

Board Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2021

10:00 a.m.

Present

David Connell, Chairman
Britt Fleck, Secretary
Rachel Little - Virtual
Bob Pierce
Kat Satterfield
Tony Guisasola
Christie Moore - Virtual
Frank Reynolds

Not Present

Jeff Markey, Vice Chairman

Also attending the meeting virtually was Cristina (Cris) Correia from the State Attorney General's Office and in-person, members of the DDS Staff.

Pre-meeting presentation by Gilmer County Future Farmers of America (FFA) members and Mike Bushey the Director of the Gilmer County Agriculture Center.

Establish Quorum/Call to Order

Chairman Connell confirmed the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 10:16 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Chairman Connell called for a motion regarding the minutes from the September 15, 2021 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. Commissioner Moore presented agency updates.

COVID-19:

- The agency has seen a significant decline across the state in COVID-19 cases. Last month, the agency experienced a spike of 27 team members who were infected, and that number is down to nine in September. So far in October, we have only two.
- The safety measures in place are working. As the agency sees 2 ½ - 3 million customers each year in the centers, the front-line staff are in high-risk jobs. We continue our wellness checks and temperature checks. Our communications team has done an awesome job of informing team members about the protocols in place to keep them safe

Community Outreach:

- DDS partnered with the Savannah Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic in September to assist homeless veterans in the Savannah area.
- We filled three vehicles to transport food, water, and toiletries to the Veterans Outreach Center.

Reciprocity:

- DDS has signed an agreement with the jurisdiction of Taiwan for driver's license reciprocity, similar to the South Korea agreement signed several years ago.
- To be eligible for reciprocity, the customer will need to submit a document from the Taiwanese Consulate to DDS.
- The DDS Legal team does an excellent job in researching the laws of that country ensuring they are consistent with the laws of Georgia.
- The Reciprocity process is not easy to accomplish. The agency has been in discussions with Germany and Canada, but one of the key parts of these agreements is a sign-off by the Georgia Economic Development Authority and the Governor's office.

The Commissioner introduced the Speaker of the House, David Ralston, and thanked him for everything he is doing for this agency and the state. When concerns were raised about the general public having knowledge of voter identification cards, Speaker Ralston ensured funding was added to the DDS budget to ensure citizens that they can receive this free credential from DDS. The agency appreciates him for that effort.

Speaker Ralston welcomed everyone to Ellijay. He thanked the DDS staff for all the hard work. Speaker Ralston was en route to Atlanta to prepare for the upcoming special session, which will start on November 3rd and should end before the holiday break. The 2022 regular session will begin in January, and the number one item of discussion will be adopting the state budget. This year, the State is in better shape financially than in previous years. Members will discuss the city of Buckhead and solutions the State can offer to help the city of Atlanta with its crime epidemic. The Speaker also is working on the issues of mental health and public safety, and he truly believes the two issues intersect. In the last session, lawmakers took the first step in expanding resources by adding \$57 million to the state budget for mental health care. This year, he hopes they will add more to expand options for treatment.

Speaker Ralston expressed his appreciation for the Board and the DDS team and opened the floor for questions. Chairman Connell explained he has been on the Board since Perdue's first term; he has gone through four Commissioners, and Commissioner Moore is the best. He mentioned how hard it is to find employees across the state and asked if the issue will be examined during the upcoming session, particularly as it relates to compensation. The Speaker mentioned the raise given to our agency last year and identified other agencies where increases will be made.

Director Jared Smith provided an update on the Office of Investigative Services (OIS) core mission, divisions, and services:

- OIS Core Mission
 - The mission of the OIS is to investigate all allegations of fraud appertaining to the illegal acquisition of identification cards and driver's licenses.
- OIS Divisions
 - Uniform Investigations Unit – Uniformed Criminal Investigators are assigned to specific customer service locations, based on the need for a law enforcement presence. These investigators conduct patrol functions, along with conducting criminal investigations that are location specific.
 - Criminal Investigations Unit – Plainclothes criminal investigators that are divided into the northern and southern regions of the state, that are responsible for the investigations of fraud and all other violations of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated that are perpetuated within the immediate jurisdiction of OIS.

