Minutes

GDUI Board of Directors Meeting

September 28, 2024

1. The GDUI Board of Directors convened on Saturday, September 28, 2024, at 1:00 pm eastern via Zoom.

2. Attendance:

a. Board Members Present:

Sarah Calhoun, President,

Maria Hansen, 1st Vice President,

Cheryl McNeill Fisher, 2nd Vice President,

Penny Reeder, Immediate Past President,

Maria Kristic, Treasurer,

Lynn Merrill, Secretary,

Vacant, Director 1,

Olivia Norman, Director 3,

Vicky Kennedy, Director 4,

Kay Malmquist, Director 5,

Liz Bottner, Director 6,

Joyce Feinberg, Affiliates Liaison,

Ryan Hooie, Guide Dog Schools Liaison,

b. Board members Excused (E) or Absent (A)

Lolly Lijewski, Director 2, (A)

Andrea Giudice, Editor, (E)

c. Invited Guests:

Cindy La Bon, Membership Committee Chair (A)

Dixie Sanderson, Membership Data Base Manager (P),

Melanie Brunson, Advocacy and Legislative Affairs Committee Chair P)

Terri Terlau, Special Concerns Committee Chair (A),

Kenneth Semien, Sr., ACB Board Liaison (E),

d. Others Present: GDUI members who were in attendance were invited to announce themselves. Two members announced their presence.

3. Approval of Agenda: President Calhoun called for any additions or changes to the previously published Agenda. A motion was made to approve the Agenda (Norman/Botner). Motion passed unanimously by acclamation.

4. Announcements:

1. President Calhoun was excited to describe her new partnership with Wren, a female black standard poodle from Gallant Hearts in Mississippi. Wren is three years old and is an excellent match. Congratulations were offered from members.
2. President Calhoun reviewed some housekeeping items she would like us all to follow during board meetings to save time, have less interruptions and make the meeting enjoyable.

President Calhoun will keep track of the time to begin the meeting. After announcing the meeting is open, she will ask Maria K to begin the recording. While people are finding the “Okay” button, if the chatter is limited it will help everyone hear the “Okay” option.

After the roll call has been taken, members who have called in to observe the meeting are asked to announce themselves. if someone chooses not to speak, that is their prerogative. It is not necessary for each caller to identify themselves. However, in the case when members can speak before a vote is taken or at the end of the meeting, then everyone needs to announce themselves.

Minutes will be approved and treasurer’s report accepted. No one needs to make a motion and seconded for these two items.

When a motion is made and before it is seconded, first President Calhoun will repeat the motion and if no additions or changes are made, she will then ask for a second. After a second is made, the floor is open for discussion prior to voting. We don’t need a quick second after a motion is made in order to continue.

When it is open for board members to make a comment, suggestion or have a question, President Calhoun will ask board members to state their name, then will call each person name by name when the floor is open.

When there happens to be some background noise, President Calhoun will pause the meeting and bring it to attention. No one else needs to step in for correction. This will prevent people over talking one another if one person handles the situation.

These few guidelines are intended to help in making our meetings a bit cleaner for everyone to hear and participate.

c. 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.

5. Approval of minutes: Minutes of the July 27, August 4, and September 11, 2024, Board of Directors Meetings were distributed to members prior to the meeting. President Calhoun called for any changes. Hearing none, the minutes were approved as submitted.

6. Acceptance of Treasurer’s Reports: Treasurer’s Reports for July and August, 2024, were distributed to members prior to the meeting. Hearing no corrections, the reports were accepted.

7. Advocacy and Legislative Affairs Committee update: in addition to the report submitted, M. Brunson thanked the Board for supporting the committee by holding two special Boar meetings to consider recommendations from the committee and for its enthusiasm and support. She also noted that the committee is working on issues that were not necessarily mentioned in the latest report such as grocery cart return areas at Walmart.

8. Mastadon: Mastadon is a decentralized, open-source social platform that is similar to Twitter. P Reeder has recommended that GDUI establish an account as an additional social media platform to which GDUI can post M. Kristic will set up the account and post the usual notices that are sent to other social media outlets but requested assistance in engaging with others who post questions or comments. O. Norman and L. Botner volunteered to assist.

