

**Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Full Commission Board Meeting – Approved 1/18/08
September 7, 2007
Panhandle Office Complex, 4500 Avenue I, Scottsbluff, NE
8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon, MST**

Chairperson Dr. Kenya Taylor called the meeting to order at 8:06 a.m.

A. Roll Call

Members present were Ms. Mary Ann Burke, Mr. Clifford Carlson, Mr. Daniel Darnall, Ms. Luana Duennerman, Ms. Maureen Larsen, Mr. Raymond Meester, Dr. David Rutledge, Dr. Kenya Taylor. Absent was Mr. James DeVaney. Staff attending was Ms. Tanya Wendel, Executive Director, Ms. Lori Burrage, Business Manager, Dr. Donita Mains, Field Representative and Ms. Peggy Williams, Mental Health Specialist/Interpreter. Interpreter was Ms. Lorelei Waldron.

B. Acceptance of the Agenda

Mr. Ray Meester made a motion to accept the agenda. Ms. Wendel asked to add E.2.c., Interpreter Review Board appointment; E. 2.d., staff reimbursement. Ms. Duennerman asked to add, F.4.b., NeAD conference. **Mr. Darnall seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Darnall, yes; Mr. DeVaney, absent; Ms. Duennerman, yes; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, yes. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

C. Acceptance of the Minutes

1. Full Commission Meeting – June 1, 2007.

Mr. Carlson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Ms. Burke seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Darnall, yes; Mr. DeVaney, absent; Ms. Duennerman, yes; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, yes. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

E. Executive Director's Report

1. Staff Program Updates

a. Field Representative

Ms. Wendel introduced Ms. Nancy Marsh who will be staffing the Scottsbluff office. Ms. Marsh worked for Health and Human Services for 22 years, is taking a sign language class at the community college and signs music at church.

a. Field Representative Activity Report – April through July

Ms. Wendel explained the new Field Rep coverage map and asked Dr. Mains to report on her activities. Dr. Mains stated she enjoyed her monthly travel to Scottsbluff but did not feel it was adequate coming only once a month. She has received many calls for services from Sidney, Chadron and Alliance and established partnerships with the Aging Offices, Voc Rehab and the ESUs in those areas. People in these areas are very excited to have services in Scottsbluff. Dr. Mains is now covering the Kearney and Holdrege areas and will be traveling every third Thursday of the month to Kearney where

the Aging Office will provide office space. Dr. Mains will be providing training to Ms. Marsh.

Mr. Carlson noted there were no ADA presentations reflected in the activity reports and suggested providing ADA workshops in Lincoln or Omaha in the coming year.

c. Mentoring Interpreters Across Nebraska (MIAN)

- 1. Summer Intensive Summary**
- 2. Program Components**
- 3. 2006-07 Year End Report**

Ms. Wendel reported there are 12 protégés currently participating, four from Western Nebraska, in the mentoring program. There are educational interpreters in the Scottsbluff/Gering area but none that meet the licensing requirements. The Summer Intensive had wonderful presenters, but the workshop notice should have been mailed out six months in advance which will happen for the next summer intensive.

d. Mental Health Specialists Activities

- a. May 15, 2007 Minutes**
- b. Service Delivery Plan**
- c. DVD for Hospital Personnel**

Ms. Williams reported on the service delivery plan for the Lasting Hope Recovery Center. Ms. Williams contacted Alegent Health after they received funding for a new mental health facility and requested they set up a program for deaf and hard of hearing people which they are receptive to. There is discussion of making this a regional program.

Ms. Williams was contacted by Creighton University to participate in an educational DVD on hearing loss, infant screening, communication techniques and accessibility issues for nursing personnel nationwide.

2. Licensing

- a. Letter to Interpreters**
- b. Letter to State Entities**

Ms. Wendel reported that effective September 1st all state agencies, state colleges, courts and law enforcements agencies are required to use licensed interpreters. The Commission recently conducted a three day Certified Deaf Interpreter workshop with Mr. Jimmy Beldon and 16 participants. There were study groups in the evening to prepare for taking the test to become licensed. The Interpreter Licensing Review Board will meet on September 21st since agencies are already questioning what will happen if they don't use a licensed interpreter.

c. Interpreter Review Board Appointment

Ms. Wendel reported since being appointed to the Full Commission Board, Ms. Larsen resigned her position on the Interpreter Licensing Review Board. A notice was sent to NeRID regarding the vacancy which was posted on their website for two months with no responses. Ms. Wendel received an application from Ms. Barb Woodhead; NeRID is comfortable with her appointment since she is a licensed interpreter. **Mr. Meester made a motion to appoint Ms. Barb Woodhead to the Interpreter Licensing Review Board. Ms. Larsen seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Darnall, yes; Mr. DeVaney, absent;**

