

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES**  
**WEDNESDAY, September 12, 2018**  
**1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Georgia School for the Deaf  
232 Perry Farm Road  
Cave Spring, GA 30124

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Tom Wilson  
Sandy Adams  
Faye Perdue  
Vincent Martin  
Craig Camuso  
Diane Davis (by phone)  
Angela Mackey (by phone)  
Louise Hill (by phone)  
Johnathan Taylor (by phone)

Mr. Wilson, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:15 p.m.

Mr. Wilson recognized Interim Vocational Services Director Dr. Lee Brinkley-Bryan and Cave Spring Center Manager Russell Fleming who welcomed the GVRs board to the Georgia School for the Deaf.

**Meeting Minutes**

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

**GVRA Staff Reports**

Mr. Wilson recognized GVRA Executive Director Sean T. Casey.

Mr. Casey gave an overview of the situation surrounding Hurricane Florence and how it will impact office closures and GVRA activities in the coming days. Officials are monitoring the storm, and Mr. Casey said that the safety of staff and clients will be the driving force behind any decisions. He noted that the Leadership Summit is scheduled for September 17<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>, and inclement weather may result in a possible postponement.

The Employment First committee is in the process of being formed, and, once gathered, they will work in the coming months to provide guidance to the General Assembly. The Committee will consist of 14 members, including representatives of other state agencies

serving similar populations, representatives of the disability and business community, and those with family members with disabilities. The first meeting is anticipated at the end of October once the Governor makes all appointments.

Mr. Casey noted that the organization is working with the RSA surrounding a previous audit and the proceeding corrective action plan. The goal is to maximize services provided to clients and ensure they are given all the help they need to find and maintain a career. Identified issues include the time used to determine eligibility and the time taken to develop and Individualized Plan for Employment. The audit findings spanned State Fiscal Years 2014 through 2016.

The organization has compiled a transition plan for the incoming governor and submitted it to the Governor's Office to be turned over following the next gubernatorial election. Mr. Casey noted some of the many accomplishments highlighted in the transition plan. The GVRS Board will be receiving a copy of this.

The SFY 2018-2019 budget was submitted as a flat-rate budget across the board. Mr. Casey noted that legislators have been educated as to the benefits of increasing the GVRA budget to maximize the federal match. GVRA has submitted a request for an enhancement to the VR budget to allow for a 2 percent pay increase for staff for SFY 2020.

Georgia Industries for the Blind is in the process of installing a new roof on its plant in Bainbridge. The Tucker VR office has moved into a new building, and several other offices are slated for relocation in the near future, including Waycross and Perry.

Mr. Casey gave a brief overview of the organization staff count and other staffing demographics. The vast majority of hiring is occurring in the programs rather than administration.

The AWARE system is currently online, and potential issues are being addressed as situations arise. Because the original warranty for the preliminary package purchase packaged has now expired, GVRA now has the option to expand its platform and is compiling a list of features needed.

Organization staff will meet with legislators next week as part of a joint subcommittee on the Inclusive Post-Secondary Education program. This is a continuation of a previous subcommittee meeting that was cut short due to a medical emergency. GVRA is prepared to present both four and seven-year growth projections for the program at this meeting.

Mr. Casey outlined upcoming training sessions and conferences.

Mr. Wilson recognized CFO Minerva Nixon. Ms. Nixon went through information related to the close of the previous state fiscal year, noting that the organization finished the year with expenditures below budget. She noted the amount of federal funds the state has relinquished in past years.

Mr. Wilson recognized Special Projects Manager Cece Walker who discussed the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor Code of Ethics.

Mr. Wilson recognized Ms. Brinkley-Bryan for the vocational services update. She noted that the organization has set forth targeted goals for the VR offices throughout the state as well as the GVRA residential campuses. Training will play a key component in giving staff the tools to meet these goals.

Mr. Wilson recognized Marketing Manager Patrice Meadows to give a marketing update. The organization will soon host panel discussions across the state regarding resources for individuals with disabilities. This will be part of a larger celebration of the annual National Disability Employment Awareness Month in October. In addition, GVRA will soon unveil several videos highlighting programs and client successes. Ms. Meadows said the organization aims to be the leader in accessibility of marketing and promotional materials.

### **SILC Presentation**

Mr. Wilson recognized Jill Baldwin for the Statewide Independent Living Council update. She said the SILC will be holding town hall meetings prior to June 2019 to better gauge what the public needs and wants from the organization. They are also doing ongoing recruitment for their governing board.

### **SRC Presentation**

Deputy Executive Director Kevin Harris gave the State Rehabilitation Council report on behalf of SRC Chair Rossany Rios. The SRC is working to finalize the GVRA liaison position. The next SRC meeting will be in Valdosta in October of this year. Mr. Harris commended Mr. Casey for the work done throughout GVRA in helping individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Harris provided additional information regarding the Executive Director's report earlier in the meeting.

1. The RSA audit results addressed findings from fiscal years prior to Mr. Casey's tenure. Mr. Casey was presented with these items and others in the weeks following after his arrival, and plans were subsequently made to systematically address the issues.
2. Beginning in 2014, a Master Calendar had been discussed for the agency, and since the time of the last Board meeting, it has been implemented to help organizational leaders plan and to avoid scheduling conflicts.

### **Old Business**

No old business

### **New Business**

Mr. Wilson proposed adoption of the CRC Code of Ethics as the official code of the agency in conjunction with ongoing policy and codes of conduct. The motion to approve was made by Ms. Adams and seconded by Mr. Martin. It was approved unanimously.

Mr. Wilson proposed a change to a quarterly meeting schedule that would be coordinated with the SRC to help collaboration between the two groups. This would require an adjustment to the GVRS bylaws.

Mr. Wilson proposed moving the November 2018 board meeting to Wednesday, November 28. The motion to approve was made by Ms. Perdue and seconded by Ms. Hill. It was approved unanimously. The location will be determined at a later date.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Wilson adjourned the meeting at 3:17 p.m.