

Georgia Association of Training, Employment, and Supports

Board of Directors Meeting
Creative Enterprises– Lawrenceville, GA
February 3, 2017

Meeting began at 9:30 a.m. The meeting was held at Creative Enterprises in Lawrenceville, GA.

BOARD Members present included:

Lynn Smith
Anisio Correia (by phone)
Leigh McIntosh
Dave Ward
Keith Powell
Sheila Zipf
Paula Phillips
Tricia Llewellyn

Other GATES Members & Guests present:

Charles Hall
Shawn Pursley
Michael Whitfield (by phone)
Ken Carswell
Jasmin Perry
Carrie Edwards
Dawn Randolph
Gwen Allen

I. Call to Order & Approval of Agenda

President Smith commenced the Board of Directors meeting and reviewed the agenda. A call to approve the agenda was made by President Smith. The agenda was approved by the BOARD.

II. Approval of October 21, 2016, Board Minutes

President Smith called for the approval of the Minutes. The Minutes were approved by the BOARD as written.

III. Committee Reports/Update

A.) Finance Committee Report

Charles Hall reported the financials as of December 31, 2016. GATES total revenue for DECEMBER was under the projected budget for the period by approximately (-\$90,000). Cost of sales was also under budget projections accordingly. This resulted in a \$60,565 net revenue for December (approximately \$7,500 under budget).

Expenses for the month were under budget by \$1,269. This gave GATES a net loss for December in the amount of (-\$ 4,507). The loss was greater than the projected budget of \$1,745 by (-\$6,252). As compared to FY16 the December loss was greater than the \$7,665 gain GATES had in December of 2015. For the year to date (Y-T-D) – NET LOSS: (-\$58,333).

Since July, GATES has a decrease in revenue under budget projections by (-\$349,211) or (-11.6%). The net revenue Y-T-D is (-\$38,915) or (-10%) under the budgeted net revenue of \$383,996. When comparing the FY16 Net to FY17, the FY17 Y-T-D total is (-\$49,466) or (-13%) under the FY16 Net Revenue.

GATES total Y-T-D expenses are under the projected expenses by 1.7% or \$7,168 for a total Y-T-D expense of \$403,414. This is also less than the FY16 expense on 12/31/15, which was \$404,075.

The net gain/loss over expenses Y-T-D (-\$58,333) is greater than the negative budget projection of (-\$26,586) and approximately \$48,000 more than the net loss on 12/31/15 of (-\$ 9,529).

B.) Selection of FY17-19 Audit Firm

Shelia Zipf presented information on the quotes secured to select an audit firm for 2017-2019. The Finance Committee reviewed the quotes, and while Gay and Joseph, CPA, PC was not the lowest bid, the committee recommended GATES continue to use that firm for audit services. Based on the additional staff time required for a new firm to be oriented to GATES operations and the staff consultations Gay and Joseph provides during the year continuation of Gay & Joseph was recommended. A call to approve Gay & Joseph, CPA, PC was made by President Smith. The CPA firm was approved by the BOARD.

IV. Georgia Enterprises Report

Mr. Shawn Pursley provided an update on his attendance at the annual SUPRA conference. One activity of note was a new format that mimicked speed dating. The participants were invited to participate in about twenty rounds of different operational topics. Each table would discuss one topic for fifteen minutes and then continued on to the next table topic. He stated this dynamic method was more efficient than the type of format they had used in the years prior.

Mr. Pursley also provided a summary report to the BOARD regarding GEPS which included the “State Use Operational Plan”.

Quarterly end user surveys were sent out. The response rate is usually low. This time GEPS received three responses; one good, one fair and one poor. This still provided GEPS the opportunity to address the poor reviews and resolve the issues.

A usual goal for GEPS is to partake in a joint bid which rarely come by. This year GEPS actually got to participate in one. Out of the three CRPs that bid on the DOT's contracts, one was successful. It was a sizable contract that will employ quite a few people.

GEPS looks to average 15 contract opportunities sent out to work centers every quarter, and they are averaging 13. GEPS also looks to average about 12 submitted bids every quarter with 6 new contracts. Currently, GEPS is averaging 10 submitted bids with 16 new contracts in the fiscal year of 2017 although most of the new contracts are small.

GEPS is also currently sending out their quarterly surveys to CRPs. This will help better understand their abilities, how they are changing and help recognize the areas they are interested in bidding on.

Mr. Pursley reminded the BOARD of the yearly Working Wonders luncheon coming in March of 2017. An award ceremony for participants who preferably have participated in the State Use program but if not have some way benefited from a CRP. He encouraged CRPs to send in their nominees. Of those nominees, five will be chosen and awarded beautiful plaques provided by New Ventures. The luncheon is held at the West Tower in the Sloppy Floyd Building downtown Atlanta. The luncheon will follow the council meeting.

