**Virginia Board for People with Disabilities**

**Board Meeting Minutes**

***December 2, 2015***

The Virginia Board for People with Disabilities held its regular quarterly meeting on Wednesday, December 2, 2015 at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, 4700 S. Laburnum Avenue, Richmond, Virginia.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Vicki Beatty, Donna Bonessi, (DARS), George Randolph Burak, Michael Carrasco, Theresa Casselman, Deborah Johnson (serving as designee for John Eisenberg,( VDOE) Carina Elgin, Sari Leinonen-Farrell, Ethel Parris Gainer, Melissa Gibson, (disability Law Center of Virginia), Tera Yoder (serving as designee for Donna Gilles, (PPD/VCU), Felicia Hamilton, Ronald King, Marisa Laios, Ronald Lanier, (VDDHH) Donna J. Lockwood, Mary McAdam, Mark McGregor, Charles Meacham, Jane Ward Solomon (serving as designee for Richard Mitchell), Alexis Nichols, Atima Omara, Deanna Parker (DBHDS), Jessica Philips, Cindy Rudy, Korinda Rusinyak, Angela Sadsad, Summer Sage, Matthew Shapiro, Terry Smith, (DMAS), Ed Turner, Kathleen Vaughan, (DARS),Travis Webb, Angela West and Rose Williams.

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**:

Carina Elgin, John Kelly and Rachel Loughlin.

**CALL TO ORDER, WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:**

Board Chair, Charles Meacham called the meeting to order at 9:35 am. The Chair welcomed Board members and Board staff. He welcomed Agency Designees: Deborah Johnson serving as designee for John Eisenberg (VDOE), Jane Ward Solomon serving as designee for Richard Mitchell (DBVI) and Tera Yoder serving as designee for Donna Gilles (PPD/VCU). Mr. Meacham also welcomed Luncheon Presenters: **Luncheon Presenters for Grant Presentation:** Pam Hinterlong, Instructor, Rehabilitation Research & Training, VCU; Tonya Fowler, Executive Director, The Arc of Southside; Steve Berger, Arc; Sierra Hoskins, Arc and Sabra Carter, The Arc of Southside.

The Chair made general announcements: The **PIP** Graduation is scheduled Saturday, April 9, 2016; **YLF** applications for the 2016 Leadership Development Training Program will soon be available on the agency’s website and will be due in March 2016. The next Board meeting date and location will be sent as soon as the RFP is awarded. The Chair reviewed the meeting agenda.

**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2015 BOARD MEETING MINUTES:**

The Chair asked if there were any changes to the Board meeting minutes. Hearing none, the Chair called for a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes. Cindy Rudy made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the September 9, 2015 Board Meeting minutes. Marisa Laios seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF JUNE 2015 COMMITTEE MINUTES:**

The Chair asked if there were any corrections to the Committee meetings minutes. Hearing none, the Chair called for a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes. Mr. Mark McGregor made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the June Committee minutes. Marisa Laios seconded the **MOTION**. The MOTION carried unanimously.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

Stephen Joseph, Secretary, provided an overview of the December 2, 2015 Executive Committee meeting which included a fiscal report, the Directors report, Board member attendance, discussion of the revised Conference Support guidelines, and 3 investment (grant/contract) items (See Executive Committee minutes for additional detail).

**REVIEW OF CONSUMER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS:**

Ben Jarvela provided a brief overview of the results of the Consumer Satisfaction Survey. For the 2015 Survey, there were a total of 225 respondents, less than the 370 in 2014 and 285 in 2013. The majority of responses came from online respondents and grant/contract participants. Mr. Jarvela noted that part of the lower response rate was likely due to the fact that the training programs were not held in 2014-15. Overall comments were positive but there were recommendations for improvement and individuals unfamiliar with the Board.

