

**Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Quarterly Board Meeting
Richmond, Virginia
Tuesday, July 8, 2008
Approved Minutes**

Ms. Bruce called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. She asked board members, staff and guests to introduce themselves.

Members Present: Ms. Liza Bruce, Mr. Joe DePhillips, Mr. Ashleigh Moody, Ms. Althea Pittman, Mr. Desmond Savill

Member Absent: Ms. Evelyn Cabrera-Heatwole, Mrs. Judy Spears

Staff Present: Mr. Ray Hopkins, commissioner; Mr. Bob Berrang, deputy commissioner/general manager, Virginia Industries for the Blind; Mr. Jim Taylor, chief deputy commissioner; Mr. Bob Burton, deputy commissioner for services; Mrs. Eva Ampey, special assistant; and Mrs. Kathy Proffitt, board recorder

Guests Present: Mrs. Maryann Belcher, human resources director

Adoption of Agenda: It was moved, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to adopt the agenda as distributed.

Action on Minutes of Previous Meeting: It was moved, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to approve the April 8, 2008 minutes as amended.

Public Comments: None

Commissioner's Report: Mr. Hopkins provided a brief description of his background to the members, as follows. He was previously employed by the U.S. Department of Education where he worked four years in Rehabilitation Services Administration. He noted his primary duties were with the Randolph Sheppard Vending Facility Program. Prior to RSA, he worked at the State of Oklahoma Department of Rehabilitative Services. During the last 10 years with the agency he was the administrator of visual services, which is the program that provided rehabilitation services to adult blind in the state. Mr. Hopkins noted that he had worked as a rehabilitation teacher, rehabilitation counselor, and licensed blind vendor in the Randolph Sheppard program. He was also a client of the vocational rehabilitation program. Mr. Hopkins has been involved with vocational rehabilitation in terms of regional and national organizations and has been on various boards and involved in consumer organizations. He was past president of National Council of State Agencies for the Blind.

Mr. Hopkins noted items that may impact the department or board, and services for the blind, i.e. issues regarding regional continuing education programs funded by RSA, the Randolph Sheppard Vending Program, and the JWOD program. Mr. Hopkins stated he recently participated in a video conference with all DBVI facilities and stated he did not have an “agenda” but there may be some changes in the future. Since he began employment on July 1, he stated he will provide a more thorough report at the October meeting.

Virginia Industries for the Blind Report: Mr. Berrang reported the year-end physical inventories at the eleven stores and two plants were completed on time as was other fiscal year-end required information. The year-end revenue closed at \$23,500,000 well above budget due primarily to sales at the Langley Air Force Base that supported several deployments to Iraq and receipt of several unexpected navy mattress orders. We continue to meet our charge to be self funded operating without the use of general funds. In addition to financing all of our operations over \$ 600,000 was used to finance new ventures and improve systems at all our locations. We are starting to see increasing orders from VDOT for our new reflective vests.

- VIB year-end blind employment is 97 with 51% supporting the two plants, 21% employed at our eleven stores and 28% working in services. Of note is that although Services provide excellent blind jobs representing 28% of our total they only return 5% of the total revenue. Since service employment has a very low margin some of NIB’s affiliates do not participate in these opportunities as we do.
- After nearly six months of recruiting we hired our replacement fiscal officer. Art Thorn comes to us with over thirty years of valuable experience not only in finance but plant management and Human Resources as well. Art is also a certified Public Accountant and will come on board on the 24th of this month.
- June was certainly a memorable one for me as we held the Grand Opening ceremony of our SKILCRAFT SSSC store at Fort Belvoir on June 18th. This brought to closure an effort started in December 2000 when I made my first contact with their Deputy Garrison Commander. After several meetings we received their Letter of Intent (LOI) from the Garrison Commander on April 3rd 2001. Several years of follow up resulted in the June opening once again proving the wisdom of Winston Churchill’s motto that “one should never give up”.
- VIB’s next venture will be at the Defense Supply Center- Richmond, DSC-R, when they release a building to us later this year.
- Don Rymer is retiring after twenty years of dedicated service to VIB. Don’s many talents included being a licensed Class A contractor certified in HVAC, Security and other disciplines as well as being a Virginia Contracting Officer.
- That concludes my report but if you concur I would like to ask the board to appoint four members to our VIB Advisory Board as required by the code.

Mr. Berrang concluded his report and stated the need to have DBVI board members approve reappointment of members of the VIB board.

