

**Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired**  
**Quarterly Board Meeting**  
**Richmond, Virginia**  
**October 12, 2010**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Bruce called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. She asked Board members, staff, and guests to introduce themselves.

**Introduction of New Board Member:** Chairperson Bruce welcomed Mr. Hamm of Richmond to the Board. Mr. Hamm stated that he had resided in the Washington, D.C. area for 18 years but relocated to Virginia when Governor Gilmore appointed him as Deputy Secretary of Natural Resources. Later he was appointed as Secretary of Natural Resources and is now retired. He gave a brief history of how he became vision impaired and how he has been involved with the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

**Members Present:** Chairperson Liza Bruce, Robert Dendy, Ronald Hamm, Alice Malbone, and Althea Pittman

**Members Absent:** Marsha Hester and Marc Johnson

**Staff Present:** Ray Hopkins, Commissioner; Bob Burton, Deputy Commissioner for Services; Eva Ampey, Special Assistant to the Commissioner; and Joan Carneal, Recorder

**Adoption of Agenda:** It was moved by Mr. Hamm, seconded by Ms. Pittman, and passed by unanimous vote to adopt the agenda as presented.

**Action on Minutes of Previous Meeting:** It was moved by Ms. Pittman, seconded by Mr. Dendy, and passed by unanimous vote that the July 13, 2010, minutes be approved as amended.

Mr. Dendy inquired about the Governor's visit to the Virginia Industries for the Blind Charlottesville Plant (VIB-C) mentioned in the July 13 minutes. Commissioner Hopkins stated that the Governor did not visit the VIB-C Plant as reported and discussed extending an invitation to Governor McDonnell to visit the Charlottesville Plant in the near future. Members will be notified once that date has been finalized. Dr. Hazel's visit was discussed later in the meeting as reported below as Ray's last comments.

**Public Comment:** None

**Commissioner's Report:**

- Ending the federal fiscal year on September 30, 2010, the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) is serving all eligible individuals and is not anticipating having to go on an order of selection for the next fiscal year. DBVI is very pleased to have funding available to recruit for a dealblind coordinator. DBVI is now in a position to fill several positions that have been vacant during the budget restrictions.
- During the last quarter, the Social Security Administration (SSA) conducted an internal audit to monitor how DBVI uses their data and how well it is secured. Only one issue was raised during the audit regarding records retention and that was resolved during the audit.
- The Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) conducted an onsite monitoring review last year, and DBVI had expected to receive the official recommendations back in August. However, that final report has not been received. DBVI is not expecting any changes in what was discussed during the onsite visit and the final report.
- DBVI received approval for the In-Service Training Grant for the next five years in the amount of \$18,883. This grant provides funding to support staff training.
- The federal government is still operating on a continuing resolution through the first of December 2010 or until Congress passes a new budget.
- The Older Blind/Independent Living and the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) programs for the first couple of months of this fiscal year will operate on the same funding as last year.
- DBVI received \$500,000 in reallocated VR funds. RSA notified state agencies that additional funding was available for reallocation and encouraged agencies to consider applying for those funds. This is probably due to the lack of state-match dollars, and the stimulus funds are affecting states' abilities to utilize the funds. DBVI cannot seek additional grant funds without assuring that state-match dollars are available and that it can handle the impact to its maintenance of effort requirement. The funding was, however, absorbed by several states and the money did not go back into the Treasury.
- DBVI has had seven budget reductions over the last four years.

- Governor McDonnell has indicated that he plans to call the General Assembly into a special session in November to address government reform with the intent to have the legislature address recommendations from the Commission on Government Reform. There are no specific recommendations regarding DBVI being consolidated or eliminated included in the Commission's report.
- Commissioner Hopkins encouraged Board members to extend an invitation to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, Dr. William A. Hazel, to attend a Board meeting as the official spokesperson for the Governor. He stated that he has been very impressed by the accessibility of the current Governor's staff and stated that Dr. Hazel had visited the Azalea Campus on four separate occasions since his appointment.

### **Virginia Industries for the Blind Report (VIB)**

- The Contract Management Services agreement with the Army to conduct contract closeout with the Virginia Industries for the Blind Richmond Plant (VIB-R) did not work out.
- The National Industries for the Blind has signed the agreement as the Prime Contractor and VIB will be first in line for an off-site contract.
- VIB-R's generator has now been approved and they hope to move back into the building by January or early February 2011.
- VIB is in the process of hiring a VR specialist/coordinator who would be involved in working with employers and potential employees.
- Two separate online catalog ordering method projects are progressing. One will service eVA users (Virginia government's web-based procurement system) and the second is for VIB stores' Federal government customer base (e-commerce). VIB is in the process of hiring a customer service representative who will be required to maintain, update, and service these online catalogs.
- The Deputy Commissioner for Enterprises position selection should be made during the week of October 18<sup>th</sup>.

### **Division for Services Report:** Bob Burton reported that:

- Four interviews for the Roanoke regional manager position were conducted, and there are two more individuals to contact. A decision should be made within the next two weeks. Three rehabilitation teachers, with outstanding qualifications, have been hired since our last meeting. One VR counselor began on September 13 who has a

Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision from Ohio University. She also has a Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling from Winston-Salem State University and is a certified VR counselor. This VR counselor will have a transition caseload, making two for the agency. The other transition VR counselor is employed in the Richmond regional office. A rehabilitation engineer will begin employment on October 25. This employee has been employed with VITA (Virginia Information Technology Agency) as a field engineer for the past ten years. Before going to VITA, he was employed by DBVI in the Roanoke office as the rehabilitation engineer. Before coming to DBVI in 1998 he was employed at DRS( Virginia Department of Rehabilitation Services) as a VR counselor.

