

Georgia Association of Training, Employment and Support, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, January 27, 2022

10:00 AM

via Zoom

Board Members Present:

Dave Ward

Joel Prawucki

Leigh McIntosh

Mike Wilson

Larry Gluth

Lynn Smith

Meredith Champagne

Tricia Llewellyn Konan

Other GATES Members and Guests

Kimberleigh Moore-Willis

Caitlin Hyatt

Sheila Pierce

Chris Wells

Bethany Whetzel

I. Call to Order & Approval of Agenda

A quorum of the Board membership was established. President Dave Ward commenced the Board of Directors Meeting at 10:02 AM with a welcome to everyone. A motion was made and seconded for the approval of the meeting agenda. The agenda was approved as presented.

II. GVRA Update & Q&A

Guests Chris Wells, Sheila Pierce, and Bethany Whetzel provided an update of what is happening in the agency. There is an increased focus on blind and low vision clients, specifically with a bill that is introduced in this session. GVRA staff encouraged the continued use of the online referral portal and highlighted its importance in serving those 88,000 eligible students. In the coming year, GVRA will be performing program reviews with each of the CRPs that are contracted with the agency. Additionally, this summer, there will be a special GROW summer program at Roosevelt Warm Springs starting in June. GVRA staff mentioned information can be found on their website underneath Roosevelt Warm Springs but that they would also follow up after this meeting with additional details. GVRA would also like to perform a training session for providers and welcomes any feedback on what the training should entail.

There are potential opportunities on the horizon for providers to work with GVRA through DHS and DBHDD and more details are forthcoming.

GVRA is focused on hiring the open positions, with 50 being filled this past week. Their focus is also on increasing salaries for their counselors in an effort to retain employees.

After this update, GATES members briefly discussed their experiences with GVRA.

Approval of October 28, 2022 Board Minutes

President Ward called for the approval of October 28, 2022, minutes. A motion was made and seconded for the approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved as presented.

III. Committee Reports/Updates:

Finance Committee Report

Mike Wilson, Treasurer, and the Finance Committee met on January 20 to review the December 2022 Financial report.

Caitlin Hyatt, GATES CEO, then provided a review of the GATES financials as of December 31, 2022. Year to date, GATES is net positive \$40,196, with GASP coming in at a net negative (\$11,685), GEPS at a positive \$26,878 and GISN at positive \$25,001.

GEPS Service contracts are down compared to last year and budget, but product sales are really picking up. There was discussion regarding the COVID test kits that have been recently approved as mandatory, but then moved to preferred.

GISN has been positive every month thus far, except for July and December. December is notorious for being a slower month due to the holidays. Hyatt noted that most of the assignments in the Spring are ongoing assignments and occur for a considerable amount of time. All good news.

Payments to work centers – 100% of these were paid in 7 business days or less.

Organizational Updates

The various CRPs in attendance provided updates on what is happening at their organizations.

Legislative UPDATE

Jared Thomas of Garst Thomas Public Affairs provided an overview of the work he has done since the October Board meeting and the plan moving forward for the legislative session. Thomas has had several meetings with Chris Wells of GVRA, Sheila Pierce, Bethany Whetzel, and Caitlin Hyatt of GATES.

The plan continues to be that GATES remains open in its dialogue with GVRA to ensure that everyone is aware of the short falls and where things could be improved upon. Rep. Dempsey, Chris Wells, Jared Thomas, and Caitlin Hyatt of GATES met in December to discuss the issues at hand. As a result of that meeting, Chris and his team at GVRA were to provide data on referrals and utilization. The data was provided in late December. As a result of that data, Hyatt and Thomas have asked for some additional clarifications, and those points are forthcoming from GVRA.

Goals for 2023 are: a Budget line item for GATES providers, transparency in GVRA budgeting, improved referrals, budget restoration to a minimum of pre-covid levels, and clear line of communication of legislators, administrators, and CRPs to ensure accountability.

Georgia Enterprises Report

In Shawn Pursley's absence, Caitlin Hyatt updated the Board on the State Use program and reviewed the contract status report. Discussion ensued regarding the products that are certified under the State Use Program. Concern was expressed with the move towards products becoming preferred instead of mandatory. **A task force was created to review the current and potential products that are provided by GATES CRPs.** The

task force will consist of Shawn Pursley, Caitlin Hyatt and members of Tommy Nobis Center, Bobby Dodd Institute and potentially New Ventures.

Georgia Interpreting Services Network (GISN)

Caitlin Hyatt provided a brief overview of GISN activities. Assignments are picking up and the focus is now on outreach and participating at local tradeshow and fairs.

VI. Old Business

GATES April Board Meeting

Due to a scheduling conflict, the April 28th Board Meeting has been moved to April 21st.

GATES Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting is currently scheduled for June 9th. The Board decided to combine the annual meeting with the July 28th Board meeting. Therefore, June 9th could be released from everyone's calendars.

V. New Business

Appointment of the Nominating Committee

In accordance with the Bylaws, the Board appointed a nominating committee to determine the next slate of officers for the terms to begin on July 1, 2023. The committee will consist of Dave Ward (chair), Lynn Smith, Larry Gluth, and Tricia Llewellyn Konan.

There being no further business to come before the Board the meeting was adjourned.

The next quarterly Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2023 with the location to be determined.

Respectively Submitted,

Joel Prawucki,
Secretary of the Board

Minutes prepared by,
Caitlin Hyatt
CEO, GATES