

## Board Meeting Minutes

January 13, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

### **Present**

David Connell, Chairman  
Jeff Wigington, Secretary  
Rachel Little  
Bob Pierce  
Britt Fleck  
Jim Cole

### **Not Present**

Jeff Markey, Vice Chairman  
Wallace Coopwood

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 10:01 a.m.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Connell called for a motion regarding the minutes from the November 18, 2020 Board meeting. Bob Pierce made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes as presented; Britt Fleck seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

### **Commissioner's Report**

Deputy Commissioner Ricky Rich welcomed the Chairman and members of the Board to the first Board meeting of the new year. The Commissioner was not able to attend due to a State Agency Heads' Meeting downtown at the Governor's Office. Deputy Commissioner Rich started the report with a few updates and thanked the team for an amazing job in getting the agency through the past year.

#### Annual Managers Meeting 2020:

- The Deputy Commissioner thanked HR Director Deborah Moore, Training Supervisor Reggie Smith, and the training team for putting together an excellent virtual manager's meeting. The agenda was full of activities for the staff.
- The format was a recorded video that consisted of encouragement, testimonials, a magician, a Human Trafficking video by Tyler Perry, team member interviews, and other great information. Over 136 managers attended.
- The Board watched a short video of the meeting highlights.

#### Major Accomplishments 2020:

- COVID-19:
  - As an essential agency, DDS created a Continuity of Operations Pandemic Plan to provide the framework for responding to the pandemic at all DDS locations.
  - The agency added protective glass barriers at all service counters, limited customer capacity in its lobbies, and required appointments for all in-person services. DDS provided Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to all team members, instituted social distancing, and increased disinfecting at all facilities. DDS also modified processes to enhance safety, such as creating a process for contactless road skills tests.

- Emergency Rules:
  - The agency created several emergency rules in the wake of the pandemic to ensure customers could be served. With gubernatorial permission, DDS granted a 120-day extension to drivers whose licenses or ID cards would expire during the four-month period from March through June, FTA Suspensions were delayed by 60 days, certified DUI and driving schools were authorized to conduct online classes, ALS hearing requests and driving privileges were extended 90-120 days (Executive Order 03.25.20.01), Ignition Interlock Device reporting was extended by 60 days, proof of school enrollment options for customers under 18 years of age was expanded, remote issuance was allowed for mature drivers with eye exams dated in the last 24 months, and emergency accommodations were approved for regulated schools to use online instruction.
- Customer Service Center (CSC) Performance
  - During the calendar year, DDS served 2,432,544 customers face-to-face, and an additional 1,186,443 customers were served using Online Services, resulting in over 3.6 million customers being served in 2020. Team members were asked to wear PPE, social distance, disinfect high-use surfaces, regulate lobby usage, conduct contactless road tests, etc., and they did so while providing excellent customer service.
- Remote Services:
  - A positive outcome from the COVID-19 Emergency has been the growing popularity of DDS Online Services and the free Mobile App DDS 2 GO. During 2020, a total of 786,015 new accounts were added, and 1,186,443 transactions were performed using these services.
- Reservations for all services:
  - Another process change that stemmed from Covid-19 is the new option for customers to make appointments for all services. Appointments are not mandatory but are recommended due to the limited number of customers allowed inside a Customer Service Center at one time, social distancing requirements, and other CDC recommended safety requirements.
- Contactless Road Test:
  - Due to safety precautions, DDS instituted contactless road testing. To eliminate the need for a driver examiner to ride in the vehicle, a parent or responsible adult is required to accompany the applicant. The driver examiner gives instructions from points outside the vehicle. The test is completed on DDS property, test the same driving skills, and utilizes the same scoring sheet that was used prior to the pandemic.
- Remote issuance for seniors:
  - Customers age 64 and over now are able to renew or replace their driver's licenses without visiting a DDS Customer Service Center in person. A recent DDS rule change allows the required vision exam to be submitted with the online application, if it was completed by a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist within the previous 24 months.
- Facilities:
  - DDS saw many improvements to its facilities in 2020. The Atlanta CSC added 18 new parking spaces to assist with the high demand at that location. Glass partitions were installed at all CSCs, the Contact Center, and all reception areas as part of the COVID-19 Safety Initiative. Wall-mounted temperature scanning devices were installed at all Headquarter entrances as well. The aging Security System was replaced at all locations with new state-of-the-art equipment.

