

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BOARD**  
**Wednesday, May 12th, 2021**  
**1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.**

**VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tom Wilson (Chairman)  
Faye Perdue (Vice-Chair)  
Sandy Adams (Secretary)  
Craig Camuso  
Suzanne Dooley  
Louise Hill  
Vincent Martin  
Angela Mackey  
Jonathan Taylor  
GVRA Executive Director Chris Wells (Non-Member)

**Introduction**

GVRS Board Chair Tom Wilson welcomed everyone in attendance. The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the March 10<sup>th</sup> meeting were unanimously approved.

**GVRA Staff Updates/Reports**

**Executive Director – Chris Wells**

Director Wells updated the board on current agency program highlights as well as organizational and financial updates. Program highlights are below.

- **Administration**

Staff will formally return to offices on August 1, with a minimum of four in-office days a week. In addition, 200 Piedmont staff will be consolidating offices to the 13<sup>th</sup> floor. Executive Director Wells noted that GVRA is planning to establish an interagency Business Unit and is planning a Stakeholder Summit for late August at RWS. This summit is to bring together agency partners to have conversations on how to move GVRA forward. Executive Director Wells also noted that IT is working on increasing the agency's network bandwidth and connectivity improvement.

- **Business Enterprise Program**

Blind Vendor and Employee work status – 44 Blind Vendors working F/T and P/T; 13 Blind Vendors not working and approximately 1525 vendor employees. RSA's Financial Relief Funds – GA BEP is projected to receive \$702K in federal financial relief from RSA; the BEP is finalizing the application for submission to RSA

- **Disability Adjudication Services**

DAS has closed 53,591 cases. DAS has hired 40 new employees (38 Adjudicator Trainees). DAS is on schedule to complete its transition to the new Disability Case Processing System (DCPS) within the next six (6) months.

- **Georgia Industries for the Blind**

Sixty-Six employees, 69.7% Direct Labor Blind Ratio. New Products are Piston Parts Kit (Defense Logistics Agency), Parachute Deployment Bags (DLA) and Windshield Wiper Kits Pleated Disposable Mask Machine (DLA)

**Agency Financials** – The agency is currently in good standing and on track with the budget for the current fiscal year.

**Stakeholders Summit – Ahnemiah Porter, Executive Assistant**

Ms. Porter presented a synopsis of the summit to the Board. Invitations and a formalized agenda are forthcoming.

**Legislative Updates – John Boan, Public Affairs Officer**

Mr. Boan provided an update on the passed legislations, HB 128 and HB 146.

**RWS/CS Updates – Dr. Lee Brinkley-Bryan, Director of Residential Services**

The RWS Virtual Graduation ceremony is scheduled for June 24, 2021. The Morgan Cottage (1934) was lost to a fire on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Dr. Bryan provided details on the RWS HVAC Mini-Plant Project. Number of RWS students serviced: RWS Distance Learning 224, Distance Services 344, total served 568. RWS Return to Campus Phase II – May 17, 2021. Twenty to 22 additional students will return to campus. CSC students served, Distance Learning 19, Distance Services, 21, total served 40. CS will be recruiting to a new CSS Manager due to Russell Fleming's promotion.

**Vocational Rehabilitation – Dr. Christine Fleming, VR Director**

Director Fleming provided an update on the total number of VR field services staff as of April 2021(365), along with current and future positions that are still in active recruiting (OAT, Counselor 2 and 3, Pre-Employment Specialist Employment Specialists, Business Analyst, District Managers, Supervisors, Interpreters and Assistants). Dr. Fleming provided totals of the individuals served and well as the total number currently on the waiting list. Dr. Fleming provided an update on Transition Services.

**Bond Sales – Paul Bryant, Bond Projects Manager**

Mr. Bryant provided an overview of how the bond process works. Mr. Bryant provided the Board with the current resolution for their consideration.

**State Rehabilitation Council – Kate Brady, Chair**

No update.

**Statewide Independent Living Center (SILC) – Shelly Simmons, Executive Director**

Executive Director Simmons submitted her presentation for the Board's review though did not present at the meeting.

**New/Old Business – Tom Wilson, Board Chair**

The Board elected to have the current officers remain in their positions with the new term running from July 2021 to June 2022. The Board approved the Bond Resolution submitted by Mr. Bryant. There was no old business to discuss.

**Public Comment**

None

The meeting was adjourned a 2:20 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, July 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 via ZOOM.