

Board Meeting Minutes

June 9, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Present

David Connell, Chairman
Jeff Markey, Vice Chairman
Jeff Wigington, Secretary
Britt Fleck (Phone)
Jim Cole (Phone)
Kat Satterfield

Not Present

Rachel Little
Bob Pierce
Tony Guisasola

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 10:02 a.m.

Oath of Office

Chairman Connell gave the Oath of Office to our newest DDS Board member, Mrs. Kat Satterfield. Mrs. Satterfield was appointed by Speaker David Ralston on June 7, 2021.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Connell called for a motion regarding the minutes from the May 12, 2021 Board meeting. Jeff Markey made a motion to approve the regular meeting minutes as presented; Jeff Wigington 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 was excited to be able to meet in person with the Board and in a new space.

The Commissioner provided an update on HB 466, a new law that makes driver training mandatory for 17-year-olds, which becomes effective July 1, 2021. This is just one of many bills that passed during the most recent legislative session. As with any new bill related to a driver, DDS has done a great deal of marketing. He showed the Board a portion of a press release that informs 17-year-olds that they now have to comply with Joshua's law requirements.

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

- Hiring Challenges (unemployment benefits, improving economy, and starting salaries)
 - The amount of money offered for unemployment benefits creates challenges for recruiting employees at the \$10.50 an hour starting salary. When the additional unemployment benefit expires in late June, she hopes more workers will be encouraged to return to the workforce.
 - With the economy improving, DDS now is competing against fast-food restaurants, which start their employees at \$11/hour. Kecia showed a flyer from Amazon, which is offering a signing bonus of up to \$1,000 and \$20/hour.

- The Customer Service Centers (CSC's) are conducting hiring blitzes throughout the state and conducting "on the spot" interviews. Kecia thanked the Communications team for doing a great job of promoting the event.
- Director Bivins was excited about the pay increase for team members making less than \$50,000 a year. This will be a \$2,000 pay raise and something the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, and the Finance department have worked really hard on over the last few years.
- Non-Commercial Road Test Expansion
 - In June 2020, the agency started a modified road test with an examiner standing outside the vehicle on DDS property. That modification will end this month, and DDS will be resuming normal road tests on July 1st.
 - Board Member Wigington asked about the plan for a virtual road test. Director Bivins explained that the pilot started in March 2021 and has been well-received. A contract has been awarded to a supplier, and the hope is to have the devices next quarter. The Commissioner said the goal is to replace the examiner that typically rides in the vehicle with technology. Deputy Director Pierre Miles has been instrumental in this process, as well as all other areas of assistance.
- 64 and Older Issuances
 - This group of drivers was not able to renew online because this age group required an eye test based on GA Law. Field Operations started a remote issuance process to allow seniors to upload their eye test required documents, and DDS has processed 4,700 such issuances since last June.
 - For customers that were worried about visiting a center because of COVID, Field Operations created a "Senior Hour." This allowed those customers to be serviced before official opening hours.
 - DDS is now able to allow this group to renew online. Information Technology (IT) and Project Management Office (PMO) worked diligently to bring this to fruition.

Crandall Heard, Deputy General Counsel, provided an update on Georgia Electronic Conviction Processing System (GECPS):

- In the past, GECPS had one person handling 900 courts; however, through a federal grant, the unit has added an auditor and one additional trainer.
- The agency received 53,662 convictions last month. The normal average ranges from 80,000 or 90,00 each month, but the number is increasing gradually. Of the 53,662 convictions, a total of 18.56 % were reported late in the last 30 days. DDS has had a lot of issues with courts sending citations outside of the 10-day window, which can contribute to the safety of the motoring public.
- The statute requires convictions to be submitted within 10 days, which can be a challenge for the courts for several reasons. A clerk may leave and fail to tell the new clerk of a citation backlog, or the court simply may be unaware that such a backlog exists. The additional DDS training and the new auditor are helping to improve the situation. Unfortunately, out-of-state courts sometimes submit 30 days late, and DDS can do nothing about it.
- The Commissioner explained the safety concerns and how they could impact any family across the state. He reminded the Board of a high-profile case involving a Commercial Driver License (CDL) driver that should not have been licensed who ultimately killed 7 motorcyclists in the Northeast. The Chairman asked if the courts understand that these are lives and not numbers. Crandall explained he doesn't think they do in some cases and that is one of the things DDS is stressing in training.

