

**Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind, Board of Trustees, Virtual Meeting,
May 19, 2020**

Pursuant to the Governor's First Supplemental Order dated March 18, 2020, the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Board of Trustees met via phone/zoom conference on May 19, 2020 at 9:00 AM.

Present

Mr. Chip Dobbs
Mr. Ron Garrett
Mr. Pat Greene
Mr. Clarence Haynes
Mr. Joseph Johnson
Mr. Robert Kelly
Mr. Mitch Kemmer
Ms. Crystal Richardson
Mrs. Hope Scarborough
Mr. Jackie Smith
Mrs. Frances Taylor
Rev. John Whitfield
Dr. John Mascia, President
Mrs. Amanda Fuller, Secretary

Absent

Mr. Terry Dunn
Governor Kay Ivey
Ms. Gerri Robinson
Mrs. Frances Taylor, Chair, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the meeting. She called on Rev. John Whitfield to offer the invocation.

Following roll call by Mrs. Amanda Fuller, Secretary, a quorum was declared.

Dr. John Mascia provided a brief overview of the meeting and what he learned from participating in a webinar on April 21 sponsored by the Alabama Association of School Board Association regarding the parameters of a virtual meeting. They stressed that while we have been given leeway to hold these meetings in virtual fashion given the current situation in our State and nation, they strongly stressed that we should be very careful not to abuse our ability to be transparent. Dr. Mascia said we are transparent. We were told we should only discuss items that cannot wait – these items include getting our seniors graduated, personnel, and legal issues. Other regular business that can wait we do not plan to bring up during this meeting. We wanted to make sure you saw the financial reports and the facilities report. These items are on the agenda for discussion and not action items. We want to focus on getting our students graduated, and we do have a purchase for Gentry which Jessica Edmiston and Jonathan Sherbert will explain to you. This will be our road map for today's meeting.

Authorization to award seniors.

Dr. Mascia requested authorization to award seniors, as listed below, the proper certificate or diploma on May 28.

Alabama School for the Blind

Dalton Lee Amos, Southside
Kaleigh Elizabeth Gable, Talladega
Kameron L. Hardy, Birmingham
Donavan J. Perman, Birmingham
Chassidy Shaiana Thomas, Goodwater
Anaya M. Williams, Birmingham

Tanner Grayson Wood, Birmingham

Alabama School for the Deaf

Ben Aust, Alexander City
Brittney Bailey, Dothan
Christina Cooper, Talladega
Suri De La Cruz, Bessemer
Whitney Maldonado, Mobile
Emma Maynor, Cave Springs, GA
Cory McKinnie, Dothan
Myles Morman, Montgomery
Victoria Needham, Pell City
David Palacios-Campos, Vestavia Hills
Hannah Rains, Sylacauga
JaQuan Rankin, Franklin
Jessika Rawls, Huntsville
Joao Sierra, Leeds
Cody Steward, Sheffield
Hunter Stults, Florence
Tyler Thompson, Sylacauga
Isabella Underwood, Gadsden
Hunter Weaver, Birmingham

Helen Keller School of Alabama

Taylor Jordan Barrow, Lafayette
Xavier DeAndre Erskine, Harvest
Lisa Marie Evans, Smiths Station
Dekendrick Rodriquez Graves, York
Kelsie Brianna Headley, Clanton
Jeffrey Dale Oliver, Talladega
Jacob William Seago, Roanoke
Aubrey Lynn Smith, Anniston

On motion of Rev. John Whitfield, second by Mr. Chip Dobbs, unanimous authorization was given to Dr. Mascia to provide the proper certificate or diploma to the 34 graduates of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind on May 28, 2020.

GRIN Software.

Mrs. Taylor reported that the purchase of GRIN software is the next agenda item, and she reminded the members of the Board that this had been discussed during a previous Board meeting and was approved for a lesser amount. The request on the table today is for an additional amount needed to purchase more software.

Dr. Mascia informed the Board that \$179,000 is being requested for AIDB's portion of a software program to develop a data base to justify our outcomes to Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS). The original software was purchased 15 years ago and initially it was thought this could be updated and at a cost of approximately \$78,000, but it was determined that the software we had was antiquated and has to be replaced. We actually do not have a choice as this is required to fulfill requirements of the several million dollar contract with ADRS.

Mrs. Jessica Edmiston explained that this software is needed in order to move the Institute to the next level. It has implications to E. H. Gentry, the Alabama Freedom Center for the Blind and the Regional Centers. This is a national company with localized support. It is a premier organization with a team working to solve problems. This will provide a much more robust platform and the expenditure will not take away from any services. Our E. H. Gentry and Freedom Center budgets can support this, and we have close to a \$10

million contract with ADRS. The return on the investment will be less staff time as currently a lot of the data needed is handled by hand, and we are working with an antiquated system. This will take us to the next level.

Mr. Jonathan Sherbert stated that the funds to pay for this are in the Gentry and Freedom Center budgets, and he feels the time is now to make this purchase. ADRS has money allocated for this year, and we are not sure what is going to happen in the future. He also said this can be integrated into the same platform as Bradley Hurd is using for the Children and Youth Program.

Mr. Robert Kelly moved that authorization be given to move forward with the purchase of the GRIN software. Second was made by Mrs. Hope Scarborough.

Mr. Ron Garrett asked who would be using the software and if it is accessible for people who are blind. Mrs. Edmiston responded that the software will be accessible to individuals who are blind and deaf/blind. Individuals within Gentry, the Regional Centers and the Freedom Center will be utilizing the software as will the Assistive Technology personnel and Field Services personnel as well as Case Managers and Directors within Regional Centers, Job Developers within Regional Centers and all Instructors and Directors including the Executive Director of Gentry as well as other staff who may have the need to utilize the software.

