

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**GEORGIA DRIVER'S EDUCATION COMMISSION MEETING**

June 22, 2021, at 1:30 pm

Georgia Governor's Office of Highway Safety  
7 Martin Luther King Jr., Drive, Suite 643, Atlanta, Georgia 30334.

Chairman Allen Poole called the June 22, 2021, meeting of Georgia Driver's Education Commission meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. Those in attendance and constituting a quorum were as follows:

<b>Board Members in Attendance</b>	<b>Board Members not in Attendance</b>
Mr. Allen Poole, Chairman	
Mr. Spencer R. Moore, Vice Chairman	
Dr. Malika Reed Wilkins	

**Non-Members in Attendance were as follows:**

Mr. Josh Turner, Georgia Driver's Education Commission  
Ms. Kisha Bell, Georgia Driver's Education Commission  
Ms. Pamela Farr, Georgia Driver's Education Commission  
Mr. Toni Abasi Hill, Malcom Omari Hill Scholarship Fund, Inc.  
Ms. Amy Radley, Georgia Attorney General's Office  
Mr. Mike Mitchell, Georgia Department of Driver Services  
Mr. Kyle Cain, Georgia Department of Driver Services  
Ms. Denae Hartsfield, Georgia Department of Driver Services

**Approval of Agenda**

Chairman Poole presented the agenda. Vice Chairman Spencer R. Moore made a motion to adopt the agenda. Dr. Malika Reed Wilkins seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Approval of March 23, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Chairman Poole presented the March 23, 2021, meeting minutes. Chairman Poole made a motion to adopt the minutes. Dr. Wilkins seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comment**

Chairman Poole offered a time for Public Comment. There was no response.

**Staff Report**

Mr. Josh Turner presented the staff report including the Provider Scholarship Redemption Report, FY 2021 Customer Service Report, for April through June Scholarship Report. A copy of the Staff Report is attached.

Also, Mr. Turner advised that GDEC staff will begin reviewing policies for authorized providers and develop new procedures in the manner that providers advertise the scholarship program. Many parents have recently been confused when visiting provider websites with links to the scholarship application portal as many providers have webforms that must be completed before the link to the portal appears.

Parents are often confused that submitting the provider's webform that collects contact information is instead submitting the scholarship application resulting in dissatisfied parents.

Finally, Georgia Driver's Education Commission will be examining the 90-day Covid-19 extension. GDEC will monitor the extensions and see if the 90-day extension is still needed. GDEC is seeing that the providers are having a large backlog of students that may need extensions applied to their scholarship. GDEC will continue to work with all providers to make sure all students have enough time to complete their training.

Mr. Turner invited everyone to attend the GOHS Conference held on August 22-25, 2021, at the Hyatt Regency Savannah in Savannah, Ga.

Toni Abasi Hill with the Malcom Omari Hill Scholarship Fund, Inc. inquired regarding the availability of scholarship brochures and qusted how the Commission could increase minority participation in "accessing and gaining" the scholarships and referenced 1<sup>st</sup> United Driving School only redeeming 6 shcolarships and Atlanta Technical College redeeming 14 scholarships. Mr. Hill further asked if the Commission could assist the providers with marketing campaigns since many of the minority-owned providers are only one-person operations. Mr. Turner responded that the brochures would be reprinted after the new budget begins in FY 2022 and explained that the scholarships are distributed evenly throughout the state by Congressional district and provide each applicant a list of authorized providers and publish the list on the website to be accessed at any time. Further, Mr. Turner explained that the Commission doesn't favor or recommend any driving school to ensure that all providers operate in a fair environment. Mr. Hill further opined that larger driving schools have large budgets for marketing and small, minority-owned businesses do not have a budget for marketing. Chairman Poole responded that there is a great deal of discussion at the national level regarding equity in transportation infrastructure and that the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration would be hosting discussions on this topic. Chairman Poole further stated that the Commission strives to be fair and operate with a data-driven focus to address inequities. Mr. stated the report that Mr. Hill referenced is broken down by provider, not location, and even though the top provider redeemed far many than the rest of the providers on the list, they have 19 locations across the Metro Atlanta region and offered to present the report by location if it would be helpful.