**DISCUSSION/VOTE ON REVISED BOARD BYLAWS:**

Mr. Meacham, Board Chair reported that John Cimino, Board staff conducted a review of the bylaws. Mr. Meacham noted that proposed changes to the bylaws reflect current practice of the Board. After discussion, the Board Chair called for a vote to **APPROVE** the amended bylaws. Mr. Matthew Shapiro made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the amended bylaws. Mr. Ed Turner seconded the **MOTION.** The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**DISCUSSION OF FFY 2016 COMPETITIVE RFPS AND OTHER INVESTMENTS:**

The Board Chair, Mr. Meacham, asked members who had any affiliation with an organization that might be interested in bidding on any of the three proposals to recuse themselves from the proposal discussion and to leave the room. Mr. Meacham reported that the Executive Committee voted to recommend to the full Board, approval of the release of the three RFPs for grants/contracts.

The Board Chair again asked if anyone needed to recuse themselves for the discussion of the **1st Recommendation**: “Development of Adult (Parent) Curriculum on Critical Decision-Making Points for Students with Disabilities (a “Train the Trainer” model)”. The following members recused themselves: Sari Leinonen-Farrell, Marisa Laios, Summer Sage, Mary McAdams, Teri Yoder and Deb Johnson. The recommendation was for a Solicitation for Proposal to the Virginia Department of Education for $150,000 for the “Development of Adult (Parent) Curriculum on Critical Decision-Making Points,” to add students with disabilities as one of the target populations and to require a sustainability plan to ensure the training would continue after the conclusion of the grant. After discussion, the Chair called for a vote of Approval on this recommendation. Mr. Michael Carrasco made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the recommendation from the Executive Committee. Vicki Beatty seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

The Chair asked if there was anyone who needed to recuse themselves from the discussion of the **2nd Recommendation: “Expansion of Advocates Building Livable Environments (ABLE)**.” The following members recused themselves and left the room: Korinda Rusinyak, Travis Webb and Marisa Laios. The recommendation was that a Sole Source Contract be negotiated with the VA Associations of Centers for Independent Living (VACIL) because they were uniquely qualified to conduct this project. After discussion, the Chair called for a vote to **APPROVE** solicitation of VACIL through a Sole Source Contract for “Expansion of ABLE,” that builds on the Accessibility Reference Manual for building professionals in VA, Option 2 for $119,650, and added delegation of authority to Executive Director to negotiate up to $150,000 to increase the number of interactive game-based scenarios. Matthew Shapiro made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** recommendation from the Executive Committee. Ms. Cindy Rudy seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously. Ms. Jane Ward asked if the products would be accessible to all disability populations. Ms. Lawyer, Executive Director, stated it would but additional moneys would likely be needed to accomplish this and so some of the additional $30,000 available through negotiation would likely be used for that purpose, but not to exceed $150,000 mentioned above.

The Board Chair again asked if anyone needed to recuse themselves for the discussion of the **3rd Recommendation: “Ensuring Continuity of Care for Infants At-Risk or with Developmental Delays.”** For this discussion the Chair recused himself and Ms. Marisa Laios recused herself. Ms. Lawyer continued the meeting and briefly described the proposed project. The recommendation was to Release a Competitive Request for Proposals with $125,000 available for one or more projects. After discussion, Ms. Lawyer called for **APPROVAL** of the recommendation. Ms. Korinda Rusinyak made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the recommendation from the Executive Committee. Mr. Ron King seconded the **MOTION.** The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**REVIEW OF DRAFT CONFERENCE SUPPORT GUIDELINES:**

The Board Chair reported that the Executive Committee was informed at the September 2015 Board meeting that the Board now has funds available for grants, contracts and event support. The Executive Committee asked Board Staff to revise the procedures to include more stringent criteria for eligibility and program content. The Executive Committee reviewed the Event Procedures and Application Form, and after discussion, made a recommendation to the full Board to reinstate conference support and to set the dollar amount for SFY 2016.

