

## **Meeting Minutes - Elected Committee of Managers January 19, 2019**

Wyndham Garden Hotel  
3401 South IH-35  
Austin, TX 78741

Meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m.

### **Roll call of E C M and Guests**

E C M Representatives not in attendance were Harvey Stavinoha, Paul Parker and Arnold Sanchez.

Audience members included Ruben Aguilar, Elizabeth Chaney and her guest, Clayton Hell's wife, Beverly Hell, Tommy Crawford's daughter, Tom Chepey and his wife, Kim Chepey, LeRoy De La Garza, Manny Sifuentes and the new future trainee, Sophia Sparks with her husband.

### **B E T Staff Attending**

Michael Hooks, B E T Director

### **Approval of minutes of last meeting**

E C M Chairperson Clayton Hell called for approval of the minutes from the prior E C M Meeting.

### **Director's Report**

Mike Hooks welcomed everyone and proceeded to report on the program status.

## **Facilities Information**

There are currently 114 facilities in B E T. There are pending new facilities to include the Capitol Complex project, the new state building at the Triangle campus in Austin, and the new TxDOT campus in South East Austin. Working on space negotiations in El Paso for a Micro Mart in a State building. We are continuing to work with Fooda for pop-up restaurants within G S A facilities. There were no facilities that closed this quarter. There were nineteen facilities that had operational areas of business upgraded. There are currently 101 assigned managers. There is one unassigned licensed manager, Mr. Bill Jones who resigned from 763, Brazoria Vending. There were no managers that left the program this quarter. Ms. Laura Lewis was assigned to 911, Dallas Federal Building and Mr. Eric Sifuentes was assigned to 954, Gatesville Prison Vending Route II, however left the facility before a week of operation. The next class of trainees, Mr. Nure Kebirtimo and Ms. Sophia Sparks, begins on February 4, 2019 with a projected graduation date of May 16, 2019.

### **There are currently thirteen facilities with temporary management:**

Bruce Best – Brazoria Vending

Dwayne Zuppardo – I R S Snack Bar

Rebecca Chambers - Hardeman County Rest Area Vending

Kenneth Landtroop – Donley County Vending

Roberto Pena – Hidalgo County Court House

Zach Davis – A. Maceo Smith Federal Bldg.

Randy Clutter – Orange County Vending

Gay Nimitz – San Antonio Vending

Aloha Cook – Gatesville Vending Route II

Mike Sparks – Texas Workforce Commission (T W C) Vending  
John Watson, Jr. – Franklin County Vending  
Tommy Crawford – Cowtown Vending  
Robert Jones – L B J Vending

Mr. Hooks mentions additional information concerning the upcoming temporary closure of Facility 888, Waco VA, due to major re-construction of the building.

Director and E C M discussed low performing facilities.

**There are two facilities with outsourced management:**

VA Waco – Rene Hearn  
NASA – Shemika Fills

**Service Delivery – Business Visitations Completed**

Year to date total visitations: 636

Value of equipment purchased during the first quarter: \$48,000

**Number of Blind Employees in B E T Businesses:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 11  
2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter:  
3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter:  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter:

**Number of Employees with No Disability in B E T Businesses:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 1412  
2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter:  
3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter:  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter:

## **Number of Employees with Other Disabilities in B E T Businesses:**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter: 144

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter:

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter:

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter:

## **Comments:**

Aloha Cook expressed her gratitude towards B E T Business Consultants, Tracie Johnson and Nancy Greely, with their assistance on the transfer of the Gatesville Vending route.

## **Current Events:**

Partial Federal Government shutdown still underway. This event is affecting facilities, licensed managers and communications with G S A. Mr. Hooks applauds Harvey Stavinoha and his efforts to continue pay to his employees for a period during the shutdown especially considering the losses that he has endured because of the shutdown.

The B E T Rule revisions were published for public comment December 14 through January 14. Comments were received and the agency is currently working on responses to those comments.

House Bill 718 has been introduced in the current legislative session. The bill provides nutritional standards requirements for products sold in vending machines on state property. Mr. Hooks shared the website of Texas Legislative Online, with the audience, to search for information and get updates on HB 718.

Director Hooks outlined each of the nutritional standards that HB 718 addresses.

Mr. Hooks announced the conclusion of his Director's Report and opened the floor to questions or comments.

Tommy Crawford inquired about the new TxDOT facility as to it being Camp Hubbard? Mr. Hooks responded by stating that Camp Hubbard is not affected, nor is it going to be a part of the new TxDOT campus.

