

# **BEP VENDOR COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

March 22, 2019 • DSB Business Office, Lacey, WA

## **Vendor Committee Members Present**

- Gloria Walling, NW Region
- Robert Miller, At-Large, Committee Chairman
- Robert Ott, SW Region
- Roy Gappert, SW Region

>Committee Not Present: James Janney and Stephanie Hilton

## **BEP Staff Present**

- Elvis Pruett, BEP Interim Manager
- Liz Tunison

## **Others in Attendance**

- Roderick Roberts, BEP SW Operator
- Lessa Mangold, Roderick's Manager

## **MEETING AGENDA- March 22, 2019**

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Financial Report for October – January 2019**
- 3. Training Program updates**
- 4. State Rehabilitation Council (S.R.C.) update**
- 5. Vending Micromarket commission rate**
- 6. All-State Topics and Location ideas**
- 7. Facility Maintenance Program - Gloria**
- 8. Report on Facilities**
  - a) DOT & ESD Espresso– April 2018**
  - b) Clark County Courthouse- January 2019**
  - c) Legislative Building- April 2018**
  - d) NOAA- September 2018**

- e) US Courthouse Seattle – April 2019
- f) Snohomish County Courthouse
- g) Snohomish PUD – new facility October 2019
- h) Goodrich – April 2019

**9. Transition of BEP Staff Position**

**10. Other Business – Robert Miller**

- **Recruiting & Funds**

## **MEETING MINUTES- March 22, 2019**

### **1) INTRODUCTIONS**

- All present introduced themselves.
- Agenda was read.

### **2) FINANCIAL REPORT FOR OCTOBER 2018 – JANUARY 2019.**

- DSB has a new data management program as of mid-March. The financial piece of this upgrade as run into some issues thus BEP didn't have the normal details available for the meeting.
- As of the end of January, BEP's operating fund balance was \$389,532.
- Equipment repairs year to date is \$15,783
- Equipment purchases year to date is \$14,993.
- Consultant wages from October thru February is \$11,100.
- Rents are up to date.
- Consumable Inventory debt thru January is \$8,792.

### **3) BEP TRAINING PROGRAM UPDATES**

- Two potential trainees in the pipeline. One is currently in OTC. Elvis will be meeting with him this month. This person brings a wealth of hospitality and management experience. The other individual has completed on the onsite evaluation portion. They have currently working on the Hadley prerequisites. Elvis plans to meet with their VR counselor soon to discuss progress.
- Elvis and Liz need to sort through all of training materials and streamline the materials. Want to make information as user-friendly as possible for VR. Don't want to discourage them from forwarding clients if the process is convoluted and cumbersome.

#### **4) STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL (SRC) UPDATE – Gloria Walling**

- Met in April with governor liaison to discuss membership qualifications. This included possible extending Gloria Walling's membership.

#### **5) MICROMARKET COMMISSION RATES**

#### **6) ALL-STATE TOPICS & LOCATION IDEAS**

- Location: In order to save money, it was decided to continue having All-State at a BEP site in Olympia.
- Topic Ideas:
  - Elvis spoke with motivational speaker from last year (Dancing Shepard) about potentially continuing leadership talk in 2019. Elvis asked if there was value in for the attendees based on the cost.
  - Accountant from Precisely Right Accounting.
  - Someone to talk about current laws, including new family leave program. How will it play out in 2020 when employees can start using it?
  - Invite DSB's John Sheehan to share what's new in adaptive equipment.
  - [Aira](#). Aira connects people who are blind or low vision to a trained professional agent who is dedicated to further enhancing their everyday experience – completely hands-free assistance at the touch of a button using smart phone. Gloria has a contact that can come speak. Seemed to be a lot of interest in this topic as two vendors shared how to utilize it day to day.
  - Discuss and teach how to do daily accounting. Was utilized in BEP training. Great daily practice to stay on top of business and eliminate surprises.
  - Dave Ramsey financial planning.
  - Sysco's Chef to discuss applicable food trends.
  - Kevin Daniels from the Lighthouse for the Blind.

#### **7) FACILITY MAINTENANCE PROGRAM – Gloria**

- Gloria has hired a handy man to minor repairs such as replacing water filters or lubing equipment. Much more affordable than calling in repair company with high hourly rates. Staff also appreciate the quick turnaround. The person is paid by the task versus the hour. Maintenance expenses are a tax write off.

## 8) REPORT ON FACILITIES

### a) **DOT & ESD OLYMPIA – Start date: April 2018**

- Vendor present to report on café, espresso stand and ESD espresso.
  - ESD coffee sales are strong. Building sales on grab & good. Increasing food sales is key to improving profitability. Still considering ways to get over more food options. In the nearly year vendor has operated site, it's only been closed once which is key in keeping customer loyalty. May extend close time 30 minutes to 1:30 pm to handle lunch business and closing duties.
  - DOT espresso stand is currently open only 4 hours daily. Barista slides over to deli to assist during lunch. Sales are strong. Barista gets many positive comments from facility. May need to increase prices soon.
  - DOT Café has had a 10% in sales. Vendor feels it's time to reexamine menu to adjust options and pricing. There have been some facility housekeeping issues that have interrupted business. Elvis and vendor's manager have been key in getting problems rectified.
  - If approved, DOT will be going thru an extensive remodel in 2021. Up to half the staff may be temporarily relocated. BEP is uncertain how the café will be impacted during this time or if DOT had any plans to remodel the space. BEP might consider a remodel to make the space more user-friendly.

### b) **CLARK COUNTY COURTHOUSE – January 2019**

- Vendor reports that sales have leveled off. Vendor is quite engaged with customers and in trying to find out what they would like café to offer. Gotten positive feedback from the facility.

