

Minutes
Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Virtual
June 23, 2020 at 12:00 PM

Board Attendees

Bonnie Atwood; Mazen Basrawi; Paul D’Addario; Deborah Helms; Ken Jessup, *Chair*; Dr. Leo Kim; Barbara McCarthy.

Members Absent

None.

Members of the Public

None.

DBVI Staff to the Board

Jessica Collette, Staff Assistant, DBVI; Wallica Gaines, Deputy Commissioner for Administration, DBVI; Raymond Hopkins, Commissioner, DBVI; Matt Koch, Deputy Commissioner for Enterprises, DBVI; Dr. Rick Mitchell, Deputy Commissioner for Services, DBVI; Deb Stickley, Director of Shared Operations, VIB.

Call to Order & Welcome

Chairman Ken Jessup called the regular meeting to order and welcomed the members in attendance.

Business Items

Introductions

Jessica Collette commenced the roll call.

Consent of Agenda

Paul D’Addario moved to approve agenda; motion passed unanimously.

Consent of Minutes

Paul D’Addario moved to approve minutes from March 2020; motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. Worley, a Virginia resident, joined and asked if the legislature will unfreeze the budget to allow DBVI to be able to take on more clients. Commissioner Hopkins responded that there is to be an examination of the state revenues and COVID-19 costs in July. Based on this examination there will be a reforecast of funds made available for the 2021 – 2022 biennium budget. In August, the General Assembly is scheduled to convene a special session to review these reforecasts to obligate funds.

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Agency Reports

Commissioner Hopkins presented an update regarding the Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired.

Donation Requests Update - Finance Committee

Non-agency applications were reviewed to discuss approval of their requests followed by Agency specific requests.

Access Virginia

A request for \$5,000 was received to support Access Virginia and their program to assist students that are blind and vision impaired to gain a better understanding of theater. Barbara McCarthy moved to approve this funding request for \$5,000; motion passed unanimously.

Goodwill Industries of the Valleys New Vision Program

A request for \$5,000 was received from Goodwill Industries of the Valleys New Vision Program to print large-print calendars for low vision individuals throughout the Commonwealth. Leo Kim moved to approve this funding request for \$5,000; motion passed unanimously.

Metropolitan Washington Ear

A request for \$53,195 was received from Metropolitan Washington Ear to support their reading services. Barbara McCarthy moved to approve this funding request for \$53,195; Bonnie Atwood recused herself; motion passed. Ken Jessup asked that this request be worded to encourage this vendor to find other avenue streams.

NFB of Virginia

A request for \$30,000 was received from NFB of Virginia to support the Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning In-Home program. Mazen Basrawi moved to approve this funding request for \$30,000; motion passed unanimously.

Virginia Voice

A request for \$50,000 was received from the Virginia Voice to support their radio reading services. Barbara McCarthy moved to approve this funding request for \$50,000; Bonnie Atwood recused herself; motion passed.

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DBVI Low Vision Services (informational)

DBVI has requested the ability to spend unexpended funds that the Board has previously approved for Low Vision Services, funds should be less than \$90,000. Barbara moved to allow these funds to be expended for Low Vision Services; motion passed unanimously.

VIB line of credit

VIB has requested a line of credit to increase liquidity of VIB funds to allow for the purchase of additional PPE for resale to customers. Paul D'Addario moved to approve a line of credit to Virginia Industries for the Blind up to \$1,000,000; motion passed unanimously.

Unfinished Business

Barbara McCarthy mentioned her previous suggestion to provide a gift in honor of Jim Wark to Virginia Voice. Discussion took place on different ideas of what could be provided. Bonnie Atwood suggesting have a legislator submit a memorial resolution in Jim's honor. Mazen Basrawi suggested providing a scholarship in his honor within his area of focus, i.e. theater, music, etc. Mazen moved to establish a fund in Jim's name; motion passed unanimously. Bonnie moved that the Chairman approach a friendly legislator for a memorial resolution to be introduced in 2021 session; motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Chairman Term Discussion

Last year, Ken Jessup mentioned that he would only serve for one year as Chairman. Due to personal reasons, Ken has decided to step away as Chairman. Vice-Chair Mazen Basrawi will step up to fill the remaining term. Also, the Secretary position is up for nomination. Bonnie has been holding this position.

Paul D'Addario moved to have Mazen Basrawi serve as Chairman, Ken Jessup as Vice-Chairman, and Bonnie Atwood as Secretary; motion passed unanimously.

Meeting Dates

September 22, 2020; December 15, 2020; March 23, 2021; June 22, 2021

DBVI Centennial Celebration

Mazen Basrawi, Paul D'Addario and Barbara McCarthy are interested in working with the Agency to celebrate the Agency's Centennial event.

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Adjournment

Ken Jessup moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:30pm; motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: September 22, 2020

Attachment
Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Library and Resource Center
395 Azalea Avenue, Richmond VA 23227
March 24, 2020 at 12:00 PM

Reports

Agency Report – *Commissioner Ray Hopkins*

Written report provided. Additional comments are as follows:

DBVI is moving towards face-to-face visits in the near future. Each program has developed plans on how their discipline will work.

DBVI has also procured a Communication Management System to communicate with stakeholders and others. This will allow the Agency to send emails, text messages and social media. In addition to this platform, the Agency is also investigating a service for in-bound callers to access specific messages.

Services Division Report – *Deputy Commissioner Rick Mitchell*

Regional Managers met earlier today regarding the new plans for restarting face to face appointments.

Enterprise Division Report – *Deputy Commissioner Matt Koch*

An individual has been chosen to head the Charlottesville Plant. Chris Opichka, the Quality Manager for VIB, has been filling in this position for several months. Three individuals were interviewed and Chris was chosen to move into this position permanently. Interviews will now be held for the Quality Manager position.

The Enterprise Division has a number of positive COVID-19 test results.

Financial Report – *Deputy Commissioner Wallica Gaines*