

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

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**COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
March 5, 2009
APPROVED**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the Regular Meeting to order at 3:05pm.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioners Joe Benedetto (Chair), Debbie Mohny (Vice Chair), Shelley Strickfaden (Secretary), Nancy Jean Eubanks, Barbara Jenkins, Leslie Ralphe, Nancy Jean Eubanks, Jennifer Peterson.

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None.

CCDHH STAFF PRESENT:

Cliff Moers, Director, Cheri Davis, Legal Auxiliary Services Program Manager, Tricia Frank, Staff Interpreter

INTERPRETERS/CART REPORTER:

Kirk Neuroth, Darlene Ensenat and Norma Blanke, Interpreters
Claudette Mondragon, CART Reporter

Commissioner Strickfaden requested that the Commissioners and Staff consider changing some of the meeting dates to an earlier time during the day for the regular Commission meeting. It was agreed that the meeting time for the June 4th regular meeting be changed to 2 pm in Denver. The September regular meeting will be in Fort Collins with the time yet to be determined.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

October 16, 2008 and January 8, 2009 Minutes will be corrected and will be approved as changed.

4. REPORTS

Commission Chair's Report, Commissioner Benedetto

- Commissioner Benedetto extended his thanks to the interpreters and the CART reporter for their services. Commissioner Benedetto also gave thanks to Commissioner Mohney and Mark Valkonen for the demonstration of the assistive listening devices again this meeting.
- Thanks were also offered to DHS Director Karen Beye, Director of Boards and Commissions Mary McGhee, and to Director Cliff Moers and the CCDHH staff.
- Commissioner Benedetto also mentioned how proud he is of the CCDHH progression – and reminded the Commission that we need to continue to press on for the DHH citizens of Colorado.
- Commissioner Benedetto reported that he, Director Moers, Director McGhee and other community members have given testimony in support of Senate Bill 09-144. After consideration, the Committee voted in favor of the bill in a vote of 5 to 3.
- Friday March 6th at 7:30 am the Senate Appropriations Committee will again will hear testimony on the bill and he encouraged attendance and testimony of the CCDHH. The staff will keep us fully informed in the coming weeks and days.
- Commissioner Benedetto also recommended that we all call, e-mail or send a letter to our legislators today in support.
- Commissioner Benedetto thanked all the Commissioners for service and reviewed some of the progress over the years including: enacted legislation, staff increased, services provided and programs implemented. He also noted that we must continue to persevere in service to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Citizens of Colorado.
- Commissioner Peterson commented that one of the Senators she contacted did respond – to which Commissioner Benedetto mentioned that this feedback was excellent.

Commission Director's Report, Director Moers

A. TEDP Report – Rob Loveless

- Rob Loveless gave the report of the past three months for TEDP – the numbers have remained steady, but with a bit of a decline. The RFP proposed in August to establish an outreach program has stalled.
- Mr. Loveless noted that the Commission Staff decided it was better to move ahead with outreach as opposed to waiting on the RFP and the proposed ideas are now awaiting Mary McGhee's approval and other approvals needed prior to implementation.
- Two contracts are pending – one with Teltex and another with Weitbrecht.
- The database is still in progress, when complete, there will be an online application as opposed to having to send the paper application. This will help streamline the process and provide better service for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens of Colorado.
- With the potential passage of the Legislative Bill, it would also be possible to provide newer technology, such as pagers. This, combined with the Outreach program, would be a perfect collaboration between the two efforts.
- Commissioner Jenkins offered a suggestion – she had contacted the Colorado Academy of Audiology and asked for a complimentary booth for the TEDP program at their convention in September in Breckenridge. Mr. Loveless agreed that this was a great idea and Commissioner Benedetto suggested that Mr. Loveless also contact Sprint to share a booth at the conference in the event that the TEDP Program does not get a free or reduced booth rate.