Manny Sifuentes asked about the status of the NASA facility at the Johnson Space Center. Mr. Hooks cited this facility as being run by a contract manager named Shemika Fields; her current contract expires on June 27, 2019. Mr. Hooks also noted that this facility has been advertised and offered to new trainees but garnered no interest. Mr. Hooks commented that this facility is being considered for a remodel.

Tom Chepey asked for details of the Winter's Triangle Complex project and inquired as to when would a remodel be on the table for his facility?

Mr. Hooks quickly responded regarding the remodel question by urging Mr. Chepey to contact his Business Consultant's. Mr. Hooks then gave a timeline, in response to the Winter's Triangle Complex project, that began with the description of a physical model of a "Grab and Go" which B E T submitted to Texas Facility Commission.

### **Financial Status:**

The financial status of the program was reviewed.

Mr. Hooks discussed facets of the Randolph Sheppard act and the fact that there is no federal appropriation for this program, in Texas nor in any other state. He stressed how federal funding is

at the discretion of Vocational Rehabilitation. Next, Mr. Hooks gave an overview on revenue streams and expenditures. He highlighted the following four Funding Sources:

- Commissions from vending machines on federal properties operated by third party contractors
- Commissions from vending machines on state properties operated by third party contractors
- Federal VR funds
- Set-Aside Fees

Mr. Hooks then reviewed the program expenditures in regards to the funding sources stated.

Audience members, the E C M and the Director discussed numerous topics including the Better Eating Today campaign, House Bill 718 and third-party vending service contracts. Mr. Hooks also addressed questions regarding T W C and food trucks including a feasibility study that he conducted. He reminded the E C M on the research that the study was previously submitted to them.

Final question posed to Mr. Hooks by E C M Cecilia Wilson regarding the Temporary Management Selection Sheet. Ms. Wilson is asking when was the revised selection sheet approved? Ms. Wilson also shared her thoughts on the updated version of that sheet as being too complicated; E C M member Karla Martinez commented that the updated sheet was approved during the September 28<sup>th</sup> E C M conference call. Mr. Hooks offered to be the liaison for Ms. Wilson and the B E T Trainer, Joe Gonzalez, to schedule a training session to go over the revised sheet. Mr. Hooks also offered the E C M an opportunity to go over the revised form again via conference call.

### **Chairman's Report:**

Chairman Hell began his report by making two announcements; an upcoming Upward Mobility Training session to take place in Washington, DC this coming January 28<sup>th</sup>; and, an upcoming legislative fly-in by N A B M to educate legislatures in Washington, DC about Randolph Sheppard issues due to the influx of new representatives. Chairman Hell urges for Texas to be well represented and cited names of managers that have made the trek in previous years. Dates have not been set yet for the fly-in.

Chairman Hell encourages all Texas vending managers to get on board with providing literature, i.e., signage, to promote health conscience alternatives to support healthier snack selections. Mr. Hooks highlighted Fit Pick's national program offering point of sale material.

Break taken, and meeting resumed in 15 minutes.

### **District Reports**

Each representative provided a report on events occurring in their district:

#### **District 1 Food Service – Chairman Hell reported on behalf of Harvey Stavinoha**

Mr. Stavinoha mentioned that, during the government shutdown, he had been able to visit most of the facilities in District 1 where managers, Nathan, Jay, and Mac, to name a few, reported being happy with activities within their facilities. Another issue shared by Mr. Stavinoha, was due to the government's decision to bring back furloughed employees to begin processing tax returns, which would result in opening the grill section to accommodate

those workers. Audience member, Manager Manny Sifuentes also noted a conversation he and Mr. Stavinoha had concerning the loss of three I R S employees because of the federal shutdown. Mr. Stavinoha recently re-hired employees.

### **District 1 Vending – Calvin Shepherd**

E C M Shepherd reports not talking with any of the managers since BLAST; also states not hearing from anyone. Is aware that Bobby Allen and Jaime Garza have been ill. Mr. Shepherd had no other information to report.

### **District 2 Food Service – Alvertis McClurge**

All managers within district 2 are aware of the government shutdown. Mr. McClurge reports a loss of 95 % of sales at his federal facility and as a result has had only one employee on schedule working reduced hours. Mr. McClurge concludes his report by acknowledging that he did not get any other notices or report of issues from any of the managers in district 2.

