

**MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
WEDNESDAY, March 13
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Sloppy Floyd Building
200 Piedmont Ave.
Atlanta, GA 30334

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sandy Adams
Faye Perdue
Tom Wilson
Louise Hill
Vincent Martin
Craig Camuso
Angela Mackey
Diane Davis

Mr. Wilson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Mr. Camuso motioned to approve the meeting minutes from September 2018, and Ms. Adams seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

GVRA Staff Reports

Mr. Wilson recognized GVRA Executive Director Shawn Ryan, noting that the board is excited to begin work with Mr. Ryan in the coming months.

Mr. Ryan gave a brief overview of his career background, specifically discussing his experience at multiple agencies within the State of Georgia. He said that during the three weeks he has been at GVRA, he has held meetings with senior staff, and that he is focused on both process and organizational improvements.

Mr. Wilson recognized GVRA CFO Minerva Nixon. She outlined the current agency budget as it stands through Feb. 28 of this year. She noted that case management expenses have steadily gone up in recent years, a direct product of the agency moving from one system to another.

Mr. Wilson recognized Vocational Services Director Christine Fleming. Ms. Fleming gave a brief introduction. She said that in her first 60 days with the agency, she has worked to get a grasp on current processes and structures. In looking towards the future, Ms. Fleming said that she aims to create an organization that gives hope to those

who need GVRA services. Ms. Fleming gave an overview of her leadership team and their respective roles and duties.

Mr. Wilson recognized Director of Residential and Transition Services Dr. Lee Brinkley Bryan. Ms. Bryan outlined her vision for transition services, specifically highlighting the need for effective processes and procedures. Transition is a part of larger collaborative approach within VR and should be viewed as a tool in the greater toolbox to help ensure clients have the skills they need to enter the workforce.

In terms of efforts for the coming year, Ms. Bryan said the transition team will develop key performance indicators that allow leadership to easily track whether goals are being met. She noted that pre-employment transition services will be a crucial component of helping students move towards higher education or a career when they graduate from high school.

Ms. Bryan said GVRA supports 128 students within the Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program, and that the agency will continue working with partners to ensure that the programs across the state are maximally effective for the students they serve and offer the best return on investment for the taxpayers.

Ms. Bryan continued her presentation discussing GVRA's two residential campuses (Roosevelt Warm Springs and the smaller Cave Spring Center). She and other leadership decided that CSC needs to reestablish itself as the premier campus for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. In addition, both CSC and RWS continue to track their performance via monthly dashboards and annual reports.

Mr. Wilson recognized Provider Management Manager Mary Ellen Mendiratta. She spoke on the responsibilities of the provider management team, with their collective goal being to protect the clients and the taxpayers and to ensure that services are being delivered with the best outcomes and at the lowest cost available. Ms. Mendiratta discussed the expectations of providers when they agree to work with GVRA.

Mr. Wilson recognized James Stephens to discuss the agency's ongoing contract with the UGA Carl Vinson Institute specifically as it relates to the Executive Leadership Development Program and the Human Resource Development Analysis Program. The Leadership Program is now in its second cohort with the first graduating class completing the program last September. He said the Carl Vinson Institute continues to work with GVRA to optimize training opportunities statewide.

SILC Presentation

Becky Ramage-Tutt, Assistant Director for SILC, said the Statewide Independent Living Council has Independent Living Day coming up on March 19, an event which should serve as a dialogue between legislators, organizational leaders and the public at large.

SRC Presentation

State Rehabilitation Council Chairman Rossany Rios gave an overview of what the SRC accomplished the previous calendar year. During this time, the SRC adopted revised bylaws and developed a timeline for receiving policy changes/updates from Vocational Rehabilitation. She said the SRC has established strategic goals for 2019 including: developing a comprehensive statewide needs assessment and pushing a supported self-employment policy proposal.

Old Business

Ms. Adams moved to reaffirm the vote from the previous telephonic meeting ratifying Shawn Ryan as the new GVRA Executive Director. Ms. Davis seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

New Business

Mr. Wilson noted the upcoming GVRS meeting dates through the remainder of 2019. Once locations are finalized, these meeting notices will be posted on the GVRA website.

Public Comment

Mr. Wilson recognized Adam Hinchliffe from the Center for the Visually Impaired. Mr. Hinchliffe welcomed Mr. Ryan to GVRA and committed himself and his organization to working with the agency in the future.

Mr. Wilson recognized Esther Maclin. She said that her son has been on the GVRA caseload for roughly a year. She said they have struggled working through various agencies and would like to have seen greater progress in her son's efforts to find a job.

Mr. Wilson recognized Letitia McKenna. She said her son received GVRA services and has since landed employment. She said many people aren't aware of the benefits and programs available to them.

Mr. Wilson recognized Linette Miller. Ms. Miller said she is a parent of child with special needs and is also a provider who works with GVRA. She said she believes that agency clients aren't receiving the best training to help them in their job hunt. She said she is looking forward to the changes the agency will make in the future.

Board Statements

Mr. Martin noted a previous GVRA client who now makes over \$200,000 annually, saying that she wouldn't be where she is today without GVRA.

Ms. Mackey said that Vocational Rehabilitation can provide the roadmap to connecting individuals with disabilities with employers.

Various board members thanked the speakers and everyone who helped to make the board meeting a success.

Mr. Wilson adjourned the meeting at 3:03 p.m.