# South Carolina Commission for the Blind 1430 Confederate Avenue Columbia, South Carolina 29201

## Meeting Minutes June 16, 2020

Notifications of all regular, called, or special meetings are compliant with the FOIA requirements, Section 90-4-80.

### Opening

The meeting of the members of the South Carolina Commission for the Blind was called to order at 2:00 pm on June 16, 2020, by Chairperson Peter Smith.

### Present

Peter Smith, Chairperson, via phone

Dr. Judy Johnson, Vice Chairperson, via phone

Mary Sonksen, Secretary, via phone

Rosemary Roberson, Board Member, via phone

Darline Graham, Commissioner, via phone

### Public Comment

None.

### Approval of Minutes

Chairperson Smith made a motion to approve the April 21, 2020, and May 19, 2020, minutes. It was seconded. No discussion. The motion passed.

### Finance Report

Matt Daugherty reported:

* The agency was 92% of the way through the State Fiscal Year with 79% of its budget utilized.
* The Finance team was working hard on the 1.2 million dollars in open encumbrances.

No Discussion.

### Introductions

### None

### Human Resources Report

#### Wanda Miller reported:

* The Licensed Practical Nurse had accepted the position and would begin employment on June 17, 2020.
* The Transition Counselor position in Spartanburg would soon be filled.

### Commissioner’s Report

#### Darline Graham reported:

* Most Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for Phase 1 had been received from the Department of Administration and distributed, including:
  + Cloth face masks
  + Face shields
  + Goggles
  + Hand sanitizer
  + Lysol
  + Signs
* Signs had been placed in all buildings to remind everyone to practice social distancing and safe hygiene.
* To help ensure the safety of everyone, Mark Gamble, Wanda Miller, and the Safety Team had established a screening checkpoint in Building D where staff, consumers, and visitors would enter the campus, answer three brief questions, and have their temperature taken.
* The Safe Return Procedures and other helpful information was available for staff on the Telework website. For accessibility, the location and full text of all signs placed around the campus was listed on the Telework website.
* During Phase 1, Senior Managers and a limited number of staff had worked in their offices on a rotating schedule.
* Phase 2 would begin in the middle of July. Additional staff would slowly rotate back into the offices, including the Charleston and Greenville locations.
* The agency had continued to provide quality services for consumers.
* Todd Collins and Troy Shorter had worked hard to clean the outside of the buildings and improve the landscaping at the Columbia campus.
* The agency was in the initial hiring phase for the Grants/Budget Accountant and Accounts Payable/Receivables Supervisor positions in the Finance department.
* Minor organizational changes were planned, including separating the AWARE Administrator role from the Quality Assurance Director (QAD) and moving the IT department under Operations. The vacant QAD role would be posted.
* Within the Business Enterprise Program (BEP), a solicitation of requirements for the full food service of the naval station at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba was being reviewed, and preliminary discussions with a possible partner were underway.
* Board member Rosemary Roberson was presented with a plaque and recognized for her many years of dedication and service to the agency and the citizens of South Carolina.

### Presentations

Matthew Daugherty reported:

* A search was underway for new office space in Conway and Florence.
* Mold clean up would be needed in the Walterboro office.
* Ongoing projects in Columbia included:
  + The plumbing in the dormitory would need upgrading to properly accommodate the washers and dryers.
  + The generator would need to be replaced.
  + Outside lights would need to be upgraded.
  + Handrails would need to be replaced due to safety concerns.
  + Some BEP stands would need to be cleaned and repaired.
  + An icemaker in Building C had leaked.
  + Buildings and sidewalks had been pressure washed, bushes had been trimmed, and other landscaping improvements made to the campus.
  + A tree in the parking lot on the Confederate Avenue side of the campus would need to be removed due to safety concerns.

Kisa Grate reported:

* Seventy-five (75) consumers had been assisted with achieving employment which aligned with their career goals. Positions filled included:
  + A Certified Peer Support Specialist with the Charleston County Government,
  + A canteen at the Richland County Office Building (operated by a Blind Licensed Vendor),
  + A Heating and Air Mechanic,
  + An Automotive Technician.
* The top areas in which consumers had been employed were:
  + Office and Administrative Support,
  + Sales and Sales Related Occupations,
  + Personal Care and Service,
  + Business and Financial Operations,
  + Computer and Mathematical Occupations.
* A consumer who had completed on-the-job training as a Nursing Assistant and passed their certification exam had started employment in May.
* A consumer would start employment on June 16, 2020, with Clemson University’s Computer and Information Technology Department as the team lead for the Student IT Services Division.
* Several consumers had begun the application process with Randstad USA, which was providing Remote Contact Traces for DHEC.
* Conduent has been recruiting for work from home technical support positions. The agency would be assisting consumers who applied for these positions by providing typing assessments at the Columbia Campus.
* During an upcoming Rehabilitation Center discussion group, a guest speaker was scheduled to discuss his experience working in a technical support position at Conduent.
* For the past two years, Ms. Grate had worked with a consultant from Apprenticeship Carolina to develop the BRIDGE program into a Pre-apprentice program. The tentative start date for the pilot program, focusing on the occupation of Customer Service Representative, would be in July 2020. The qualifications and terms of the pre-apprenticeship, the curriculum for job-related education, and the on the job component were in the process of being finalized.

Rhonda Thompson Reported:

* An individual will be recommended to fill the vacant Older Blind position.
* Jenny Bond and Toni Davis were recognized for their hard work in maintaining a list of referrals and addressing the Low Vision needs of consumers by phone and mail.
* The National Federation for the Blind (NFB) Successful Transitions Team had hosted a week-long Virtual Children’s and Teen Summer Camp in which attendees participated in discussion sessions, reading programs, and various workshops.
* Twenty-four (24) seniors had participated in group discussions on mobility training and played games as part of the Older Blind Spring Virtual Camp held on May 30, 2020.
* An Older Blind Workshop, hosted by Shelly Coppell, President of the NFB Senior Division, would be held on June 17, 2020.

### Committee Report

None.

### Old Business

None.

### New Business

None.

**Election of Board Officers**:

* Dr. Judy Johnson accepted the nomination by Peter Smith to become the next Chairperson. The motion was seconded. The vote was unanimous. The motion passed.
* Peter Smith accepted the nomination by Mary Sonksen to become the next Vice Chairperson. Dr. Judy Johnson seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous. The motion passed.
* Mary Sonksen accepted the nomination by Peter Smith to remain the Secretary. Rosemary Robertson seconded the nomination. The vote was unanimous. The motion passed.

### Adjournment

Ms. Sonksen made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Roberson seconded the motion. The motion passed. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 3:16 pm by Chairperson Smith.

**Future Board Meeting Schedule:**

July 21, 2020

August 18, 2020

September 15, 2020

### Signatures

Chairperson

Secretary

Date