Ms. Duennerman, yes; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, yes. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

d. Staff reimbursement

Ms. Wendel has received two requests from staff for reimbursement of their interpreter licensing fees. Interpreting is a requirement of one position but not the other. At the direction of DAS State Personnel, it will be added to the job description under other duties as assigned if the license fees are reimbursed. If not reimbursed, the agency can no longer request the employee to interpret in any capacity. **Mr. Carlson made a motion to pay the cost, per the request made by the two individuals, based on current budget availability. Mr. Meester seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Darnall, yes; Mr. DeVaney, absent, Ms. Duennerman, yes; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, yes. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

3. Web Based Referrals

e. User Guide

Ms. Wendel reported the go live date for the web based referral system was August 1st. This has eliminated making multiple phone calls and improved the process greatly. Ms. Larsen it would be helpful to have the location of the assignment listed when the referral goes out especially in Omaha since it is so large. They have to accept the assignment and then cancel when they find out they cannot make it in time due to the travel time involved. Ms. Wendel stated there is a phase two of the design and it could be added at that time.

4. Business Manager's Report

a. General Ledger

b. Audit Report

Ms. Burrage reported on the labor contract impasse and salary increases for contract employees. Training was held on September 5th and the increases, back wages and interest will be finalized and paid by the end of the month.

Audience Comments

Dr. Taylor asked to suspend the agenda for audience comments. The audience introduced themselves: Ms. Kay Darnall with Hamilton Relay Services, Aurora, Nebraska; Mr. Louis Strong, Minatare; Ms. Rita Lux, Gering; Mr. Jerry Wilson, Scottsbluff; Ms. Marie Wilson, Scottsbluff; Mr. Russell Saito, Scottsbluff; and Ms. Ramona Robertus, Scottsbluff. Mr. Wilson stated he is very happy that a Commission office has been established in Scottsbluff.

5. Scottsbluff Office Overview

Ms. Wendel reported the office officially opened on September 4th. Still in the process of getting the office setup, including the equipment display units for the Nebraska Specialized Telecommunications Equipment Program (NSTEP) demo equipment and videophone access. Ms. Wendel thanked the audience for attending the meeting and encouraged them to contact Ms. Marsh for any assistance they need. Ms. Marsh will be traveling to several communities, therefore her schedule will be posted on the office door and encouraged calling ahead for appointments.

F. Subcommittee Reports

1. Goals Committee

a. Goal Activity Reports

Ms. Wendel stated there will be a major push to promote the Technology Expo that will be held on April 19th, 2008. Ms. Wendel has been in discussion with Hamilton Communications to provide transportation from central Nebraska to Omaha. The expo will feature new technology and an ASL festival. Mr. Russell Saito offered transportation for individuals in the Scottsbluff area. Dr. Mains will be responsible for keeping the Field Reps on track with their goal activities. It will be crucial to track activities and to be able to provide statistical information to the legislature. Mr. Carlson agreed; with term limits, there will be a need to constantly educate new senators on the importance of our services.

4. Deaf/Hard of Hearing Issues

Open Round Table on Deafness

1. Events – Internet Notice

Ms. Duennerman reported on the meeting in Columbus, Nebraska, with representatives from the Nebraska School for the Deaf Alumni Association (NSDAA), Nebraska Association of the Deaf (NeAD), the Lincoln Association of Deaf, (LAD), the Commission, Happy Silent Senior Citizens and the Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS). Discussion included linking the NSDAA and the Commission websites together, Deaf awareness in June and parental action with state senators. The next ORTD meeting will be held September 22nd, at the Omaha Association of the Deaf hall from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

b. NeAD Conference

Ms. Duennerman reported the NeAD conference was held June 15, 2007, in Columbus, Nebraska and included a workshop, titled “Leadership From Within” conducted by Mr. Jack Cooper, NAD Region II Board Representative from Olathe, Kansas.

H. New Business

Mr. Carlson announced there is an effort to create a Hand and Voices Foundation chapter in Nebraska. An informational meeting is scheduled on September 22nd at Boys Town in Omaha from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., CST. Teleconference sites are located in Kearney, Norfolk and Scottsbluff, Nebraska. The organization is dedicated to supporting families and their children who are deaf or hard of hearing and is unbiased towards communication modes and methods. Child care and interpreter services will be provided at the Omaha location.

Ms. Wendel announced the Sorenson VRS Interpreting Center is hosting an open house on September 20th from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at 13215 Birch Dr, Omaha, NE.

Ms. Williams announced that the Commission is conducting a domestic violence workshop for deaf women on September 22nd at OAD from 12:00 noon to 2:00 p.m. Ms. Gretchen Waech is the presenter; Hamilton Communications is providing lunch at 11:30 a.m.

Mr. Saito requested the Commission provide interpreter workshops through videoconferencing to the Scottsbluff area. Ms. Wendel agreed; there are many good workshops that should be made available to this area. The Commission has the videoconference equipment if the State will commit to installing the lines. Ms. Wendel reiterated that the community needs to make Ms. Marsh aware of the needs in this area.

Mr. Meester announced Heritage Presbyterian Church will host a Church Interpreter workshop on October 27th, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 pm., in Lincoln.

Next meeting – December 7, 2007 in Lincoln at 9:00 a.m.

Meeting adjourned at 11:26 p.m.