

**Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Quarterly Board Meeting
Richmond, Virginia
Tuesday, January 13, 2009
APPROVED MINUTES**

Ms. Bruce called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. She asked board members, staff and guests to introduce themselves. Ms. Bruce welcomed new board member, Mrs. Alice Malbone as the new member to the board.

Members Present: Ms. Liza Bruce, Mr. Joe DePhillips, Mrs. Alice Malbone, Mrs. Judy Spears, Mr. Desmond Savill, and Mrs. Althea Pittman

Members Absent: Mr. Ashleigh Moody

Staff Present: Mr. Ray Hopkins commissioner; Mr. Bob Burton, deputy commissioner for services; Mrs. Eva Ampey, special assistant to the commissioner; Mr. Rick Bohrer, industry manager; Mrs. Maryann Belcher, human resource director; and Ms. Kathy Proffitt, board recorder

Staff Absent: Robert Berrang

Guests Present: Mr. Shawn Haney, Bank of America

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

Action on Minutes of Previous Meeting: It was moved, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to withhold approval of the October 17, 2008 minutes until the April 14th meeting.

Public Comment: None

Mrs. Bruce requested that the language be added to the October 2008 minutes that the purpose of the meeting being held on the 17th was to

give the members the opportunity to attend the grand opening of the new dormitory.

Commissioner's Report: Commissioner Hopkins stated that the governor had announced budget reductions for the 2009 cycle. State agencies were requested to submit budget scenarios for 5,10, & 15 percent reductions. DBVI reduction amounted to 3.5 percent.

Mr. Hopkins stated that DBVI was spared compared to other agencies. However, reductions in the past have impacted DBVI. He noted that Jim Taylor retired in December, 2008 and his position was included in the budget reductions and will not be able to fill the position. Mr. Hopkins also stated that Mr. Taylor's position was funded by federal funds. Mr. Hopkins noted that expenditures out of the federal rehabilitation grant have been basically going along an unprecedented "cliff". DBVI has spent higher percentage of funds by this time this year as compared to previous years. He stated that chief deputy commissioner Jim Taylor had drawn up a comparison of the last few years and noted that the federal year ending September 2008, DBVI basically had no funds remaining - \$16,000. Last year DBVI ended the fiscal year with plus \$50,000. DBVI will curtail spending by closing a few of the categories under the agency's Order of Selection (OOS) policy. Vocational Rehabilitation program has been under an OOS for the last few years. As of January 5, 2009, the VR program is only serving customers in the category of the most significantly disabled. Mr. Hopkins mentioned that staff would be monitoring budgets and when it is determined that DBVI has sufficient funds, the agency will open other categories as appropriate. He also provided a brief description of the OOS process for new board members.

Mr. DePhillips asked a question regarding the current legislative session if consolidation of disability agencies was an issue. Mr. Hopkins said he had not heard any mention of state agencies consolidating and would keep board members informed if legislation was introduced.

Virginia Industries for the Blind Report: Mr. Rick Bohrer, VIB plant manager/contract services, provided the VIB report due to the absence of Mr. Bob Berrang. Mr. Bohrer noted at the six-month point of the current fiscal year, revenues and expenditures were on budget as forecasted. After eight years, the Defense Supply Center Richmond

(DSCR) Bellwood, has released a building to VIB to locate a new store. VIB staff will begin work on March 2, 2009 and expect a second quarter opening.

Mr. Bohrer reported that VIB staff placed two names in nomination to represent VIB for national recognition for blind direct and indirect employees of the year. Both will attend the October National Industries for the Blind Conference in Kansas City, Missouri. Ms. Sandra Chew, the VIB Richmond receptionist is the VIB Indirect Labor nominee. After a six-week training course at VRCBVI and a brief internship with the Richmond regional office, was hired at VIB. Sandra answers the phones for Richmond as well as the switchboard for VIB Charlottesville. In between calls and visitors, she provides data input for the cost accounting system, uses specialized mail software to validate addresses for the Mail Handling Department and provides general administrative support. Mr. Jackie Parks was selected from Charlottesville as the VIB direct labor nominee. He is a versatile individual whose primary function is to spread material that is cut and sewn into mattress covers. VIB Richmond will be moving to temporary locations while renovation of the current facility takes place. Mr. Bohrer reported as of January 13, staff were advised that preparation of the lease is delaying the move to mid or late February. There is general agreement on all terms and conditions except who is responsible to pay for the emergency pulls and strobe lights. Upgrading these are required by the ADA and city codes. A couple of other items are being ironed out (parking spaces and electrical outlets). The Alcohol Beverage Control (ABC) currently occupies part of the building. The landlord is using the ABC lease format which is not the normal format used by the Department of General Services (DGS) Division of Real Estate Services. Due to this and the holidays, final negotiations have been delayed. VIB representatives have responded to all of the concerns from the Department of Real Estate Services. Mr. Bohrer estimated the start of the renovation is mid March.