B. Legal Auxiliary Services

- Ms. Davis reported that the Legal Auxiliary Services conducted two trainings last month – both of which were very successful.
- The Legal Auxiliary Services Advisory Committee still has vacancy for a Deaf Representative to chair the project – the flyers were available at the meeting.
- Ms. Davis also reported on the need to reexamine the Grievance Policy – Legal Auxiliary Services had a complaint, and Ms. Davis, along with Carrie Ann Lucas will review the Commission policies including the Grievance Policy.

C. Budget

- Ms. Davis reported that the Commission is on target with the budget.
- The appropriations for Mr. Loveless' salary still needs to be moved to the correct fund.

D. SB 098-144

- a. Director Moers noted that even with our discussions of tough times, our bill is moving forward.

- b. There is a lobbyist who is working with the Rural Telephone Company Association (the members of which are called The Colorado Telecommunications Association) who is not in favor of the SB 144. They feel that the DTUF, Disabled Telephone Users Fund, should not fund the Commission. Director Moers also mentioned the 7:30am legislative hearing on March 6th and encouraged all to attend in support and write or call the Committee members.
- c. Director Moers said that we added a grant cap to the program – 25K 1st year and 50K every year after that – we will need to go back to the legislature to increase it. This cap will make it more favorable.
- d. Director Moers highlighted the process of creating and writing this bill. Starting with tremendous expertise and contribution, Mary McGhee. Also noted were the woman who initiated the drafting of the bill as well as the person who took over and completed it. The Commission also needed to write a fiscal impact report.
- e. Initially, there are 3 legislators who are against our bill – all three are republicans – their biggest opposition is related to funding and concerns that the bill was tied to Tabor.
- f. Commissioner Mohny voiced concern about not having heard earlier about the bill, not having time to help draft and review the bill in order to better support it. Commissioner Benedetto shared this concern. Chair Benedetto saw the bill complete only two days before he needed to testify on it. Director Moers mentioned that this is a department bill. In the future, an exception to this procedure will be requested so that Commissioner Strickfaden as Chair of the Legislative Committee and the Commissioners could be involved in the process.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee, Commissioner Benedetto

- There is no new business to report for the Executive Committee.

Interpreter Committee, Commissioner Eubanks

- Commissioner Eubanks reported that she attended the Symposium on Deafness, Language and Learning and was able to make some good connections.

-Legal Auxiliary Services Program Advisory Sub-Committee, Chair Valkonen

- The LASC (Legal Auxiliary Services Sub-Committee) chair, Jennifer Pfau, moved to California. The committee is looking to find a new chair for that position as well as a new Deaf representative. The same procedure for finding the new chair will be followed as it was when the Commission was established.
- The LASC met on February 20th and voted in a new Chair - Mark Valkonen. Mr. Valkonen shared his perspective and the need to review policies for the LASC – he looks forward to this task at the upcoming Committee work sessions.

- Commissioner Benedetto asked the Commission if there were objections to this appointment and, hearing none, approved Mr. Valkonen's appointment as Chair of the Subcommittee.

Standing Rules Committee/Bylaws Committee, Commissioner Ralphe

- Commissioner Ralphe explained that they met in February to look through the handbook and work on it and offered thanks for Director Moers and Ms. Frank's efforts.
- A Private contact list was shared and Commissioner Ralphe requested that everyone correct or approve by initialing their contact information.
- Commissioner Ralphe noted that looking at the Values and Goals for the Commissioners to review and potentially update at the Fall CCDHH retreat.
- Commissioner Ralphe also asked if The Susan Elliott award that is currently handled under the Nominations Committee should remain there, or be handled under a different Committee. Commissioner Mohny suggested that it stay under nominations and be revisited in the June Meeting
- Commissioner Ralphe also noted that the bylaws stipulate a 4th person is needed for a majority vote – the question is posed that should we add a fourth member to complete the Executive Committee and the response from the Commission was yes. It was agreed that the Commission will redraft the bylaw and have it ready for the June meeting.