The Chair stated that the Executive Committee recommends **APPROVAL** of the Conference and Event Procedures and Application Form to include the following changes: Delete the Funding Criteria – the 4th Bullet, “applicants have a history of working collaboratively with the Board, from the Event Procedures; Add “description of Board staff involvement” to the Application Form. Mr. Michael Carrasco made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the recommended Event Support Procedures and Application Form and the recommended changes. Ms. Marisa Laios seconded the **MOTION**. The **MOTION** carried unanimously. Mr. Meacham Board Chair stated that the Executive Committee recommends for **APPROVAL** $10,000 be available for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2016 and that SFY 2017 budget decisions will be made at the June 2016 meeting. Mr. Mark McGregor made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the Executive Committee to recommendation that $10,000 be available for SYF 2016 and that the 2017 budget decisions will take place at the June 2016 meeting. Ms. Ethel Gainer seconded the **MOTION.** The **MOTION** carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was none.

**REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF FFY 2017-2021 STATE PLAN GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND DRAFT ACTIVITIES:**

The Board Chair Mr. Meacham stated that the Board is to review, discuss and approve the draft of the FFY 2017-2021 State Plan Goals and Objectives for public comment prior to finalizing for submission to the Administration for Community Living. He noted that the Board staff was directed to flesh out additional objectives and activities from the draft goals and several objectives that were developed at the September Board meeting. Mr. Meacham reported that there are 2 goals and 14 objectives to be reviewed for changes if needed. He led the review of each of the 2 goals and the 14 objectives. After review and discussion, the Chair stated that the Goals and Objectives would be released, as amended by the Board at this meeting,to the public for a 45-day public comment period. Mr. Meacham noted that at the March 2016 Board meeting and June 2016 meeting the committees will look at the current and existing goals and objectives. At the June 2016 meeting the Board will vote final approval of the FFY 2017-2021 goals and objectives. The Board Chair thanked staff for a job extremely well done.

**LUNCHEON PRESENTATION:**

Grant Presentation: The presenters Pam Hinterlong, Instructor, Rehabilitation Research & Training Center, VCU; Tonya Fowler, Executive Director, The Arc of Southside; Steve Berger, Sierra Hoskins, The Arc of Southside were introduced by Lynne Talley, Board staff. Ms. Hinterlong introduced Ms. Fowler who introduced Steve Berger and Sierra Hoskins both are supported Employees/Self-Advocates and Sabra Carter, Employment specialist. The presenters gave an overview of Primary Project Objectives and Activities that included: Develop and maintain skilled staff that can support integrated employment outcomes for people with significant developmental disabilities; Develop and maintain a business network of employers that can facilitate and support the community employment of people with IDD; all individuals who seek integrated employment make informed career choices; Develop a network of self-advocates, followed by the Employment Outcomes- 14 community jobs and 2 additional placements since the end of September for a Total of 16 jobs. The Presenters conclude their presentation with a note of thanks to the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities for supporting the The Arc of Southside in helping local citizens with disabilities to have *A Life Like Yours!* The Chair thanked both Pam Hinterlong and Tonya Fowler and the others from The Arc of Southside for the impressive grant accomplishments and for coming to the meeting to share this information.

**COMMITTEE STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS:**

Board Chair Mr. Meacham reported that it was determined at the June 2015 Board meeting that the Board would move to a functional committee structure vs. the current topical area committee structure effective March 2016. Mr. Meacham noted that if the new structure did not work, it could be changed back or a new structure tried. The Chair reviewed with the Board the purpose of the three new committees and the core responsibilities: **Investment and State Plan Oversight Committee;** ensure prudent stewardship of taxpayer funds by providing fiscal and quality oversight of all grant or contract awards, conference support and training program expenditures; **Advocacy, Outreach and Training Committee:** to facilitate more effective advocacy by individuals with DD and related disabilities and their families and to plan and monitor outreach efforts to raise awareness of DD issues as well as promote support- the values of the Board and its constituents; **Policy and Evaluation Committee:** provide oversight of and guidance on Board advocacy regarding disability related policy issues; to assist planning strategies for liaison activities and policy development; and monitor program evaluation; and support development of the Assessment

