



Present:

- Mr. Joe Higgins, Chair
- Mr. Wyatt Batchelor, Vice Chair
- Ms. Samantha Brown-Parks, Secretary
- Mr. Chuck Roberts, Treasurer
- Mr. Alan Danzig, Member
- Ms. Vivian Greentree, Member
- Mr. Andy Hilmes, Member
- Mr. Bob McMahon, Member
- Mr. John Phillips, Member
- Mr. Destry Rogers, Member
- Ms. Patricia Ross, Commissioner
- Mr. Pete Peterson, Veterans Service Board, Liaison to Foundation Board
- Ms. Shelley Sainberg, Attorney General's Office
- Ms. Amy Sillmon, Attorney General's Office
- Ms. Jarelle Thompson, Foundation CEO, Homeless Coordinator, GDVS
- Ms. Raven Holstick, Foundation COO, Transition and Employment Coordinator, GDVS
- Mr. Mark Demers, Chief Development Officer and CFO, GDVS
- Mr. Kerry Dyer, Deputy Commissioner and COO, GDVS
- Ms. Charlotte May, Director, Public Information and External Affairs, GDVS
- Ms. Camala Ball, Budget Analyst, GDVS

On Thursday, May 1, 2025, the Veterans Service Foundation Board meeting was held by video/teleconference.

The members listed above were present.

Mr. Higgins called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Commissioner Ross announced the appointment of Jarelle Thompson as the new Foundation CEO to replace Mark Demers and the appointment of Raven Holstick as the new Foundation COO to replace Kerry Dyer. Mr. Demers will still be involved in the preparation of IRS Form 990 since he is the Chief Financial Officer for the Department. Mr. Higgins expressed thanks to Mr. Demers and Mr. Dyer for all they have done for the Foundation.

Thursday, May 1, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.
Minutes - Veterans Service Foundation Board Meeting
Atlanta, Georgia

Mr. Hilmes made a motion to approve the minutes from the March and April meetings, which were previously distributed to members to review. Mr. McMahon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

OFFICER REPORTS

Mr. Demers asked for approval to submit the IRS Form 990. Mr. Higgins stated that he will take care of that under new business. Mr. Demers clarified that the in-kind donation of a van for the homes that was offered was not accepted due to liability issues. The Foundation has never accepted an in-kind donation to date. This includes the QuickBooks subscription. A cash donation was made for this by Commissioner Ross. In-kind donations must be physical property, and we haven't accepted any physical property.

Mr. Dyer reminded the Board that the invoice for the D&O insurance will come in June or July and the amount will be \$2,298.00.

Ms. Hammond wasn't present but had sent out the report below for members to review before the meeting.

The funds in the account are allocated as follows:

General Funds	\$40,558.15
Homelessness	\$ 106.21
New Homes	\$ 1,025.00
State Benefit Book Ads	\$ 59.23
Suicide Prevention Hardware	\$ 1,700.00
Suicide Prevention Summit	\$ 0.00
<u>Women & Diversity</u>	<u>\$ 314.53</u>
TOTAL	\$43,763.12

DIRECTOR ACTIVITY REPORTS

Mr. Rogers asked about the legality of us buying homes. He referenced an email he sent regarding Louisiana opening homes to reservists and guardsmen, which is out of pocket for them. Can we investigate doing that here? The people he knows in Kentucky want to know if we would like a presentation on how they build, staff, fill, and sell their homes. He also met David Vickers, a man who builds homes and said it would be a great time to buy a home already built because of the current market conditions. There are 4-5 homes in the Atlanta area that are for sale. Can we legally buy homes here in Georgia?

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Commissioner Ross requested the information from Mr. Vickers. The State would have to purchase the property, and we could go back through the grant process and request the 65% from the VA. The State would have to put the money up front and be reimbursed from the VA. We have looked at a couple options in the area which won't work because of the number of renovations needed. Mr. Rogers agreed to send an electronic introduction to Commissioner Ross and Mr. Vickers.

Regarding opening the homes to guardsmen and reservists, Commissioner Ross explained that we will do some research on that. The way our homes are funded requires proof of active-duty status. Guardsmen and reservists who have deployed can currently be admitted into our homes. The Burial Equity Act, which will allow guardsmen and reservists who have fulfilled their initial tour of duty to be buried in our cemeteries even if they don't have the active-duty time should be signed by Gov. Kemp soon.

Mr. Roberts has been having free veterans' breakfasts each month and more veterans are coming each month.

Mr. McMahon would like to get the gift committee back on track.

Mr. Hilmes mentioned that Kim Scofi from United Military Care has been working with him to get a We Care Veterans Fair in Columbus. It will be September 12. The VA will come in with mobile clinics and give expedited service they would not normally receive in that area to veterans. Lots of resources will be available. They expect 5,000 people. He also mentioned a Workforce Development Summit in Columbus that featured Commissioner Ross as a speaker. She talked about the VECTR Center in Warner Robins that helps transitioning servicemembers.

Commissioner Ross announced that there will be a We Care Veterans Fair in Rome in August and in Cobb County in October.

Mr. Danzig announced that he is looking into possibly getting a grant from the Augusta National Community Foundation. Mr. Rogers mentioned that he knows the General Manager and he is willing to reach out to him.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Brown-Parks made a motion to accept IRS Form 990 so that it can be submitted. Mr. McMahon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Roberts made a motion to approve the planning of a Legislative Breakfast to benefit the Foundation. Mr. McMahon seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Commissioner

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Ross announced that Dr. Greentree has agreed to sponsor the breakfast through Fiserv. The event will be on May 19 at the Buckhead Club from 7:30-9:00am. \$30 per person will go to the Foundation. We have three legislators so far who have been confirmed, Senators Kay Kirkpatrick and Kenya Wicks and Representative Bethany Ballard.

Mr. Higgins announced a proposal that the Foundation serve as a conduit to receive a vehicle on behalf of a worthy veteran and then the vehicle would be donated to that veteran. There is an application process that must be completed by August 1. Mr. Hilmes made a motion to have the Foundation serve as this conduit. Ms. Brown-Parks seconded the motion. It was clarified that we would not manage the application process. Progressive Insurance would determine who the recipient is. The motion passed unanimously.


Mr. Rogers asked if there was a summary sheet to use when talking to legislators and if there are any specific issues they should bring up. Commissioner Ross offered to give a sheet once all the legislation has been signed.

The Veterans Service Foundation Board entered Executive Session at 10:41 a.m. and returned to normal session at 11:10 a.m.

Mr. Higgins announced that the next meeting will be on June 5th at 10:00 a.m.

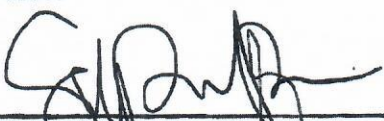
Mr. Hilmes made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Higgins seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Higgins adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:12 a.m.

SIGNED:



Joe Higgins, Chair

ATTEST:



Samantha Brown-Parks, Secretary