

Board Meeting Minutes

February 9, 2022

10:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

Present

David Connell, Chairman
Jeff Markey, Vice Chairman
Britt Fleck, Secretary
Rachel Little
Bob Pierce
Kat Satterfield
Tony Guisasola
Christie Moore
Frank Reynolds

Not Present

Also attending the meeting were Cristina Correia from the State Attorney General's Office and members of the DDS Staff.

Establish Quorum/Call to Order

Chairman Connell confirmed the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Connell called for a motion regarding the minutes from the January 12, 2022 Board meeting. Frank Reynolds made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes as presented; Bob Pierce seconded the motion, with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

Commissioner's Report

The Commissioner welcomed the Board, members of the DDS staff, and others attending the meeting. He thanked Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Michele Granger who will be retiring soon. He introduced Travis Kennedy as the new Interim CFO and Vita Jordan who is the new Accounting Director.

Commissioner Moore talked about the agency's partnership with the military and how members use the skills learned in the military to obtain a CDL. The Commissioner had the opportunity to participate in a military roundtable with the Governor and other local, state, and federal leaders in Warner Robins. DDS will begin a partnership with Warner Robins Air Force Base next Monday, and the CDL Travel Team will perform testing on the base. This partnership illustrates the agency's expansion of services to our military personnel and the public in general.

The Commissioner continued by giving several other agency updates.

COVID Update:

- With an agency of over 900 team members, DDS did extremely well with its COVID mitigation strategy. DDS serves 2-3 million customers a year face to face, and maintaining those numbers during a pandemic is nothing short of a miracle.
- Last month the agency saw its highest number of COVID cases, and those positive cases affect the workforce. Team members that test positive, as well as anyone that has been in close contact with them, are required to quarantine. DDS is very proud of what the agency has been able to accomplish despite the pandemic.

Budget Update:

- The Commissioner spoke about previous visits to the Governor's Office to discuss budget recommendations for the agency. At every meeting, he advocates very heavily for funding for the staff.
- Commissioner Moore spoke about the Amended FY 2022 budget and FY 2023 budget and discussed items recommended by the Governor, such as a \$5,000 cost of living adjustment for all full-time employees and funding for the voice bot and kiosk initiatives. The 2023 budget includes the continuation of the \$5,000 cost of living adjustment, allowing eligible employees to withdraw cash payments for 40 hours of annual leave, and changes in ERS funding.

Kecia Bivins, Director of Field Operations, provided an Operations update:

- Technology
 - Kecia spoke about the challenges in the Call Center, which currently has over 20 vacancies and extremely high call volume. The voice bot will offer some assistance with those challenges.
 - The first voice heard by a customer is the bot, which is designed to answer simple questions. If more detailed information is needed, those calls will be transferred to a live agent. Since November, the voice bot has answered over 130,000 calls and transferred over 120,000. It was able to resolve 120,000 calls without assistance, and the hope is that the Contact Center will experience an increase in its service levels by the next Board meeting.
 - Virtual road test cameras are experiencing some intermittent issues. Approximately 35% of non-commercial road tests are being conducted virtually, and the goal is to be at 50% by the end of February.
- Specialty Issuances
 - The agency employs a grant-funded, CDL Travel Team, which is a group of four CDL examiners who travel across the state to administer CDL road skill tests to employees at large companies and students at CDL schools. This team has administered over 3,800 road skills tests to date.
 - One of the responsibilities of the Central Issuance team is to provide credentials to inmates. DDS partnered with the Georgia Department of Corrections to ensure that inmates approaching their release date can receive a Georgia driver's license or ID if they are eligible. Issuing these credentials helps with obtaining housing, employment, and medical services, which helps them achieve a smoother transition when reentering society.
- COVID Vaccination Program
 - The agency also partnered with the Department of Public Health to administer the COVID vaccine and booster. Since the partnership, DDS has hosted 45 different events across the state and over 150 customers and team members have been able to receive a vaccination or booster shot.
- Contest
 - Each holiday season, Deputy Director Pierre Miles facilitates an ugly sweater contest. We have had the same winner for the last three years. The goal is to incorporate fun into the workday, and the team members really enjoy all of the fun activities.
 - Next week, DDS will host its Fastest Typist Contest, in which the nine fastest typists from around the state (one from each district) will compete to see who has the fastest transaction time.
 - The Communications Team is sponsoring a Voice Bot naming contest and has received over 80 submissions to date.

- Director Kecia Bivins created a group called Website Content Crashers, which consists of Subject Matter Experts from all divisions. The group will be meeting to review 419 pages of content on the agency's website, which is accessed by 1.3 million visitors each month. The website and the Contact Center are the first touchpoints that customers experience, and DDS wants to make sure the content is accurate, up to date, and reflects the agency's views.