**AGENCY DESIGNEE BUDGET, POLICY, AND PROGRAM UPDATES (DMAS, DBHDS*,* DOE, DBVI)**

**Deanna Parker, agency representative, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS):**

* **Individual and Family Support (IFSP) Program** -The IFSP funding period for FY2016 has ended. The IFSP has approved 650 applications for assistance and distributed $675,000 in funds to Individuals on the waiver waiting lists and their families. DBHDS will be holding public meetings throughout the state in November and December regarding the redesign of the Individual and Family Support Program. Each session will include a short presentation about the proposed changes to the system and discussion. The dates and locations of the meetings are found on the DBHDS website.

**ID/DD Waiver Waiting Lists** (as of November 20, 2015)**:**

|  | **ID**  **Waiver** | **DD Waiver** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Total Slots** | 10717 | **1053** |
| Urgent Waitlist | 4933 |  |
| Non-Urgent Waitlist | 3190 |  |
| **Total Waitlist** | **8120** | **2133** |

**Training Center Updates:** As of December 1st, the current combined training center census is at **436.**

| **Name of TC** | **Previous Week Census** |  | **Current Census** |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CVTC** | **1651** | **216** | **164** | **49** | **213** |
| **NVTC** |  | **42** |  |  | **41** |
| **SEVTC** |  | **69** |  |  | **69** |
| **SWVTC** |  | **113** |  |  | **113** |
| **Total** |  | **440** |  |  | **436** |

* **Housing Update:**

| **Total # of Rental Choice VA rental subsidies** | **18** |
| --- | --- |
| Number of slots utilized | 14 |
| Number of rental assistance slots remaining | **18** |
| **Total # of VHDA HCVP rental subsidies** | **97** |
| Number of vouchers leased | 35 |
| Number of vouchers remaining to be utilized | **62** |

* **Waiver Redesign:** The three IDD waiver amendments (minus Appendix J) have been posted to the DBHDS website for comment.  The amendments are accompanied by separate a Table of Contents document to enable you to discern which appendices you are most interested in reviewing.  Appendix J is the financial projections appendix and is still being drafted.   This comment period is in advance of the official comment period, which will commence upon the completion of Appendix J.  Once Appendix J is available, notice of the official public comment period will be posted.  The advance preview of the waiver amendments is being posted to enable stakeholders to have as much time as possible to review the three very lengthy amendments. The community is encouraged to review the amendments and submit comments through the *My Life, My Community* email address at [mylifemycommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov](mailto:mylifemycommunity@dbhds.virginia.gov).  This link is also posted in the same location on the website. The sections of the amendments are available [here](http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/professionals-and-service-providers/developmental-disability-services-for-providers) and [here](http://www.dbhds.virginia.gov/individuals-and-families/developmental-disabilities).
* **CMS HCBS Regulation Statewide Transition Plan -** DMAS and DBHDS are responding to communication from CMS with feedback on the VA Statewide Transition Plan. The updated transition plan is scheduled to be posted for public comment in mid- February.

