

**Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services**

**Virtual via Zoom**

**Thursday, June 17, 2021**

**10:00 a.m.**

**AGENDA**

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Call to Order	Eddie Williams, Chair
Prayer	
Verification of Quorum	Karen Freeman
Verification of Open Meeting Act Notice	Eddie Williams
Approval of Agenda	Eddie Williams
Approval of Minutes for the March 4, 2021 meeting	Eddie Williams
<b><i>New Business:</i></b>	
Swearing in New Board Member – Kevin Kidd	Ashley Hamlett, General Counsel
Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services Administrative Code Rules	Ashley Hamlett
Commissioner’s Annual Performance Appraisal	Eddie Williams
Board Member Questions and Division Updates	Executive Leadership Team
Commissioner’s Comments & Legislative Update	Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw, Commissioner
<b><i>Announcements:</i></b>	
Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services meeting dates for <b>2021</b> :	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b><i>Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021 – 10:00 a.m., Montgomery/State Office, Large Conf. Room</i></b></li><li>• <b><i>Thursday, Dec. 2, 2021 – 10:00 a.m., Montgomery/State Office, Large Conf. Room</i></b></li></ul>	
Board Business/Discussion	Eddie Williams
Adjourn	Eddie Williams

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## ***Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services***

### ***Board Meeting Minutes***

#### ***Virtual Via Zoom***

***Thursday, June 17, 2021***

#### **Call to Order:**

Mr. Eddie Williams, Board Chair, called the regularly scheduled open public meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

#### **Prayer:**

Dr. Graham Sisson, Jr., Executive Director of the Alabama Governor's Office on Disability (GOOD), opened the board meeting with prayer.

#### **Verification of Quorum:**

Board members present: Mr. Eddie Williams, Board Chair; Mrs. Penny Foster, Board Vice-Chair; Mr. Kevin Kidd; Mr. Mitch Strickland; Mr. Jimmie Varnado; and Mr. Charles Wilkinson. A quorum was declared.

#### **Verification of the Open Meetings Act Notice:**

For the health and safety of the public (including the effectiveness of COVID-19 mitigation strategies), and in accordance with Section III (Open Meetings Act) in the First Supplemental State of Emergency: Coronavirus (COVID-19) Proclamation signed by Gov. Kay Ivey, Governor of the State of Alabama, on March 18, 2020, the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services' regularly scheduled board meeting was conducted virtually via Zoom and was open to the public. Interpreter services were provided via Zoom by Mr. Josh Brewer and Ms. Angel Dahlgren.

Mrs. Karen Freeman verified that the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services meeting for June 17, 2021, was posted on the Alabama Secretary of State's website on May 17, 2021, at 2:13 p.m.

Meeting registration information for the public was provided on the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' website at the following link: <https://rehab.alabama.gov/about/meet-our-board> with a deadline of June 11, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. CDST. Mr. Dave White, Governor's Office, Senior Policy Advisor, and Ms. Susan Sellers, United Ability-Birmingham, Chief Executive Officer, joined the virtual board meeting.

At the conclusion of the board meeting, a summary of the meeting was posted on the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services' public website on June 17, 2021, before the close of business. The summary recounted the deliberations conducted during the meeting and the actions taken with specificity to allow the public to understand what happened.

#### **Approval of Agenda:**

Mr. Williams asked for a motion to approve the agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Mitch Strickland and seconded by Mr. Jimmie Varnado. The motion was approved.

## **Approval of Minutes for March 4, 2021 Meeting:**

The minutes from the March 4, 2021, meeting were mailed prior to the board meeting. Mr. Williams stated that if there were no corrections, the minutes would stand approved as presented. The minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

## **New Business:**

### **New Board Member: Mr. Kevin Kidd's Swearing-in Ceremony**

Mr. Williams, Board Chair, introduced the newest board member, Mr. Kevin Kidd. Mr. Williams and current board members welcomed and introduced themselves to Mr. Kidd. Mr. Kidd, of Crossville, will fill the vacancy on the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services left by the untimely passing of Mrs. Leah Patterson Lust. As a professional in state government with a hearing impairment, Mr. Kidd comes highly recommended to represent Congressional District 4 as a representative of both business and industry, and people with disabilities. Mr. Kidd was appointed by Gov. Kay Ivey on March 11, 2021 and confirmed by the Senate, effective April 7, 2021, and his term of service will expire Sept. 30, 2025.

Commissioner Burdeshaw and the Executive Leadership Team introduced themselves and welcomed Mr. Kidd to the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services. Commissioner Burdeshaw reported that Mr. Kidd will be an asset to the Board, bringing his unique perspective to the Board as he was once a consumer of Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) beginning at 15 years old and through his graduation from the University of Alabama in 1992. He began his professional career as a Workshop Manager with Darden Rehabilitation in June 1994 and joined the team at the Alabama Department of Labor in 1998, where he has served as an Employment Security Representative, Employment Services Manager, Area Field Services Supervisor, and his current role as Program Services Manager. As a person with a disability who utilized ADRS services, Mr. Kidd has a very personal understanding of how our programs support people with disabilities to be successful in school and their transition to college and into career. He is a lifelong advocate and fighter for disability rights and has great empathy and compassion for all Alabamians in need of specialized services.

Mrs. Ashley Hamlett, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Legal Counsel, administered the oath of office for Mr. Kidd as a member of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services. Mr. Kidd stated he is looking forward to serving on the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services.

