

**GEORGIA STATE BOARD OF VETERINARY MEDICINE**  
**SB 604 Subcommittee Zoom Meeting Minutes**  
**Wednesday, August 10, 2022 - 9:00 a.m.**

The Georgia State Board of Veterinary Medicine, SB 604 Subcommittee, met via Zoom on Wednesday, August 10, 2022. The following members were present:

**Committee Members Present**

Dr. Beckey Malphus, Committee Chair, Georgia State Board of Veterinary Medicine (GSBVM)  
Dr. William Wright, DVM, Committee Vice Chair, Georgia State Board of Veterinary Medicine (GSBVM)  
Dr. Janemarie Hennebelle, DVM, MPVM, State Veterinarian, Georgia Department of Agriculture (GDA)  
Dr. Jill Lancaster, DVM, Advocacy Chair, Georgia Veterinary Medical Association (GVMA)  
Dr. Keri L. Riddick, DVM, Executive Director, Georgia Veterinary Medical Association (GVMA)  
Dr. Doris Miller, DVM, DVM, PhD, DACVP, University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine (UGACVM), Associate Director of State Government Relations

**Committee Members Absent**

Dr. Keith Harris, DVM, DACVP, Special Assistant to the Dean, University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine (UGACVM)

**Staff Present**

Adrienne Price, Executive Director  
Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist  
Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor

**Visitors Present**

Susan Blevins, Director of Operations, Georgia Veterinary Medical Association (GVMA)  
Marti Brick, University of Georgia College of Veterinary Medicine (UGACVM)

**Call to Order:** Dr. Malphus established a quorum of the Committee was present and called the Committee meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

**OPEN SESSION**

**Agenda** The Committee accepted the agenda as presented.

**Discussion – SB 604**

**Reasons Why the Bill Exists**

Dr. Riddick reviewed a document that was shared with the Committee concerning SB 604. She reiterated that the impetus for proposing the legislation was in no way representative of any animus towards the current Board or board staff but rather out of concerns surrounding the ability of the Office of Secretary of State to accommodate the unique needs of the veterinary profession. The document addressed concerns about delays in the licensing process to include but not limited to issues with the information provided through the call center, lack of ability to have direct access to the Veterinary Board staff and the need for increased systems automation. She indicated that the goal of the bill was to create a more “nimble, responsive” Board. The document further explained how an independent Board has the potential to resolve some of these concerns.

Dr. Malphus expressed understanding regarding the concerns raised about the call center. With regard to the concerns raised relative to processing delays, she provided some examples of how the applicants/licensees fail to present the whole picture as it relates to their application when discussing the matter with others outside of the Board. She remarked that she, personally, has been contacted by an applicant who alleges that no one has contacted them about their application but when she contacts the Board, she is provided proof of staff’s responsiveness and the applicant being the cause for delay. She indicated that since applications and complaints are confidential that much

of what takes place between staff, the Board and the applicant/licensee cannot be provided to the public and having an independent Board would not necessarily resolve that issue.

Dr. Miller joined the meeting at 9:23 a.m.

Dr. Lancaster stated that she wants to streamline the digital parts of the application process and her angst is about the fact that some documents have to be physically provided to the Board office rather than submitted electronically.

Ms. Price addressed the Committee by explaining that the agency is working feverishly to automate the application process. She outlined the Agency's current project of systems automation. She indicated that the project will not be done completely for this upcoming renewal cycle, ending December 31, 2022, but it is well underway. Originally the phases were to begin in October 2022 at the Professional Licensing Boards Division; however, the timeline has shifted somewhat. She remarked that it is requiring an incredible amount of financial and human resources and the division is attempting to do it without adversely effecting day to day operations.

Dr. Malphus queried Dr. Hennebelle of the GDA regarding their ability to fund staff and have the systems in place to handle the IT side of licensing.

Dr. Hennebelle responded that the GDA is a resource, and the bill reflects that their role is strictly for administrative purposes. She continued that the Board under the GDA umbrella will be more of an independent entity with its own website. Dr. Hennebelle noted that the GDA does have an electronic licensing infrastructure in place, but that it is not designed to handle the complexity of licensing this profession and will need to be fully funded to have an adequate database and licensing process in place.

Dr. Miller posed a question to Dr. Hennebelle regarding the ability of their licensing system to handle the transcript process for graduates in such a way to expedite the licensing process upon graduation. Dr. Hennebelle replied that the current system cannot handle this request; that the GDA would need to purchase a separate system to accommodate the process.

Dr. Malphus responded that she agrees with the beauty of direct access, but again reiterated that the technology and complexity of the application and other pieces of information, such as transcripts, will take a bit to figure out.

Dr. Riddick noted that there is no expectation that the bill will take effect immediately. She indicated that GVMA envisioned the move being complete by the time that the UGA Class of 2023 graduates; however, the new Board and rules will not be in place until 2024. She stated that she hopes that two years would be adequate time to get the required processes in place.

After further discussion of specific line items within the bill, the feedback legislators provided about the bill post legislative session, the potential for referring the bill to Georgia Occupational Regulation Review Council (GORRC) and hearing the thoughts from each member of the committee and Executive Director, it was the consensus of the Committee that there is a great deal of work to do. Areas of concern surround the ease of transition of the GSBVM from the Office of Secretary of State, the period of transition, and the funding and resources necessary to do so as quickly and efficiently as possible should the bill pass during the next legislative session.

The Committee agreed to move forward as follows and provide feedback at the next meeting:

- The GVMA will contact Mr. Gabriel Sterling, Interim Division Director of the Professional Licensing Boards Division, to obtain information that will assist in developing an itemized budget for the GSBVM to operate. Included in that discussion will be Dr. Hennebelle and Dr. Malphus.
- The GDA will submit a request to their Information Technology Department for them to reach out to the corresponding department within the Professional Licensing Boards Division to determine the technology that would be required to issue licenses and address disciplinary matters for the GSBVM.
- The GVMA will request their attorney to conduct an additional review of lines 42-44 of the bill to ensure that the language does not exclude board members from receiving a mileage allowance or reimbursement for conferences and other meetings they may attend as a member of the GSBVM.

- The members of the GSBVM will contact AAVSB to gather information from other veterinary boards that have undergone the process of becoming an independent Board and the steps that took to do so.

Dr. Malphus thanked everyone for their insight and the open discussion. She noted that she loves the idea of an autonomous Board; however, it has to be the right move for all concerned. She stated that although there is always room for improvement, the Board has improved. It is nimbler now more than ever before, and that it will continue to progress no matter where it is.

The next Subcommittee meeting will be Thursday, September 22, 2022 at 9:00 a.m.

**Adjournment** No further business was discussed, and the Committee meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.

**Minutes recorded by:** Michelle Hornaday, Board Support Specialist

**Minutes reviewed by:** Adrienne Price, Executive Director & Meagan Doss, Licensing Supervisor

**Minutes approved on:** August 24, 2022

BECKEY MALPHUS, DVM  
**COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

ADRIENNE PRICE  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

WENDY CUEVAS, DACVPVM  
**BOARD CHAIRPERSON**