9. Membership Committee: discussion was held concerning the Membership Committee report, and those of the past with respect to the goals and steps taken to recruit new members, engage with guide dog school representatives at the convention, and the general perceived attitude of the membership chair. Despite the reports indicating that there are not goals or plans for recruitment, some ideas were suggested such as reaching out to new guide dog handlers who have purchased signs or pouches, brainstorming other ways to connect with graduating students, attending state ACB conventions, promoting the Early Bird Special for new or returning members, etc. Noting that there are no members on the committee other than the chair, C. McNeil-Fisher volunteered to be a eco-chair of the committee if the chair is agreeable to that. President Calhoun will reach out to the chair to discuss the suggestion.

10. President Calhoun applauded the recent Community Call, lead by P. Fletcher, and L. Botner and C McNiel Fisher, with guest R. Hooey, Guide Dog Schools Liaison. M. Kristic will add a link on e GDUI webpage for Community Calls to hold the links of the calls.

11. Annual Membership Meeting: the annual meeting is scheduled for October 19 at 1:00 pm eastern. L. Merrill reported that there are efforts to invite a guest speaker, not only to educate members on issues but to also draw in members in order to reach a quorum. An invitation has been sent to Senator Angus King – I. Maine, who has introduced a bill, The Homeward Bound Act to address issues related to the CDC restrictions on dogs returning or entering the US from other countries. The Act would relax restrictions on certain dogs; those of servicemembers returning to the US from overseas tours, police dogs, and service animals who are returning from low-risk rabies countries. Senator King is campaigning for another term in the US Senate so his schedule might not be flexible enough to be able to attend our meeting. Merrill asked for other suggestions for a guest speaker in that event.

12. 2025 Annual Budget: President Calhoun reminded members that the 2025 Budget will be developed over the next several weeks in order to be presented at the November 23 meeting for approval. Committee chairs will be asked to submit projected income and expenses for the 2025 calendar year. M. Kristic will be sending the 2024 budgets to the respective committee chairs for their review and consideration. M. Hansen explained that the Budget and Finance Committee does all it can to honor the committee requests but it also needs to look at realistic income and expenses and sometimes make difficult decisions.

13. Extraordinary Veterinary Care Relief: during the July meeting, in light of the sunset of the Emergency Veterinary Care sub-committee, a suggestion was made to give consideration to making a donation to Helping Hands for the Blind for emergency veterinary care. M. Hansen asked members to submit suggestions on an annual amount (that would be determined each year and not “locked in” in perpetuity) to send to Helping Hands for the Blind, adding that the suggestion was an excellent one.

14. ACB Annual Auction: M. Hansen and S. Calhoun will work together to create a gift basket to donate to ACB on behalf of GDUI.

15. Editor’s , Report: S. Calhoun reported on behalf of A. Giudice that the next publication will be published on October 5, 2024. While it’s likely too late to submit articles for the October edition, future articles are always welcomed and can be sent to [editor@guidedogusersinc.org](mailto:editor@guidedogusersinc.org).

16. Fund raising: V. Kennedy announced that we will be offering the sale of wreaths, table décor and reindeer from Sherwood Forrest Farms again this year. The 22-inch wreath will be $50, the centerpiece will also be $50, and the reindeer set will b $39. Shipping will be included in the price. Projected sales will begin the second week of October and end the first week of November. Unfortunately, they cannot be shipped to Hawaii or Alaska.

17. Blessing of the Guides: Laurel Jean and Audrey are pleased to offer a blessing of the guides this year. There will be four categories; retired, new guides, working dogs, and those who have crossed the rainbow bridge. More information will be distributed about how to submit names and dates.