**Terry Smith, agency representative, Virginia Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS):**

* **Home Health Care Rule (Department of Labor)** - DMAS is working to be fully compliant with the Home Health Care Rule on January 1, 2016. This Rule permits for payment of overtime and travel (under certain conditions) for home health care workers. This will mean that some attendants in the consumer-direct service delivery model may be eligible for time and a half pay for certain hours worked. The Department and their Fiscal/Employer agent, PPL are working to assure that all components of the Rule are fully implemented within this month, December 2015. More information will be forthcoming.
* **Waiver Redesign** - DMAS is working with DBHDS on redesign of the three waivers currently serving individuals with disabilities. While several meetings have moved issues forward much remains to be completed. Some highlights include:
* A rate study has been completed by the DBHDS contractor.
* A detailed report on the redesign of the Intellectual and Developmental Disability waivers as required by the last Session of the General Assembly has been posted.
* Bi-weekly telephone calls with CMS on waiver redesign have concluded.
* A work plan is under development with benchmarks to assist in maintaining the priorities of the project.
* Public comment on the amended waivers will be sought in the near future in order to permit time for a review of the redesign prior to submission to CMS.
* The planned implementation of the waiver redesign is July 2016.
* **BUDGET ACTION -** As a second reminder, several budget actions were taken during the last General Assembly which became effective in July of 2015. There is an expectation that as a result of waiver redesign further increases will be sought during this General Assembly 2016 session.
* 2% increase for congregate residential services (except sponsored placement)
* 5.5% increase for in-home residential services
* 2% increase for day support and prevocational services
* 10% increase for therapeutic consultation services
* 15.7% increase for skilled nursing services in the ID and DD waivers
* 6% increase for the EPSDT nursing
* **PACE** -Federal legislation has been passed which will remove the age requirement of 55+ for the Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly. Several states have begun pilot projects inclusive of populations other than the elderly and Virginia is closely monitoring these projects and the opportunity for federal funding. This is of interest to the Commonwealth as options for managed care are expanding within the Commonwealth.

* **MFP** - The Money Follows the Person Program will sunset in December of 2017. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has approved the Commonwealth’s sustainability plan. A phase down of the program and funding is in the works including a reduction in staff in the program at DMAS.
* **Automated Uniform Assessment Instrument** - An automated preadmission screening process for individuals who will be eligible for long-term supports and services was rolled out in July 2015. This has provided rich data to DMAS which has been shared by both DARS and VDH to work on process improvements to the pre-admission screening process. The new system which requires automation of the process has resulted in drastic reductions in the amount of time for completion of the UAI and faster service delivery.

* **Managed Long Term Services and Supports -** DMAS continues to work aggressively on design of a Managed Long Term Services and Supports system. Additional information will be forthcoming.

* **Regulations/Manuals**

Look for the release shortly of the following:

The Nursing Facility Provider Manual

The Elderly or Disabled with Consumer Direction Provider Manual

The Preadmission Screening Manual

**Deborah Johnson, reported for John Eisenberg, agency representative, Virginia Department of Education (VDOE):**

* Virginia’s Statewide IEP system is still being planned but it got rolled back to VITA for further review. We have now waited 2 full years for approval to even issue an RFP for vendors. These delays will significantly hamper our implementation timeline.
* New history and social science Aligned Standards of Learning used on the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program have been drafted and will be out for public review/comment this Friday on the VDOE website.
* The Restraint and Seclusion draft regulations are at a standstill due to significant stakeholder disagreement. Significant legal questions were raised concerning conflicts with Virginia’s Corporal Punishment statutes. Guidance was sought from the Attorney General and VDOE will be working to potentially explore a legislative fix. No timeline for a first draft can be shared at this moment.
* VDOE has been conducting a yearlong review of the Regional Tuition Reimbursement Programs better known as Regional Programs. An initial report of our findings will be delivered to the Commission on Youth on December 8th, 2015. The report highlights the “state of the state” of these current programs and makes a number of recommendations for further study of adapting the current program to meet current modern needs of school divisions serving students with high support needs.
* 27 school divisions are currently participating in our Virginia Tiered Systems of Support Cohorts. Virginia Tiered Systems of Support combines Response to Intervention, Positive Behavior Supports, and School Mental Health First Aid training.
* Work is advancing on the development of Applied Studies Diploma which has replaced the Special Diploma. Competencies are nearing completion and a data system to track progress will be sent to RFP in the next few months. The competencies will focus on academics, employment, independent level, communication and self-advocacy. VDOE will be working with certain school divisions to pilot this new model in the near future.
* VDOE is working with the Board of Education to explore possible changes the Standards of Accreditation. One draft idea is to expand credit accommodations for students with disabilities to the Advanced Studies Diploma. Alternate pathways to achieve verified credits are being explored for difficult subjects such as World Languages.

