

Meeting Notes

Small Business Liaison Team (SBLT)

Thursday, April 27, 2017, 1:00-2:30 pm

Please send corrections, edits or additional information to help@oria.wa.gov.

Location	Department of Commerce Building Floor 4, Large Room 407 Sunshine Room
Purpose	Presentation: Program Overview: Department of Services for the Blind
Attendees	• Mark Adreon • Linda Alongi • Jeff Baughman • Doug Cheney • Kari Gilje • • Scott Hitchcock • Kim Johnson • Edmon Lee • Rachael Lindstedt • Erin Lopez • • Janet Shimabukuro • Jovi Swanson • Peter Vernie • Brittany Wilson •

Agenda Highlights

- **Welcome and Agenda Overview**
 - Upcoming Events
 - Web Traffic Report
- **Presentation:**
 - Program Overview: Department of Services for the Blind (DSB)
- **Roundtable**

Welcome and Agenda Overview

Scott Hitchcock, Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance

- Reviewed Agenda and Introductions

Upcoming Agency Event

Department of Commerce

- [Business Partnership Forum](#)^a: June 1, 2017, Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center, 1500 Broadway, Tacoma WA 98402

Department of Homeland Security

- **EB-5 Program Informational Session:** May 22-26, Seattle; see email from Scott Hitchcock

Department of Commerce

- **Small Business Financing Workshops:** May 3, 2017, Kennewick / May 4, 2017, Tukwila

- **PNDC/PNAA Aerospace Defense Symposium:** May 4, 2017, Joint Base Lewis McChord
- [Getting a Utility Contract: Doing Business with Washington Energy Providers^b](#): May 10, 2017, Seattle
- [Doing Business with Defense Logistics Agency^c](#): May 24, 2017, Seattle
- **The San Juan County Economic Development Council - Annual Economics Luncheon:** June 7, 2017, Friday Harbor
- [Government Contracting Essentials^d](#): June 21, 2017, Seattle;
- [CleanTech Showcase 2017^e](#): June 26, 2017, Seattle
- **NASA Small Business Industry Day:** September 26, 2017, Seattle

Other Events

- **SBCTC Offers Spring Lunchtime Accessibility Webinar Series** see email from Janet Shimabukuro
- [Global Accessibility Awareness Day^f](#): May 18, 2017 (2-4 pm), 1500 Jefferson Street SE, Olympia WA, room 1213

Web Traffic Report

Rachael Lindstedt, Office for Regulatory Innovation and Assistance

- Presented the [Web Traffic Report^g](#) for January 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017:
 - Small Business Guide agency referrals
 - Small Business Guide HTML
 - Small Business Guide PDF
 - United States and Country page views
- A quarterly web traffic report is presented to the Small Business Liaison Team each month; next month's report will include data from February 1, 2017 to April 30, 2017.

Presentation

Program Overview: Washington State Department of Services for the Blind

Mark Adreon, Department of Services for the Blind

- **Scott Hitchcock, ORIA:** Cyrus Habib, Lt. Governor, spoke highly of the services provided by the services for the blind during the OFM Employee Recognition Breakfast on Wednesday, April 26, 2017
- Services provided by the Department of Services for the Blind, includes:
 - Vocation rehabilitation: provides alternative skills, vocational goals, and training to help people become employable

- Child and family program: helps support families with blind children
- Transition youth: 15% of funds help with youth transitioning from school to college and beyond
- Older blind program: provides training to older people (past employment age) with the goal of keeping them independent
- The funding they receive is 80% federal and 20% state (match)
- The Vocational Skills, Self-employment program provides people with the opportunity to grow their businesses; goal is to make it easy to understand and help get people funded
 - Dreams and Reality Workshop offered by the program is a two week program:
 - First week they focus on the 25 characteristics of successful entrepreneurs
 - Second week is a “Shark Tank” type workshop where they break up into groups, come up with business ideas, plan and present their ideas to the funding team
 - Three measures of success:
 - ✓ Going to pursue self-employment;
 - ✓ Self-employment is not for me;
 - ✓ Not ready for either self-employment or regular employment – need further help
 - Customers provide a blueprint for a three year business plan and funding request (vendors often help customers)
 - Self-Employment receives successful pitches to the team for funding (14-18 business a year gets funded for \$14k-\$16k)
 - **Success story:** customer in Eastern Washington submitted a business plan requesting \$25k for surplus pallets of supplies to be sold on Ebay; team determined the requested funds did not fit with the Fiscal Expenditure and instead approved \$20k worth of packing tape; customer sold the packing tape to delivery company and made not only the original borrowed \$20k but and additional \$20k
 - Division of Vocational Rehab works together with Self-Employment program
- They are working towards establishing a certification similar to the one offered by OMWBE and WVDA for Disability Owned Business in Washington;
 - USBLN and National Chamber of Commerce is also working with them – goal is to build an inclusive work environment for those with disabilities and determine what type of certification makes sense for disability owned businesses
 - Pennsylvania and Massachusetts already have rules in place for disability owned business certification