18. . Upcoming meetings:

November 23, 2024, Board Meeting

19. Adjournment: In the absence of further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:05pm (Botne/Kristic).

Respectfully,

Lynn Merrill

Secretary

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

Advocacy and Legislative Affairs Committee Report

SEPTEMBER 2024  
  
The Advocacy Committee has recently made two recommendations  to the GDUI Board of Directors.  The first was 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.  This recommendation was approved by the GDUI Board in August.  Work among organizations of guide dog users and other disability organizations aimed at urging the U.S. Dept. of Transportation to get the Known Service Animal Pilot under way is ongoing.  We will share further details as they become available.

The committee also recommended that GDUI send at least one representative to a rally planned for October 15 in San Francisco, California to protest ongoing discrimination against people who travel with guide dogs by drivers for Uber and Lyft.  GDUI's Board approved this recommendation as well.  GDUI President Sarah Calhoun, Board member Olivia Norman, and Guide Dog School Liaison Ryan Hooey will be representing GDUI at this rally.

The committee will meet again on October 23.

Melanie Brunson, Chair

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

The GDUI Bylaws Committee has one amendment for members to vote for or against during the elections that commence on October 20, 2024.

**Amendment : Clarify when notice of elections will be given.**

**Current Language:**

**7.05:  Notice of Meetings**

**(1)The Organization shall give notice to the members entitled to vote of the date, time, and place of each annual or special meeting of the members.  The notice shall be given at least 45 days before the annual meeting date and at least 10 days in the case of a special meeting.**

**Proposed Language:**

**7.05:  Notice of Meetings and elections**

**(1)The Organization shall give notice to the members entitled to vote of the date, time, and place of each annual membership meeting, special membership meeting, and elections  .  The notice shall be given at least 45 days before the annual meeting date, the Elections,  and at least 10 days in the case of a special meeting.**

**Submitter’s Rationale: clarify when notice of elections will be given to members to comport with current practice.  The current Bylaws are clear on when to give notice of annual meetings, special meetings, and proposals to amend the Bylaws; however, they are not specific on when to give notice of elections of officers and directors.**

Respectfully,

Lynn Merrill

Chair, Bylaws Committee

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

Editor’s Report

Greetings all,

The next issue of Paws for GDUI- News You can Use will, all technology globlins permitting, go live on Saturday, 10/5/24. I was late sending out the reminder/request  message seeking submissions, however, it went out on Thursday, 9/26.

I have been enjoying having a calendar section, and to that end, am planning to include fun items in future issues- so if you are aware of strange “holidays” please let me know of them so they can be included..

Remember that Paws for GDUI- News You can Use is published bimonthly, with the year’s first issue in February. This means if you, or an organization you are associated with, has an event or something of note that occurs in the months between issues (January, March, May, July, September, and November) please send the announcement of such early enough for it to get mentioned in the issue that precedes the month of the event.

As always- please keep the articles; app and technology suggestions; names of blogs; recipes; funny, unusual, and just plain weird news tidbits coming. Together we will make “Paws” better and better!

Respectfully submitted

Andrea Giudice, editor

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

GDUI Bi- Monthly Board Meeting

Guide Dog School Liaison Report

September 28, 2024.

Ryan Hooey

- Have began combing through the guide dog school surveys and seeing what changes, adaptations can be made as well as everything that looks amazing.

- Planning to have these sent out in November if my timeline stays the same with work.

- Have heard from a few different schools of things they would like to see.

- Have received a request from Matthew Bottomly, former Breeding Director with Guide Dogs UK, with over 30 years experience.

- Working with IWDR, International Working Dog Registry.

- It is more for guide dog and service animal schools but would like to present the info to the membership, perhaps we can record?

- https://www.iwdr.org/

- Have gotten some contacts from international schools that would love to give an update but would like it recorded for time zone purposes.

- Guide Dogs UK

- Vision Australia

- Onsay Spain

- Blind Low Vision NZ Guide Dog Services, New Zealand

- Have started a hosting a zoom session kit for use with the membership should they want to host something for GDUI in the future.

- Contains settings and accessibility features for screen readers, voiceover use with zoom.

- How to facilitate and keep discussions on track.

- Looking for where this can be posted once done or at least housed for later use, or just safe keeping.

