

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2020  
1 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.**

**VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

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

**Introduction**

GVRS Board Chair Tom Wilson welcomed everyone in attendance.

**Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the July 8<sup>th</sup> and July 29<sup>th</sup> meetings were passed unanimously.

**GVRA Staff Updates/Reports**

**Executive Director – Chris Wells**

Director Wells provided agency highlights and an overview of the RSA monitoring virtual visit, strategic planning and budget development. The VR town hall has been completed, and the administration office town hall will be held on September 11<sup>th</sup>. 85% of all Business Enterprise Program vendor locations are closed, and many of the current vendors are retiring. Georgia Industries for the Blind is still open and operating. While there was some backlog of orders due to COVID-related issues, staff have caught up and are working on current federal contract orders. Roosevelt Warm Springs is working on a potential opening plan for students.

**Employer Success Story – Michael Romesburg, CVS, Lead Manager of Workforce Initiatives**

Mr. Romesburg shared a success story about Ms. Margaret Dixon who currently works at CVS as a store associate. Mr. Romesburg provided a background of the relationship with CVS and GVRA. In addition to hiring GVRA clients, CVS also has a mock store on the RWS campus. At this location students are trained in customer services, retail and merchandising training. Mr. Romesburg said there will be additional opportunities for partnership and collaboration in the future.

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

Administration and VR Leadership are currently meeting daily preparing for the RSA virtual visit. In addition, the VR four assistant directors' positions have been filled. Those four individuals are in the process of hiring for the eight district managers. After the eight district managers have been hired, the next hires will be the four coordinator positions (training & development, AWT, strategic initiative and transition). Director Fleming provided client numbers as of August 30<sup>th</sup>. The Office of Provider Management developed a criteria for providers to receive mileage reimbursement for client services. VR staff have been given numerous online trainings in recent months, with all of those trainings housed on the agency SharePoint.

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

None

### **State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) – Kate Brady, Chair**

No Report.

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

The State Plan for Independent Living was submitted on June 30<sup>th</sup>. SILC conducted two breakout sessions at the virtual National Conference on Independent Living (NCIL) workshop and are in the process of preparing for the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) workshop. Director Simmons invited the board to review a recently-completed documentary, which is in the process of being made accessible via audio, ASL and Spanish. The next SILC board meeting is scheduled for October 8<sup>th</sup> via Zoom.

### **Public Comment**

Vice Chairman Wells updated the Board on the last Employment First Council meeting, noting that they are working on their next report to the Georgia General Assembly.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:17 pm. The next meeting date is Tuesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. Meeting platform to be determined.