**Ron Lanier, Director, Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH):**

* **New Contract for Sign Language Interpreter is Pending** – With the current contract for sign language interpreter services expiring this month, VDDHH’s Interpreter Programs Manager has been in the process of developing a new contract solicitation. For the past several months, meetings have been held with representatives of the professional interpreting community in Virginia and purchasing staff from the Department of Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). Data from surveys of state-screened and nationally certified interpreters, and the market in other states, has been analyzed. We expect to have the new contract ready to go out to all qualified interpreters in the Commonwealth this week, with a start date of January 1, 2016. We do anticipate a rate increase for interpreters, recognizing that it has been nearly 10 years since a meaningful rate increase was provided. The expectation is that the new contract will appeal to a broader audience of interpreters, thus increasing access to effective communication for consumers doing business with state agencies.
* **Relay Outreach Positions Filled** – Previously, we reported that the Commonwealth has new contracts for traditional Relay, and Captioned Telephone relay services. With the contracts in place, the new provider, Hamilton Relay, has hired Paul Stuessy as Outreach Coordinator for traditional relay services and Frazelle Hampton as Outreach Coordinator for CapTel (captioned telephone) relay services. You may contact VDDHH for more information about Virginia Relay and to request equipment demonstrations and presentations by Paul and/or Frazelle.

**Melissa Charnes Gibson, agency representative for the disability Law Center of Virginia (dLCV):**

* dLCV has placed on their website “Ask the Expert.com”

**Tera Yoder, reported for Donna Gilles, agency representative for Partnership for People with Disabilities (PPD/VCU):**

* Continuing with LEAP training.

**Jane Ward Solomon, reported for agency representative Richard Mitchell, Virginia Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI):**