- Reached out to all schools who attended the Guide Dog School Update 2024 at Convention. Asked for any quick hitting updates and to remember we will be hosting the same session again in June 2025.

- Pleas remind other schools that have not taken part as well to get in contact with me should they have questions or comments on how to participate.

- Just as an FYI for all

- I have travelled across the Canada/ USA border by flight and ground/ car after August 1, 2024.

- I would highly recommend having the CDC form complete.

- All you have to do is show the conformation email on your smart phone, or print out.

- Have not been asked to show when crossing a land border, but this will depend on the agent you get.

- Asked twice to show it when flying and coming through customs. This was out of 3 times so it looks like you will be asked more often than not.

- Never asked for vaccine verification just CDC report.

- Finally not sure if I should let the Board or membership know about this or not so my apologies.

- Schools including Leader and GDB have several job posting up on the IGDF website that are not related to dog training if interested please go there for more details and to apply.

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

Membership Committee Report

Only information to report this quarter is sending out letters to all 16 Guide dog schools.

There are 3  Canadian guide dog schools and 13 US guide dog schools.

Cindy LaBon

Membership Chair

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

Membership Database Report

September 2024

Our annual membership stands at: 282

Life members:118

Total membership:400

Of that number there are :228  affiliate members.

Respectfully submitted,

Dixie Sanderson

Guide Dog Users Inc.

Membership Database Manager

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

Nominations Committee Report

September 2024

GDUI will be holding elections in October.  The positions that are open are:

**President (term ending in 2026)**

**1st Vice President (term ending in 2026)**

**2nd Vice President (term ending in 2026)**

**Secretary (Term ending in 2026)**

**Treasurer (term ending in 2026)**

**Three Director Seats (one with term ending in 2025 and two with terms ending in 2027)**

**The candidates for these positions are:**

**Candidate for President: Sarah Calhoun         (incumbent)      From     Missouri**

**Candidate for First Vice President: No candidates applied for this position**

**Candidate for Second Vice President: Maria Hansen                            From     New York**

**Candidate for Secretary: No candidates applied for this position**

**Candidate for Treasurer:           Maria Kristic    (incumbent)      From     New York**

**Candidates for Director:**

**Olivia Norman (incumbent)    From Washington DC**

**Patty Fletcher  From Tennessee**

**Terrie Terlau     From Kentucky**

**The 2024 GDUI Elections will begin at 12:00 AM ET on Sunday, October 20, 2024, and end at 11:59 PM ET on Sunday , October 27, 2024.**

**GDUI members who have paid their dues by the record date of August 26, 2024, are eligible to vote in this election. Each member has one vote.**

**GDUI must receive the votes of fifteen percent of the members entitled to vote in this election, or at least sixty  votes, for this election to be valid.**

**Voting System**

**Once again this year VoteNow will be handling our election.  GDUI members will have the option of voting either telephonically or online.**

**Your prior voter ID number will no longer be valid.   Shortly before the elections commence, members will receive new voter ID numbers  by e-mail directly from VoteNow.  You will also receive the number for telephonic voting and the link to the online ballot. Please watch your inboxes for this important information.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dixie Sanderson

Nominations Committee Chair

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

Public Relations Committee Report

September, 2024

We have added links to the recordings of GDUI’s 2024 convention programs to our Web site. They can be found in the navigation menu of each site page or directly at [2024 GDUI Convention Recordings Links - Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI) (guidedogusersinc.org)](https://guidedogusersinc.org/2024-gdui-convention-recordings-links/). They are also available via the ACB Focus: Guide Dogs podcast in your favorite podcast app.

We have added the announcement of our upcoming elections and proposed bylaws amendments to our Web site. It is found under the corresponding heading on our Home page or directly at [Announcing GDUI 2024 Elections - Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI) (guidedogusersinc.org)](https://guidedogusersinc.org/announcing-gdui-2024-elections/).

