

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

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Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

Karen L. Beye
Executive Director

COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING June 5, 2008

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the Regular Meeting to order at 3:00 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

CCDHH STAFF PRESENT:

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

INTERPRETERS/CART REPORTER:

Interpreters: Kirk Neuroth, Brandon Morgan and Tricia Frank
CART Reporter: Claudette Mondragon

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was approved.

4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Corrections were made to the March 6, 2008 minutes.

5. REPORTS

Report of the Director, Cliff Moers

- Cathy Caplicki and David Anthony volunteered to complete a resource directory for people who are deaf. Rebecca Herr has been contracted by the Commission to work on the information sheets on the website. She will also work on the resource directory which will be renamed the Commissions Community Resource Directory. Resources for people who are hard of hearing will also be added. A big thanks to Cathy, David, and Rebecca for their hard work on these efforts.
- Cliff and Cheri will be attending the Hearing Loss Association of America in Reno, Nevada in June for networking purpose and to learn more about hard of hearing issues. Cheri would like to learn more about CART services and listening systems in legal settings and courtrooms.
- Cliff will be attending the National Association of the Deaf in July. Both of these national conferences will give the staff an opportunity to network and learn from others. Specifically Cliff hopes to learn more about how law enforcement agencies and prison officials work with individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing and gather more information about the latest in assistive listening devices.
- Cliff suggested that August would be good time for a retreat. There will be four new Commissioners and this would be an opportunity to review the strategic plan and the new Commissioner manual. Details will be forthcoming.
- Janet Hensley, Director of Aging and Adult Services, within the Department of Human Services is interested in collaborating with the Commission in developing a task force to address issues that face the older adult who is deaf and hard of hearing.
- Pat Going, Executive Director of the Business and Assistive Technology Center will be a guest speaker at the next meeting to discuss the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Restoration Act.
- Cliff introduced Tricia Frank who is the new staff interpreter for the Commission.
- Cheri Davis reported that they would hold a Deaf Interpreter Workshop on June 7th at Front Range Community College. The response has been wonderful with 18 participants registered.
- The Legal Interpreters Summer Seminar will begin June 14th. There are 18 participants registered (10 hearing, 8 deaf). Cheri explained that Deaf Interpreters work as a team with Hearing Interpreters. Both of these trainings are fully funded by the Commission.
- Cliff passed around the Kentucky Commission for the Deaf Resource Guide.

Report of the Chair, Deacon Joe Benedetto

- Chair Benedetto welcomed Karen Beye, Executive Director of Human Services and Liz McDonough, Public Information Officer. He thanked the Department and staff for their support of the Commission.

June 5, 2008

- Chair Benedetto thanked Commissioners Elliot, Sims, and Thomson with a lovely speech and thank you gift for serving the Commission. They will not be returning for another term.
- Director Beye awarded the new Susan Elliott award to Commission Elliot. This will be an annual award given to someone demonstrating leadership and outstanding service to the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Chair Benedetto credited Susan with working so diligently with Representative Dorothy Rupert to legislate the Commission eight years ago.

Presentation by Valentino Vasquez on ASL Standards

Mr. Vasquez is a full time ASL professor at the University of Northern Colorado. He also works with the education-interpreting program through the DO IT (Distance Opportunity for Interpreter Training) Center. House Bill 04-1037 passed in 2004 to allow ASL as a foreign language credit in universities and school districts. However, there were very few qualified ASL instructors. Kathy Bennett from the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB) headed up a task force to address the law and the issues. The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE) are working together with CSDB. Commissioner Elliott has been working on student standards for ASL credits. Every institution will have to submit a proposal on how they plan to teach ASL and the standards they will implement. Standards for teachers are still an issue and CDE will have to work on this issue. It is unclear whether a Bachelors degree will be required and what form of accreditation. Commissioner Mohny discussed the issues that faced Boulder High School such as the fear that ASL would take students away from other foreign language classes and the lack of ASL instructors would not be adequate to go past one year of ASL classes.

UNC has a task force to develop the Teaching ASL Program (TAP). They are looking at a curriculum that would graduate ASL teachers. This would potentially be a masters degreed program. There will need to be approval from UNC administration and the state board of education. Students would also have to take a formal proficiency interview to complete their certification.