MOTION: Mr. DePhillips made a motion to accept the appointment and reappointments of the following members to the VIB Board. Mr. Savill seconded. There being no further discussion, it was passed by unanimous vote to accept the appointment and reappointments noted below:

1. Bill Mustain reappointed for a second full three-year term. Mr. Mustain is an industrialist and has been an excellent board member with regular attendance at VIB board meetings. Bill was highly instrumental in launching VIB's safety vest line by sending us orders from two local construction companies.
2. Charles McElroy is president of the Charlottesville based Worksource Enterprises that has been providing job training and employment to persons with disabilities since 1967 and is well known to our DBVI counselors.
3. James Howard is the Director of the Greene County Social Services and as such is in a position to benefit VIB. James is visually impaired receiving services from DBVI's Peter Del Priore.
4. Thomas Rutenberg is a local Industrialist serving as Chief Financial Officer at C.W. Hurt Contractors. He has years of financial and general industrial experience and is looking forward to contributing to VIB's operations

Division for Services Report: Mr. Burton stated he was pleased to announce that the Bristol, Staunton, Fairfax and Richmond offices are fully staffed. The Fairfax manager hired a new person to take Korey Singleton's position as rehab engineer. Mr. Singleton had taken a position at George Mason University. The incumbent, Mr. Brad Miles has tremendous experience in the area of assistive technology. He began employment in June. Mr. Burton noted a vacancy of a rehabilitation teacher in the Roanoke office. The position is in the recruit system; however, no one has been hired at this time. He also reported a vacant orientation and mobility position in the Norfolk office. During the past year, two individuals have been offered the position however; both chose not to take the job for various reasons. He noted that a selection for the deafblind position at headquarters had been made. Mr. Burton offered the position to the individual however, the person declined. He noted the frustration of recruiting, interviewing, selecting the candidate to offering the position then not accepting the position. He indicated that perhaps candidates were perhaps going back to their current employer letting them know they have been offered the job and the employer reciprocates by offering more money. Mr. Burton also mentioned that the rehabilitation center had recently been plagued by resignations of persons going to the Veterans Administration. Currently, there is still a vacant vocational evaluator position, two orientation & mobility instructors, assistant director for instruction, and a braille instructor. He noted, however, a vocational rehabilitation counselor position had been filled by Kris Lewis. She worked as a rehabilitation counselor for Maryland for 10 years. Ms. Lewis is visually impaired.

Mr. Burton provided an update on relocations of two regional offices, He noted that the Staunton office has moved into space available in the Virginia Employment Commission building near the campus of the Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center. The Roanoke office is currently in the planning phase of moving. Four agencies are looking to co-locate

in an old shopping mall near the airport. Plans have been developed and approved; however, some of the other agencies are having issues with the plans. It is estimated to take about six to nine months before moving into the new location.

Mr. Burton reported that the Integrated Case Management system called AWARE completed a pilot at the Roanoke office and the center. The pilot went well and the staff is excited about what the program has to offer. Other staff will be trained on the program during the months of August and September and are planning to go live with the system on October 1.

Endowment Fund Receipts & Expenditures: Ms. Ampey reported for the quarter ending June 30, 2008, the department accepted on behalf of the board, donations in the amount of \$3,411.63. Endowment fund expenditures as of June 30, 2008, were \$20,185.43. Ms. Ampey also noted that at the end of May, the market value of the endowment fund account of the Bank of America Private Wealth Management account is \$6,661,087. Mrs. Ampey reported from January to May, 2008, the account has made \$76,156.30.

Update on VRCBVI Dorm Renovations: Mrs. Ampey reminded the board members of the fact that they had not tapped into the \$500,000 approved for the dorm renovation project. She noted that the process is to spend down bond fund money, then the general fund money and lastly the endowment fund money. Mrs. Ampey stated that she may have to come back to the board and request additional funds at a later time.

Mrs. Ampey also mentioned that the Capital Outlay Project is scheduled to be completed and turned over to the agency on August 1. However, the agency has to wait until a Certificate of Occupancy is received. She noted that mattresses have been ordered from VIB and a voiceover phone service will be installed in each dormitory room. This will enable clients to call home at any time at no cost. Jim Taylor has generously approved payment from his budget to pay for the phone service in the dorms.

Mr. Moody asked about a possible date for the dedication of the new dorms. Ms. Bruce suggested that the board meeting scheduled in October be set to coincide with the dedication.

Ms. Bruce requested if information was available on the expiration of board members' terms. Ms. Ampey stated that the information was available and that Ms. Pittman had been recently reappointed to the board. According to the records, Ms. Bruce and Ms. Cabrera-Heatwole terms expired June, 2008. Ms. Bruce noted that due to Ms. Cabrera-Heatwole's workload at the Veterans Administration, she will no longer be able to continue to serve on the board.

Election of Officers: Ms. Bruce opened the floor for nominations for the positions of secretary, vice chair and chair.

MOTION: Mr. Moody nominated Mr. DePhillips to serve as secretary. It was moved, seconded by Ms. Pittman and passed by unanimous vote that Mr. DePhillips serve as secretary for the upcoming term.

Ms. Bruce stated that after talking to board members, it was decided to recognize Mr. Bowman for his many years of service by creating a plaque to be placed in the new dormitory building. Ms. Ampey had talked to Ms. Bruce and stated that there were some restrictions on the funds to be used to pay for the plaque. She stated some concerns regarding money coming from endowment funds, the placement of the plaque and also the inclusion of Commissioner Bowman, the architect as well as the governor's name on the plaque. After discussion, it was decided to look into the process of obtaining a plaque.

Adjournment: It was decided to schedule the October meeting to coincide with the open house of the new dormitory building. There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 2:25 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, October 7, 2008, at 1:00 p.m. at the DBVI headquarters building.

Date Approved: _____

Ms. Liza Bruce
Chair

Mrs. Evelyn Cabrera-Heatwole
Secretary