We have added the Advocacy Committee’s announcement on reporting fraudulent service dog advertisements to the FCC in our Resources > Advocacy Resources section, under the corresponding heading on our home page, or directly at [Report those ads that encourage doting pet owners to break the law and identify untrained pets as service and guide dogs! - Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI) (guidedogusersinc.org)](https://guidedogusersinc.org/report-fraudulent-service-dog-ads-to-ftc/).

Our Meeting Minutes page has been updated with the latest approved minutes from our board meetings. This page is accessible from the navigation menu of each

page of our Web site or directly at [Meeting Minutes - Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI) (guidedogusersinc.org)](https://guidedogusersinc.org/resources/meeting-minutes/)

As of September 24, 2024, we have 836 followers of our Facebook page, 350 members in our Friends of GDUI Facebook group, and 308 followers of our X (formerly Twitter) handle. Our social media links can be found in the Widgets section of every page of our Web site, along with the links to subscribe to our Chat and Business lists. Our Facebook page can be accessed directly at <https://www.facebook.com/GDUInc/>, our Facebook group can be accessed at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/GDUINC/> , and our X timeline can be accessed at <https://x.com/gduinc>.

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria Kristic

Chair

GDUI Public Relations

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

Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI)

Treasurer’s Report, July, 2024

Income:

Product sales: $170.00

Product shipping: $39.00

Annual membership: $45.00

Donation: $30.00

Total income: $284.00

2024 YTD Income: $6,566.52

2024 Expected Income: $12,404.00

Expenses:

Directors and Officers Liability Insurance: ($1,211.00)

Awards plaques and shipping: ($240.62)

Mailing of auction item to winner: ($119.90)

Webmaster: ($222.00)

HostGator, Domain renewal, gdui.org: ($21.17)

Reimburse Hava for shipping of plush pup to drawing winner: ($49.50)

Product shipping: ($32.95)

PayPal fees: ($8.42)

Square fees: ($0.68)

Total expenses: ($1,906.24)

2024 YTD Expenses: ($6,112.86)

2024 Expected Expenses: ($27,640.56)

Balance Reconciliations:

Capital One:

Beginning balance as of June 30, 2024: $1,769.60

Credits: $14.32

Debits: ($1,472.79)

Transfer from PayPal: $4,000.00

Ending balance as of July 31, 2024: $4,311.13

Carrollton Bank:

Beginning balance as of June 30, 2024: $4,380.17

Credits: $30.00

Debits: ($49.50)

Ending balance as of July 31, 2024: $4,360.67

PayPal:

Beginning balance as of June 30, 2024: $6,218.39

Credits: $239.00

Debits: ($383.27)

Transfer to Tapital One: ($4,000.00)

Ending balance as of July 31, 2024: $2,074.12

First Georgetown Securities as of July 31, 2024: $482,853.76

Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI)

Treasurer’s Report, August, 2024

Income:

Product sales: $125.00

Product shipping: $66.70

ACB Monthly Monetary Support: $120.00

Total income: $311.70

2024 YTD Income: $6,878.22

2024 Expected Income: $12,404.00

Expenses:

Webmaster: ($148.00)

Product shipping: ($68.65)

Dues payment to ACB: ($10.00)

Grasshopper, Offshore minutes: ($0.19)

PayPal fees: ($6.73)

Square fees: ($1.25)

Total expenses: ($234.82)

2024 YTD Expenses: ($6,347.68)

2024 Expected Expenses: ($27,640.56)

Balance Reconciliations:

Capital One:

Beginning balance as of July 31, 2024: $4,311.13

Credits: $150.25

Debits: ($10.19)

Ending balance as of August 31, 2024: $4,451.19

Carrollton Bank:

Beginning balance as of July 31, 2024: $4,360.67

Credits: $0.00

Debits: ($0.00)

Ending balance as of August 31, 2024: $4,360.67

PayPal:

Beginning balance as of July 31, 2024: $2,074.12

Credits: $160.20

Debits: ($223.38)

Ending balance as of August 31, 2024: $2,010.94

First Georgetown Securities as of August 31, 2024: $471,055.51

Respectfully Submitted,

Maria Kristic

Treasurer

Guide Dog Users, Inc. (GDUI)

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