

## **CODHHE MEETING MINUTES**

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

6:30 PM – Sterck School

Newark, Delaware

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Richard Pelletier, Chair, DSD; Christy Hennessey, IRI; Loretta Sarro, DODHH; Peg Stewart, Interpreter/Advocate; Julia Sullivan, HLADE; and Kyle Hodges, Staff

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Diana Armstead, Advocate; Joe Drexler, WCD; Terry Whitham, DSP

### **INTERPRETER**

Lois Steele  
Alyx Richardson

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:40 PM.

### **ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA**

- Depending on time, Kyle has passed out some information on the Delaware Certified Court Interpreter Program.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the November 15, 2006 meeting minutes as amended.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Peg provided the November and December reports.

The balance of accounts as of November 30, 2006: Certificate of Deposit, \$3,090.74; Money Market Account, \$6,340.29, plus \$3.91 interest. Total balance of \$9,434.94.

The balance of accounts as of December 29, 2006: Certificate of Deposit, \$3,090.74; Money Market Account, \$6,344.20, plus \$4.37 interest. Total balance of \$9,439.31

Kyle asked if there any other options in the money market to give you more interest. Peg stated that when Sue Raymond died, her family directed donations and it became a 501 (c) (3). Peg will check on the corporation status and the 501 (c)(3) status.

Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer's reports as submitted.

## **Business**

### **DETRS Meeting/CapTel**

Loretta gave the following report:

Julia Sullivan and I attended the December 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. Other attendees were: Helen Harper, VR Caseworker Supervisor/Division for the Visually Impaired; Judy Joyce, Verizon who replaced Eloise; Karl Ewan, Sprint DE TRS Account Manager and Jim Cole, DTI Telecommunications Technologist, who facilitated this meeting.

Karl Ewan provided a PowerPoint presentation report on the year-to-date call percentage of Relay users, call volume, number of complaints/accommodations and outreach activities. Loretta asked Karl if there was any information about the video relays since he didn't give any in his presentation. Karl responded that the traditional TTY calls have declined and VRS calls have increased across the nation. The other relay providers are also experiencing the same decline in numbers in these areas. CapTel is on the increase.

Jim Cole is still doing the investigation on CapTel services. Jim is contacting other states that have well run services and he found out that the other states are having a great success; and Delaware is the only one that is using Verizon. Jim wanted to know if there are any funding sources to get the necessary equipment. The other states are charging a surcharge fee. Other states provide the relay service and include the availability of CapTel which is funded by the state. In Delaware, Verizon does not include CapTel services.

The interstate (all types of relay) calls are reimbursed by the National Exchange Carriers Association (NECA). The State of Delaware does not pay for anything that is paid for by NECA. NECA is the organization that is contracted by the Federal Communication Commission to manage the percentage of profits. All TRS (Telecommunication Relay Services) providers (Sprint, AT&T, Verizon, Sorenson and others) put in a percentage of their profits into a fund to pay for interstate calls. Verizon runs the relay and a percentage goes to NECA and NECA redistributes the money. Delaware, through Verizon, has not begun to participate in this program. Jim Cole agreed that CODHHE and HLADE will work together and find out what can be done in the future. It was suggested

writing a letter to Jim Cole that he has not compiled the information from other states that was promised at the DETRS meeting. Kyle will contact Linda Heller from HLADE to get some accurate numbers of how many people would be using the system. It was added that the testing of the equipment was okay. Kyle added that the best approach is that everyone works together; and if there is a surcharge, legislation will be needed. Kyle stated that the legislators will ask what other states are doing this, how it is funded and how it works. It was stated that there is only one manufacturer of the CapTel machines. It was stated that an e-mail be sent to the other states' offices of the deaf to see what they are using, how many people does it serve and how is it funded. Loretta stated she had done that two years ago, and that most are funded by the PSC. It was agreed for CODHHE to write the aforementioned letter to Jim Cole.

### DAD ASL Legislation

Rich asked if there was ever legislation proposed for ASL? Loretta replied "yes" and "no". Kyle asked what the ASL legislation bill would do? It was stated that it recognize ASL as an official language so that ASL classes can be offered in the high school and post secondary level. Delaware is one of the few states that does not have that type of legislation passed so that ASL is recognized as an official language. Peg suggested checking with Lynn, who had been involved in this issue before. Rich replied that he would check with Lynn. Loretta had said in the past she had gone with Lynn to the schools and there was no interest at that time. The National Association for the Deaf has a model bill and this will be looked at the Board meeting next week. Kyle suggested contacting Rep. Bethany-Hall Long who has interested in deaf and hard of hearing issues. Peg suggested Reps. Pam Maier, Liane Sorenson and/or Manolakos (a new representative). Kyle asked for the model website's e-mail address to be forwarded to him. Kyle asked how many states have that legislation. It was stated that around 45 states do have the ASL legislation.

### Open Discussion

#### *Emergency Preparedness Plan*

Loretta gave the following report:

Loretta attended a January 9 meeting with the Emergency Preparedness Working Group for Persons with Disabilities from DeIDOT. Ed Smith acted in the Advisory capacity from the Department of Safety and Homeland Security. They are working on emergency preparedness and a lot of issues were addressed at this meeting.