* **THE SERVICES DIVISION** -The Vocational Rehabilitation program served across the Commonwealth, in various stages of the rehabilitation process, 1,796 individuals who are blind, deafblind, or vision impaired.  200 of these individual cases were closed as successfully employed with an average hourly wage of $16.68 per hour.
* The Rehabilitation Technology Services has hosted 751 visits to its Resource Room as of October 2015.  This includes visits from customers and potential customers, and outreach to educators, employers, state employees, and the general public.
* The Rehabilitation Technology Services have participated in several outreach projects for the agency in the form of training and public awareness display tables to include: The Virginia Business Leaders Network meeting; DBVI Open House; and the SunTrust Ability Awareness Day.
* The Rehabilitation Teaching program across the Commonwealth worked with 2,201 individuals to help them gain the necessary skills to be able to continue living independently.  There were a total number of 1,188 individuals that gained the necessary skills.
* A new workforce unit has been established this year.  This unit experienced its first hire in late July, which was the Coordinator of Workforce Development. Two of the four Workforce Specialist that will serve across the Commonwealth in various regions have been hired.  Already numerous contacts have been made and the beginning phases of internships and actual employment placements have already begun.
* The Library and Resource Center, including our seven National Library Service of the Library of Congress of Virginia sub-regional libraries; in Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Fredericksburg, Roanoke, Staunton and Virginia Beach, served 11,198 Virginians who are print-disabled from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.
* The Library and Resource Center successfully transitioned to a new cloud-based database in August-September-October 2015.
* The Library and Resource Center hosted the AIM-VA Coordinating Council Fall 2015 meeting, and has convinced the Council to continue to meet in our facility for future meetings of the Council, which are held in the spring and fall.
* The Library and Resource Center Braille transcribers have successfully completed Unified English Braille training, and are ready for the transition slated for January 4, 2016.
* The Library and Resource Center hosted the Virginia Unified English Braille Steering Committee, in cooperation with the VDOE, during several meetings this quarter.
* The 2015 Learning Independence, Feeling Empowered! (LIFE) program was our most successful one to date.  With twenty-two participants, it was the largest LIFE program we have had.  Blind and vision-impaired youth had the opportunity to focus on developing their blindness skills (cane travel, Braille, technology, personal and home management skills, physical conditioning, job-readiness skills, and discussions about advocacy and blindness-related issues) and to work at integrated work settings in Richmond.  We also gave four blind young adults the chance to serve as mentors for the LIFE program so that they could gain valuable work experience to help them in pursuing their career goals.
* In August we hosted the Live Active, Live Healthy, Live Modern program, a week-long program for seniors over the age of fifty-five who are experiencing vision loss.  We had eight participants, along with three family members, and they participated in activities designed to introduce them to independent living skills.
* For the past year, VRCBVI has been engaged in the Learning Collaborative Project with the goal of increasing utilization of VRCBVI and of promoting a much more concentrated focus on employment readiness activities.  As a result, we are anticipating more opportunities for our students to participate in internships and volunteer and work experiences.  We will be following the employment outcomes for all students who participate in the VRCBVI program with assistance from data collected from AWARE.
* VRCBVI students have been featured in positive media stories.  For example, one of the LIFE students was placed at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens for his work experience.  On August 25 this student and the VRCBVI program were highlighted in an article on the website for Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens.  [Check the story out here](http://www.lewisginter.org/meet-intern-will-eichenberger/).
* One of the VRCBVI students participated in the Richmond half marathon, and he appeared in a news story on Channel 12 in which he [described his participation in the VRCBVI training program and how the confidence he gained at VRCBVI prepared him to do the half marathon.](http://www.nbc12.com/clip/12004739/newly-blind-runner-posts-personal-best-at-richmond-half-marathon)
* In early summer the newly-renovated recreation building was reopened for our use, just in time for the LIFE program.  We offer activities such as physical conditioning, bowling, swimming, ballroom dancing Zumba, etc.  The recreation building also features an accessible basketball hoop.  The recreation building allows us to host large gatherings such as Family, Friends, and Beyond Day.  We had 119 current students, past students and guests in attendance.

**ENTERPRISE DIVISION**

Contract Management Services (CMS) employs 30 people with 20 or 67% being blind across four teams. The teams de-obligated $32M of federal government funds as a result of their work. Our customers are so satisfied with our service that they plan to close an operation in San Diego and move the work to us in Chester which will add another 8 positions. There is also talk of us taking charge of their Philadelphia operations.

* Manufacturing has grown into new product offerings with fire extinguishers now being refurbished in Richmond employing two persons who are blind at the moment and growing quickly. VIB can save the Commonwealth over $100 per a typical 10-pound extinguisher while reducing waste in landfills and employing Virginians who are blind. We have also increased value to the Commonwealth by producing a line of hospitality mattresses for State Parks which saves them money and compliments our $3.7M market for the Navy and colleges and universities which saves higher education money and now partners with a Micro vendor for installation. Several of these colleges and universities do not have to buy from VIB, but they opt to do so because of our quality, price, and service.
* VIB assembles individual components into kits for federal and commercial customers. The biggest operation serves the Department of State and kits high threat kits for diplomats and security services overseas. This kitting function brings in over $12M a year and nets close to $1M for VIB and is growing in the year ahead.
* VIB’s 10 Base Supply Centers (BSCs) employ 34 staff members with 18 or 53% being blind. Revenue has grown over last year by $3.5M which is up 20%. A decision by the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) in the Pentagon will close their independent office supply room and move those purchases to the VIB supply center in the Pentagon and is expected to grow sales by $120k.
* New Business Development continues at a brisk pace in order to find solutions for customers and generate new employment opportunities in Virginia’s New Economy. In the quarters to come, we will report on great strides such as a new LED product line. VIB is close to signing a deal to manufacture and distribute Philips Electric’s LED lighting products. We have received assignment from the National Industries for the Blind and completed pricing and training and are only awaiting the legal documents for this co-branded product. This product line will employ half a dozen of our blind employees and has huge growth potential in an environmentally-friendly industry.
* VIB has seen a 52% increase in revenue and a 40% increase in profits over 2011 totals and the trajectory is very bright.

