

Minutes
Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Virtual
June 29, 2021 at 11:00 AM

Board Attendees

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

Members Absent

Ken Jessup.

Members of the Public

John Felton, Virginia Voice; Neely Oplinger, Metropolitan Washington Ear; Tracy Soforenko, National Federation of the Blind.

DBVI Staff to the Board

Jessica Collette, Staff Assistant, DBVI; Wallica Gaines, Deputy Commissioner for Administration, DBVI; Dr. Rick Mitchell, Deputy Commissioner for Services, DBVI.

Call to Order & Welcome

Chairman Basrawi called the meeting to order and welcomed the members in attendance.

Business Items

Introductions

Chairman Basrawi commenced the roll call.

Consent of Agenda

Ms. Bonnie Atwood moved to approve the agenda; motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Neely Oplinger shared that she is happy to attend and answer any questions regarding the grant proposal for the Metropolitan Washington Ear. Mr. John Felton shared that as he is new to Virginia Voice, he is thankful for the opportunity to speak to the Board today. Mr. Tracy Soforenko shared that is great to make meetings open to the public and added that communication to the public regarding these meetings would increase public participation. He also mentioned updating the Board website with meeting dates and members is needed.

Grant Proposal Presentations/ Discussion

Virginia Voice: Ms. Bonnie Atwood is recusing herself from discussion and voting.

This application has 2 components: \$50,000 for programmatic and \$88,000 for moving expenses to relocation out of LRC. Discussion took place around the application submitted by

Minutes
Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired
Virtual
June 29, 2021 at 11:00 AM

the Virginia Voice. Ms. Barbara McCarthy moved to approve the \$50,000 application for programmatic expenses as submitted from Virginia Voice; Ms. Debbie Helms seconded; motion passed. Again, Ms. Bonnie Atwood abstained. Chairman Mazen Basrawi moved to approve the requested \$88,000 contingent on the restraint to move within the next fiscal year; Ms. Barbara McCarthy seconded, motion passed. Again, Ms. Bonnie Atwood abstained.

Metropolitan Washington Ear: This application is for \$56,000 for programmatic expenses. Discussion took place around the application submitted by the Metropolitan Washington Ear. Ms. Debbie Helms moved to approve the application from Metropolitan Washington Ear; Mr. Paul D'Addario seconded; motion passed.

National Federation of the Blind: This application is for a new program, the Silver Bells, \$40,000 grant and then NFB will match to fully fund the program. Discussion took place around the application submitted by the National Federation of the Blind. Ms. Debbie Helms moved to approve the application from NFB; Ms. Barbara McCarthy seconded; motion passed.

Goodwill of the Valley: Ms. Debbie Helms is recusing herself from discussion and voting. This application is for \$7,500 for calendars and new equipment. Discussion took place around the application submitted by Goodwill of the Valley. Ms. Bonnie Atwood moved to approve the application from Goodwill; Dr. Leo Kim seconded; motion passed. Again, Ms. Debbie Helms abstained.

Adjournment

Ms. Bonnie Atwood moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:24 pm; motion passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: September 28, 2021