- Goal is to make Washington state the third state have the disability owned certification
- Self-Employment program (as it is now) was started 2 ½ years ago with the help of AvitaBiz which is based in Portland Oregon
 - 80 customers have gone through the training
 - 40-50 businesses have kicked off
 - Not mandatory to go through the workshops – marketing to work with the counselor to look for people that have a hard time finding employment
- How many businesses have succeeded? Currently looking at the numbers now to determine whether they need to adjust the programs
- How do you stay engaged? We work with customers to establish a self-employment hourly rate as the goal; it can take up to two years to reach their goal
 - **Success Story:** Entrepreneur in Spokane wrote and submitted her a business plan for horse massage (3 pages in length); they had worked in the horse industry for years already invested in the equipment, certification and licensing. They approved funding for \$19k. The entrepreneur is very successful and started to develop their own clothing line along with a school teaching horse massage. They are famous nationwide and it took four years to get to this point.
- What can we do to make the Small Business Guide more accessible? I would love to help out and the best way is to agree to make an accessible website
 - HTML is more accessible version than PDF
 - WaTech provides agency assistance with accessibility (Ryan Lessinger)
- We want to become an economic engine through:
 - Educating the businesses and the state
 - Establish disability owned business status
- **Erin Lopez, DES:** we are working with OMWBE and WDVA to go through the rules – DES manages WEBS and Contract Policy and are willing to work with DSB to determine best practices for state contracts
- Will work with Scott to update our website and tools to make it more accessible

Roundtable

- **Scott Hitchcock, ORIA:** Events Workgroup is on track. Meeting with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce May 3 (DOR, ESD, LNI, SOS, ORIA and CBI – Celia Nightingale). This is the first step towards building a relationship with the Economic Development Councils and they are working towards a Fall Event.
 - Conversation originally started in December with the Thurston Chamber of Commerce when SBLT team members attended meeting.
 - We have been researching other chambers to establish a relationship with; however, most of those contact do not look like a good match at this point (i.e. we can attend but not present)
 - **Janet Shimabukuro, DOR:** Rose and I attended Thurston county chamber meeting and brought a stack of business cards. Was surprised at the number of people that are unaware of the resources available (i.e. DOR can answer tax questions)
- **Brittany Wilson, ORIA:** Communication workgroup met last week and is on track. I had been working on the FAQ provided by the SBLT team and presented it to the workgroup. Team decided to tackle the roadmap, make it more in to a checklist, and compare the information to the FAQ.
- **Linda Alongi, COM:** Cheryl Smith who has been working on the regulatory roadmap wanted to announce that the Lynnwood manufacturing roadmap is now up and good to go
- **Erin Lopez, DES:** passed out the announcement for the Business Partnership Forum occurring on June 1, 2017. Thank you to the sponsors this year we are focusing on IT / green environmental preferred purchases.
 - Will be surveying businesses monthly for a year to determine success of the forum (goal: 200 business attend; 50 connections with state agencies and 12 contracts)
 - **Janet Shimabukuro, DOR:** If we are attending the late afternoon forum, do you need staff at the table the whole time? Yes, that would be preferable so questions are answered
- **Scott, Hitchcock, ORIA:** Shout out to Milani Conn who did a great job of showing ORIA staff (Rachael, Brittany and Scott) the MyDOR system

Referenced Hyperlinks

- a **Business Partnership Forum**
<http://des.wa.gov/services/contracting-purchasing/contracting-and-purchasing-events/business-partnership-forum>
- b **Getting a Utility Contract: Doing Business with Washington Energy Providers**
<http://www.cleantechalliance.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=847203&group>
- c **Doing Business with Defense Logistics Agency**
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/selling-to-the-defense-logistics-agency-tickets-31544657921>
- d **Government Contracting Essentials**
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/government-contracting-essentials-tickets-31544588714>
- e **CleanTech Showcase 2017**
<http://www.cleantechalliance.org/events/EventDetails.aspx?id=926107>
- f **Global Accessibility Awareness Day**
<https://olygaad.wordpress.com/>
- g **Web Traffic Report**
[https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/1729/Documents/Analytics/WebSite%20Analytics%20-%20SBLT%20Report%20\(Jan%202017%20-%20Mar%202017\).pdf](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/1729/Documents/Analytics/WebSite%20Analytics%20-%20SBLT%20Report%20(Jan%202017%20-%20Mar%202017).pdf)