- Intelligence Unit – This unit is comprised of two intelligence analysts who are charged with supporting the administrative unit in its daily activities by providing research and conducting preliminary investigations into alleged criminal activity that is reported to OIS.
- Administrative Unit – Provides administrative support to the OIS units and DDS mission.
- Task Force Officer (TFO) – OIS works in concert with the Department of Homeland Security by providing a task force officer attached to I.C.E. Due to the nature of some of OIS's investigations, some suspected offenders fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government, more specifically under Immigration and Naturalization.
- OIS Services
 - Assist with photo and document requests, miscellaneous database searches, and facial recognition.
 - OIS will assist agencies whose requests facilitate the investigations of the seven deadly sins of law: murder, rape, armed robbery with a firearm, aggravated child molestation, aggravated sodomy, aggravated sexual battery, and voluntary manslaughter.

Director Shevondah Leslie provided an update on the office of Governmental Affairs and Communications division responsibilities and initiatives:

- Division Responsibilities
 - Monitoring and tracking legislation that has the potential to impact DDS or our team;
 - Producing the Agency's Award-Winning newsletter, The Scoop, which highlights team members and their accomplishments;
 - Managing the Agency's social media presence (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube); and,
 - Managing the statewide Motor Vehicle Network (MVN) screens, producing the driver training manuals, and marketing and educating customers on the agency's initiatives.
- Free Voter ID Initiative
 - Using funding awarded to DDS by the Georgia General Assembly, DDS partnered with the Georgia Association of Broadcasters to produce and promote the "Free Voter ID" commercial. This commercial began airing on October 1st.
- Road Tests and Driving Schools Initiative
 - "Less waiting and more driving!" is the slogan used to promote Third-Party Testing (TPT) sites and make customers aware of road test options.
 - Board Member Fleck asked if, after taking the test at an off-site location and coming back to the center for the ID, a customer can do that on the same day. Shevondah said you can.

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

The Commissioner reminded the Board that, several months ago, he mentioned that fewer customers should be coming into the centers in 2022 due to renewal cycles and the credential expiration dates. Data can predict which customers need to renew; however, it cannot predict the number of customers that will lose their license or change their addresses. Unfortunately, the volumes have not reached the expected decline, primarily due to customers moving and making various changes to the license. Volume still is increasing. The Commissioner spoke to the August COVID numbers, as well as experiencing significant turnover at the end of the summer. While both situations slowly are improving, they have impacted the performance statistics, but we hope to turn those around in the coming months. The Commissioner provided the Board with Online Services and Mobile App performance numbers, as well as customer satisfaction survey participation responses.

Rule for Initial Approval

Angelique McClendon, General Counsel, reviewed the following rules:

- **375-5-3-.17** Program of Instruction (proposed amendment to Commercial Driver Training Program of Instruction)

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

Citizen Waivers

1. Hortensia Eugenia Lora – She is seeking a Georgia driver's license in the name of Hortensia Eugenia Lora. She is 65 years old. She became a naturalized citizen and married Alan Lora in the Dominican Republic. They divorced but she continued to use the last name of Lora. Her last passport expired in 1996. She is unable to obtain the marriage certificate to Lora from the Dominican Republic. She submitted her marriage certificate (spouse – Norberto Alfonso), Certificate of Naturalization, US Passport, birth certificate of the child (father of the child – Alan Lora – birthplace of the father, Dominican Republic), dissolution of marriage (spouse – Alan Raul Lora – date of marriage – 12/27/79 – the place of marriage – other country), valid REAL ID Florida driver's license, federal tax return, passport fees receipt, and Social Security card (S/S).

Bob Pierce made a motion to approve the waiver pending SAVE Verification; Britt Fleck seconded the motion with unanimous approval by the remaining Board members.

2. Jill Elizabeth Smith – She is seeking a Georgia driver's license in the name of Jill Elizabeth Smith. She is 49 years old. Her last name on her birth certificate is her mother's maiden name of Smith. After she was born her mother married Glen Jackson and she was enrolled in school with the last name of Jackson. In 2019 she started using Smith as her last name. She is missing her name change documents to Jackson and back to Smith. She submitted her birth certificate, grade 5 and 8 report cards, driver education certificate, high school diploma, birth certificate of child, S/S card from 2017 and 2019, valid REAL ID Florida driver's license, S/S letter, passport fees receipt, and credit card statement.

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

New or Old Business

The next Board meeting will be held on November 17, 2021.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully Submitted,



Britt Fleck, Secretary