Committee Reports**Mental Health Task Force, Ric Durity**

Mr. Durity is with the Mental Health of Denver and is the Co-Chair for the mental health and substance abuse task force. Mr. Durity explained that the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community does not have a plan to address the needs of mental health and substance abuse. First Lady, Jeannie Ritter has made mental health a priority. There are very few mental health services that meet the needs of this population. The task force is trying to identify the need and the resources. The task force is bringing together all stakeholders and has developed a six-phase plan. The cost to go through this process is estimated at \$30,000. Cliff has secured funding through the Colorado Division of Mental Health for \$23,000. The task force is also looking at best practices in other states for implementing a statewide system of mental health and substance abuse services for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. They are also developing surveys to identify what has and has not worked across the state. The challenges included mental health in the public schools. The task force has requested participation from CDE but they have not received a response as of this meeting. The Health Care Policy and Finance Department's Medicaid plan is currently going through reform. As a result they have not had representation and yet they provide the majority of the public funding for mental health in the state.

Commissioner Elliot expressed her concern regarding lack of choice in particular for high school students who are deaf. Mr. Durity recognized that choice of service providers should be written into the strategic plan.

TV and Media Committee, Director Cliff Moers

Director Moers reported that he met with Joyce Brubaker from the Rocky Mountain Deaf News and they are writing a proposal to Rocky Mountain PBS. The proposal is still in draft.

Standing Rules Committee, Chair Susan Elliott

Commissioner Elliott is helping to revise the current Commission Manual. She is proposing four sections: Current commissioner information; Operating procedures; Regulations, statutes, etc.; TEDP. The manual would also address conflict of interest, the role the Commissioners play in the evaluation of the Director, and the evaluation of the Commissioners themselves. There should also be an archive the motions that were passed, approved, etc.

Chair Benedetto asked Commissioner Elliott if she would consider remaining as the chair of this committee as a 'member of the public' after her term expires. She will consider this offer.

Finance Committee, Chair Terry Sims

Commissioner Sims reviewed the current budget and announced a new fiscal period would begin on July 1, 2008.

TEPD Program Committee, Chair Debbie Mohny

Commissioner Mohny announced that the Commission is going to hire a .5FTE TEDP coordinator. The new RFP's for the both the telecommunication equipment and outreach services have been issued. The Marion Downs Hearing Center contract has been offered for a three month extension until the new contract is decided upon.

Interpreter Committee, Chair Nancy Jean Eubanks

Legal Auxiliary Services Program Advisory Committee, Chair Jennifer Pfau

Legal Referral Specialist Cheri Davis Reporting

Commissioner Eubanks thanked Cheri and Jennifer for their hard work with the legal programs and trainings. Commissioner Eubanks suggested the Committee find a way to support Educational Interpreters through trainings and other venues to show the Commissions support of their professional work. CSDB offers a training that is partially funded by Sorensen however CRID does not have funding to bring in quality trainers. Commissioner Elliott mentioned that there would be an interpreter track at the Colorado Symposium for the Deaf. The Committee will meet to make suggestions to the Commission on this issue. Speaker Vasquez will also contact Commissioner Eubanks to discuss his thoughts on the subject of educational interpreter support.

Legislative Committee, Chair Shelley Strickfaden

Commissioner Strickfaden explained that the Rocky Mountain Deaf School bill was passed. It will enable RMDS to receive funding for building rental from Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. Senate Bill 57 passed and many participated in the signing with Governor Ritter. This will require insurance plans to cover hearing aids for children birth through 18 years of age.

Nomination Committee, Chair Mohny

The Committee interviewed 10-11 candidates for Commissioners. There are 4 seats open and they have sent their recommendations to the Governor. He can choose to accept or decline the recommendations.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

- Jennifer Pfau discussed her concern regarding educational interpreters. Her son requires an interpreter, however, his school lacks flexibility in how the interpreter is assigned based on his son's request and needs. She would like to see the Commission become more involved with the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA) task force through CDE. The certification does not guarantee quality. It was recommended that the Interpreter Committee address this issue.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Cheri Davis clarified that Municipal Courts do not fall under the legal interpreter statute. The task force is working with the Department lawyer to finalize the letter to be sent to the Municipal Courts statewide.
- Director Moers recommended that a committee be formed to finalize the strategic plan. Originally Commissioners Thomson, Mohny, and Elliott volunteered. Director Moers will send out a draft and request Commissioners to serve on a Strategic Planning Committee.
- Commissioner Elliott recommended we address the importance of orientation for new Commissioners as well as new chairs of committees/task forces.

8. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Commissioner Mohny that the Colorado Chapter of HLAA will hold its annual meeting titled "Building Communication Bridges" on October 11, 2008 at the Ben Nighthorse Campbell building at the Fitzsimmons Medical Complex in Aurora. The Commission will be an exhibitor again this year.
- Commissioner Elliott announced the Deaf Symposium would be held November 13-15th in Colorado Springs.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vickie Thomson, Secretary