Counselor to see if a VR program is the next best step in his journey.

Coeur d'Alene Region - Kevin is an 86-year-old Navy veteran that lives with his wife in Coeur d'Alene. Kevin's initial point of contact with ICBVI was a visit to our regional office and low-vision store, in January 2025, where he spoke with our VRA, Merrilee. She proceeded to set up a referral and scheduled a meeting with the regional Rehabilitation Teacher, Tyler Kuisti.

During their first meeting, Kevin expressed his desire to continue to be as independent as possible and to keep learning new things.

Tyler and Kevin began by addressing some environmental difficulties Kevin was having with lighting and glare. The RT determined that these could be easily addressed with two different filtered cocoons and an OTT desk lamp, which were provided by ICBVI.

Next Kevin expressed frustration at how difficult it was for him to read novels, even when using magnification. The RT took this opportunity to tell him about the Talking Books Program and assisted him in completing and submitting an application for their service.

Over the course of several scheduled meetings, Kevin learned how to utilize accessibility desktop pc features (e.g. screen magnification, contrast, fonts, voice commands, etc.), as well as accessibility features on his smart phone, and tablet. Kevin practiced these skills between meetings and asked thoughtful questions when the RT was present.

Kevin has stated that he feels very comfortable using these aids to tackle tasks like paying bills and reading and sending emails. The RT will continue to work with Kevin to be more fluid with the skills they have been working on, as well as learning new skills and identifying possible new independent living goals.

Tyler reported that he likes this example because it shows the variety of services ICBVI can offer and demonstrates an initial positive result in a relatively short period of time (four meetings over the course of a month).

Sight Restoration

The Sight Restoration program is another sterling example of Idaho's general fund dollars making a real difference in changing peoples' lives for the better. Merrilee Jackson from our Coeur d'Alene office shares one such story that stood out to her because it was the client who was so appreciative of the services she received from ICBVI.

Diana is a 68-year-old widow. She lost her husband last June and therefore lost half of their social security income. She was forced to come out of retirement and go back to work part-time, approximately 22 hours a week, as an in-home care provider. Around this time, she was also diagnosed with having bi-lateral cataracts which hindered her independence by making many personal tasks difficult to accomplish. These difficulties extended to her new job as well.

Some of her job duties included driving to her clients' homes because there were no public transportation options where she lived. She also struggled performing other tasks the position required. Diana came to ICBVI looking for help. She was unable to cover the cost of having cataract surgery and needed assistance to pay her Medicare co-pays. Merrilee met with her, took her application and showed care and empathy. Merrilee advocated for her new client and guided her through the Sight Restoration program process.

Diana was able to have her cataract surgeries performed, which were both successful. She is now able to perform the personal and professional tasks she was struggling or unable to do prior to the surgical procedures. She can now drive and is extremely grateful to Merrilee and ICBVI for our assistance and giving her back a larger portion of her independence.

Low Vision Clinic and Low Vision Store:

The Low Vision Clinic continues to make a difference in hundreds of peoples' lives each year. Dr. Hansen, Collene and Lynn work with many individuals who come through our doors with little hope after seeing their own personal eye physicians. Through empathy and education many of these people leave their clinic appointments with a sense of hope. Whether it be receiving new aids and appliances to help them use their remaining vision more efficiently or being referred to our VR, IL or ILOB programs, these individuals finally have some hope to grasp onto to let them know things will be better.

Lastly, our Boise store, and our regional stores, continue to provide aids and appliances to clients and the public throughout the state. These are essential in helping make their lives just a little bit better by offering aids that they may not get in other places or if they are able to find them, they are much cheaper at our locations.

Assessment and Training Center – Kevin Jernigan, ATC Manager

The ATC is still on track to have Efren Moreno join the ATC team in June as our 2nd full-time O&M. I have spoken with him a few times and he is very much looking forward to joining the ICBVI family. He is scheduled to start June 2nd but will need to take some time off after the first week to finish a previous commitment. He is hoping to only miss a week or two versus the original 3 weeks he was expecting to take. Either way, by the July term the ATC will be able to start offering students five days a week of O&M which is something we haven't been able to do since December 2023.