Vice Chairman Moore asked Mr. Turner if had any data on the number of driving schools that had backlogs in students completing their driving training as the new law requiring 17-year-old's to complete Joshua's Law goes into effect on July 1. Mr. Turner responded that he didn't have the data currently available on how many students requested extensions but could the data for the Commission. Mr. Turner further explained that the backlogs appears to be centered around metropolitan regions including Atlanta and Savannah and that driving schools had expressed to Commission staff that driving schools were experiencing labor shortages that may be compounding the situation.

Dr. Wilkins made a motion to accept the report. Vice Chairman Moore seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Adoption of Fiscal Year 2022 Meeting Schedule:**

Mr. Turner provided the Fiscal Year 2022 meeting schedule. These are subject to change.

- First Quarter: September 21, 2021, 1:30 pm
- Second Quarter, December 15, 2021, 1:30 pm
- Third Quarter, March 22, 2022, 1:30 pm

- Fourth Quarter, June 22, 2022, 1:30 pm

Vice Chairman Moore made a motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 meeting schedule. Dr. Wilkins seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

#### **Adoption of Resolution 2021-01, A Resolution Designating an Alternate Signer for GDEC Provider Contracts.**

Chairman Poole presented Resolution 2021-01, A Resolution Designating an Alternate Signer for GDEC Provider Contracts. Chairman Poole explained that currently he is the designated signer for GDEC Provider Contracts and that from-to-time, situations arise in which he isn't immediately available to sign the contracts and felt it was important that the Commission designate an alternate signer for the GDEC Provider Contracts.

Vice Chairman Moore explained that he felt that naming an alternate signer for GDEC Provider Contracts was a necessary move and that he felt Mr. Turner would be the appropriate alternate signer.

Vice Chairman Moore made a motion to adopt Resolution 2021-01, a Resolution Designating an Alternate Signed for GDEC Provider Contracts, and further moved that Mr. Josh Turner be designated as the alternate signer. Dr. Wilkins seconded the motion and offered her support of the recommendation. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Adoption of Second Amendment of Fiscal Year 2021 Budget**

Chairman Poole presented the Second Amendment of the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Dr. Wilkins made a motion to adopt Second Amendment of the Fiscal Year 2021 Budget. Vice Chairman Moore seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Adoption of Fiscal Year 2022 Budget**

Chairman Poole presented the Fiscal Year 2022 Budget. Chairman Poole stated there has been difficulties and challenges for our law enforcement to enforce the rules on our highway. It has caused us to see some downtrends that came with the finances. GDEC may revisit the budget in the future. Chairman Poole advised that the actual collections in the current fiscal year are down approximately \$500,000.00 from the estimated collections in the State Fiscal Year 2022 budget. Mr. Turner explained that he has sought guidance from the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) since the monthly scholarship allocations are based off of the initial State Fiscal Year Budget and OPB advised that they hoped to provide guidance after the first quarter of the new fiscal year. Vice Chairman Moore asked Mr. Turner if he would make the shortcoming in the budget known to OPB in hopes of seeking additional funds in the amended budget process during the legislative session. Mr. Turner advised that this would be the third consecutive year where the actual collections were less than the projected collections and the legislature allocated those funds in the amended budget and we seek those funds again this year with OPB and the legislature.

Vice Chairman Moore made a motion to adopt budget. Dr. Wilkins seconded the motion. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Other Business**

Chairman Poole opened the floor for other business. There was no other discussion.

#### **Adjournment**

Dr. Wilkins made a motion to adjourn. Vice Chairman Moore seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kischa Bell  
Operational Analyst  
Georgia Driver's Education Commission