Mr. Sherbert also said that we will not have the equipment unless it is accessible to the blind and deaf/blind. Joel Stephens and Doug Nixon have been involved with the discussions and will continue to be involved, and we have a commitment from the company that it will be accessible.

There being no objection to the motion, the motion carried.

Financial Report.

Mr. Sherbert provided an update on the financial report for the 2nd Quarter. Mr. Joseph Johnson reported that he and Mr. Sherbert had met and discussed the financial report and everything looked good. Industries sales are down a little but that is to be expected during this time. Following discussion of the financial report, Mr. Johnson moved approval. Second was made by Mr. Haynes. There being no objection, the motion carried.

Construction Report.

Mr. Joey Hutto reported that the demolition of Rogers Hall has been completed and the bid for the new building came in at \$1,895,672 from Douglas Builders. The plans are before the Building Commission. Hopefully the plans will be sent back within the next two weeks and work can begin. This is a seven month project. Plans for renovation of Graves Hall are at the Building Commission and should be received soon. The restoration of AIB due to the water damage totals \$205,832. Douglas Builder was awarded the bid on this project. Approval should be received soon to proceed with this project. The plans for the HVAC replacement at AIB is also before the Building Commission. Paving has been completed at E. H. Gentry, AIB, and the Birmingham Regional Center. The Physical Plant Department staff will be installing sound proof windows at Riser Cottage in the next few weeks. The PPD staff are also completing major repair work to the boiler system for Taylor, Henderson, and McDonald Hall dorms on the Alabama School for the Deaf Campus.

Executive Session.

Dr. Mascia requested the Board go into executive session. Mrs. Fuller read the following letter:

“Dear Dr. Mascia:

I have reviewed the information provided by your staff regarding matters to be considered at the upcoming meeting of the Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Board of Trustees on May 19, 2020. As attorney for AIDB, I certify that the Board may properly meet in an executive session at that time in compliance with the requirements of the Alabama Open Meetings Act, §36-25A-1 *et seq.*, Code of Alabama (1975). I understand that matters to be discussed include the job performance and recommended personnel actions for one or more employees who are not required to file a statement of economic interest with the Alabama Ethics Commission. These are permissible matters for discussion in an executive session under §36-25A-7(a)(1). I will be available by telephone to address any additional questions that you or Board members may have. Thank you.

Sincerely, signed, Clay R. Carr”

Roll call vote follows:

Mr. Chip Dobbs, Yes
Mr. Ron Garrett, Yes
Mr. Pat Greene, Yes
Mr. Clarence Haynes, Yes
Mr. Joseph Johnson, Yes
Mr. Robert Kelly, Yes
Mr. Mitch Kemmer, Yes
Ms. Crystal Richardson, Yes
Mrs. Hope Scarborough, Yes
Mr. Jackie Smith, Yes
Mrs. Frances Taylor, Yes
Rev. John Whitfield, Yes

Following executive session, the meeting was called back to order. Mr. Haynes moved that all personnel actions discussed in executive session be approved. Second was made by Mr. Kelly. There was no opposition so the motion passed.

Mrs. Taylor requested any member of the Board who planned to attend Graduation to please let Mrs. Fuller know so seating arrangements can be made.

Mr. Kelly asked when production workers would be going back to work. Dr. Mascia said we are working on plans but Birmingham has more stringent rules.

Mr. Garrett commended Dr. Mascia and his staff and Board members who contributed to the success with the Alabama Legislature. Dr. Mascia said we really had a wonderful outcome this year. He recognized several champions we have in Montgomery including Representative Bill Poole, Senator Arthur Orr, Governor Kay Ivey, Mr. Kelly Butler, Lt. Governor Will Ainsworth, and many others. He also expressed appreciation to Mr. Sherbert for his budget presentation to the Finance Director.

Dr. Mascia expressed appreciation to the members of the Board for their support.

Mrs. Taylor thanked the Interpreters, Rosemary Guy and Randy Chappell, for their outstanding job and Patrick Smith for his technology expertise in making sure this meeting was successful.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Approved: _____
Frances Taylor, Chair

Signed: _____
John Mascia, President

By: _____
Amanda Fuller, Secretary

Personnel discussed in executive session include:

Students First Act – Non-Renewal Probationary Classified

Jeff Smallwood, Plant Manager, AIB, June 3, 2020

Ashley Anderson, Recreation Specialist, ASB, End of 2019-20 School Year

Jackie Cofield, Secretary, ASB, June 3, 2020

Chelsey McGee, Teacher, HKS, End of 2019-20 School Year

Suspension

David Washabaugh, Store Manager, AIB, May 25, 2020-May 29, 2020

Grant Non-Probationary Status – Teacher

Jocelyn Colley, Teacher, ASB, End of 2019-20 School Year

Brooke Foster, Teacher, ASB, End of 2019-20 School Year

Kimberly Munroe, Teacher, ASB, End of 2019-20 School Year

Katrina Thomas, Teacher, ASB, End of 2019-20 School Year

Kristen Bowen, Teacher, ASD, End of 2019-20 School Year

Donna McGee, Teacher, ASD, End of 2019-20 School Year

Leah Sutton, Teacher, HKS, End of 2019-20 School Year

Harry Wood, Teacher, Special Projects, End of 2019-20 School Year

NOTE: As required by the Alabama Open Meetings Act, notice of this meeting was posted on the Secretary of State's Office [website](#) on May 11, 2020.