### **District 2 Vending – Dwayne Zuppardo**

E C M Zuppardo extends a warm welcome to Mr. Alvertis McClurge as this is his first committee meeting. Mr. Zuppardo continues his report by citing one facility changeover taking place, Scott Smith leaving the cafeteria in Fort Worth and taking over Tommy Crawford's Cowtown Vending Route. Mr. Zuppardo noted no other issues have taken place within the district and concludes his report.

### **District 3 Food Service – Arnold Sanchez**

Mr. Sanchez was not present however, Chairman Hell provided a brief overview and reports that Mr. Sanchez had a catastrophic loss of employee and, because he is training, the new hires, to open his facility on Monday, was not able to attend today's meeting. Manager Greg Stavinoha reports being hit as well because of the shutdown but is surviving due to another business venture. E C M Karla Martinez reports on behalf of Mr. Sanchez that manager Ashley Edwards is doing well and is launching a new menu addition to her facility by offering baked goods.

### **District 3 Vending – Cecilia Wilson**

E C M Wilson reports all is quiet and shares the following news affecting two facilities that were under temporary management, Randy Clutter's vending route and the Brazoria County vending route, are up for advertising; the recent loss of a Business Consultant due to retirement, Mr. Lyndon Lee; making Tina Vega the lone Business Consultant for the time being. E C M Wilson asked for an update as to the progress with replacing Mr. Lee and Mr. Hooks responded that research is being conducted to find a strategy for staffing that position in a timely manner. E C M Wilson wrapped up her report by sharing one story out of the fourteen plus years of working with retired Business Consultant, Lyndon Lee.

### **District 4 Food Service – Kristen McNabb**

E C M McNabb reports having contacted all managers however, has not heard back from anyone, which is not unusual. Ms. McNabb is thankful to report that her facility has not been affected by the federal shutdown; she is going to introduce a new feature to her facility by purchasing pre-packaged pastries through Hill Country Bakery which offers a higher quality baked good therefore offering a nicer product line. Ms. McNabb is excited about this endeavor and relays having no other issues to report on other than

a common one which involves getting a hold of personnel at her base.

### **District 4 Vending – Clayton Hell**

Chairman Hell reports having several issues to discuss; Manager Gay Nimitz operating a temporary location and if combined with her designated facility, that pairing would prosper into a more business viable location; Mr. Hell adds that this idea may be presented in the future. Manager, Jenna Norwood, at the State Supported Living Center, having recently undergone a downsizing to the number of vending machines, by the school's administration, has been severely impacted. The opportunity to bid on the Brazoria County vending route may be an option for Ms. Norwood to add and increase her income base. Audience participant and Manager Manny Sifuentes, added to this conversation by commenting that managers have had several opportunities to bid on available facilities to help increase their income base. Chairman Hell continued his report by sharing Bob Pena's situation at his temporary facility and reports doing well except for his permanent location, Hidalgo County, which has been experiencing electrical issues. Managers Luis and Pablo Cantu have had family related health issues although their facilities are doing well. Manager Dave Corbett reports doing well and in the process of building a storage area for his facility; Manager Rames Gonzalez was looking forward to the opening of the buildings that were temporarily closed for remodeling; that closure has deeply impacted his earnings but is hopeful that the expansion of the bridge will generate more business. Chairman Hell closes out his report by citing managers that he had not heard from and talked about his own personal slight increase in sales to his facility; a year to date increase of 10% in sales.

### **District 5 Food Service – Tommy Crawford**

E C M Crawford opened his report by requesting the ETA, from Mr. Hooks, of the future micro market in El Paso; Mr. Hooks' response is negotiations are ongoing, not aware of the schedule of events at the moment but B E T is waiting to find if approval has been granted to occupy the first floor lobby of a state building in El Paso; B E T does have a partner for this endeavor and this facility would be in conjunction with Arturo Fonseca's facility. Mr. Crawford reports on behalf of his facility, saying that Fort Bliss, during this time of the year, is referred to as the "money months" due to the extra expenditures that surface such as having to pay unused employee vacation time and paying bonus money to managers, etc., undoubtedly, these events contribute to paying a lower set aside fee during this period. E C M Crawford concludes his report by commenting that the last nine months have been fundamental in developing a successful, strong working relationship with the immediate contract officials, known as the "core".

### **District 5 Vending – Paul Parker**

Chairman Hell reports on behalf of Mr. Parker who is not present, stating that Mr. Parker did not communicate any pressing issues taking place in district 5 vending. Chairman Hell does mention speaking with manager, Ms. Esta Scott, whom will be approaching a golden milestone with B E T, her 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Ms. Scott began her B E T career back in 1969; Congratulations to Ms. Scott.

