

Interpreter Review Board Meeting
July 27, 2009
1:00pm-3:00pm
4600 Valley Rd
Conference Room 4A

A. Call to Order:

The meeting of the Nebraska Interpreter Review Board was called to order at 1:05pm at the NCDHH office in Lincoln, NE. Board Members present: Dr. Peter Seiler-PS, Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson-TN (Chair), Ms. Kelly Brakenhoff-KB, Ms. Barb Woodhead-BW (Vice-Chair), Mr. Bob Deaton-BD, Mr. Gary Theiler-GT.

Interpreters: Ms. Margie Propp and Ms. Debie Seiler

Absent: Mr. David Montgomery-DM, Ms. Vickie Steinhauer-Campbell-VS

Public attendees: Mr. Art Nelson, Ms. Lisa Clinard, Ms. Sharon Sinkler

Staff: Ms. Traci Cooney, Ms. Peggy Williams, Mr. Ben Sparks

B. Approval of Agenda:

a. Additions to the agenda:

Dr. Peter Seiler recommended adding "Roster Updates" under Approval of Agenda.

Motion to approve agenda as amended.

[BW/GT/Motion passed]

C. Approval of minutes:

a. February 6, 2009 Minutes

Ms. Peggy Williams stated that the spelling on Ms. DeLair's name was incorrect throughout the minutes. DeLair is the correct spelling.

Motion to approve minutes as amended.

[KB/BD/Motion passed]

b. Roster Updates

Discussion took place regarding the member terms. Changes were recommended to the term years for Mr. Theiler, Ms. Steinhauer-Campbell and Ms. Kelly Brakenhoff. It was decided that the term start date for replacement members would be the date the replacement member started instead of when the previous member started since the member would be taking over during a term.

D. Public Comments

- a. Ms. Sharon Sinkler decided to wait until the second Public Comment time to make her comments.

E. Old Business

a. LB 310 Update

- i. Ms. Barb Woodhead stated that, as she understood it, the bill is stuck in committee which means this board has the opportunity to pursue wording that either all medical facilities must use licensed interpreters or work towards legislation for all interpreters to be licensed and create a new bill. She suggested looking to other states for wording such as “any person who presents themselves as an interpreter”, even if that person is volunteering their services. She recommended that Dr. Seiler and Mr. Montgomery meet with Jeff Santema. She noticed that most bills stop at Mr. Santema because of his legal opinion.
- ii. Discussion ensued regarding the moving of this bill to a more general licensing section but then this board would fall under HHS and that isn't the route that this board would like to take. Ms. Woodhead's suggestion is for this board to decide which direction to take, all interpreters vs. medical facilities only, and bring that recommendation to the Full Commission Board.
- iii. Dr. Seiler discussed that Illinois now has a color coded license system for sign language interpreters. Each color represents the level of certification and the level of licensure they have. He stated that Illinois has language that directs all interpreters to be licensed. He also said that Illinois has penalty language that says a person who presents themselves as an interpreter without being licensed can be fined up to \$2500. Ms. Woodhead stated that Nebraska's LB 310 does have penalty language regarding the fining of interpreters but not the businesses. Ms. Williams stated that this board needs to make the Full Commission Board aware of what the original opposition was and from who. Discussion regarding the educating of agencies and businesses on use of interpreters and ADA. Ms. Williams stated that the RID National Meeting this year may cover talk of requiring all medical assignments to only use nationally certified interpreters.
- iv. Mr. Deaton asked for clarification on how making a new bill will work. Ms. Woodhead explained that it will have a new number. It will no longer be LB 310, it will be LB #. It will still fall under LB 87 originally. Ms Woodhead explained that Senator Haar introduced LB 310. She said he is still interested in working with this board to create a bill with language appropriate for the Board's goals. Discussion ensued regarding using Senator Haar again or a different Senator to introduce the bill once language is changed.

Dr. Seiler recommended using Senator Haar again and getting others to assist. He feels the more names, the better chance for passage. He stated that he will start working in the fall on meeting the Senators and work on getting their support. Ms. Woodhead agreed that networking early will help. She felt there wasn't enough time to create that network with LB 310.