The Commissioner gave an update on facilities:

- One of the highest demand careers in the state at the moment is CDL drivers. A lot of products are coming into the state, and DDS needs to help ensure they get to market. Most CDL drivers are tested at a DDS CDL facility or a location regulated by the Department.
- The Commissioner is excited about adding two new centers to the current 67, and both will be CDL sites. He showed a map of the future Douglas County property, which the State Property Commission is in the process of transferring to DDS.
- Commissioner Moore also met with the Mayor of Hazlehurst. Hazlehurst has major logging industries in the county and needs CDL drivers to move shipments. This property also is being discussed by the State Property Commission today.
- The Rome CSC is an existing CDL location that also has received funding for a new building, and that funding will be available in mid-July.
- The new Dalton building has been discussed at recent Board meetings, and the Commissioner hoped to provide the Board with a date for the groundbreaking ceremony, but it has not been scheduled yet. The goal is to have the Governor participate, and DDS is looking forward to breaking ground on this new building.

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

- Approximately 3,000 customers used online services during the last Monday in May, and as a result, those 3,000 customers didn't have to visit a CSC on a Tuesday, which is still the agency's busiest day. The agency just established a partnership with Georgia Broadcasting Association, which should help drive customers to online services. In many cases, customers don't need to be served in the center, and DDS wants to do everything possible to inform customers that they can perform their service online. The agency saw 196,000 customers in the centers last month, and the average wait time and service level for this month have gone down. The hiring challenges are the main reason.
- The staff is helping customers understand the best times to come in for services. Tuesday mornings generally begin with 50 people in line at the larger centers. For the last several years, customers are in and out in 30 minutes, and they are used to that efficiency.
- The Commissioner compared the wait time to traffic on I-285. When the interstate traffic is slowed, clearing out the traffic takes a while. Staff is arriving earlier to reduce the time that customers are in the centers. If a busy center sees 500 daily customers, half probably arrived before 10 am, so they will wait the longest.
- DDS served 110,000 customers online and 196,000 in person in the month of May. The agency is getting closer and closer to serving as many people online as in centers.

The Commissioner ended his report with an update on customer survey responses:

The survey feedback option has been restored in the CSCs after not being included in the original DRIVES rollout, and responses are increasing. The questions asked are, "How was your service, what are you here for, was our staff courteous, was our staff knowledgeable, and was the facility clean and adequate." DDS wants all parts of the customer experience to be positive. The Commissioner always says that, even if we don't have enough people and can't be as efficient as we'd like, we always can be kind. At the end of the day, every interaction is important.

Rules for Final Approval

Angelique McClendon, General Counsel, reviewed the following rules:

- **375-3-1-.02** Applications and Supporting Documentation

- **375-3-2-.01** Expiration of License and Identification Card: When Licenses and Identification cards May Be Renewed. Revised (proposed amendment to Term of Driver's License, Permit, and Identification Card)

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

Citizen Waivers

1. Patricia Estella Mitchell – She is seeking a Georgia driver's license in the name of Patricia Estella Mitchell. She is 49 years old. Her first and middle names were absent from her birth certificate. Once they were added, her names were transposed and never corrected. She has held a Georgia driver's license from 2004 to 2013 in the name of Patricia Estella Mitchell. She submitted her birth certificate, marriage certificate (spouse-Dozier Milner Mitchell), DD-214 (entered active duty in 1994 as Patricia Estella Kuyon), college transcripts, Virginia driver's license, federal tax return, valid North Carolina driver's license, notification of personnel action, Department (Dept) of Veterans Affairs letter, valid REAL ID Virginia driver's license, W-2, Dept. of Defense memorandum, Social Security card (S/S), bank account statement, dental statement, earnings and leave statement, Washington, DC Vital Records email, and U.S. government employee ID card.

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

2. Cassandra Rose Wills – She is seeking a Georgia driver's license in the name of Cassandra Rose Wills. She is 30 years old. Her mother's last name, Davis, is her last name on her birth certificate. At around 5 years of age, her mother married her father (Tucker). After then, her last name changed to Tucker. She does not have a legal document for the name change to Tucker. She used Tucker on her marriage certificate to her husband (Wills). She submitted her birth certificate, birth certificates of children, marriage certificate, spending account statement, Michigan insurance producer license, W-2, valid Illinois driver's license, state of Illinois check, S/S card, and Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) envelope.

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

New or Old Business

The next Board meeting will be held on August 11, 2021, In-person.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Wigington
Jeff Wigington