

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Full Commission Board Meeting – DRAFT
March 28, 2008
LMEP, 4600 Valley Road, Room 4A
Lincoln, NE
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Chairperson Dr. Kenya Taylor called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

A. Roll Call

Members present were Ms. Mary Ann Burke, Mr. Clifford Carlson, Mr. Dillard Delts, Mr. James DeVaney, Ms. Maureen Larsen, Mr. Raymond Meester and Dr. Kenya Taylor. Absent was Ms. Luana Duennerman and Dr. David Rutledge. Staff attending was Ms. Tanya Wendel, Executive Director and Ms. Lori Burrage, Business Manager. Interpreters were Ms. Sharon Sinkler and Ms. Frances Beurivage.

B. Acceptance of the Agenda

Dr. Taylor asked for changes or additions to the agenda. **Mr. DeVaney made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Ms. Burke seconded the motion. Ms. Wendel asked to add F.4.b., PSC Replacement. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Mr. DeVaney, yes; Ms. Duennerman, absent; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, absent. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

C. Acceptance of Minutes

1. Full Commission Meeting – January 18, 2008

Dr. Taylor asked for changes or additions to the minutes. **Mr. Carlson made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. DeVaney seconded the motion.** Mr. Carlson asked if the email correction had been made. The vote was postponed due to Ms. Burrage not receiving the correction and will be made by email upon receiving and making the correction.

D. Chairperson's Report

1. Louis M. DiCarlo Award Letter

Ms. Wendel wrote a letter in support of Dr. Taylor who has been nominated for this national award for her work connected with noise induced hearing loss.

E. Executive Director's Report

1. Annual Report

a. Field Representative Update

Mr. Norm Weverka reported on current Field Rep activities and on the annual report. Most advocacy issues were resolved quickly; advocacy issues within the public schools are connected with the IEP process. Mr. Carlson asked what resources are available for parents wanting a child to attend a neighborhood school, but is being required to attend a magnet school in order to receive services. Mr. Weverka suggested contacting a board member of the neighborhood school since the district they live in is required to provide for the child. Ms. Wendel stated the perception is that the Commission is against the schools but we have been able to establish a good rapport with the public schools in Grand Island and Columbus and are being invited by the schools to attend IEP meetings. Mr. Carlson stated there is a problem with Lincoln Public Schools.

LPS wants to use their evaluation but parents have the right for an independent evaluation for a second opinion and are not responsible for paying for that. Mr. Meester asked if staff within the LPS administration have a degree in deaf education or training in deaf education. Mr. Weverka stated Ms. Tanya Hilligoss replaced Mr. Tom Fortune. Ms. Wendel would like to see a deaf representative and an interpreter training representative added to the SEAC committee since this committee discusses the education of deaf children. Ms. Wendel stated the Commission recently joined the Hands and Voices organization but would like to get more involved in parent groups and asked for suggestions on other groups to contact. Mr. Delts asked what the top concern with the IEP process is. Mr. Weverka responded improper evaluations; the person providing the evaluation may have a special education background but not a background in deaf education that understands the social and emotional needs of a deaf child. Mr. Carlson agreed as he has attended many IEP meetings. It appears they try to put the children into one big group, do not provide an individual evaluation and it is very difficult to get specialized services. Mr. Weverka agreed, stating they think an interpreter is the answer but don't always address the social and emotional needs.

Ms. Duennerman arrived at 9:16 a.m.

2. Biennium Budget Preparation

a. Letter to Accounting – DAS

Ms. Wendel stated a letter was sent to the DAS Director requesting to remain on a monthly payroll cycle since bi-weekly payroll will double the workload for payroll processing. That request was denied in a letter received this week from DAS. The next biennium budget request is due September 15th which will include a request for a new position to compensate for the additional workload created by NIS and now bi-weekly payroll. Ms. Wendel asked the Board to submit any additional budget recommendations prior to the June 6th meeting.

3. Mental Health

a. Advisory Committee Members

Ms. Wendel reported the Committee has had difficulty with member attendance; two members are being replaced.

b. Domestic Violence – Sexual Assault Workshop

1. Evaluation 3/1/08

The workshop was funded by the Enrichment Foundation grant which specifies the grant must be used to benefit residents of Douglas and Sarpy counties. Progress is being made in the Omaha area with shelters and providers becoming involved with the project. A video phone has been installed at the YWCA for their domestic violence hotline.

c. Lasting Hope Recovery Center

The Lasting Hope Recovery Center open house will be held April 4, 2008. Ms. Wendel and Ms. Williams met with Dr. Brookhouser and other Boys Town administrators regarding an adolescent treatment program for deaf and hard of hearing youth. They are supportive of a regional concept, collaborating with Iowa School for the Deaf. A facility would need counselors that sign, a consulting psychiatrist and interpreters. Another meeting is planned with a smaller group to design a model that

could attract other states due to the small number of patients. A separate facility would be needed with a projected cost of \$20,000,000. Dr. Jeanne Prickett expressed interest in exploring a transition program at the Iowa School the Deaf campus. Regional Programs are responsible for the education of a child (day classes) but not responsible for mental health services if the child is going into a residential treatment program. Ms. Duennerman asked about insurance coverage. Ms. Wendel stated it is a big issue since many of the children are covered by Medicaid and the reimbursement rate is low to the facility. Medicaid doesn't always want to pay for interpreters. Health and Human Services will need to be involved in the planning process. Mr. Carlson stated private funding sources may be attracted to a regional program. Mr. Carlson commended Ms. Wendel for the progress being made on this issue.