The winter term was a quick 10 weeks that finished up on March 14th. We had 12 students in total with a mix of full time and part time. We had 7 full timers and 5-part timers. We had one student from Idaho Falls, 3 from Coeur d'Alene, and the rest came from Mountain Home, Boise, Meridian, Nampa, and Caldwell. All but two students were returning students from the fall term. The students enjoyed 2 activity days. The first one

involved a visit to the Basque Museum, lunch at Bardenays, and exploring the Discovery Center in the afternoon. The second activity day involved ceramics and drumming at Fort Boise with lunch from Jersey Mikes.

The ATC staff have provided **1500** classes this term compared to 1391 classes in the fall 2024 term. Keep in mind the winter term was 2 weeks shorter than the fall term.

We expect to have a full caseload of students for spring term, with quite a few students who have never attended the ATC before. We should end up with 3 or 4 new students and a group of returning students who will be good mentors for the new ones.

We were planning to send Bailie to the Colorado Center for the Blind this month to collaborate and develop new ideas for the job readiness program. However, Bailie has started the process of moving closer to her family in Washington and will no longer be our job readiness instructor and part time Braille instructor.

Speaking of training. The ATC is hosting a Boise Blindness 101 March 26th. Chris was offered the opportunity to coordinate this latest training and jumped at the chance. He is coordinating the training with Jeff, Rocio, and the ATC team.

We were lucky enough to have another O&M intern from Portland State this term, Remina Goude. Remina came in with an in-depth background as a teacher of the visually impaired and was a huge help to the O&M program. Speaking of O&M interns, our O&M intern from the fall term passed her ACVREP O&M test and is now an official certified O&M.

I am happy to report that the spring term will mark the launch of our adaptive gardening program that Chris is spearheading. The composting worms are thriving and actively processing food waste from the ADL kitchen, with students contributing their vegetable scraps for feeding. The program will begin with growing tomatoes and peppers from seed, and students interested in participating will be involved in every stage of the process, from planting to harvest.

Financial Update – Corey Bresina, Administrative Services Manager

SFY25 budgets and expenditures: As of 3/13/2025

(70% through the year)

| Fund | Name | Account Category | Budget | Actual Expenses | Encumbrances | Amount Remaining | % Actual | % Remaining |
|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| 10000 | General | CAPITAL | 78,716.00 | 74,915.32 | - | 3,800.68 | 95% | 5% |
| 10000 | General | OPERATING | 372,700.00 | 313,122.76 | - | 59,577.24 | 84% | 16% |
| 10000 | General | PERSONNEL | 992,800.00 | 910,740.72 | - | 82,059.28 | 92% | 8% |

| | | | | | | | | |
|-------|----------|--------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 10000 | General | T&B | 613,411.99 | 611,157.95 | 751.10 | 1,502.94 | 100% | 0% |
| 21000 | BEP | OPERATING | 27,600.00 | 10,463 | 477 | 16,660.19 | 38% | 60% |
| 21000 | BEP | T&B | 100,100.00 | 44,626.46 | - | 55,473.54 | 45% | 55% |
| 28800 | SSA | OPERATING | 34,300.00 | 1,422.59 | - | 32,877.41 | 4% | 96% |
| 28800 | SSA | T&B | 13,000.00 | 3,489.15 | - | 9,510.85 | 27% | 73% |
| 34800 | Federal | OPERATING | 1,534,400.00 | 403,364.95 | 1,072,443.16 | 58,591.89 | 26% | 4% |
| 34800 | Federal | PERSONNEL | 2,774,500.00 | 1,603,096.66 | - | 1,171,403.34 | 58% | 42% |
| 34800 | Federal | T&B | 514,384.02 | 114,957.71 | 758.50 | 398,667.81 | 22% | 78% |
| 34900 | Donation | OPERATING | 28,100.00 | 13,079.81 | - | 15,020.19 | 47% | 53% |
| 34900 | Donation | T&B | 56,300.00 | 491.00 | - | 55,809.00 | 1% | 99% |
| 42600 | Store | OPERATING | 62,900.00 | 35,586.18 | - | 27,313.82 | 57% | 43% |
| 42600 | Store | PERSONNEL | 25,700.00 | 15,101.54 | - | 10,598.46 | 59% | 41% |
| | | | | | | | | |
| | | Total | 7,228,912 | 4,095,793 | 1,073,953 | 2,059,166 | 56.66% | 43.34% |

