

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2015  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

CENTER FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED  
739 WEST PEACHTREE STREET NW  
ATLANTA, GA 30308

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Jimmy DeFoor  
Sandy Adams  
Amy O'Dell  
Don Parks  
Bob Green  
Louise Hill  
Jonathan Taylor

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Fay Loggins

Jimmy DeFoor, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. DeFoor moved to consider the minutes. Motion was made to approve the minutes by Louise Hill and seconded by Don Parks. The motion was passed unanimously.

### **Consumer Presentations**

Mr. DeFoor welcomed Fontaine Huey to introduce Desmond West to present to the board. Desmond shared his story about struggling through vision loss and his journey through the Vocational Rehab program. Desmond is now a full-time assistive technology instructor at the Center for Visually Impaired. He thanked GVRA for all that they have done for him.

Bob Green introduced Lee Russell to present to the board. Lee shared with the board the hard times she has faced due to her hearing and vision loss. She told the board of the obstacles that she faced while going through the Vocational Rehab program and how VR worked with her to overcome her problems. Lee received a job with Ferguson Elementary School as a cafeteria worker and has been there for five years. She expressed how grateful she is for everything that GVRA did for her.

### **Executive Director Report**

Mr. Schmiege began by giving an update on the GDOL MOU. He informed the board that he is unsure if it can be executed by the set deadline.

Mr. Schmiege addressed issues with the GRACI system. He said that David Frydrych, a contractor for GVRA, has been working to improve the issues.

Mr. Schmiege provided an update on the employee satisfaction surveys. He noted that the executive leadership focused first on DAS and have interviewed every supervisor in DAS.

Mr. Schmiege gave an update on Georgia Industries for the Blind. He discussed how GIB has engaged the marketing firm MODO MODO. GIB has been working with them to improve future messaging and direction.

Mr. Schmiege then gave an update on the Business Enterprise Program. He informed the board that BEP has been given permission to run a laundromat, which will be opening in the coming months.

Mr. Schmiege also gave an update on Vocational Rehabilitation. He informed the board that he thinks they will have an agreement with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities to move individuals into supportive employment. He noted that he expects to have this executed before June 30, 2015. He also informed the board that they plan to work with the Department of Juvenile Justice to help individuals move out of youth detention centers and into the Vocational Rehabilitation program.

Mr. Schmieg noted a new partnership between the agency and the Carl Vinson Institute of Government. He told the board that the institute will help the agency develop better training and a clearer long-term vision. They are finalizing the agreement and are set to have a meeting to kick-off the partnership in June.

Mr. Schmieg gave an update on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. He told the board that a draft regulation has been issued, and it is in a public comment period, which lasts until June 15, 2015.

Mr. Schmieg also gave a presentation on the agency's goals and objectives. He informed the board that the agency has developed dashboards to track how it meets these goals and objectives.

Mr. Schmieg presented two action items to be voted on by the board. Mr. DeFoor moved to consider the budget. Motion was made to approve the budget by Sandy Adams and seconded by Bob Green. The motion was passed unanimously. Mr. DeFoor moved to consider the capital bonds resolution. Motion was made to approve the resolution by Amy O'Dell and seconded by Bob Green. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Schmieg then presented the proposed SFY 2016 board meeting schedule. Mr. DeFoor moved to consider the schedule. Motion was made to approve the schedule by Amy O'Dell and seconded by Sandy Adams. The motion was passed unanimously.

Mr. Schmieg mentioned that three individuals are being vetted for the replacement of Marsha Farrow. He informed the board that it will hear from the governor's office when a decision is made.

### **Old Business**

No old business.

### **SRC/SILC Comments**

Kip Slade, the new chair of the State Rehabilitation Council, said he is excited about the group's prospects moving forward.

Shelly Simmons presented an update on SILC activities. She discussed how employment and education are big issues faced by people with disabilities.

### **New Business**

Mr. Defoor said that the capital bonds resolution was already discussed by Mr. Schmieg. No other new business.

### **Public Comment**

Betsy Grinovich spoke to the board regarding the resignation of Marsha Farrow. She said that she is displeased with the way the situation was handled.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. DeFoor adjourned the board meeting at approximately 3:00 p.m.

The next GVRS Board meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2015. The location has yet to be determined.

*Jimmy DeFoor*

*Paul Adams*

*Precious Davis 7/8/15*