### **Re-Appointment of Mr. Eddie Williams of Huntsville:**

Commissioner Burdeshaw reported that Mr. Eddie Williams of Huntsville, Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services, Chair, was reappointed by Gov. Ivey and confirmed by the Senate, effective Oct. 1, 2021, and his term of service will expire effective Sept. 30, 2028. Mr. Williams will continue representing Congressional District 5 as a member of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services. Mr. Williams was first appointed to the Board in June 2011 and was elected to serve as its Chairman for the last two years. Commissioner Burdeshaw has worked closely with Mr. Williams and found that he is an excellent representative for business and industry on the Board as he has enjoyed a long

career with one of Alabama's most prestigious technology companies, Sanmina-SCI, a global leader in electronics manufacturing services. He recently retired from Sanmina-SCI's Defense and Aerospace Division in Huntsville where he has served as Avionics Program Manager. As a parent of an adult son with autism, Mr. Williams has a very personal understanding of the challenges that families face in getting the best care for their family members. He is a true champion for disability rights and has respect and compassion for all Alabamians in need of specialized services. His personal, professional, and volunteer experience advocating for people with disabilities gives him a unique and valuable perspective on disability services in Alabama.

State law requires the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services to consist of seven members, one from each U.S. Congressional District, with three being individuals with a disability, one being a parent of a child with a disability, and three being from business or industry.

### **Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, Administrative Rules:**

Mrs. Ashley Hamlett, General Counsel, reported the notice of proposed rule changes approved by the Board at its March 4, 2021 meeting appeared in the Alabama Administrative Monthly in the March 31, 2021 edition. The notice called for public comments and written requests to orally address the Board concerning the proposed rule changes. The rule changes were also placed on the department's public website. No written comments were received prior to the deadline of Tuesday, June 15, 2021, (i.e., two days prior to today's regularly scheduled board meeting).

Mr. Williams moved to approve and adopt new rules and amendments to the department's Administrative Code chapters governing Organization and Administration and SAIL as published in the Alabama Administrative Monthly on March 31, 2021 and placed on the department's public website. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mitch Strickland and the motion was approved.

### **Commissioner Burdeshaw's Annual Performance Appraisal:**

Mr. Williams and the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services expressed their appreciation to Commissioner Burdeshaw as she continues to manage all levels of the department under specific health and safety guidelines. With the board having reviewed and appraised Commissioner Burdeshaw's performance in the last year, Mr. Williams moved to increase the Commissioner's annual salary by five percent (5%) adjusted to the nearest dollar amount divisible by 24 effective July 1, 2021, and reflected on the July 30, 2021 paycheck. Mr. Williams also moved to provide a two percent (2%) cost of living increase adjusted to the nearest dollar amount divisible by 24 effective September 1, 2021, and reflected on the October 1, 2021 paycheck. Mr. Jimmie Varnado seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Commissioner Burdeshaw expressed her sincere gratitude to the Board for their continued support.

### **Board Member Questions and Division Updates:**

The Executive Leadership Team members were provided an opportunity to answer any questions and give updates to their written reports.

## **Commissioner's Comments & Legislative Update:**

Commissioner Burdeshaw reported Gov. Kay Ivey issued a statement earlier this week, announcing Alabama Finance Director Kelly Butler will be retiring on August 1, 2021 due to complications that may be associated with ALS, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, more commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease. Commissioner Burdeshaw noted that Mr. Butler has been a tremendous asset to the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and has reached out to him in relation to future services, if needed.

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services experienced another successful Legislative session regarding its budget request. ADRS requested and received level-funding for three major programs and an additional \$1,485,366.00 increase for Alabama's Early Intervention System. The Department is grateful to Governor Ivey, Finance Director Butler, and the Alabama Legislature for their continued support.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services has completed the annual budget planning process in June. The Commissioner, Chief Financial Officer, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, Budget Accountants, and Human Resource Development Director meet annually in June and September. These meetings lay the foundation for the annual budget request that is presented to the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services for approval and then to the Executive Budget Office and Finance Director.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) are working together to provide access to vocational and long-term supports that are needed to accomplish access to the range of services established under the home and community-based settings rule. ADMH has written a new Medicaid Waiver for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. ADRS will play an integral part in the waiver process. The Medicaid Waiver, once receiving final approval, will enable ADMH and its local programs to bill Medicaid for services. Both agencies are excited about the access to wraparound services that will be provided to individuals with significant disabilities.

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services fulfilled all the requirements under the Financial Relief and Restoration Payments (FRRP) Appropriation and were able to draw down the appropriations designed to mitigate a portion of the lost revenues experienced by blind vendors because of the pandemic. We were able to garner "active participation" of both the Business Enterprise Program Executive Committee and the Elected Committee of Blind Vendors.

## **Announcements:**

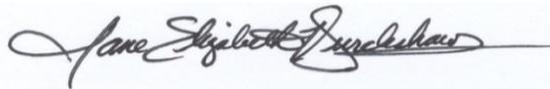
Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services meetings dates for **2021**:

- **Thursday, Sept. 16, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.**, ADRS Montgomery/State Office, Large Conf. Room
- **Thursday, Dec. 2, 2021 – 10:00 a.m.**, ADRS Montgomery/State Office, Large Conf. Room

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:52 a.m.

Minutes were taken by Karen Freeman.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jane Elizabeth Burdeshaw", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Jane E. Burdeshaw, Commissioner

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eddie C. Williams", written over a black horizontal line.

Approved:

Eddie C. Williams, Chair