***Cognos, Agency Content, Statewide Reports, Budget Development, Budget Dashboard**

| | FFY25 | FFY24 |
|---------------------------|---------|-----------|
| Pre-ETS obligation | 261,446 | 669,676 |
| Pre-ETS draws 100% | 0.00 | (593,306) |
| Balance of 15% | 0 | 76,370 |

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----|
| 50 - PC | 2,528,939 | 67% |
| 55 - O/E | 777,039 | 38% |
| 70 - CO | 74,915 | 95% |
| 80 - T/B | 774,722 | 60% |

We are still working on spending the VRBS24 award. This grant balance is now down to \$744,434.90. The Pre-ETS obligation balance for this grant is down to \$76,370.

The updated award amount for VRBS25 is \$1,742,970 and is roughly 45% of our total amount (\$3,878,914 estimate). The updated award amount for OLB25 is \$101,700 (\$225,000 estimate) and the current award amount for ILB25 is \$33,038 (\$73,092 estimate).

The State FY 2026 budget was passed by JFAC back in late February.

Rosana retired on January 31st and Andrew has taken over her position. Laura was hired for the open Financial Technician position and started on January 7th. She has a great deal of accounting and grant management experience and will definitely be an asset to the agency.

New Business

Next Board Meeting: June 3, 2025, in Boise

Consumer Input

Dana Ard, NFB President – NFB Convention in Burley, ID 3/27, 3/28, 3/29 at the Best Western Hotel and Convention Center. Donald Porterfield and his wife will do a seminar on leadership. This year we will hear from Krista Kramer on the I Can Connect and the Assistive Technology Program of Idaho. We will have seven vendors this year and we have Marcie Chapman who will do a Traveling Blind Program. Last fall they went to Eastern Idaho and it was a really good experience. We have a lot of variability in what we are doing. If there is anything that you want us to write a resolution on for example, we have one written to preserve Talking Book Programs or Library services for the blind. If those programs are cut, we could potentially have no library services. Our National Convention is in New Orleans this year later in July, maybe the 2nd week. It's hard for any of us to know what's going to happen and it's frightening because no one seems to be listening. When we went to Washington seminar, we provided them with a list of important items for the blind. Jackie – Bell Academy for 7–17-year-olds is scheduled to be in McCall, ID, July 21-26. We already have 7 kids registered. We are looking for someone to lead some recreation or physical sports activities. We have our staff already. This will be our fourth summer that we've done it and it's been a great opportunity. Dana – NFB Treasure Valley Chapter is going to do the sports activity morning and I've recommended we schedule it in June. Usually, NWABA does the Cooperative Games. We also have Cycle for Independence, our biggest fundraiser of the year. Joe Grover has taken over organizing it. It's May 17 at River Glen. We will have a 10, 25, and 50 mile. We will have members from the Idaho Falls area. It's a great event and we feed people hamburgers and hot dogs. Beth – if RSA gets moved to another agency at the federal level, we would like to remain under the Governor's office here in Idaho and we would like advocacy from you all. Dana – I will write a resolution this afternoon. I'm on the committee but I don't vote. Beth – it should go to the Governor's Office. Silver Bells is a program that came from a need for additional training for seniors and in our state, they didn't have to be 55 and over. We were fortunate to get \$10,000 for this program. We are looking for possible sources of funding and thanks to Steve for allowing Marcie, Deeann and Kebbie to help. We also had Cindy and Joe Grover help. The people learned techniques for cooking, cleaning, and technology, and Braille. We had orientation and mobility and they were very receptive. Out of that we have a lot of people coming to our group for people who are losing vision. Lisa Baker runs that group. Jackie – if we could have a Silver Bells in North Idaho, we could fill it up.

