

STATE OF COLORADO



Colorado Department of Human Services

people who help people

AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
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COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING March 6, 2008

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the Regular Meeting to order at 3:10pm.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioners Joe Benedetto (Chair), Susan Elliott, Debbie Mohney, Terry Sims, Nancy Jean Eubanks, and Vickie Thomson,

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Shelley Strickfaden

CCDHH STAFF PRESENT:

Cliff Moers, Director, and Cheri Davis, Legal Auxiliary Services Program Manager

INTERPRETERS/CART REPORTER:

Hillary Stanley, Karen Warwick, Candice Stuck, Interpreters
Claudette Mondragon, CART Reporter

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes from the October 25, 2007 and January 10, 2008 meetings were approved.

5. REPORTS

Report of the Chairman, Deacon Joe Benedetto

- The Chair expressed his and the Commission's condolences ~~and those~~ to Commissioner Terry Sims and his wife Maggie on the death of their son, Matthew.
- The Chair welcomed the Commissioners, Staff and the public to the quarterly Commission meeting.
- The Chair expressed thanks to the Gill Foundation for allowing the Commission to hold its meeting in Colorado Springs in their building.
- The Chair extended thanks and appreciation to the interpreters and CART reporter for their professional services.
- The Chair extended a special note of thanks and appreciation to the DHS Staff and our Commission Staff for their dedicated service.
- The Chair congratulated Director Moers on his recent graduation from Regis University with an MSM (Masters of Science in Management).
- The Chair announced the guest speaker, Janet Dickinson, who will share information about the Rocky Mountain Deaf School.

Report of the Director, Cliff Moers

- Three Commissioners' terms will expire on June 30th. Terry Sims, who represents the public; Susan Elliott, who represents late deafened adults; and Vickie Thomson, who represents professionals. None of these Commissioners are running for another term. Commissioner Mohney offered to chair the Nominations Committee. The Commission will give Commissioner Mohney names of potential replacements.
 - The Three Year Strategic Plan needs to be finalized. Commissioners Elliott and Thomson will work with Chair Benedetto and Director Moers.
 - Rocky Mountain Public Broadcasting Services, KRMA TV, invited Commission staff and community members to the studio for a digital TV demonstration and to discuss options available for captioning and other means of communication. Joyce Brubaker, Director of the Rocky Mountain Deaf News, is interested in chairing the TV Media Access Committee of the Commission if the Commission is in favor of it. This Committee would identify and confirm the most desirable methods of delivery of programming for the deaf and hard of hearing community. It would then submit a proposal to RMPBS. RMPBS will then develop an outline of the technology needed to meet those goals. Commissioner Elliott mentioned that the Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) run by the National Association for the Deaf has been working on this and we should coordinate efforts. Commissioner Mohney also said that WGBN has been working on these efforts. Everyone agreed that closed captioning should not be removed but ASL captioning could potentially be added. There was discussion about forming a committee.
- New rules go into effect on April 1 for the TEDP. The Joint Budget Committee has approved a .5 FTE to coordinate the TEDP in the state office. The position will hopefully be filled by July 1, 2008. There will be two new RFP for the contract vendor for 3 years. The new RFP requests the vendor provides marketing for the TEDP. The TEDP Committee will review the RFP and be involved in the application and selection process.

- Cheri Davis discussed the Legal Auxiliary Services Program. They had a very successful training February 9-10th. Carla Mathers, nationally known legal interpreter, attorney and author, presented “Advanced Ethics in the Courtroom”. Twenty legal interpreters were in attendance.
- The program is developing a supervised mentorship-training program. This will enable the interpreters to obtain ~~their~~ hours required in the new licensure rules. In April the program is co-sponsoring with DOVE, a legal workshop at the CRID convention in Grand Junction. Cheri was also invited to join the Court Interpreters Oversight Committee (CIOC). This typically is for spoken language court interpreters but many decisions and policies made will affect legal sign language interpreters and CART Providers as well. Cheri will serve a two-year term on the committee.

Rocky Mountain Deaf School – Janet Dickinson, Director

Ms. Dickinson discussed the importance of communication at RMDS. Currently they have a preschool and elementary school program. They are expanding to middle school next year. They have an after school program and all children who are deaf and hard of hearing are invited to participate. They offer a variety of committees/groups and encourage students to participate. Ms. Dickinson invited anyone to visit the school.

Committee Reports

Mental Health Task Force, Director Cliff Moers

Janet Wood, Director of Mental Health Services, has secured \$30,000 to assist the Mental Health Task Force. This will provide interpreter and CART services during meetings. There will be about 4 meetings. The task force would like to have approximately 12 members. Currently there are six. They will also hold community focus groups (Deaf/Hard of Hearing, parents, professionals) to receive input. A facilitator is going to be hired to assist the task force. Commissioner Elliott recommended representation from school administration. Cliff announced that education would have its own focus group.

Standing Rules Committee, Chair Susan Elliott

Commissioner Elliott recommended the rules be revised due to changes to the Commission. The Board Handbook should have committees’ specific goals, objectives, number of members, length of terms, how often they meet, etc. Current chairs should report to vice-chair how each committee is performing.

Finance Committee, Chair Terry Sims

Commissioner Sims thanked everyone for their prayers during this sad time. Commissioner Sims reviewed the current budget.

TEPD Program Committee, Chair Debbie Mohny

Commissioner Mohny reported that the financial cap was raised to 300% of the federal poverty level and this will increase the number of applications. They are hoping to collect data to determine who is still not eligible to receive equipment with the new rules. Commissioner Elliott recommended that all committee chairs keep records of their action plans to distribute to the Commission.

Interpreter Committee, Chair Nancy Jean Eubanks
Legal Auxiliary Services Subcommittee, Chair Jennifer Pfau
Legal Referral Specialist Cheri Davis Reporting

Commissioner Eubanks asked Ms. Davis to speak on behalf of both committees. Ms. Davis explained there were over 200 parking lot issues that have been divided into 5 groups: policies and procedures, referral systems, training, outreach, and a bench book. The policies and procedures group will bring recommendations to the Commission in May. There has been some confusion regarding advisory committees, subcommittees, and committees. There are a lot of concerns surrounding interpreting outside of the legal auxiliary services. The municipal courts do not fall under the jurisdiction of the legal auxiliary legislation. Commissioner Elliott recommended a letter be sent to the courts from the Commission with recommendations to use legal interpreters. Chair Benedetto recommended we pursue legislative action to strengthen Colorado statutes. A motion was made and seconded that a letter will be sent from the Commission to all municipal courts.

Legislative Committee, Chair Vickie Thomson

Commissioner Strickfaden will be the new chair of the committee. Commissioner Thomson announced the hearing aid legislation bill is still in the Senate. There was a fiscal note attached to increase the reimbursement rate for children on the Colorado Health Plus plan. The next action for the committee is to address the sunset review for the Commission.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Rebecca Herr asked the Commission if they were aware or taking a stand on the ADA Restoration Act. There was a lot of discussion. It was recommended by Cindy Powell from the Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center (DBTAC) that the Commission invite Pat Going to discuss this issue.
- Rebecca Herr explained that the Boulder Chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America has been awarded a \$5,000 grant from Boulder County Aging Services. They are developing awareness-training materials to be distributed to senior centers, residential facilities, and councils about how to communicate with people who are deaf or hard of hearing. They are developing a web site which should be ready next month.
- Cindy Powell from DBTCA offered her support and assistance with the letter to the municipal courts. She stated that Title II of the ADA has clear guidelines on the use of qualified interpreters and assistive devices.
- Robert Knox, co-founder of the Colorado Springs chapter of HLAA, announced the Annual 5K Walk 4 Hearing on May 3rd in Longmont. This raises funds for the national and state association. Funds also support the annual conference that was held last year in collaboration with the Marion Downs Hearing Center.
- Billy Allen discussed CAN (Communication Access Network) which is a group of individuals (deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing) who are working together in Colorado Springs to determine needs. Billy introduced the committee members present.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Commissioner Elliott discussed the issue of ASL as a second language in schools. Legislation passed in 2004 to allow ASL as a second language. Cathy Bennett is the chair of the ASL Standardization Content Committee. The Colorado Commission on Higher Education gives the Colorado School for the Deaf the

authority to determine policy. There is a training program being developed at the University of Colorado. The main issue is the lack of standards and lack of qualified personnel to teach ASL.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner Mohny announced that Sprint and Hamilton would have free Internet CapTel. Anyone can sign up on sprintcaptel.com. The website is www.hamiltoncaptel.com.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Thomson, Secretary