

Georgia Association of Training, Employment, and Supports Board of Directors Meeting

November 06, 2015

President Becky Ketts called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The meeting was held at New Ventures in LaGrange, GA.

BOARD Members present included:

Keith Kennedy
Becky Ketts
Dave Miller
Lynn Smith
Sheila Zipf
Leigh McIntosh

Other GATES Members & Guests present:

Charles Hall
Anna Hensley
Sara Horton
Lara Hunt
Emily Layton
Shawn Pursley
Dawn Randolph

I. Call to Order & Approval of Agenda

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

II. Approval of July 17, 2015 Board Minutes

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

III. Committee Reports/Update

Finance Committee Report

A) Acceptance of FY15 Audit

Charles Hall and Sheila Zipf headed a discussion regarding the Audit performed by the firm of Gay & Joseph and reviewed by the GATES Finance Committee. The Audit was accepted as satisfactory, and President Becky Ketts called for its approval. Keith Kennedy made the motion, Dave Miller seconded, and the Audit was approved by the BOARD.

B) Approval of 990 filing

President Ketts called for the approval of Form 990 and authorizing Sheila Zipf to sign on behalf of the Board. A motion was made, seconded and approved.

C) Financial Reports (June & September 2015)

GATES Treasurer Sheila Zipf notes first quarter financials got off to a slow start and GEPS' loss a major custodial contract with Gwinnett Tech. The contract had been month-to-month since its June 2014 expiration. Regarding membership Mr. Hall states he steadily continues to collect payment of Dues.

For GISN, unusual fluctuations in Interpreter Cost of Services percentages, normally 80% of Revenue, are expected to balance back out by November's end. Fluctuations were due to transition of Payroll to the LaGrange office which will increase efficiency overall.

For the current period ending September 30, 2015, GATES experienced a net loss over expenses of gain of (-48,458) which is normal for first quarter. For each of the other operations, GASP shows a Y-T-D net loss of (-\$19,407), GISN shows a Y-T-D net loss of (-\$31,802), and GEPS shows a Y-T-D gain of (+\$2,624.)

IV. Update on GVRA

The Board discussed the preliminary *Spending Update Oct. 2016*, sent to President Ketts. Mr. Hall noted GVRA has not issued a Utilization Report since the 2014 fall season. The Board made suggestions as to what needs to be included in the report and President Ketts would schedule a discussion with GVRA to make those adjustments.

President Ketts mentions a slowdown in referrals. There was Board discussion as to whether the STEP program was causing this issue. Field officers seem to be misinterpreting terms of contracts (e.g., whether STEP'S contracts must be for a full six months). The BOARD requested President Ketts and other Board representatives meet with GVRA to discuss this issue.

V. Georgia Enterprises Report

Mr. Shawn Pursley provided a summary report to the BOARD regarding GEPS Contract Status Report and the State Use Operational Plan. In addition the Board discussed,

A) STATE USE COUNCIL MEETING

During the September 2015 State Use Council meeting, Mr. Pursley presented an analysis of Fair Market Value (FMV) to the new Deputy Commissioner. Two items of note are: (1) GEPS is not winning enough contracts, and (2) there are hurdles with some of the products. More support is needed from DOAS. 50% of Products have been accepted. After determination of the remaining 50%, a phone conference call of the State Use Council will take place.

B) SOP for State Use Disability Criteria

Mr. Charles Hall leads this discussion and notes that all criteria previously recommended during the July 2015 Meeting were approved by the State Use Council. In September, the Council also officially adopted the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) definition of "disability" for State Use Policy. State Use law requires that all products sold and services provided through GEPS must have 75% of the work force for that product or service be an individual with a disability.

Each CRP participating in the State Use program must file a quarterly report with the GEPS office of the hours worked by individuals with disabilities. This must represent 75% of the hours worked for State Use products and/or services. In addition, the CRP's Chief Executive Officer must sign an affidavit that the CRP is complying with the 75% rule when the quarterly report is filed. It is recommended the CRP maintain appropriate files on each employee that is assigned to a State Use product or service. Lastly, GEPS will randomly select one to three CRPs per year to audit their State Use workers disability eligibility records regarding the 75% rule. The Board discussed how these new policies will be implemented.

C) Ability One Eligibility Determination and Documentation

President Ketts states that several organizations have expressed a desire for a review of their records for Ability One. Her opinion is that an outside entity would be preferable. Mr. Hall suggests that the scope of the project be drafted on paper, including any potential issues. Keith

Kennedy states that a key issue will be competitive versus non-competitive employability. He offers that some individuals are actually competitive yet remain under the 75% ratio, which counters the objective to move them into competitive jobs. President Ketts thinks that sending out a Needs Assessment Survey to the CEOs would be a good way to get this project underway. No action was taken on this project.

D) State Use Council oversight of DOAS compliance to support program

Dave Miller suggests issuing a letter of support to the State Use Council (SUC) from the GATES BOARD, in the spirit of solidarity, for assuming a more active role and oversight of the program. Though DOAS has final legal authority on whether a product or service gets put on “Set Aside”, he would welcome the State Use Council having a greater role in marketing and measuring new avenues for growth. Shawn Pursley supports bringing back “Set Aside” for services to allow for the possibility of a competitive bid to come up (within 8%), in order to win first right of refusal. It was suggested a letter from the BOARD be drafted, circulated, and presented at the January 2016 Meeting.

VI. Legislative

Dawn Randolph reminded BOARD members to send in their updated accounting data so that she may forward these economic revisions to the legislature before the holidays. She and President Ketts are discussing strategies to close the gaps for State match and fully fund GVRA.

She reported a Legislative Study Committee has been formed to focus on the options of those with disabilities to obtain competitive employment. Ms. Randolph has met with GVRA to discuss timelines and realistic approaches for this objective. When the Study Committee met in October 2015, President Ketts noted two areas of concern: (1) questions about sheltered workshops, and (2) organizations paying sub-minimum wages. The next Committee meeting will take place in mid-November. Three expected topics are: (1) what’s taking place in schools, K-12, (2) what GVRA has observed in terms of education, training, and employment, and (3) challenges that Easter Seals is having across the autism spectrum.

Calendar

There being no other business and announcements to come before the BOARD, the meeting was adjourned at 1:40 P.M. The next quarterly Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for February 05, 2016 at the Center for the Visually Impaired (CVI) in Atlanta, GA.

Minutes Recorded and Written by Lara Hunt,

Respectfully Submitted,

Anisio Correia, Secretary
GATES Board of Directors