Roberta Fencil, Lions Knights – I'm working on being the district rep, I am a part of the organization and I am an active member. Knights of the Blind was created in October of 2020, acted upon Helen Keller challenge which is to prevent avoidable blindness and to improve quality of life for blind and

low vision individuals in the local communities and for them to partner with other organizations an to increase membership and support and access to support, devices, information to improve access for blind and low vision individuals. Knights of the Blind is empowering blind and low vision to live full and satisfying lives. Also, common courtesies such as saying hello to a blind person, announcing when you leave the room, etc. We have resources here in WA: WA Council of the Blind, American Council of the Blind, Hadley Helps, NFB WA, National Library Services for Blind, WA Talking Book and Library, and resources for veterans. A lot of veterans don't realize that they are eligible to receive services. Another purpose of Knights of the Blind is about raising awareness. You don't have to do it alone; you can live full and satisfying lives. I am blind and I am fully involved with the Lions Club and every project in the community. I live a very busy, active life. I work with people with disabilities, that's something that I love to do. I encourage people to give this information to everyone. Steve – are any of the organizations that you mentioned, are they available to people in Idaho. Roberta – I don't know but I will ask.

BEP – Justin Fish, BEP Supervisor

ICBVI Board Report: FFY 2025 1ST Quarter: Oct, Nov, Dec

Our goal is to provide great food service to government employees, have our vendors be successful in their business and assure the success of the Business Enterprise Program. The first quarter numbers below show a dramatic jump compared to last year. This was due to the problems we had in the first quarter of last year, dropping sales. It is good to see the numbers back to normal.

Financial Snapshot

| FFY 2025 | OCT-DEC (Q1) | JAN-MAR (Q2) | APR-JUNE (Q3) | JULY- SEPT (Q4) | | Total |
|------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--|--------------|
| Gross Sales | \$418,883.25 | | | | | \$418,883.25 |
| Total Net Income | \$125,435.03 | | | | | \$125,435.03 |
| Average Income % | 38.84% | | | | | 38.84% |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-------------|--|--|--|-------------|
| Set Aside Collected | \$12,648.89 | | | | \$12,648.89 |
|---------------------|-------------|--|--|--|-------------|

| FFY 2024 | OCT-DEC (Q1) | JAN-MAR (Q2) | APR-JUNE (Q3) | JULY- SEPT (Q4) | Total |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Gross Income | \$327,584.63 | \$432,556.51 | \$493,266.89 | \$550,717.96 | \$1,804,125.99 |
| Net Income | \$45,527.91 | \$136,909.71 | \$133,161.65 | \$209,070.27 | \$524,669.54 |
| Average income % | -129.14% | 48.12% | 41.55% | 44.54% | -1.27% |
| Set Aside Collected | \$5,322.12 | \$13,691.13 | \$14,416.79 | \$20,894.49 | \$54,324.53 |

BEP UPDATES

Facility survey:

- Mountain Home Airforce Base: We put the solicitation for interest out to the licensed vendors in November 2024. We received notices from two prospective bidders. One dropped out after learning the full demands of the contract. With no other vendor interest, it defaults to the only interested party. We have chosen Tony Bridges as the vendor to pursue the contract. Tony interviewed several teaming partners and has chosen Blackstone consulting.
After submitting the source sought form with an email explaining our priority and the legal authority, MHAFB contacted us to move forward with the direct negotiation process. We have made a site visit and are awaiting the solicitation. The solicitation will come directly to the SLA then we will work with Blackstone and Tony to prepare the bid and submit. At that time, MHAFB can accept our terms or “direct negotiate”.
- Twin Falls County Courthouse: We did a site visit for vending service, accepted the opportunity and will install it in April.
- Twin Falls County Sheriff’s Department: We did a site visit for vending service, accepted the opportunity and will install it in April.
- Health and welfare Boise Westgate: We did a site visit for vending service, accepted the opportunity and will install it in March.

Facility set up:

- We have installed the Health and Welfare Westgate facility on March 12th. The facility has 400 personnel. We have added this as a contract to Theresa Hout.