- Awards and recognition:
  - DDS is proud to have customers and business partners acknowledge its hard work. The American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA) awarded to DDS two regional awards for Community Service Recognition and State Driver Examiner of the Year. DDS executives hold seven positions on various AAMVA Boards and Committees, which recognizes the agency's contribution to the industry. Chairman Connell gave the agency recognition for being above 99% REAL ID complaint and leading the nation.

Brett Young (PMO Director) provided an update on DRIVES:

- The DRIVES project remains on-time and under budget. The rollout phase started on January 12th and will run through January 19th. The agency is very comfortable with the rollout and the rollout support team. DDS recently completed an Organizational Change Management (OCM) survey among team members, and 89.3% responded that they had received adequate information about the DRIVES project.
- This is a joint project with the Department of Revenue, and DDS has representation from several DOR divisions. The rollout support team consists of members from multiple divisions from both agencies and is available to help in any area.
- Brett shared the rollout timeline with the Chairman and members of the Board. DDS and DOR will implement a soft launch on Monday, January 18th, and all agencies will be in full production on January 19th.

Shevondah Leslie (Legislative Liaison) provided an update on the 2021 Legislation:

- The session convened on Monday, January 11, 2021, and DDS has two items that it is tracking.
- The first piece of legislation places DDS in compliance with FMCSA rules and is sponsored by Chairman John Corbett (House) and Chairman John Albers (Senate). This legislation will change the expiration date for CDL permits from 180 days to 365 days, as well as require customers to complete an entry-level driver training course before DDS will administer a behind the wheel road test.
- The second piece of legislation permits DDS to increase customer fees and is sponsored by Chairman Sam Watson (House) and Chairman John Albers (Senate). The fees for an initial limited permit would increase from \$25 to \$32, renewal of that limited license would increase from \$5 to \$10, and lost license fees would increase from \$5 to \$10.

Deputy Commissioner Rich provided an update of the agency's performance:

- The agency processed 900,000 fewer in-person transactions in 2020, mainly due to being closed for a short time and serving only CDL customers during the initial weeks of the pandemic. Online services increased by 300,000 transactions which offset part of that decrease and helped the agency meet its goal of moving customers away from the centers and toward online services. DDS is very proud of the numbers and its ability to serve the citizens of Georgia. The Chairman mentioned that, in November and December, the wait-times were greater than last year. He asked if the agency anticipates that wait-times will increase following the DRIVES implementation. Deputy Commissioner Rich explained that we do expect to see the wait-times increase until team members become efficient at using the new system but that those numbers will decrease once that happens.

Deputy Commissioner Rich ended his report with customer survey responses:

- The survey reflects excellent numbers, especially concerning courteous staff, knowledgeable staff, and the cleanliness of the facilities. DDS is proud of these responses. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner, as well as the leadership team, expect exceptional customer service from its team members, and they are very proud of how customers are treated.

The survey function is not included in the initial rollout of DRIVES, but the agency is working on ways to continue collecting this data and hopes to automate it within the DRIVES system soon.

### **Rules for Initial Approval**

Angelique McClendon, General Counsel, reviewed the following rules:

- **375-3-1-.18** New Resident Licensing Requirements (amended to National Driver Register)
- **375-3-1-.19** Purged or Expired License (amended to Testing and MVR Requirements After Expiration of License)

Britt Fleck made a motion to approve the initial rules for adoption; Jeff Wigington seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

### **Rules for Final Approval**

- **375-1-1-.04** Electronic Signatures
- **375-5-1-.10** Office Requirements (amended to Driver Improvement Clinic Office (Requirements))
- **375-5-2-.11** Office Requirements (amended to Driver Training School and/or Limited Driver Training School Office Requirements)
- **375-5-3-.11** Office Requirements (amended to Commercial Driver Training School Office Requirements)
- **375-5-6-.18** DUI Alcohol or Drug Use Risk Reduction Program Location and Facilities

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

### **New or Old Business**

The next Board meeting will be held on February 10, 2021.

### **Adjournment**

There was no further business to discuss; Chairman David Connell called for a motion to adjourn. A motion was made by Rachel Little and seconded by Jeff Wigington with unanimous approval by the Board.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Wigington  
**Jeff Wigington**