Minutes

GDUI Board of Directors Meeting (Special)

August 4, 2024

1. The GDUI Board of Directors convened on Sunday, August 4, 2024, at 7:00 pm eastern via Zoom.

2. Attendance:

Sarah Calhoun, President,, Present

Maria Hansen, 1st Vice President , Present

Cheryl McNeill Fisher, 2nd Vice President, Present,

Maria Kristic, Treasurer, Present

Lynn Merrill, Secretary, Present

Penny Reeder, Immediate Past President, Present

Vacant, Director 1, Excused

Lolly Lijewski, Director 2, Present,

Olivia Norman, Director 3, Excused,

Vicky Kennedy, Director 4, Present,

Kay Malmquist, Director 5, Present

Liz Bottner, Director 6 , Present

Joyce Feinberg , Affiliates Liaison, Present

Ryan Hooey, Guide Dog Schools Liaison, Present,

Andrea Giudice, Editor, Present

Melanie Brunson, Advocacy and Legislative Affairs Committee Chair, Present,

5 GDUI members announced their presence.

3. Meeting protocol: if one wishes the floor, please do not interrupt; members who wish to comment will be asked to state their name when the person speaking has finished. Those who have stated their names will be called upon in the order in which they were stated. GDUI members in attendance may make comments prior to the Board voting on an issue.

4. Agenda: President Calhoun stated that the purpose of, and agenda for, the special meeting was to discuss one topic with respect to considering a recommendation from the Advocacy and Legislative affairs Committee that GDUI endorse a proposal to approach the Open Doors organization with regard to the creation, design, and implementation of the Known Service Animal Pilot program authorized by amendments to the Air Carriers Access Act that were signed into law earlier this year, and encourage Open Doors to do this in collaboration with both consumer advocacy organizations and the airline industry organizations. Motion to approve agenda (Hansen/Reeder) passed unanimously by acclamation.

5. Background: M. Brunson explained that in the spring of 2024, Congress passed a large funding bill for the Department of Transportation. Among other things, it calls upon the DOT to establish a 5-year pilot program which will allow individuals with disabilities to apply for, and be accepted into, a Known Service Animal Program. Those who are accepted will not have to complete the airline travel forms as long as their service dog is in service but may re-apply when they are partnered with a successor. The program will be evaluated after 5 years. In her conversation with the NFB Advocacy attorney, Brunson learned that when DOT was approached with questions about the timeline for establishing the program, they were advised it could take several years. However, DOT suggested that if a proposal for implementing and administering such a program was made, that might facilitate the implementation of the pilot program. Accordingly, in their discussions, they believed that Open Doors would be the best available choice in light of its experience with both the disability and airlines communities. The idea is that if the disability community agrees that Open Doors is a reasonable choice, and the airlines agree, and Open Doors agrees to design and administer the program, then DOT could be approached with the plan.

6. Motion: that GDUI endorse a proposal to approach the Open Doors organization with regard to the creation, design, and implementation of the Known Service Animal Pilot program authorized by amendments to the Air Carriers Access Act that were signed into law earlier this year, and encourage Open Doors to do this in collaboration with both consumer advocacy organizations and the airline industry organizations (Brunson/Reeder). Motion passed unanimously be acclamation

7. Adjournment: In the absence of further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm eastern.

Respectfully,

Lynn Merrill

Secretary

\*\*\* end \*\*\*