4. Mentoring Interpreters Across Nebraska (MIAN)

a. Workshop – Mentor & Protégé Training

Ms. Wendel stated the third cohort group will end June 30, 2008, with the last cohort group starting July 1st. Mentor and protégé training will be held April 24 – 26, 2008 in Omaha. Ms. Wendel feels the mentoring program should be part of the Metro Community College (MCC) interpreter training program. A meeting is scheduled with Voc Rehab and hope to get a meeting with the Dean of MCC to dialogue this.

5. Licensing

a. Member resignation

b. Criteria for Board Members

c. Applicants

Ms. Wendel reported two Licensing Review Board members resigned for personal reasons. Two applications have been received; one would fit the deaf representative and one for the local government representative, both individuals are deaf. **Mr. Ray Meester made a motion to accept Mr. Gary Theiler. Mr. DeVaney seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Mr. DeVaney, yes; Ms. Duennerman, yes; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, absent. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion. Ms. Duennerman made a motion to accept Ms. Vicki Campbell. Mr. Delts seconded the motion.** Ms. Duennerman asked if there is a conflict of interest since Ms. Campbell is an employee of Voc Rehab. Ms. Wendel stated Ms. Campbell uses interpreters and understands interpreter issues which would be beneficial. Voc Rehab employees have served previously. **Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Mr. DeVaney, yes; Ms. Duennerman abstain; Ms. Larsen, yes; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, absent. Vote was six votes in favor of the motion with one abstention.**

6. Business Manager's Report

a. General Ledger

b. Journal Star Article

Discussed under the Executive Director's report.

F. Subcommittee Report

1. Deaf/Hard of Hearing Issues

a. Expo Update

Ms. Duennerman presented articles from the Lincoln and Grand Island newspapers on the Expo; several TV and newspaper interviews are scheduled in April. The bus leaving from Kearney is full, there is another bus leaving from Rousseau

Elementary School in Lincoln. There are buses coming from Des Moines, Iowa, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Topeka and Olathe, Kansas. Hard of hearing seminars are being held at the DoubleTree Hotel located across from the Civic Center. Scooters and wheelchairs will need to be provided by the individuals needing them. Seating will be located by the concession area.

c. Booth Signup Sheet

Ms. Duennerman needs two moonwalkers to provide security from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., with the registration table and the NCDHH booth.

d. Open Round Table on Deafness Notes

The meeting focused mainly on the Expo and addressing concerns from the Deaf community why there is event at the DoubleTree that would take away from the Expo. Ms. Wendel addressed the concerns with the group. Deaf History month was celebrated at the Capitol with a booth and OAD provided baskets for the Senators. Deaf Awareness Week will be in September. The next ORTD meeting will be May 3rd at the Heritage Presbyterian Church in Lincoln from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Mr. Carlson thanked Ms. Duennerman for her work on the Expo.

2. Legislative Committee

a. Communication Card

b. Legislation – Future Ideas

Mr. Meester distributed a draft of a communication card for deaf and hard of hearing people. Suggested changes should be submitted to Mr. Meester. The Committee would like to explore future legislation to expand interpreter licensing and to recognize sign language as a modern language.

3. Interpreter Issues

a. Calling Order Discussion

b. Web Referral Memo

Ms. Wendel reported on the calling order concerns. The assignments go to everyone in the group at the same time, some are faster in responding then others and get the assignments. One interpreter removed themselves from the directory. NeRID has been asked for input on the calling order but has not responded. If Ms. Wendel doesn't hear back from NeRID by the next meeting, an internal decision will be made.

4. TRS Advisory Committee

a. Members

b. PSC Replacement

Ms. Wendel reported the Public Service Commission (PSC) representative, Mr. Gerald Vap's term will be ending and he doesn't feel he has the time to commit to the TRS Committee. PSC would like to replace Mr. Vap with Mr. Tim Schram. **Mr. Meester made a motion to accept Mr. Schram. Mr. DeVaney seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Ms. Burke, yes; Mr. Carlson, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Mr. DeVaney, yes; Ms. Duennerman, yes; Ms. Larsen, no; Mr. Meester, yes; Dr. Rutledge, absent. Vote was in favor of the motion.** Mr. DeVaney announced he is resigning from the TRS Committee. Ms. Larsen and Mr. Delts volunteered to replace Mr. DeVaney. The Board voted for Ms. Larsen to replace Mr. DeVaney.

Ms. Wendel presented a proposal to PSC for an advertising campaign to

promote the equipment program with the funding coming from the surcharge. PSC Commissioner Frank Landis was not comfortable approving the request but suggested that Hamilton could submit a proposal for a promotion and get reimbursed for the cost.

5. Goals Committee

a. E 911

PSC sent a letter to make sure E911 services were in compliance. Ms. Wendel will follow up with PSC on the number of responses they have received. A new goal has been added under goal two for creating access in medical settings. A package is being developed including video and power point presentations on communicating with deaf and hard of hearing patients.

G. Old Business

a. Public Access Videophones – PAV

Ms. Wendel contacted Eppley Airport regarding a public access videophone. Mr. Delts contacted Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) to request a demonstration for the airport but there seems to be a communication breakdown. Mr. Delts suggested inviting hospitals or other businesses to the demonstration once it is arranged.

I. Announcements

a. ASL – Nebraska Department of Education Endorsements

b. UNO Update

c. Early Hearing Detection

Mr. Carlson suggested including our information in the newborn screening packet as a way to reach more families. Ms. Wendel announced Mr. Carlson's son has been selected as a 2008 Nebraska Better Hearing and Speech Month representative by the Nebraska Speech Language Hearing Association (NSLHA). Ms. Wendel has been asked to speak at the NSLHA conference in Kearney this fall.

Next Meeting – June 6, 2008 – Omaha Office

Meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.