Legislative Committee, Commissioner Strickfaden

- Commissioner Strickfaden referenced Director Moers report regarding the new legislation for bill 144.
- An update on SB 57 – Hearing Aids for Minors – Commissioner Strickfaden's personal experience will lead feedback on the implementation of SB 57. She met with an audiologist to discuss the process and this audiologist has had 2 of 7 insurance pre-authorizations approved for hearing aids.
- Commissioner Strickfaden offered two items to note about the Hearing aid coverage:
 1. The date that hearing aid coverage will occur in the year is the insurance date of renewal.
 2. The hearing aids are billed as an office visit, as opposed to a durable medical good, allowing a single co-pay to cover hearing aids, and accessories such as ear molds and FM systems.
- Director Moers briefly discussed that title protection for interpreters – DORA spoke at last meeting and they had taken the approach to look for title protection as opposed to licensure – now they are asking why we don't have licensure – so CCDHH will look to pursue this in the future – and work with CAD (Colorado Association of the Deaf) to stay informed regarding this bill.

Nominations Committee, Commissioner Mohney

- Commissioner Mohney review the purpose of the Nominations Committee – there is no new business at this time.

TEDP Program Committee, Commissioner Mohney

- Commissioner Mohney reported that Rob Loveless gave the initial report in TEDP – since the RFP has stalled for outreach, she would like to know how to best support the staff in and stay informed of the progress.
- Commissioner Mohney also mentioned that because the Senate Bill does include language about the funding for TEDP through the DTUF, it is important that the TEDP Program Committee support this effort.

Media Access Committee, Commissioner Jenkins

- Commissioner Jenkins explained that the name of this Committee changed from the “TV and Media Committee” to the “Media Access Committee” and redefined the purpose to more fully incorporate all types of media.
- The Media Access Committee recently met and agreed to an overall goal to provide seamless and effective access to all types of information to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population. The short term goal is to identify people on the Commission who are ready and able to serve on this Committee as well as outstanding members in the community.
- Commissioner Jenkins also highlighted the goal of assessing the feasibility of a TV station 24/7 to be available in script or text/interview form for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population.
- A longer term goal is to research, devise and implement a means of disseminating TV and web based information so that it is readily available to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population. This would include, but not be limited to: local and national programming, V-logs, You Tube, Public, Political and Safety announcements.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee, Commissioner Peterson

- Commissioner Peterson reported on her monthly meeting with the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Implementation Team.
- Commissioner Peterson also thanked Director Moers for his contributions and asked that everyone be sure to read his monthly reports highlighting the progress of this Committee.
- The current Goal of this Committee is to make funding available to support the Coordinator position and to move forward on the Five Year Plan. The Colorado trust Fund did not take interest in the Project, so the Committee has been pursuing other sources of funding.
- A Subcommittee has been established regarding Standard of Care and is currently developing guidelines and researching the criteria for the Standards of Care for Colorado.

- Other Mental Health agencies in Colorado are paying attention to the Committee and are interested in meeting with us to make sure their agencies are accessible to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Population.
- Commissioner Peterson noted that the ADARA conference (American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association) is held biannually and will take place in April in Texas and some of the Committee members will attend.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Tyler Milford – Regional Sales Manager for 3 states with CSD VRS a VRS company based in Florida. CSD VRS has a new VP (Video Phone) – one particularly good for government employees because it works especially well through firewalls. He also described their other product – Z340 Video Phone it has WIFI built in and it is the smallest in the market. He can be contacted through ww.csdvrs.com or tmilford@csdvrs.com.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

8. NEW BUSINESS

None

9. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner Mohnery announced the third HLAA Walk for Hearing that will be held on Saturday, May 9 in Longmont Dawson Park/Macintosh Lake – the kickoff meeting will be this Saturday at the Izaak Wilton Clubhouse in Longmont – come for free food.
- Commissioner Jenkins announced that the Sertoma clubs are having the third annual Soapbox Derby – ages 8-13 for children with any disability. There is a \$45 registration fee and anyone who cannot pay will be given a scholarship.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 5:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Shelley Strickfaden, Secretary

