**Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS)**

**Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind (BESB)**

**Statewide Committee of Blind Vendors**

**Mr. Tyrell Sampson called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm.**

**Committee Members Present: Chairman Mr. Keith Haley; Vice Chairman Mr. Rich Braccia; Mr. David Pelaggi; Ms. Brandy Altergott; Ms. Shelly McDermott; Mr. Karan Punjabi; Ms. Sovey Ramirez**

**Agency Staff Present: Tyrell Sampson, Program Supervisor;**

**Draft Minutes for review**

**Old Business**

**Minutes of the March 5th, 2024.**

**Minutes from the meeting from March 05, 2024, for action.**

**MOTION: moved to accept the minutes, and seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Yes – 7, No – 0, Abstained – 0**

**First Right of Refusal Legislative Office Building Cafeteria**

**A discussion of the first right of refusal for the Legislative Office building cafeteria was discussed in detail. Mr. Sampson reported that a site survey was conducted. He shared that the cafeteria only appears lively and vibrant during legislative sessions, and the current food service providers have expressed concerns about the lack of foot traffic and overall customer satisfaction.**

**Mr. Sampson noted that there is a significant amount of concern with the inconsistent foot traffic in which supports the food cafeteria as high foot traffic has been determined to align with the legislative sessions.**

**Overall, the discussion revealed that there are currently several challenges facing the cafeteria operation, and there would be a need for a comprehensive plan to improve services and attract more customers by the LOB to ensure longterm sustainability for the cafeteria operation.**

**MOTION: Ms. Altergott moved to waive the Legislative Office building location, always retaining our rights to vending and Mr. Pelaggi seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Yes – 7, No – 0, Abstained – 0**

**Coffee Cart Operation- DESPP 1111 Country Club Road Middletown**

**The Department of Safety and Protection in Middletown has approached BESB to set up a coffee cart in their building that sees a daily footfall of around 100 to 500 visitors.**

**Mr. Sampson discovered that Servomation is already the micro-market provider in the building, and they have discussed future opportunities before. The building's second floor houses a micro market exclusively for the employees, but they would like to expand its range of offerings to the general public. Mr. Sampson recommends that instead of operating a manned coffee cart, we should replicate the existing micro-market and offer coffee in an unmanned way.**

**Mr. Sampson suggested that the range of products and services offered may not be as extensive as those provided by the employee micro-market, except for fresh food. However, if we do include fresh food, we can use one of the latest refrigerators with credit card readers built into the doors.**

**Chair Haley expressed interest in the idea during the discussion and expressed liked it. He believes that it can provide opportunities for someone seeking however he doesn't think anyone can consistently make money by running a manned coffee cart in that location. Mr. Sampson agreed with Chair Haley views. He believes running it as an unmanned operation could make it profitable. Mr. Sampson agreed with Chair Haley's opinion.**

**After all deliberations, Mr. Sampson proposed we offer the idea of an unmanned operation similar to that of a micro market. However, if they prefer a manned station, we should wave this location. We will support either option as long as the committee is satisfied.**

**Mr. Haley agreed with Mr. Sampson's suggestion.**

**MOTION: Ms. McDermott moved to waive the idea of a manned coffee cart but accepted a Micro Mart style or wave the location should the agency not have interest in the micro-market concept offering, Mr. Punjabi seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Yes – 7, No – 0, Abstained – 0**

**No further discussion**

**Norwalk Community College Cafeteria**

**Mr. Sampson raised concerns about the future of the food service operation at Norwalk Community College due to the uncertainty surrounding the head cook's wishes. Ms. Ramirez who operates the Greenwich Beach concession, is currently uncertain about whether she wants to continue running Norwalk. Mr. Sampson intends to speak with the head cook to clarify the situation next week. The committee discussed potential difficulties in finding someone to take over the location, given its state location. Mr. Sampson emphasized the importance of maintaining the profitable location and identifying a replacement if necessary.**

**Chair Haley mentioned that the location being Norwalk makes it difficult to find someone unless they live nearby.**

**Mr. Sampson agrees and says that he will personally do his best to retain this operation since it has been long-standing and profitable.**

**2024 Transfer & Promotion List (committee approval)**

**The Committee was in compliance with the promotion transfer. No appeals were necessary based on the list provided.**

**MOTION: Mr. Pelaggi moved to accept the 2024 transfer and promotion list and Ms. Altergott seconded the motion.**

**Vote: Yes – 7, No – 0, Abstained – 0**

**Mr. Sampson raised a question related to the BESB (Bureau of Education and Services for the Blind) being a micro-market opportunity and should the committee consider a sub transfer and promotion list for operations in which a operator chooses to operate in partnership as this will allow for some operators making less and at the bottom of the seniority based transfer and promotion list opportunity to grow.**

**Mr. Sampson speculated if they should roundtable this for the June meeting or establish such an opportunity at this time and follow the traditional seniority transfer promotion list.**

**Discussion**

**Chair Haley stated currently, the regulations in place are to go with the traditional transfer and promotion, which is the seniority route. However, the committee needs to consider the theory behind the micro markets since the person in first place could potentially take all the opportunities, leaving no one in second place with any. This means the committee should consider coming up with an alternative method of selection for consideration.**

**Ms. McDermott suggested that they filter down the highest amount that people have and then start from there to see who else could add to their one or two. This would ensure that the opportunities would be distributed more evenly and that no one would be left out.**

**Ms. Altergott suggested that location plays a factor in the availability of micro markets. For instance, Ms. Ramirez in Norwalk is more likely to get such opportunities than Ms. Altergott in Rocky Neck, who is further away from the location. However, if another micro market comes up that's closer to Brandy, it wouldn't make sense to bypass her when there's no one else out there.**

**Chair Haley suggested circling back with the committee prior to the June meeting to discuss what to do in certain situations.**

**Adjournment**

**Motion to adjourn by Mr. Pelaggi and seconded by Ms. McDermott**

**The meeting adjourned at 4:14pm**