Three people went to an Emergency Preparedness and Response Conference in December in Washington, DC. Information brought home from the conference was 1) Evacuation Planning: Innovation and New Practice; 2) Planning for

Elderly and Pediatric Populations, who need to be identified with special procedures put in place for evacuation; 3) People with Cognitive Disabilities, who need to be identified and how to work with them during evacuation since this population needs to be kept with their families; and 4) Service Animals and Durable Medical Equipment. Also, someone at the meeting talked about getting the Amish people prepared.

Kyle is on the Public Outreach Sub-Committee. This sub-committee discusses how the state can better reach the community on emergency preparedness and when an emergency occurs (e.g. how do you identify and find the people who might not be able to get to the evacuation shelters). Kyle stated that Terry is trying to get these people in the 911 database to help give them access to more records of where people are and how to get to them. Kyle said that the most updated 911 form is on the SCPD website. It should also be on the CODHEE website and maybe the Delaware Home page website. Terry is the only one that enters this information. It was suggested that maybe one day a year to sign up for the 911 form at the State Services Centers. Kyle suggested a radio, TV, email and phone number, or billboards saying where you can get the forms. Loretta said that Public Health has their own form mainly for special needs for children through the SNAP organization. Loretta will e-mail this form to all.

Loretta said in regard to emergency preparedness for the deaf and hard of hearing, Neil McDevite is working with Loretta on setting up a training for deaf and hard of hearing people. Loretta will let Kyle know the details to pass on to Terry. Loretta spoke to Terry about being able to complete the 911 form on line. Terry said that at this point, that is not a possibility - a hard copy has to be completed and sent to Terry. Because of limited space on Terry's computer, it is not possible to have an extended database.

Kyle said that some of the communication problems/glitches are related to new technology. They are trying to work through all of this since they know now that they cannot reach some people (i.e. deaf and hard of hearing). Kyle said that even though all the problems are not solved, at least they are trying to resolve these issues.

Loretta noted that Terry would like people to include their home and cell phone numbers on the 911 form. At this time, Kyle noted that there may be a capability issue with the State system and cell numbers.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### Reports from Organizations on CODHHE

- HLADE—their new e-mail is [HLADE@comcast.net](mailto:HLADE@comcast.net). A foundation was set up with \$5,000 to be used for assistive listening devices in honor a boy

who died. There will be a national conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma from June 21 through the 24.

- Peg announced that her new e-mail home address is [peg.stewart@verizon.net](mailto:peg.stewart@verizon.net).
- Behavioral Health Committee—Christy announced that a meeting at Renata's office has been scheduled for Feb 1 at 9 am to discuss how better communication can be developed between both groups. This is also related to a needs assessment report from Dr. Myers on deaf and hard of hearing services. More information is needed for funding purposes. Christy said that the Child Mental Health representative has not been at the last two or three meetings. Kyle said that he would like to attend this meeting also.

Kyle asked how the Jan 18<sup>th</sup> meeting went as he had gotten someone from Connections, Kirsten Olson to attend. Kyle said that there was a disconnect between Connections and IRI in making referrals to Connections for people who were deaf and had some mental health/substance abuse issues. Christy said it was a good meeting and Kirsten told us that everyone has to go through an intake process; and the issue is insurance and who is going to pay. Kirsten would like to hire a therapist that can sign; but that person has to be licensed for health insurance purposes. It was suggested how you can advertise that information to post the position for a licensed therapist. A lot of information was exchanged and clarified; and Connections said that they would try to improve their system and communication.

Kyle said that in reference to representation from Child Mental Health, Cliff from the Dover office had attended; and then Jeannie from Wilmington was appointed to attend these meetings since they are held in Wilmington. Apparently, Jeannie had to use sick or vacation time to attend these meetings. In December, Kyle e-mailed her to ask if she would like him to contact someone about her not having to use sick time and to determine if she is the designated person. And, a follow-up e-mail was sent and no response was received. It was decided for Kyle to contact Cliff to see who would be the designated representative.

- Delaware Certified Court Interpreter Program-- Kyle said that on Feb 6 a meeting will be held at Department of Technology and Information (DTI) to discuss Video Relay Services and Video Remote Interpreting Services for the K-12 and State networks. The purpose of this gathering is to assist in understanding the requirements of deaf and hard of hearing users. Once they better understand the requirements they hope to utilize our existing video gateway; and if necessary, expand infrastructure to provide these technologies to the schools and agencies. This message came from Colleen Gause. Loretta and Kyle will be attending. Kyle also contacted Linda to attend so HLADE can be represented.

Rich said that because of the State firewall, they cannot communicate with others within the State; however, contact can be made with others out of state. Kyle invited Rich to attend also. Loretta said that Mindy, the technology person is going to attend. Peg said that Lori Moers, the coordinator of services for deaf and hard of hearing students outside of the Delaware School for the Deaf program might also be a good person to invite. Lori is on the state mail system. Loretta gave Colleen some other names to be included in this meeting.

Rich said that the Video Remote Interpreting Services precludes deaf people from fully participating in a meeting as if there was a live interpreter. The problem is that the deaf person can receive information but cannot participate fully since the video interpreter cannot see or hear all that is going on in the room. Rich said that this is a very limited way to communicate and does not provide a full range of communication that a student would need in a K-12 situation.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting will be March 21 at 6:00 pm at the Delaware School for the Deaf in Newark. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Kyle Hodges  
CODHHE Administrator

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