

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired**  
**Quarterly Board Meeting**  
March 26, 2024  
11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Location: Virginia Industries for the Blind (VIB)  
1102 Monticello Road  
Charlottesville, VA

**Board Members in Attendance**

Joseph Ashley, Bonnie Atwood, Robert Bartolotta, Paul D'Addario-Chair, Ken Jessup-Vice Chair

**Board Members Absent**

Mazen Basrawi

**Guests in Attendance**

Bryce Lee, The Optimal Service Group, Well Fargo  
Karen Logan, The Optimal Service Group, Wells Fargo  
Olu Rosanwo, The Optimal Service Group, Wells Fargo (virtually)  
Public: Williams (virtually)

**DBVI Staff to the Board**

Wallica Gaines, Deputy Commissioner for Administration; Matt Koch, Deputy Commissioner of Enterprises; Maggie Mills, Executive Assistant to the Commissioner; Rick Mitchell, Commissioner; Ashley West, Executive Assistant to the Deputy Commissioners

**Call to Order & Welcome**

Chair D'Addario called the meeting to order and welcomed the members in attendance. A quorum was met.

**Business Items**

**Introductions**

A roundtable of introductions was conducted. Several members of the VIB Advisory Board observed the meeting.

**Consent of Agenda**

Dr. Ashley moved to approve the agenda as presented, and the motion passed unanimously.

**Consent of December 12, 2023, Minutes**

The Minutes were approved without objection. Minutes were accepted for filing.

**Public Comment**

None

**Investment Report**

The Optimal Service Group (OSG), Wells Fargo reviewed DBVI's investment portfolio to date which has been in a long-term asset allocation since December 2021. Mr. Rosanwo reviewed the portfolio. **\*\*Wells Fargo will bring the Board's Investment Policy Statement to the next Board meeting so the Board can discuss and vote on an investment plan.** The investment plan is the direction of the overall investment. The spending plan is what the Board's target might be to disburse in grants. As of February 29, the Endowment Fund balance was \$6,054,173.

## **New Business**

### **Financial Disclosure Completions**

Ms. Mills reported on the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council's requirement for citizen members appointed to a State Board to complete a Financial Disclosure Form and training every two years. **\*\*She will send a link to the form and training so those who have not yet completed this requirement can do so.**

### **Endowment/Income Tax Check Off/Corporate Charity**

Mr. Bartolotta motioned to have the Endowment Fund added as an optional voluntary contribution to the items that Virginia taxpayers can elect to contribute to on the Virginia income tax form. All were in favor. **\*\*The Chair will contact Garren Shipley about going forth with this option and will report back to the Board.**

### **Adopting a Spending Plan**

Dr. Ashley motioned to develop a Spending Plan that is up to 4% of the corpus over a 3-year rolling average ending on March 31. There can be exceptions for addressing extenuating circumstances that are presented to the Board and the Board approves by majority vote as described in the Bylaws. All were in favor and the motion was approved. **\*\*Deputy Commissioner Gaines will develop the policy and send to the Chair to review before sending to the Governor's Office for approval.**

### **Board Attendance**

**\*\*The Board directed Deputy Commissioner Gaines to draft an attendance policy regarding attendance at Board meetings so that it can be voted on at the next Board Meeting.**

### **Recruitment of 3 New Board Members**

Board Members Bonnie Atwood and Ken Jessup have terms expiring the end of June. If anyone knows of possible good candidates, encourage them to apply. If anyone has difficulty in applying, they can contact Ms. Mills for assistance. It is expected that one new Board Member announcement should be made on Friday.

### **Tour of Charlottesville Facility**

The Board was given a tour of the VIB facility.

## **Unfinished Business**

### **Board Orientation and Ethics**

Mr. Bartolotta reported that there is currently no official Orientation for the Board. **\*\*Commissioner Mitchell will send Mr. Bartolotta the State Rehabilitation Council liaison contact information to use its Orientation material as an example to create Orientation material for the Board.**

### **Grant Fund Outcomes**

Deputy Commissioner Gaines reported on the reports that are required to be submitted from grant recipients. The reports should outline what has been done with the funds. Applicants for Endowment Funds are notified that they are to submit a report the following year on how the funds were used. The 2022 grantees did submit reports, but the reports submitted were different for every organization, because they were not told what to include or how to report the information. Deputy Commissioner Gaines may want guidance on what the new Grant Fund Outcome Report should look like.

## **Grant Request Process Template**

Deputy Commission Gaines will design the grant request application which Dr. Ashley recommended should include status reports to be submitted December 1 and June 1 of the following year.

April 10 a notice that the grant form is available will go out via GovDelivery and on the DBVI website. The Board will not accept grant applications past the June 1 deadline. **\*\*Deputy Commissioner Gaines will share information via a spreadsheet with the Board the week of June 3.** The Board will hold a Special Meeting on June 14 to review applications. The purpose of the Special meeting is to review applications received. Some applicants may be invited to make a presentation. **\*\*Wells Fargo will have 4% avg mid-April.** Regular meeting is June 25.

## **Other Business**

Commissioner Mitchell invited the Board Members to the DBVI All-Staff meeting scheduled for May 9 and 10 at the DBVI Azalea Campus. Secretary Littel will be participating in the Service Awards portion of the meeting.

## **Adjournment**

Dr. Ashley moved to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor.