

# 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 September 3, 2009**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m. by Chair Benedetto.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

#### **Commissioners Present:**

Commissioners Benedetto (Chair), Mohny (Vice Chair), Jenkins; Peterson, and Ralphe

#### **Commissioners Absent:**

Commissioners Strickfaden and Eubanks

The Chair and Administrator were notified in advance of their absences and granted these commissioners an excuse.

#### **CCDHH Staff Present:**

Cliff Moers (Administrator) and Cheri Davis (Legal Auxiliary Services Program Manager)

#### **Auxiliary Service Providers:**

Interpreters Darlene Ensenat, Richard Blankis and Kelly Turner  
CART provider Claudette Mondragon

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved.

**4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The June 4, 2009 minutes were approved as written.

**5. REPORTS**

**Chair's Report: Commissioner Benedetto**

Welcomed Commissioners, staff and visitors to our Commission meeting.

Thanked Front Range Community College (Library) of Ft. Collins for graciously providing the Commission with a meeting room.

Extended thanks and appreciation to our interpreters and CART provider for their professional services.

Extended a special note of thanks to the Colorado Department of Human Services and our Commission staff for their wonderful co-operation and service.

Announced the half million-dollar grant from the Colorado Department of Human Services for mental health and substance abuse services for deaf and hard of hearing citizens.

Emphasized that the CDHS Grant is very significant, one of the biggest developments in the life of this Commission, and will positively affect services to the deaf and hard of hearing communities in the years ahead.

Announced that the grant was awarded to a partnership between the Commission and the Mental Health Center of Denver. The grant provides for:

- A project coordinator position to work with the implementation team;
- Communication access for implementation team and other key meetings;
- An assessment of training and technical assistance needs among mental health and substance abuse providers;
- Technology assistance for providers throughout the state;
- Training and technical assistance on appropriate delivery of services for providers throughout the state;
- Stipends for family and consumer participation.

The Chair thanked all those who have worked so long and so hard to improve mental health and substance abuse services, including:

- CCDHH Mental Health and Substance Abuse Task Force, which issued the Action Plan to address these needs.
- Center for Systems Integration, which provided professional consultations, services and drafted the plan.

- Mental Health Center of Denver, for professional counseling and extraordinary support and leadership.
- CCDHH MHSA Implementation Team of professionals and community members.
- Colorado Department of Human Services, which provided all of the funding requested.
- Administrator Moers and MHSA Committee Chair Jennifer Peterson for their leadership.

Each of these parties has made a difference.

The Chair said that this collaborative approach between various parties is a wonderful example of a dynamic and progressive Commission taking the lead to provision MHSA services.

The Chair is hopeful that these efforts to provide essential services for our citizens will continue in the months and years ahead.

The Chair also extended thanks to each and every committee chair and committee member for their services to the Commission this past year.

The Chair said that he has observed great committee progress and is very appreciative of each committee's contributions to the work of the Commission.

### **Administrator's Report: Administrator Moers**

**Budget:** Administrator Moers started the discussion with an explanation of the Fund 100 and 14.E (more detail was provided in the last monthly report). There is close to a million dollars in the combined budgets, most going to legal auxiliary services for CART and interpreting.

**Open Positions:** There are three positions not yet open that, when filled, will bring the total to 7 employees equaling 4.3 FTE's (full time employees). More details of the current positions and those to be filled are in the last month's report from Cliff. Commissioner Debbie Mohny will be participating in the interview process for a Technical Assistance Specialist who will work with hard of hearing community.

**Rules:** There are currently three rules categories, TEDP, Legal Auxiliary and the Grant program.

1. **TEDP:** The TEDP really requires very little clean up and nothing significant was changed within those rules.
2. **Legal Auxiliary:** The Senate Bill 144 required some changes to the auxiliary services, so those changes were made in concert with what was in the bill. Most were regarding the hiring of qualified community interpreters for court-ordered treatment programs and services instead of legally qualified interpreters.
3. **Grant Program:** We are currently developing a program and guidelines for the grant program committee's statewide implementation.

The three groups of rules will be sent to members for feedback. The grant committee rules will be referred to the Bylaws Committee for review and recommendations. They will go to the Commission for their approval prior to the State Board.

**Community Resource Directory:** The directory is currently being devised and categorized to be convenient and easy for the public to use. An alphabetical format is proving to be most viable. It should be available on the web site, by PDF or in hard copy.

**Commission Name Clarification:** We are considering clarifying the name of the Commission to either the Colorado Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or the Colorado Commission of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. The moniker would remain the same. We will vote on the change during the December meeting.

**Committee Reports:**

**Interpreter Committee: Mark Valkonen** (Chair of the LASAC subcommittee).

A vacancy incurred when Jennifer Pfau moved to California. A new deaf community representative has applied. A synopsis of Ashanti Brown was given, including her experience in the deaf community and as a paralegal. The Commission was highly impressed with her credentials, and she was voted in to the Advisory Council. The Council is also looking to fill upcoming vacancies, and Chair Valkonen was thanked for his hard work in this regard.

**Bylaws Committee: Commissioner Ralphe.**

The Bylaws Committee is very close to having the handbook done. There will be a list of significant changes, beginning with the most important, such as policy changes. This will make it easier to review and vote on.

**Legislative Committee: Chair Joe Benedetto for Chair Strickfaden.**

The Colorado PUC's Disabled Telephone Users Fund (DTUF) balance is negative. The Chair suggests consideration of new legislation to apply the TRS Surcharge on cell phones would be appropriate and reasonable. Administrator Moers clarified that we have to work with the Department of Human Services. The Commission voted to instruct the CCDHH Legislative Committee to draft language for including cell phones on the DTUF surcharge and taking it to the legislature.

**Nomination Committee: Commissioner Mohney.**

The following Commission terms expire in June; Commissioner Benedetto, Commissioner Mohney and Commissioner Eubanks. Commissioner Mohney will begin the process to fill those positions.

**TEDP Program Committee: Commissioner Mohney.**

The request numbers are stable, but there are an increasing number of CapTel requests. A discussion of CapTel and internet CapTel ensued. The rise in CapTel unit requests is thought to be due in part to the Relay Colorado CapTel TV advertising campaign. Public outreach for the TEDP program is needed and was discussed in detail with the goal to let more people know about it, especially senior citizens.

**Media Access Committee: Commissioner Jenkins.**

The first Media Access Committee meeting is set for the third week of November. At that meeting the goals will be set up, as well as a plan of action for the committee. Commissioner Mohney will put out an email to the HLAA for a hard of hearing member. A deaf member is still needed also.

**Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee: Commissioner Peterson.**

Last month the MHSA program received a half million dollar two-year grant to support and implement the project. They're now in the process of hiring a coordinator. The money is going directly to the Mental Health Center of Denver.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Terry Rose:** Terry Rose was concerned that the mental health benefits are for Denver services only.

**Response by Commissioner Peterson:** The mental health funds are for statewide use even though it's based in Denver. Pikes Peak, Spanish Peaks and others are also involved. More diverse representation statewide is the goal.

**Terry Rose:** Terry also was concerned about House Bill 1090 and Senate Bill 144 for interpreters. Compliance in the Pueblo area would be difficult to work with. It would also be difficult to keep interpreters interested in pursuing advanced training.

**Response discussion:** Discussion ensued on the use of title or degree for interpreters. A person who engages in a deceptive trade practice when, in course of such person's business, vocation, or occupation, such person claims to be a "sign language interpreter" or with other interpreting-related titles. This person has to show a current membership card that shows certification issued by the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf or a successor organization when it is requested and the consumers can decide whether or not they want to use non-certified interpreters.

**Kelly Gibbs:** The Deaf Olympics are opening this week. She is looking to develop legislative support for deaf/blind citizens of Colorado.

**Response discussion:** The CCDHH will look into how accessible our web is to the deaf/blind community. Further discussion on our interaction with the Commission for Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired will be looked into in the future.

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**8. NEW BUSINESS**

1. LASAC policies (forms) for best practices for interpreting in a legal setting were updated. No financial, fiscal or legal changes were made. The Commission vote to approve was passed .
2. Approval of the Commission's three-year strategic plan carried.

**9. Announcements**

Commissioner Jenkins informed the Commission about a program that provides new hearing aids for the children of Colorado who may not have insurance to pay for their hearing aids. If anyone knows of a child who needs new hearing aids they are to contact Dr. Jenkins by the end of September.

Commissioner Mohney informed those present about the "Building Communication" conference on October 10. For more information on this half day program go to [www.hearinglosscoloradoconvention.org](http://www.hearinglosscoloradoconvention.org).

Cheri Davis reminded us that September is Deaf Awareness Month. Go to [Coloradodeaf.com](http://Coloradodeaf.com) for a list of activities.

Administrator Moers informed us of the Rural Emergency Preparedness training in Castle Rock on September 18, 2009. The Commission co-sponsors the training by covering costs for auxiliary services.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:15 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Jenkins, Acting Secretary