Facility Changes:

- FBI Pocatello: We added coffee service to improve the food service experience at the facility. We added two single cup coffee brewers and a vending machine that sells coffee pods.
- INL SSF: We fully converted the facility from a snack bar to a micro-market. We remodeled and added a state-of-the-art kiosk, single cup coffee brewer and new cabinetry that greatly expanded the capacity for product.

General Updates:

- Internal Controls: Arianah and the committee representative Travis Beck have been trying to get this project off the ground. Soon as the rules are approved, they can focus on this project. The changes could directly affect the internal controls, so we don't want to get ahead of the rules approval.
- BEP Rules Approval: We have received the rules back from RSA with many markups to be addressed. We have addressed the markups and have returned the rules for further review. We are now awaiting their response.
- We meet via conference call with the vendor committee monthly to address issues around the State. This ensures that the SLA is actively participating with the vendor committee. We go over various issues around the State and problem-solve as a team.
- Possibly do Gowen Field after June board meeting. Will need to provide information for background checks.

Success Story – Sue Brangham, Coeur d'Alene

I have Retinitis Pigmentosa. I quite my full-time job after I found I had overlooked a few things on patients charts that potentially could have been detrimental to their care. I realized that I was still really dependent on my vision and I needed to get more prepared and needed more training. I ended up in Boise October of 2024 thinking I would be there 12 weeks and get what I need. Thank goodness Kevin alerted that most people stay at least 2 terms. I started full time classes at ICBVI. It was very overwhelming. The first three weeks I was absolutely exhausted. None of it was

rocket science but it was definitely difficult. Kevin told me we want you to make mistakes. I wanted to go faster but he also told me to move at my own pace. Some classes came easy but in some I had resistance in some areas like O & M. I have to commend staff for being supportive. There's also the comradery. The trainings aspects that were my favorite were skills, role models, and the comradery. I learned that even two terms was not enough and I want to go back. I want to come out of this confident and going forward with my life, being involved, getting around.

Jackie – My perception of Sue from the very beginning is that she is very independent person. I've always tried to serve Sue in the way that she wants to be served. I always say it's really hard to tell you what we can do because it depends on what you need. Sue is a person who knows what she needs and she's gotten and gotten it and she's going to be very successful. It's hard for people to go down to the ATC, it's a sacrifice, but the fact that you did that is a testament to who you are and I'm super proud of you.

Al – I wanted to read this about Jackie Stallings from the Coeur d'Alene Post Falls Press Fast Five. Jackie Stallings is VR Counselor at the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Jackie is also a mom to five, a wife, advocate for people with disabilities, and blind herself. ICBVI has been serving Idahoans since 1967. Question 1 was how long have you been at ICBVI and what do you do there? I work with people who are blind or visually impaired all-over North Idaho. My goal is to help people live full lives and be employed in careers that fit their skills and passions.

2 -What are some resources and help the commission offers that people should know about?

Our agency provides a variety of programs for all Idaho residents who have a visual impairment. Whether it is teaching somebody how to use alternative skills to overcome vision loss, support somebody in college or allow somebody to remain independent in their home, we customize services to fit clients' needs at no cost to the client.

3 - What are a few myths you can dispel for us about what it's like to be blind or vision impaired?

Most of the barriers we face are lack of understanding or low expectations. A blind person can live a totally "normal" life. We just do things a bit differently. And just for the record, we definitely do not want to touch your face. We also do not have extra senses or heightened senses; we just use our other senses more effectively. People who are blind are literally the world's best problem solvers!

4 - What is something people would be surprised to know about you?

I'm kind of an open book, so there is not much. One of my big dreams is to start doing more public speaking, so if you need inspiration, I work cheap!

5 - Any events, activities or anything else coming up we can share?

We are always looking for businesses that may be willing to take on a student during the summer. We are also planning an event April 12 for transition students and their families.

Thank you so much Jackie.

Jackie – the press wants to do a whole spread on us.

Motion to Dismiss at 12:33 pm – LeAnn Gelskey