**BUSINESS ENTERPRISE PROGRAM**

The military feeding contract at Fort Lee going into its second option year was renewed as the team at Fort Lee continued to improve and enhance the customer service provided to our troops. This contract has value of nearly $19 million per year and the licensed manager who is blind employs more than 300 fellow Virginians who serve 18,000 meals daily.

* + Micro Markets seem to be the wave of the future as the program added 4 new locations of this state of the art self-service vending concept.
  + Sales were up 9.8% as our vendors continued to grow their business and meet their customer’s needs. Sales were 1.6m greater than the prior year .8% increase.
* 14 New Vending Sites were added.
* 37 Vendors participated in continuing education.

* 4 Micro Markets were installed.
* Point of Sale Systems (Square) added to 6 Facilities

**Kathleen Vaughan, agency representative, Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS):**

* In the Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Program, each month, more people on the waiting list are being served. On December 1, 2015, services were made available to the approximately 500 people who applied for services in September. Therefore, the average amount of time individuals is currently on the waiting list is less than 90 days.

* Currently, more than 19,000 people are in the system. Of these, the total number of individuals on the waiting list to receive services is currently 2,500.

* Outcomes during the Federal fiscal year (FFY) 2015:
* 4,032 people successfully gained employment, with numbers in excess of 4,000 for the second year in a row.
* At closure, the average hourly wage was $10.09, an increase from $9.66 in FFY 2014.
* At closure, the average hours worked were 28.7, indicating a slight increase from 28.5 in FFY 2014.
* Governor McAuliffe announced that DARS received Federal funding via several grants that were awarded to Virginia: Virginia was awarded nearly $3 million in Federal funding from two grants from the Administration for Community Living to expand No Wrong Door (NWD). Funds will help streamline access to long-term services and supports (LTSS) that older adults and individuals with disabilities to remain in the community.

No Wrong Dooris a public-private partnership between state agencies and private providers, designed to simplify the complexities of navigating the system for individuals to access Home and Community Based Services (HCBS), and to promote person-centered culture change. The new funding will help increase access to HCBS, support efforts to reduce institutionalization and hospital readmissions, and enhance the quality of life for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Virginia was one of five states awarded the three-year funding.

* Virginia received more than $4.3 million in Federal grant funds over five years from the U.S. Department of Education to help nearly 500 Virginians with disabilities gain new skills and credentials to seek employment in competitive, high-demand occupations.  The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) and the Department for the Blind and Vision Impaired (DBVI) will use the funds to develop and implement a demonstration project to enhance Virginia’s existing regional career pathways systems to serve individuals with disabilities, including young adults and veterans.

Funds will be used by DARS and DBVI to train more Virginians with disabilities to succeed in jobs in industry sectors that are key for building a new Virginia economy, such as Manufacturing and Healthcare jobs. Assistive Technology (AT) will be incorporated into the program. Goals are community integration and full inclusion in the workforce.

* The DARS Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center in Fishersville will work with the Virginia Manufacturing Association to develop a one-week training program. The Blue Ridge Community College is also expected to partner in the project. The federal grant will fund 89% of the project budget. This grant was only awarded to three other states.

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

The Chair called for other business. There was none.

**CLOSING REMARKS:**

The Chair recognized Ms. Lynne Talley, of the staff, for her dedication and years of service to the Board, and wished her well in her upcoming retirement.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

BoardChair Charles Meacham called for any other business. There being none, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm.