

**APPROVED MINUTES**  
**Virginia Board for the Blind and Vision Impaired**  
**Special Board Meeting**

June 13, 2025  
11:00 am – 2:00 pm  
ALL VIRTUAL

**Board Members in Attendance**

Joseph Ashley-Vice Chair, Robert Bartolotta-Secretary, Paul D’Addario-Chair, Michael Kasey, Mazen Basrawi, Kathryn Campbell, Tina Egge

**Public in Attendance**

Sandy Halverson, NFB

**DBVI Staff Attendance**

Rebecca Askew, Senior Policy Analyst; Wallica Gaines, Deputy Commissioner, Administration; Matt Koch, Deputy Commissioner of Enterprises; Kathy Malone, Deputy Commissioner for Services; Maggie Mills, Executive Assistant to Commissioner; Rick Mitchell, Commissioner; Ashley West, Executive Assistant to Deputy Commissioners

**Call to Order & Welcome**

Chair D’Addario called the meeting to order and welcomed those in attendance. A roundtable of introductions was conducted. A quorum was met.

**Business Items**

**Consent of Agenda**

Mr. Kasey moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Dr. Ashley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Consent of March 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Ashley moved to approve the Minutes as presented. Mr. Kasey seconded the motion. All were in favor.

**Public Comment**

None

**New Business**

The Chair reviewed the purpose of the Endowment and the Board’s Spending Policy and the purpose of the June 13 Special Meeting of the Board which is to review Endowment Request applications and vote on which entities to invite to the June 24 Quarterly Board Meeting.

He reminded Board members to recuse themselves of voting if there is a conflict of interest.

A record number of applications were received requesting funds that far exceeded the available amount to grant.

Based on the Board's Spending Policy, the total amount of grants to be awarded in 2025 is \$239,927. Mr. Basrawi moved to round up the 2025 Endowment spending amount to \$240,000. Dr. Ashley seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was carried.

As there were a record number of Endowment applications to review, the Board voted on which of the 22 entities to invite to the June 24 Quarterly Board Meeting to present their initiative and to answer additional questions from the Board.

This resulted in 9 of the 22 entities to be invited to the June 24 Quarterly Board Meeting.

The Board's decision was based on prioritizing initiatives with the greatest potential to benefit Virginians who are blind, deafblind, or visually impaired.

Those entities and their initiatives are:

National Federation of the Blind of Virginia – Silver BELLS  
Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired – Super Summer Camp  
Virginia Association of the DeafBlind – 2025 DeafBlind Camp of Virginia  
Virginia Voice – Integration of Technology with the Human Narrative for Best Practices  
Blind Soccer Nation – Everyone Can Play and Learn Program  
ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia – Digital Inclusion Virginia  
Access Virginia – Arts for All Day Program  
Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington – Low Vision Support Services  
The Community Outreach Coalition – Educational Access

The Chair requested Board Members review the applications of the nine entities above prior to the June 24 meeting.

Ms. Mills will send invitations to these entities to attend the June 24 meeting in person or virtually to present a three-minute or less presentation to share additional information not already included in the application. This will also give the Board members the opportunity to ask additional questions about the request.

Non-funding notices will be sent by Ms. Mills to those applicants who will not be invited to the June 24 meeting.

Dr. Ashley proposed to dispense of the Optimal Services Group report on the June 24 Board Meeting agenda due to the number of applications to discuss at that meeting. All agreed. Ms. Mills will request Optimal Services Group provide the usual financial reports prior to the meeting. The Chair proposed to dispense of the DBVI Agency Reports from the agenda due to time constraints as well as the Old Business of discussing the Board Attendance Policy. These will be tabled and discussed at the September Board Meeting.

Ms. Egge shared that with current federal staff cuts, more entities may be looking for funds. She recommended that the Board discuss application eligibility and decision process going forward.

### **Adjourn**

Ms. Campbell moved to end the meeting. Ms. Egge seconded the motion. All were in favor.