### c) **LEGISLATIVE BUILDING – April 2018**

- Café has had to close 5 times for an entire day due to flooding caused by upstairs kitchen. Their drains clog and leak. Facility is unsure the root cause of the issue having snaked the drain multiple times.
- The facility with Pritchard went out for bid and BEP received two non-primary applications. Interviews will be held on March 23 and incoming vendor will take over on April 29.

### d) **NOAA – September 2018**

- Vendor was present and shared facility was operating at the breakeven point with minimal staff. Was closed for 2 ½ months due to government shutdown and seems

to be taking time to build sales back up. Trying out some menu changes. Facility has been supportive through everything.

- Considering the amount of time facility was closed post government shutdown, facility staff may have been forced to find new food options. These new options might be their new go-to stop rather than NOAA café now. It was suggested to vendor who is also operating US Courthouse that they don't allow that café to be closed any longer than a week so not to lose loyal customers to other options.
- Going to host a free coffee event soon.
- Lunch sales have always been strong versus the breakfast and espresso sales.
- Vendors continued NOAA discussion after vendor had to leave. Based on café's history of viability, they felt sales will improve with time. Felt that many facility issues stemmed from program's recruiting problem that resulted in vendors having to take on multiple locations. It's challenging to run several facilities when attention and time can be spread thin.

#### e) **US COURTHOUSE SEATTLE – April 2019**

- Vendor plans to open April 8 if transition goes smoothly. Uncertain of extent of equipment repairs and replacements required. Working with GSA to get everything checked and fixed. GSA has been supportive, including willingness to install espresso machine. Menu is complete and vendor will be putting in food order soon. Will interview current staff and has hired a manager. From vendor's observation, the facility is busy and they hope to go and maximize the potential of the space. This will require some cleaning and utilizing all available equipment. The current operator seems not to be using all equipment and BEP is unsure if the equipment even works.
- Elvis reiterated how helpful the GSA property manager has been especially in their willingness to replace or fix existing equipment.

#### f) **SNOHOMISH COUNTY COURTHOUSE**

- Café has been closed for 3 weeks with uncertainty of when it can reopen. There has been an ongoing facility issue and they aren't comfortable allowing café to open even though health department gave approval. Facility is taking full responsibility for issue and has been excellent in communication. They may waive a month's rent.
- Vendor has asked from consumable inventory relief and willing to use pass-thru to pay back loan. There was mixed feelings on if BEP should provide a loan, especially considering the size of the benefit payout two months prior.

#### g) **SNOHOMISH PUD – October 2019**

- BEP accepted this location after determining existing sales were strong enough to make location viable.
- It will be a satellite location to Snohomish County Courthouse.
- Building hosts community events in evenings and weekends. Vendor will have opportunity to be open to serve these visitors.
- Rent will be under \$500/month. Space and equipment is limited. BEP will need to install espresso machine and some refrigeration. BEP will consider purchasing existing equipment from current operator if in good condition and price is right.

#### h) **GOODRICH – April 2019**

- Brand new vendor taking over April 1<sup>st</sup>. Current vendor was present and shared some details of transition plan. New vendor is keeping some of the current staff and won't be purchasing any existing inventory. The incoming vendor has visited Goodrich several times and seems quite engaged in the transition process. Current vendor recommended to them interview staff before agreeing to hire them. In addition, to make sure facility is clean before setting everything up.
- Committee Chair brought up topic up mentorship. While they had provided on the job training, they knew this new vendor has built working relationships with other vendors so it might be best for them to pick whom they were most comfortable working with.
- Elvis thanked current vendor for all their support during the transition and it helping make the process as seamless as possible.
- Jim Sutherland, BEP contractor, has been assisting Elvis is preparing new vendor in business startup.
- New vendor plans to make no menu changes for the first month. She's been great about reaching out to other vendors for guidance.

#### i) **FAA**

- Jim did site visit recently. Reports food is good and customers seem happy. Facility had to bounce back after government shutdown. Vendor reports labor and food costs are good. BEP currently has no recent P & L's due to prior accountant retiring at the end of 2018.
- Vendor has had a lot of consultant assistance over the years utilizing all of BEP's contractors. There is still seems to be some struggles and room to improve service despite all the provided mentorship. Committee Chair will reach to see how vendor committee can help.

## 9) TRANSITION OF BEP STAFF POSITION

- Elvis is interim manager through July. BEP is unsure when the position will be posted.

## 10) OTHER BUSINESS – Robert Miller

### a) RECRUITMENT

- Revisited the agency's state of order of selection and its potential impact on BEP applicants as there is a slow down on client intake.
- Roderick shared in his experience, he's witnessed many negatives used to describe BEP, which can squash client interest. These range from length of training and wait time for an open facility. Elvis explained that it was common in sharing some of the realities of the process with potential applicants just to give them an accurate picture of what it takes to be successful. Especially in the challenges of being a business owner. Clients need to have eyes wide open to the commitment and hard work it requires. It's important to balance the "negatives" with the success stories.
- With influx of new VR counselors in the agency the past few years, it's a great time of continuing Bobby's efforts of building those interagency relationships. The more the agency understands about BEP the more likely to increase recruitment.
- In lines of streamlining training, BEP needs to find ways to reduce training costs where possible so not to discourage VRC from pushing clients forward if the expense seems excessive.
- Julie Brannon, OTC manager, is retiring and she often had BEP talk to students about the program. When new manager is hired, committee felt it was important for BEP to continue making those connections. One member was open to going with BEP Manager to Seattle to talk about the program.

### b) MEALS AT VENDOR MEETINGS

- In efforts to save money, should BEP continue to provide lunch and coffee service at Vendor Meetings for all attendees?
- After discussion it was decided to continue providing lunch, but eliminating any morning pastries/snacks.