**MINUTES OF MEETING**

**BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES**

**WEDNESDAY, September 7, 2016**

**9 a.m. – 11 a.m.**

HYATT REGENCY SAVANNAH  
2 WEST BAY STREET  
SCARBROUGH BALLROOM  
SAVANNAH, GA 31401

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**  
Sandy Adams

Jimmy DeFoor  
Bob Green

Jonathan Taylor

Tom Wilson

Dianne Davis

Angela Mackey

Louise Hill

Jimmy DeFoor, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

Chairman DeFoor welcomed new board members Dianne Davis and Angela Mackey. Ms. Davis and Ms. Mackey introduced themselves and spoke briefly of their background in the disability community. Mr. Green, Mr. Wilson, Ms. Adams, Mr. DeFoor, Ms. Hill and Mr. Taylor spoke of their backgrounds and introduced themselves to Ms. Davis and Ms. Mackey.

Mr. DeFoor thanked the interpreters for attending.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. DeFoor moved to consider the minutes for August 2016. Motion for approval was made by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Green and Ms. Adams. The motion was passed unanimously.

**Executive Director Report**

GVRA Executive Director Greg Schmieg noted several items in the board packets including a brochure from Blaze Sports and the GRA/SERNA Conference agenda.

Mr. Schmieg noted the final publication of the WIOA guidelines. These included a Pre-Employment Transition Services (PETS) mandate that would require the agency to spend fifteen (15) percent of its federal match for transition services for students with disabilities—the only portion of WIOA that has a financial mandate. This will expand the agency caseload to include a younger population and will raise new challenges as to how to serve this population as it exists in school districts across the state. While the spirit of the law likely applies to public schools, the aim of the agency is to reach students regardless of what school they may attend. Mr. Schmieg said the GVRS Board will play an integral role in shaping the efforts to serve this population.

Mr. Schmieg discussed the Roosevelt Warms Springs Long-Range Master Campus Plan. There was a meeting on 9.14.16 with the RWS Development Fund Board and primary partners to begin the process of establishing a long-term plan for the campus. The goal for the roughly 960-acre campus is to expand its service population beyond exclusively VR clients by opening it up to partners who will provide funding and help integrate the campus to a wider population. Mr. Schmieg welcomed board members to a future planning meeting on 10.14.16 that will include members of Gov. Nathan Deal’s office among others. Mr. Green agreed to attend on the board’s behalf.

Mr. Schmieg noted the recent State Rehabilitation Council public hearings across the state. The hearings centered on the proposed order of selection, and there was much feedback and questions regarding the proposed order. The SRC will prepare a report on the hearings that will be available at a later date. Mr. Schmieg said it is crucial to have an open and clear relationship with the SRC—in addition to the GVRS Board—moving forward.

Mr. Schmieg said that the UGA Institute on Human Development and Disability will soon conduct a consumer satisfaction survey of current and closed VR clients. The goal of these surveys is to gain a clearer understanding of how agency clients view their work with the agency.

Mr. Schmieg discussed the recent publication of a VR performance audit performed by the Georgia Department of Audits. The audit notes that the agency should focus in the future on tracking outcomes both internally and as they relate to providers. He said that the Project Horizon initiative will address much of the concerns contained therein and further efforts to address the issues raised in audit are already underway. Much of the problems with data collection can be traced back to the LIBERA case management system, and the agency is actively working to implement a new, more functional CMS. GVRA COO Jimmy Wilson briefly discussed the status of the new CMS. Mr. Schmieg asked the board to work with the agency to address the findings in the audit.

Mr. Schmieg told the board why he believes the Project Horizon initiative is crucial to the future success of the agency. It hinges on three points, he said: the why, the goal and the how. The reason the agency is undergoing the transformation is to dramatically increase the number of positive outcomes for clients, and WIOA creates the right opportunities at this time to expand services and reach as many potential clients as possible. The goal, he said, is to serve 100,000 individuals with disabilities annually, assisting 50,000 of those every year to find and maintain a job. To do this, the agency is rethinking and redesigning how it—and its providers—serves its target populations. It will align all its resources toward the greater mission and engage, train and empower staff to perform as well as possible. Mr. Schmieg and Mr. DeFoor agreed that the GVRS Board will play a significant role in shaping the agency moving forward.

In addition to Project Horizon, Mr. Schmieg said, the success of the agency relies on its continued and strengthened relationship with the GVRS Board. To help guide board relations, the agency will hire a Board Liaison; an offer has been made and that individual will likely be on staff before the next board meeting. The agency will also host an all-day board training prior to its October meeting on 10.12.16. The training will include WIOA, Project Horizon, transition services, SRC Public Hearings feedback and the consumer satisfaction surveys.

**Old Business**

No old business.

**SRC/SILC Comments**

Jennifer Page with the SRC spoke on the availability of the transcripts and reports from the SRC Public Hearings. Ms. Page asked about the availability of the questions for the consumer satisfaction surveys. She noted that the public hearings were held in a total of five (5) locations across the state, and all materials were provided in accessible formats. In total, one hundred and seventy two (172) individuals attended the hearings. She briefly discussed the questions and comments the SRC received at those hearings.

The SILC report will be delivered to the board via email.

**New Business**

No new business.

**Public Comment**

No public comment.

**Adjournment**

The next GVRS Board meeting is scheduled for October 12, 2016 in Elberton, GA at a specific location TBD. The board discussed holding a training event at the same location prior to the next meeting.

Mr. DeFoor adjourned the board meeting at 11 a.m.