- v. Ms. Woodhead referred back to the color coding idea. She is concerned that businesses and agencies will see this as being limiting on which interpreters can be used thus decreasing the assistance for the deaf and how much will it cost them.
- vi. Discussion took place regarding the licensing of educational interpreters. Ms. Brakenhoff asked about K-12 interpreters. Dr. Seiler stated that if they are included, the Nebraska Department of Education would license them and NCDHH would license all other interpreters. He also stated that this bill wouldn't be meant to offend NDE but would include them.
- vii. Ms. Richardson-Nelson mentioned that, in the old minutes, it stated that Ms. Woodhead would contact Mr Santema. Ms. Woodhead stated that she received a response in the beginning from him stating that he was busy at the time. She continued to email him and never received another response. She had asked Mr. Montgomery to contact him also and he hadn't received a response. She stated that, in the last meeting, this issue would be tabled until NCDHH had a new Director to advise on appropriate steps. Ms. Richardson-Nelson asked that the members of this board keep the communication open and update other members of this board so everyone knows what is going on.
- viii. Dr. Seiler mentioned that LB 310 was discussed in the Full Board meeting in regards to adding language that permits NCDHH to charge a fee for administering the QAST testing. Currently there is no such language. In a State Audit, it was mentioned that it would be better if there were language regarding this issue. The Board would like to see this issue added to the bill.
- ix. Ms. Woodhead stated that she has received questions regarding the future of QAST. There is rumor that the full commission board will drop QAST. Dr. Seiler informed this board that there has been no discussion on this issue. Mr. Sparks mentioned that he has received questions from new graduates from ITPs if the QAST would continue to be offered by NCDHH. Ms. Woodhead stated that she would assume there is no plan to discontinue parts of the QAST due to the fact that NCDHH just purchased new testing materials for it.

F. New Business

a. Bylaws

- i. Ms. Richardson-Nelson stated that there was previous discussion regarding the changing of the meeting requirements for this board from 4 to 2 times per year. She recommends keeping it at 4 times per year with regards to LB 310.
 - ii. The remainder of the bylaw discussion has been tabled to next meeting so that all members can review the bylaws and be able to discuss in depth at the next meeting.
- b. Licensing renewal issues and questions
- i. Entered closed session at 2:20pm to discuss an applicant's request for special consideration.
 - ii. Entered open session at 2:36p.
 - iii. Dr. Seiler asked Ms. Clinard to speak to the board at this time.
 1. Ms. Clinard stated that she has a professional reputation in the deaf community. She feels that she has come a long way and changed her life. She states that she has made some bad choices a few years back but has made many changes. She plans to pursue her masters degree in the mental health abuse (chemical, physical, etc) area to assist the deaf community. She feels that obtaining her license would help her better herself in interpreting. Ms. Richardson-Nelson thanked Ms. Clinard for her time and let her know that she will receive a information at a later time when a decision has been made. Dr. Seiler stated that the Interpreter Review Board decision must go to the Full Board for final approval and the next meeting would be September 18, 2009.

Motion to refer this investigation to the Committee of Inquiry which will investigate the issues related to special consideration for and applicant's license and report back to the Interpreter Review Board. This board will then make it's recommendation to the Full Board.

[PS/KB/Motion passed]

2. Discussion ensued regarding which members of this board are part of the Board of Inquiry. Ms. Richardson-Nelson asked Ms. Cooney to look back through past meeting minutes and find where this was discussed. Then those members will work with Mr. Sparks on gathering all the information. Ms. Richardson-Nelson recommended asking Mr. Montgomery for his knowledge on this type of issue and what the best process is for handling these situations. Mr. Deaton requested that this be done by email to expedite the decision. Ms. Richardson-Nelson addressed Ms. Clinard and explained the process to her. She explained that the inquiry group will make sure all accurate information is collected. Mr. Sparks and the committee of inquiry will

make a decision. They will bring that decision to this Board which will then take it to the Full Board in September.

- c. Review of Licenses issued by NCDHH
 - i. Ms. Sinkler discussed a letter she had written to Dr. Seiler in regards to interpreting in the court room. She recommended that if NIC Basic isn't able to interpret in the court room, she feels that RID CI/CT shouldn't be able to either. After discussion on this issue, it was decided that this Board isn't the appropriate committee to address this issue and referred her to the Interpreters Issues Committee, a sub committee of the Full Board.
- d. Referral Calling Groups/QAST vs RID ratings
 - i. This topic was referred to the Interpreter Issues Committee.

G. Public Comments

- a. None

H. Announcements

- a. Mr. Deaton welcomed Dr. Seiler to Nebraska and stated it is nice to have him here. Mr. Seiler stated that he had discussed with Mr. Deaton and others from NCBVI previously the issue of having deaf/blind interpreters. He stated they will work on that issue at a later date. Mr. Deaton explained to this board that NCBVI is in need of more than just sign language interpreters. They need persons who can tactile interpret, repeat what was said, type out what is said in meetings, etc.

I. Next Meeting

- a. November 6, 2009
 - i. Mr. Deaton stated that he will be unable to attend. Ms. Richardson-Nelson asked Ms. Cooney to send an email to members this week mentioning the date to see if everyone else is able to attend.

Meeting adjourned 3:12pm