- DBVI recruited for the deafblind program director position; five candidates have been screened and interviews will be conducted by the end of October.
- One education coordinator has retired effective November 1 and that position will not be filled at the present time.
- There are three orientation and mobility (O&M) specialist positions vacant at the Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind and Vision Impaired (VRCBVI) , and we are actively recruiting for those positions. There are four qualified applicants for these positions. There is also one VR evaluator/counselor position vacant at the Center.
- It was reported at the July meeting that DBVI had passed the standards and indicators for FFY (Federal Fiscal Year) 2009. Based on internal information, we will also pass them for FFY 2010 but we will not receive anything official from RSA until sometime next year. DBVI had hoped to have 170 successful closures for 2010; however, we only had 143 closures. Major factors for the reduction in closures were due to the current environment of the economy and retirements of long-service employees. There were 700 older blind successful closures which was an increase over 2009 by 28%.
- The Older Blind Technology program has received over 100 requests for assistive technology computers and over 80 computers have been purchased. This was a program established with federal stimulus funds and less than half of the funds that were made available have been expended. DBVI has until September of 2011 to utilize all those funds.

- Mr. Dendy suggested that staff avoid using so many acronyms, especially with newly appointed Board members. Commissioner Hopkins suggested that a glossary of acronyms will be sent to members for future reference.

### **Endowment Fund Receipts & Expenditures:**

- Ms. Ampey reported for the quarter ending September 30, 2010, that the department accepted contributions in the amount of \$2,923. Expenditures totaled \$73,746.56 and the increase was due to a payment of \$46,584.22 to Camp Easter Seals of Virginia. There was no Virginia Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (VRCBVI) endowment fund expenditures for the quarter ending September 30, 2010. The Bank of America representatives will give their presentation at the January meeting so new members can be present.
- At the July 2010 meeting members requested additional information on a request for funding for the Metropolitan Washington Ear. Ms. Ampey contacted Metropolitan Washington Ear and provided the additional information to members. Chairperson Bruce asked if there was a motion for the Board to approve funding in the amount of \$10,000 for the Metropolitan Washington Ear. It was moved by Ms. Malbone, seconded by Mr. Dendy, and passed by unanimous vote to approve the funding.

Eva Ampey reported on capital projects:

- A generator for the dormitory building is needed, and DBVI received an estimated cost of \$200,000. The Bureau of Capitol Outlay Management must review the project. Several power outages have occurred at the facility and the purchase of a generator would meet our emergency management plan needs.
- Fire alarm systems need to be replaced in the stone house, dining hall, recreation building, and the Library and Resource Center. In the headquarters building the sprinkler and fire alarm systems need to be replaced. The dormitory building needs an enunciator panel but is already wired for the sprinkler and fire alarm systems. Bids opened on September 9 and DBVI has accepted one for \$352,820 to replace these systems.
- The roof replacement for the recreation building and the dining hall has been postponed until renovations have been completed on the administration and activities (AA) building. The Center is in the process of relocating staff to other locations on the complex. The AA building must be vacated by December 2010.
- DBVI is planning to put up additional traffic signs to address speeding on campus, putting pedestrian crossing markings on the pavement, and possibly having a stop sign at the crossing.

- Construction Bids for the renovation of the Administration and Activities building for the VRCBVI were published on October 10 and bids are due back by November 1, 2010.
- Energy performance contract: Boilers need to be replaced in the administration and activities building; however, the engineer would not approve the installation due to vents not meeting UL standards. The boiler system needs to be updated at the Library and Resource Center and the existing energy management system is a proprietary system and we are unable to tie it into the new Tracer system; therefore, we will need to remove and replace the existing one with Trane's energy management system.
- A security door access system has been installed in all buildings at the Azalea Campus; however it is not fully engaged at this time. In the renovation of the Administration and Activities building the agency has moved and will move staff and students around the campus. This presents a problem with students who have access to certain entries. All access cards issued to students will need to be changed for this relocation process.

**Other Business:**

Below are suggested 2011 Board meetings to be held at the DBVI headquarters beginning at 1:00 p.m.

January 11, 2011

April 12, 2011

July 12, 2011

October 11, 2011

Mr. Hamm moved to approved to accept the 2011 meeting schedule as present, Ms. Pittman seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. Dendy will be unavailable to attend the January 11 meeting due to a scheduling conflict. Chairperson Bruce requested DBVI staff to assist Ms. Malbone with finding transportation to and from the 2011 meetings. DBVI staff will contact the Roanoke regional office to request assistance with this request.

Chairperson Bruce discussed the purpose of the finance committee consisting of Mr. Johnson, chair; Ms. Pittman; and Mr. Dendy. She requested that members and staff consider projects that they would like to

have sponsored by the Board. She requested that members send a few sentences explaining the project and the cost per year to Ms. Ampey by November 15. Ms. Ampey will forward the information to the finance committee so they can present their recommendations to the Board at the January meeting.

Commissioner Hopkins suggested that an email be sent to all members with this request since there were two members absent. Chairperson Bruce will send an email to members; however, Mr. Hamm and Ms. Malbone requested that they received information via U.S. Postal Service. Ms. Ampey volunteered to print the email and mail it to these two members.

Commissioner Hopkins addressed the issue of providing orientation to new members. Ms. Malbone did not attend the orientation when she was appointed to the Board. It was decided that since two members were absent, Ms. Ampey would send two dates for members to let her know their availability for an orientation meeting.

**Adjournment:** There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m. The next meeting will be held on January 11, 2011, at 1:00 p.m. at the DBVI headquarters building.

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Ms. Liza Bruce  
Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. Robert Dendy  
Secretary