Division for Services Report: Mr. Burton provided an update on regional offices. The following vacancies are not currently being recruited due to budget restrictions: Fairfax has an education coordinator position, and O&M specialist, and a rehabilitation teacher. Norfolk has one O&M specialist position open. Ms. Ronica Henry who has worked at the NRO in the past has filled the position vacated by the

VR counselor who retired January 1. The Richmond office has one rehabilitation teacher and one office services specialist; however, one part-time individual is working with processing bills through AWARE. Roanoke has one rehabilitation teacher position open.

The VRCBVI director, Melody Lindsey, has hired an executive secretary, a licensed practical nurse, and has offered the VR evaluator/counselor to an individual. Interviews for an O&M specialist position took place this week; second interviews will be conducted this week. Interviews have been held for a Braille instructor and a selection has been made and will be announced later this week.

DBVI went live with AWARE on October 1. DBVI is still developing business practices. A General Memorandum was issued to staff regarding new documentation requirements for AWARE. This requirement removes the six-month case summary and requires field staff to make case notes for all face-to-face visits explaining what was accomplished at the meeting and what issues need to be addressed later. These notes can be made during the visit with the customer.

The Roanoke office is preparing for a move into the Crossroads Mall in June and will be sharing space with DRS, VEC and DSS offices.

Mr. Burton reported that LRC director, Barbara McCarthy, has shared a survey conducted by Channel 12 where students call state agencies for one week determining how long it took an agency to answer calls. There were 21 different agencies contacted. DBVI's average was 16 seconds. There was one state agency reported as taking as long as 13 minutes and 31 seconds to answer a call. One other agency was reported as ringing busy all the time.

Endowment Fund Receipts & Expenditures: Ms. Ampey reported for the quarter ending December 31, 2008, the department accepted on behalf of the board endowment funds were \$3,552.00 (\$100 of that amount was a donation to the rehabilitation center). Expenditures for the quarter ending December 31, 2008 totaled to \$270,039. The breakdown is as follows:

\$ 15,000 – Metropolitan Ear
\$ 21,000 – Drivers, wages & fringes
\$ 234,039 – Dormitory expenditures

Mrs. Ampey stated that in 18 months the agency would be experiencing activities at the rehabilitation center. The AA building will be getting a new roof which will match the existing roof on the other building on the complex.

Mr. Burton informed the members about a request to repair six telebraille devices used by deafblind individuals to communicate via the telephone. Mr. Burton stated that a company had been located in Missouri which would repair the machines. The agency does not have the funds and is asking the board to pay for the repairs. The cost would be \$425 per machine which includes shipping to and from the facility. The total amount of the repairs would be \$2,550.

Motion: Mr. DePhillips moved that the board provide the funds to repair the telebraille devices to be used by deafblind individuals. Mr. Savill seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, it was passed by unanimous vote.

Bank of America Presentation: Mrs. Ampey welcomed Mr. Shawn Haney of Bank of America's Private Investment Section. Mr. Haney provided an overall review of the market index and distributed a copy of the current investment portfolio. Mr. Haney also provided an overview of the board's investments during the last quarter of 2008. He mentioned that the market was down and hopefully he would have better news to report at the April meeting.

Ms. Bruce suggested an editorial change to the investment policy by striking the name Lehman Brothers and replacing it with Barclays Capital.

Motion: Mr. Savill made a motion to change the name from Lehman Brothers to Barclay Capital as noted in the Board's investment policy. Mrs. Pittman seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, it was passed by unanimous vote.

Mr. DePhillips suggested a committee be set up to include Mr. Haney, Mrs. Ampey and a recommendation from the board to serve on a finance committee.

Ms. Bruce asked Mr. Savill to chair the finance committee and Mr. Haney to serve as a member. Mr. Haney stated that much of the work could be accomplished via email. Mr. Moody and Ms. Bruce were recommended to serve on the committee as well.

Other Business: None

Adjournment: There being no further business, it was moved, seconded and passed by unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting at 2:55 p.m. The next meeting will be held on April 14, 2009 at 1:00 p.m. at the DBVI headquarters building.

Date Approved: _____

Ms. Liza Bruce
Chair

Mr. Joseph A. DePhillips
Secretary