

**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**Georgia State Rehabilitation Council**  
**WEDNESDAY – 4.8.20**  
**10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.**

Online Meeting

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**Kate Brady**

**Austin McDonald**

**Cherise Mlott**

**Deborah Lovell**

**Brenda Bentley Parrish**

**Deborah Hibben**

**Jennifer Page**

**Karen Addams**

**Wina Lowe**

**FINISH**

**Approval of Minutes**

Ms. Lowe motioned to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Ms. Lovell seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

**Executive Director's Update**

Mr. Ryan welcomed everyone. He said that the Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment—which will be presented later in the meeting—will highlight a lot of the problems GVRA has been addressing in recent months. While the recent administrative reorganization has done much to address these problems, there's still much to do, and the process will continue through this year.

**Committee Reports**

Ms. Aldridge assumed the chairmanship of the policy committee. The Council broke into committees for their regular work session. Ms. Brady called on committee chairs to present their work.

Ms. Lovell presented the membership committee update. She said that Governor Kemp's office is waiting until after the legislative session before approving nominations for new members.

Ms. Aldridge presented the policy committee update. She noted that as she is new in her position, she hopes to meet with GVRA policy staff and acquaint herself with existing policies and plans moving forward.

Ms. Johnson said that she hopes to meet with GVRA's new legislative liaison to potentially coordinate a legislative day at the Capitol or work to partner with organizations who already have advocacy days scheduled.

Ms. Addams questioned the need for a marketing committee. She did say it should be a priority for the committee to ensure that information about upcoming events is shared in a timely manner. She said information regarding the SRC Sharepoint should be resent to members to ensure that everyone has access.

Ms. Low gave an update on the Comprehensive State Needs Assessment. She said it has been 15 years since the last Assessment, though it is technically due every three years. The report should be available at the SRC's next meeting in April. A survey that is being used to inform the greater report is still open, and the final presentation of the report will follow the close of the survey. Ms. Johnson said supported self employment services need to be further expanded across the state.

Ms. Leiter gave an update on the transition committee. She said many students aren't receiving Pre-ETS services despite the fact that they could benefit from them. Members agreed this needed to be revisited.

Ms. Brady recognized Ebony Mack who gave a breakdown of GVRA Customer Care, including call numbers from late 2019 and the first few months of 2020. She explained how complaints are addressed within the agency.

Ms. Brady introduced Vocational Services Director Christine Fleming. Ms. Fleming addressed outstanding issues that are being tracked through the Rehabilitation Services Administration. These included the timeliness of eligibility determinations, as well as other federally-mandated timelines for service. RSA staff will be visiting GVRA later this year. Ms. Fleming said that new key performance indicators have been developed and are actively being tracked. The report produced by third-party consulting firm Accenture related to the organizational structure of Vocational Rehabilitation will be released in the coming days. In addition, new trainings are being developed and implemented to ensure staff have the tools they need to succeed.

Ms. Brady recognized GVRA Provider Relations Director Sheila Pierce. Ms. Pierce noted that efforts are being made to improve relationships between providers and the agency. Processes are being implemented to expedite payments and contract approvals. As part of this, a greater emphasis is being placed on working with providers who produce client outcomes. A new provider outsourcing manual is being developed and will be released soon.

After breaking for lunch, Ms. Brady recognized GVRA CFO Monica Bradshaw. Ms. Bradshaw said agency procurement has now moved from paper checks to ACH digital payments. Stronger budgeting systems have been implemented, she said, and they should improve the budgetary process moving forward. Ms. Bradshaw welcomed Planning and Budget Director Jessime McGarity. She walked through the proposed amended FY 2020 budget.

Ms. Brady recognized GVRA HR Director Jennifer Statham. She gave an overview of the reorganization and staffing initiatives that came as a result of the reorganization. A plan is being developed regarding critical hire needs for the field.

Ms. Brady recognized GVRA Communications Manager John Boan. Mr. Boan discussed the previous year's SRC Annual Report and welcomed feedback.

The Council discussed details and potential requests regarding future meetings.

Ms. Brady recognized SILC Executive Director Shelly Simmons. She gave an overview of upcoming advocacy events. Ms. Simmons noted efforts to produce a feature-length documentary. She noted that the State Plan for Independent Living will be available in June of this year.

Ms. Brady adjourned the meeting at 1:21 p.m.