GEPS was mentioned in the newest DOAS newsletter which helps remind people of the mandate. Mr. Pursley sent out an eblast of the new catalog and GEPS has also increased the tier volume discounts on soap which helps out with larger vendors. Mr. Pursley also touched on the numbers of people that are employed and the hours worked. The goal is 200 people working but currently, they are at 74. GVRA grant was also granted this year.

Mr. Pursley will be attending the DOAS tradeshow in Jekyll Island and speaking on the program about GEPS. This will be a great opportunity to express the mission behind the program.

V. Update on GVRA

President Smith lead the conversation by providing an overview of BOARD conversations and avocation of the STEP Program. The BOARD had been moving forward with negotiations and discussion of the Program until Ronnesia Barker resigned and Dale Arnold was appointed GVRA COO. Dale has expressed interest in learning more about STEP but wanted to get through his initial orientation to the new position.

Anisio Correia reviewed the reconstruction of his contract which agreed to provided services a la carte but noted by the time the agreement was finalized referrals had dried up. Several other BOARD members agreed that referrals had dried up since the end of last year. Sheila Zipf voiced her concerns regarding referrals for individuals who were medically fragile and were unable to work. She feared they would be tracked as an unsuccessful Step 1 when in reality it shouldn't reflect on the CRP or even the individual's participation. President Smith noted in her own referrals that as time goes by much more limited information is being provided up front. She questions whether or not they are even being screened or being put in the system because the counselors feel obligated to do so.

Charles Hall noted in the last conversations with Ms. Barker the goal was to evaluate the program and establish benchmark goals by March 1, 2017. Since Ms. Barker has resigned the agency Hall suggested the BOARD needs to drive GVRA to follow through on those commitments of review and benchmarking. Dave Ward noted Ms. Barker was finally in the CRP's corner and she had suggested to Shawn Casey to extend Step 1 to June. With her no longer in the agency GATES may have lost our strongest voice as she seemed to be our best advocate in the end. Other members of the BOARD discussed the need to be proactive and ask for a discussion to negotiate the contract.

By consensus agreement the BOARD requested President Smith to reach out to GVRA, specifically Dale Arnold, and request a meeting to further discuss the agency's plans for STEP. The BOARD will be notified when a meeting has been established.

Leigh McIntosh brought up another concern that as hospitals are being closed the label of "institution" is trickling down to the CRPs. She stated CRP programs were never institutions but were set up as community rehab programs. GATES and our CRP members do not want GVRA calling their CRP partners 'institutions'. Ms. McIntosh encouraged the BOARD to join together and voice their concern, reinforcing the fact that CRPs are the community and are community providers.

VI. Government Affairs/Legislative Update

Dawn Randolph updated the BOARD on legislative activities for the 2017 session. Speculations say the repeal of the Affordable Care Act in Congress upset the Medicaid budget and in state health care plans. The Lt. Governor's special task force, the Health Subcommittee of Appropriations of the House is charged with Medicaid. They decided to move forward as is and not plan a special session in the summer.

As for appropriations, the Governor's budget has not new funding in it for community programs. Ms. Randolph was present at a recent House Appropriations Sub-Committee hearing where Shawn Casey was able to present and talk about his new role. He also introduced his new staff to the committees and made it clear he was creating a new agency. He also invited his new CFO to speak and respond to the question,

“Are we fully funding GVRA?”. The CFO informed the group that GVRA is still leaving \$30 to \$40 million on the table. During the meeting, Mr. Casey stated that by law they did not have a formal ‘waitlist’ for VR services. Ms. Randolph asked the BOARD members to gather names of people that had been turned away so she could bring this to GVRA and the committee’s attention. It would not be considered a formal waitlist but it could serve to show there are people CRPs could serve if we were fully funded. She did state if the opportunity was presented she would encourage the Sub-Committee to provide additional funding to GVRA for community programs.

She noted the issue with CRPs being labeled an ‘institution’ and encouraged the BOARD members to sell themselves to legislators by enforcing the language of Community Rehabilitation Program instead of using the CRP term.

VII. CRP Activity Updates

Ray Bishop of Goodwill of North Georgia will be setting down as CEO, after 39 years of service.

VIII. Update on GATES Annual Meeting

The GATES Annual Meeting will be held on June 9, 2017, at Goodwill of North Georgia in Decatur, GA.

Adjourn

There being no other business and announcements to come before the BOARD, the meeting was adjourned. The next quarterly Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2017, at Nobis Works in Marietta, GA.

Anisio Correia,
Secretary of the Board

Minutes prepared by Jasmin Perry
GATES/GEPS Program Coordinator