

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 2014  
1:00pm - 3:00pm**

**GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION AGENCY (GVRA)**

Jacob's Ladder School  
407 Hardscrabble Road  
Roswell, GA 30075

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Sandy Adams  
Jimmy DeFoor  
Marsha Farrow  
Robert Green  
Louise Hill  
Fay Loggins  
Amy O'Dell

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Don Parks

Mr. Jimmy DeFoor, Chairman, welcomed everyone to the Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Services (GVRS) May Board meeting. He expressed his appreciation to everyone for being in attendance at the GVRS Board meeting today.

Chairman DeFoor called the GVRS Board meeting to order at approximately 1:05 pm with the roll call.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Chairman DeFoor moved to consider meeting minutes from the last board meeting be approved and asked if there were any additions or corrections to those minutes.

Chairman DeFoor asked for a motion for meeting minutes to be approved from the last board meeting. Motion from Sandy Adams, motioned seconded by Fay Loggins that the minutes of the March 12, 2014 meeting be approved. The motion passed unanimously by the Board.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. DeFoor asked if any questions from Board members. None asked. Mr. DeFoor introduced GVRA, Executive Director, Greg Schmieg for the Executive Director report.

Mr. DeFoor advises Senator Miller would be unable to join the meeting due to a conflict and asked for presentations to begin.

Raj Gandy – introduced a Consumer Presentation from a member of the BEP Program. She introduced Zachary (“Zach”) Snow to present about his life and his business/café.

Zachary “Zach” Snow – presented about his life, program, and how the program has helped him and his business.

Mr. DeFoor – thanked Zach for his inspiring story and for sharing and giving back to the disabled community.

Chairman Defoor introduced Amy O’Dell and asked for background on Jacob’s Ladder and its successes.

Board Member, Amy O’Dell – presented about Jacob’s Ladder, it’s beginning, and the great works of the school.

Louise Hill – spoke regarding how impressed she is with current status of GVRA’s Strategic Plan. She has witnessed many strategic plans be placed on the shelf - and so far she is very proud of the dynamic movement and how everything is coming together.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Executive Director, Greg Schmieg, presented the Director’s report with the following:

**1. Update on GVRA Strategic Plan**

- With Chip Kenney’s advice – determine achievable goals.
- One goal determined for agency – to build an accountable / results oriented GVRA to have the capacity to fulfill our mission
- Establishing an accountability culture
- Seeing employment and sustainable lifestyle for those we serve
- Ensure capacity to sustain our mission
- What does it take to build the capacity to serve our mission
- Capacity in place by July 1, 2014

**2. Vocational Rehabilitation Program**

- Projecting to spend \$59MM
- Categories re-opened on Feb 1<sup>st</sup> – but still taking time to get clients through the pipeline
- Federal Match achieved
- 262 plans have been written since Feb 1

**3. Business Enterprise Program (BEP)**

- Projected 765K of surplus federal money

**4. Roosevelt Warm Springs**

- 10.5MM in state funds – from funds given to support the hospital
- Projected 3.9MM surplus for RSW

**5. Georgia Industries for the Blind (GIB)**

- Georgia Industries for Blind(GIB) has struggled due to a lot of factors –primarily loss of federal contracts
- Receiving no state or federal monies
- Projected deficit of \$107,000

**6. Disability Adjudication Services (DAS)**

- 100% federally funded – no state money
- Projected 71MM surplus
- Request by social security to add additional adjudicators

**7. GVRA**

- \$12.9MM surplus for the year – which should be all federal monies that we intend to roll-over to use next year. We do not want to have a surplus on the backs of our clients, so our goal is to have the surplus to be able to serve the disabled community and clients
- Continuing to build financial and technology infrastructure
- Currently working on standardizing marketing outreach by replacing old office signage / creating image of professionalism for our clients
- Introduction of Michael Riley as new Information Technology (IT) Director
- Still in process of negotiating the MOU with the Dept. of Labor (DOL)
- The past legislative session - the RSW Hospital property was conveyed legally to Georgia Regents Hospital the property that the RSW hospital sits on
- Met with Warm Spring all 182 hospital staff employees on April 2<sup>nd</sup> and announced the reductions – terminating all positions as on June 30, 2014 – simultaneously they would be offered new positions with the new hospital (Georgia Regents Hospital)
- 100% of those employees will be offered employment with Georgia Regents
- Capital project approved by RSA for Roosevelt Warm Springs to renovate the current buildings, fire alarms, etc.

Chairman Defoor – upon Executive Director's recommendation - asked for motion for pass of Capital Bond for improvement to Roosevelt Warm Spring (RWS). Motion from Louise Hill, second by Amy O'Dell. Motion passed unanimously by the Board.

After additional comments from Executive Director, Greg Schmiege – report was concluded.

Chairman Defoor – asked for new GVRA Program Directors to introduce new staff.

Bill Bulloch, RSW Executive Director – introduced new RSW employee, Kay Williamson, as the new Organizational Advancement Director.

Executive Director Schmiege – requested for a support / motion from the board to seek an across the board pay increase for GVRA's employees. GVRA is attempting to become more compensation competitive overall – specifically for recruitment and retaining of counselors - the highest vacancy rate.

Questions from the board regarding the request.

Executive Director Schmieg – withdraws motion.

Executive Director Schmieg – requested support / motion from the board that the agency continue to explore methods for how to best recognize employees for pay raises and becoming more compensation competitive for retaining GVRA staff.

Mr. DeFoor asked for a motion for support from the board on exploring the pay increases across the board. Motion from Marsha Farrow, motioned seconded by Bob Green. Motion passed unanimously by the board.

#### OLD BUSINESS

No old business presented.

#### NEW BUSINESS

No new business presented.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Defoor – recognized Ms. Karen Royston to present to the board on the nationally recognized High School High Tech (HSHT) Program.

#### ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business for discussion, the Board meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:39pm

#### THE NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting will be on Wednesday, September 10, 2014, 200 Piedmont Avenue, SE, 14<sup>th</sup> Floor – West Tower, Atlanta, GA 30303.



Marsha Farrow, Secretary

#### APPROVED:



Jimmy DeFoor, Chair

