

MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF GEORGIA VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES
WEDNESDAY, November 8, 2017
1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Westin Savannah Harbor
1 Resort Drive.
Savannah, GA 31421

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sandy Adams
Dianne Davis
Jimmy DeFoor
Faye Perdue
Tom Wilson
Bob Green
Vincent Martin
Louise Hill
Jonathan Taylor

Mr. DeFoor, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

He welcomed Faye Perdue as a new board member.

Mr. DeFoor called the roll. A quorum was met.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. DeFoor called to consider the minutes of the September 2017 board meeting. Mr. Wilson motioned to approve the minutes, and Ms. Davis seconded the motion. It was passed unanimously. These minutes have been posted to the GVRA website.

GVRA Staff Reports

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

Mr. Casey noted that he has now been with the agency one year, and in that time, he has visited nearly every local office, with the remaining office visits to occur in the near future. He noted that he has worked to decentralize the central office, provide more resources to the field and hire from within the organization. He said the agency has worked to expand and improve services to sensory populations. In addition, employment services has been moved back into VR.

GVRA Communications has also ramped up its advertising across multiple platforms. Staff members have also reassessed business processes to better streamline services for clients. He said the agency is working with retirees to establish a mentor program for existing employees.

The agency is working to expedite the hiring process and focusing on employee retention. The Carl Vincent Institute will also be leading a team to analyze existing training and give suggestions for its improvement. Also, Sodexo, a multi-national corporation, continues its partnership with GVRA and will be featured in an upcoming video project.

Mr. Casey thanked Mr. Green for his service to the board. He presented Mr. Green with a plaque for his service.

New Business

Mr. Defoor proposed a change in the bylaws that would continue a bi-monthly meeting schedule. Mr. Wilson so moved. Mr. Martin seconded. Discussion established that the Executive Committee will—should the motion pass—continue to meet monthly. It was passed unanimously.

Mr. Defoor proposed a calendar of GVRS board meetings and other events through 2018. Ms. Adams motioned to accept the proposed calendar. Mr. Martin seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

GVRA Program Reports

Mr. Defoor welcomed Chief Financial Officer Minerva Nixon. Ms. Nixon gave a brief rundown of expenditures by program. She noted that all the programs are on track. The agency will be able to draw down significantly more in federal funds in SFY2017 than in the previous four years and as a result has a greater carryover.

Mr. Defoor welcomed Business Enterprise Program Director Charlie Garrett. Mr. Garrett noted that in the last fiscal year, the BEP opened the first micro-market completely managed by a blind vendor, renewed the Warner Robins AFB dining contract for another five-year period and added five new team members.

Mr. Defoor welcomed Disability Adjudication Services Director Rita McWhorter. Ms. McWhorter gave a brief overview of what DAS does and how the adjudication process works. In the last fiscal year, DAS processed more than 100 percent of its budgeted workload, closing nearly 150,000 cases. It finished the year number four in the country in terms of accuracy rate.

Mr. Defoor welcomed Georgia Industries for the Blind Co-Directors Mike Jackson and Luis Narimatsu. They gave a brief introduction of GIB. The organization has recently partnered with the Georgia Department of Agriculture to participate in the Georgia

Grown initiative, which allows GIB to sell Georgia Grown-branded merchandise. A GIB pillow will also soon be available on Walmart.com.

Mr. Defoor welcomed Director of Residential Services Lee Brinkley Bryan. Ms. Bryan gave a brief history of the residential programs at Roosevelt Warm Springs and Cave Spring Center. She noted that she's worked in the last year to establish the best leadership structure. She outlined the accomplishments at CSC in the last fiscal year including the development of a data-driven program model and the implementation of a cafeteria at the center. In terms of goals at RWS, Ms. Bryan noted that they intend to increase the day program, develop a three-year strategic plan and campus master plan and maintain a 50 percent employment rate for graduating students.

Mr. Defoor welcomed VR Field Services Director Lauren Knox. She noted accomplishments of the VR program in SFY2017. These include the completion of business process mapping, the implementation of and training for SAM and Team Lead positions and receipt of \$750,000 disaster relief grant for individuals with disabilities impacted by the recent hurricanes. She said she intends to grow consistency in services across the state, improve the quality and timeliness of services and established better collaboration with community partners.

Mr. Defoor welcomed Director of Transition Services Lauri Tuten. She said that the agency is using the E3 program as a catalyst to dictate how transition services are delivered across the state. She noted that there is now a Project Search site at the Georgia Academy for the Blind, and there is a parent mentor video series in the works.

SILC Presentation

Mr. DeFoor welcomed Neil Ligon, Executive Director of Life Inc., to give a presentation on the Statewide Independent Living Council. He broke down the 2018 legislative agenda, which includes center expansion and growth of the Home Access Program. Independent Living Day at the Capitol will be held on February 8 next year.

Adjournment

Mr. DeFoor once again thanked Mr. Green for his service and welcomed Faye Perdue to the board. He adjourned the meeting at 3:20 p.m.