### **District 6 Food Service – Karla Martinez**

E C M Martinez reports not speaking to many managers in her district due to time constraints suffered by most managers including herself with being shorthanded on employees. Ms. Martinez does mention communicating with manager, John DeSimone about him experiencing equipment issues however, involvement with the Business Consultants has been key to

obtaining a resolution. Many managers in the district, continue to experience ongoing issues with finding and keeping labor due to the Austin market where fast food establishments are hiring at much higher wages and offering benefits. E C M Martinez concludes her report by noting some electrical issues within her building and waiting on vending machines; noted managers, Gesilar Joseph as doing well, Tim Dawson states that sales have improved, and Myra Escalante's sister has been a welcomed success helping at manager Escalante's facility.

### **District 6 Vending – Aloha Cook**

E C M Cook reports that every manager that has responded to her has said that they are okay. Ms. Cook does reiterate that Gatesville has been challenging for her due to a few problems with the wardens however, teamwork between the Business Consultants, her and the wardens, has been vital to overcoming and resolving problematic issues. Manager Jerry Ramirez is experiencing money issues that she thinks may be related to employees stealing from him. Chairman Hell expressed contacting Mr. Ramirez to get details and give him feedback.

## **Sub Committees Report**

### **Rules and By-Laws Sub Committee**

Chairman Hell reports that the Rules are in their “slow” phase; E C M will review the comments before they go to R S A for approval; after that, T W C will need to adopt them. Director Hooks wants it noted that the vast majority of changes to the Rules were those requested by the E C M. Chairman Hell expressed how short-staffed R S A is at the moment which will certainly impact a timely approval.

### **Finance and Budget Sub Committee –**

Karla Martinez presented the financial status of the committee as she is currently the “temporary treasurer”. Ms. Martinez reports a budget amount of \$6,800.50; there were no other expenditures other than the check that was written out for BLAST last year.

### **Election Sub Committee –**

Ms. Wilson shares a final report stating that the election went rather smoothly with no problems or hiccups; she reiterates the candidate names that were elected or re-elected as being Karla Martinez, Clayton Hell and Alvertis McClurge.

Question was asked by audience member and manager Tom Chepey, asking who the committee chair over the Rules was? Chairman Hell responds that Zachary Davis and Karla Martinez were the chairs however, he takes full responsibility with not communicating to the B E T managers regarding the proposed Rules revisions.

A lengthy discussion emerged after a question by Ms. Cecilia Wilson, was posed asking to separate the Rules and By-Laws Committee into individual committees.

### **Training Conference Sub Committee –**

Chairman Hell discussed the upcoming Upward Mobility training conference and the challenge of securing state rate hotels in Texas due to the states popularity as a hot spot for conferences and conventions. The Austin Wyndham Garden hotel has been secured for October 25<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019. Chairman Hell is requesting for a group of volunteers and a committee chair to begin organizing a program for this upcoming training conference.

### **Training of Potential Managers Sub Committee –**

Karla Martinez discussed the future trainees, Ms. Sophia Sparks and Mr. Nure Kebirtimo, commenting that both candidates worked hard during their 2-week evaluations and will be starting their training in February. Ms. Martinez also shares information concerning the possibility of three more potential candidates for the August training class.

### **Vending Sub Committee –**

Aloha Cook provided an update on the status of the current pricing review. She noted that there was an email by the B E T Trainer, Joe Gonzalez, which was sent to Chairman Hell and Ms. Cook; the email contained a spreadsheet with a chart detailing revised prices. Mr. Hooks noted that Mr. Michael Vacek makes the final decision on prices.

### **Election of Executive Committee Officers –**

Ms. Kristen McNabb Pattison nominates Clayton Hell for Chair and Ms. Karla Martinez seconds the nomination; Mr. Hell accepts the nomination. No other nominations were voiced, and Mr. Clayton Hell retains E C M chairmanship. Vice Chair nomination goes to Karla Martinez, was seconded and accepted. There were no other nominations noted for Vice-Chair; all were in favor.

Treasurer nominations go to Tommy Crawford, proposed by Karla Martinez and seconded by Kristen McNabb Pattison. Mr. Crawford accepts the nomination. No other nominations were voiced for Treasurer; all were in favor.

**Set Date and Location for Next Meeting or Workshop**

Next meeting will be held in Houston, Texas on April 13, 2019; location T B A.

**Adjournment**