Mike Mitchell, Director of Regulatory Compliance, provided an update on Commercial Driver's License (CDL) and Third-Party Testing (TPT):

- The TPT pilot program for Commercial Drivers was operational from January 1, 2021, through December 1, 2021. The four TPT pilot sites administered 4,299 CDL skills tests during the evaluation period, which freed up a significant number of testing slots at some of the larger CDL sites.
- The program consisted of four schools: Georgia Driving Academy, Truck Driving Institute, Daly's, and the Southeast Lineman School. These four schools were chosen because they had established programs with ranges that could immediately accommodate CDL skills testing.
- The results of the pilot showed how well the program fared in terms of compliance and the benefits. The agency experienced the expected results with compliance and was able to remediate some record-keeping and other minor issues. The benefit was phenomenal, as the pilot sites were able to administer a significant number of tests that the CSC examiners did not have to administer.
- Board Member Tony Guisasola asked how long it takes to train someone to be a CDL examiner. Mike explained the training is extensive and occurs over a series of days. He then asked if CDL examiners are paid more than regular examiners because of their skill set being so much greater and learned that those examiners are paid a \$2,000 supplement above their salary.
- Chairman Connell asked about the failure rate of the TPT pilot program and the 4,299 tests administered. The last study revealed a number in the mid-70%.

Commissioner Moore provided an update of the agency's performance:

DDS continues to experience a decrease in the number of customers served face to face each month, which has been expected. The number of COVID positive cases in January contributes to how services are delivered and how fast DDS can respond. Most of the CSCs are able to perform at optimal levels, but some in the metro Atlanta area are struggling. COVID and vacancies are the immediate challenges. Kecia and Pierre do a very good job of soliciting staff from middle Georgia and other parts of the state to help in metro Atlanta. The staff is phenomenal, as many will volunteer to help their team members. When the COVID numbers subside, the performance numbers should be back to that 95% or better service level.

The Online Services and Mobile App numbers remain high since every customer had to re-establish a new account as DDS moved to the DRIVES system.

The Commissioner ended his report with an update on CSC customer survey responses. The number of survey responses increased last month, and as usual, contained responses to the following questions: What was the purpose of your visit, was our staff courteous, were they knowledgeable, and was the facility clean and adequate?

Rule for Initial Approval

Angelique McClendon, General Counsel, reviewed the following rules:

- **375-3-3-.03** Recertification of Driving Ability under Georgia Assigned Risk Plan

Britt Fleck made a motion to approve the final rules for adoption; Bob Pierce seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

Citizen Waivers

1. Patricia Lewis – She is seeking a driver’s license in the name of Patricia Lewis. She is 63 years old. She was born Mary Patricia Seabrone and later married Calvin Lewis. To use the court order name change for amending her birth certificate, she used her maiden name, Seabrone on the court order. She submitted her amended birth certificate, child’s birth certificate (father of the child – Calvin Lewis), marriage certificate (spouse – Calvin B. Lewis), court order name change (name changed to – Patricia Seabrone), a letter from the Department of Children and Family Services, a letter from Illinois (IL) Department of Rehabilitation Services, a letter from College Adult Learning Skills Program, adopted child’s birth certificate, two IL ID cards, divorce decree, Social Security (S/S) card, valid IL driver’s license, and S/S letter (since 1994 has consistently used the name of Patricia Lewis).

Frank Reynolds made a motion to approve the waiver; Christie Moore seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

2. Doris Andrew Saulsberry – She is seeking an ID card in the name of Doris Andrew Saulsberry. She is 66 years old. She was born Doris Andrews Trotter and raised with the last name of Trittie. She married Eddie Saulsberry at age 17 and on the marriage certificate, her last name was Trittie. She submitted her birth certificate, marriage certificate (spouse – Eddie Ray Saulsberry), S/S letter, hospital visitor ID card, Florida Highway Safety letters (no records found for: Doris Saulsberry, Doris Trotter, Doris Trittie, and Doris Andrews), S/S letter (prior names used – Doris Andrew Trittie, Doris Andrew Saulsberry, and Doris A. Saulsberry), and an Envelope.

Christie Moore made a motion to approve the waiver; Jeff Markey seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

CDL Rule 1-1-.17 Waiver

1. Nicholas Wilson – He is seeking a waiver of his lifetime disqualification. He is 43 years old. He submitted a letter requesting the rule requirements that he is issued a commercial learner’s permit and subsequently a commercial driver’s license, both restricted to intrastate driving only for two years be waived. He asks that his CDL driving privileges in his home state of Virginia be accepted as alternative proof to satisfy the regulation.

Christie Moore made a motion to approve the waiver; Tony Guisasola seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

New or Old Business

The next Board meeting will be held on March 9, 2022.

The Chairman mentioned the work Board Member Christie Moore is doing with Warner Robins Air Force Base in reference to CDL and thinks it's something DDS needs to do statewide. He said it's great to establish those partnerships and create more CDL drivers for servicemen/women coming out of the military.

Adjournment

There was no further business to discuss; Chairman David Connell called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Bob Pierce and seconded by Tony Guisasola with unanimous approval by the Board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Britt Fleck
Britt Fleck, Secretary