

CODHHE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, January 21, 2009
6:30 PM – Delaware School for the Deaf
Newark, Delaware

MEMBERS PRESENT: Richard Pelletier, Chair; Loretta Sarro, DODHH; Peg Stewart, Advocate; Terry Whitham, DSP; Julia Sullivan, HLADE; Pam D’Occhio, Advocate; Kyle Hodges, Staff

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Drexler, WCD; Christy Hennessey, IRI

Guest: Pam’s husband

INTERPRETERS

Lois Steele
Eileen Casey

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:50 pm.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

- Loretta will discuss the March 27 DODHH conference.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Kyle noted that there is a typo on the first page, under “Members Present”—“DSD” will be deleted. Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the November 19, 2008 minutes as amended.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Peg reported that as agreed at the September meeting, the CD valued at \$9,723.96 would be given to the State to be deposited into an “8000” account which roll over year to year. Kyle reported that given the State’s budgetary status, our fiscal section advised us not to have this money deposited into an “8000” account. Kyle returned the check to Peg who opened a new account on December 11 and deposited the \$9,723.96. As of December 31, 2008, the new balance is \$9,725.21. Discussion was had about what to do with this money—possibly public outreach. Kyle suggested that this will be an agenda item for the next meeting; therefore, please come with ideas as to what to do with this money. Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer’s report as submitted.

BUSINESS

Visor Card

Loretta reported that the Visor Card Press event took place on January 12. Kyle coordinated the event with Kim who is the Public Information Officer for the Department of Safety and Homeland Security. Governor Minner, Secretary Mitchell and Colonel MacLeish and Loretta provided brief comments. Kyle assisted by announcing the names of the 1st visor card recipients (Rich, Linda, Pam's father, Adriano, and Loretta) and by giving the visor cards to the Governor to hand out. Kyle apologized for not recognizing some of the past Council members and others who had worked on this (e.g. Joe Drexler). The Dover Post had an article on the visor card in their weekly paper. This information is now out to the deaf community—if people have questions, if they do not understand something about the visor card or how to fill out the visor card form, they can contact Loretta. Peg asked "how do we get an article in the News Journal"? Kyle will ask Kim how to get an this information in the News Journal. Kyle said this event was set up like a legislative bill signing and the press is invited, but you do not know if the press will come. WBOC and the Dover Post were there. WILM and WDEL called Kyle and took a few quotes. Peg commented that most deaf people do not listen to the radio; however, parents and families could relay this information. Information will be put on the following websites: State Police, DMV, CODHHE and the SCPD websites. Terry stated that it would be good to put it on the DHSS' website—State Service Centers with a link to Loretta. Rich sent it out to the DSD contacts. Loretta stated the VRS phone number needed to be changed because of the FCC requirements of the 10-digit number. Loretta will e-mail the new VRS phone number. Kyle asked for Loretta to get this to him as soon as possible so he can forward to the State Police and DMV.

Interpreter Requirements at Mainstream Schools/Programs

Rich stated that the DSD had a meeting recently and proposed that we look into this matter through CODHHE. DSD has state requirements that their interpreters are required to have a bachelor's degree with RID certification or a master's in deaf certification. The rest of the mainstream schools that have interpreters do not have any requirements for interpreters. DAD feels that the above requirement should be used for the entire state mainstream program so there is consistency throughout the state. It is important because it effects the deaf and hard of hearing students and their lives. This is a DOE requirement for DSD education employees. Kyle said that the first thing to do is get a copy of this DSD policy and decide if CODHHE would want to move forward. If you do want to move forward with something statewide, some type of regulation or legislation may have to be established. Peg added that education interpreting is very hard and complex due to the large knowledge base. In conclusion, Rich will provide a copy of the DSD interpreter requirements to Kyle so Kyle can research the issue.

Internship with Police Department

Kyle stated in today's hand-outs you have a summary of an internship that a student from the Maryland School for the Deaf completed. This student completed an internship with the Frederick Police Department facilitated by the Frederick County Department of Emergency Preparedness supported by the Fredrick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services. This project was to develop a communication tool designed to improve communication between first responders and the deaf community. The tool will then be distributed to fire and rescue police in Frederick County. The intern also participated in

training scenarios in police and fire to allow personnel the opportunity for interaction with this intern and an interpreter. This was forwarded to Kyle by Jamie Turner from the DE Emergency Management Agency. Kyle asked if DSD would want to look into this and we could help facilitate this with Terry's assistance. Jamie indicated that we would need to talk with the Council of Police Training, State Fire School Director, and potentially some others. Kyle said that when they have done emergency preparedness drills, they have included the disability community. Terry added that in reading this student's information, it looks like there may be 2 issues —1) how the responders could better serve the deaf and hard of hearing community from the emergency services aspect, and 2) from this student's perspective, what things needed to be improved (e.g. campus maps and enhancements at intersections for the schools). Also, the student got involved in role playing. Peg added that she thought the biggest piece was they were developing a communication tool that involved people in the computer graphics department. It was something like a visor card that included pictures and may have included some of the information like the visor card and may have had some kind of symbols to communicate. This was probably distributed to different departments to have on hand for ambulances, police officers, etc. to use as a communication tool when they are in that situation where there is not an interpreter immediately available.

Terry asked if DSD has an internship program for the seniors. Rich stated that there are students getting work experience—hotel, food service, senior citizen centers and DSD students working at different businesses. Rich also stated that you have to be careful as not any student can do an internship. Kyle stated that if something does get started, input would be needed from DSD as to who would be a good candidate.

In conclusion, Rich will find out from DSD (Peg suggested that Rich contact their school psychologist who is primarily responsible for guidance to the high school students) to see if there is an interest in establishing an internship. Kyle will find out when the next emergency preparedness drill will take place to see if deaf students and the community can be involved in the emergency preparedness drills.

DMV Driver License Testing Procedures

Kyle announced that this is an information item. In today's hand-outs, you have the e-mails and the final testing procedure policy. This was finalized on December 15. The State Council for Persons with Disabilities sent in suggestions and they incorporated a lot of these suggestions. One suggestion that they did not incorporate is allowing the interpreter to ride in the front seat; however, for safety reasons, DMV be allowing the interpreter to ride in the back seat during the road test. They also are going to be using actual directional signs to direct the applicant where to go during the test instead of hand signals or sign language. The signs that they have developed are very clear and easy to understand—are approximately 5 X 8" in size, and will be held in a way that does not take the applicant's eyes far from the road (no more than glancing at the radio). All instructions (sign use included) will be provided by the motor vehicle technician via the interpreter prior to the road test, in order to address any questions, concerns or confusion.

Peg stated that she would have liked to see the term "sign" changed to "gestures". Also, Peg is not clear with the following sentence—"If a deaf or hard of hearing driver license applicant is also a non-English speaking applicant, then the interpreter may sign the questions and multiple choice answers on the automated testing system". Peg stated that the deaf person can look at the automated test on the computer and may not

understand something and if the sign language interpreter cannot sign that they are prohibiting the interpreter from signing the test. Peg noted that many deaf people are not able to read and understand English the same way as a hearing person. Terry stated that there is a sentence that reads—"The only time the use of a deaf or hard of hearing interpreter shall be permitted during a written test is when the applicant has a question or needs to other communicate with a division technician administering the test". Kyle will ask for clarification on these sentences from DMV. Peg stated that students now understand that there are certain accommodations that they may or may not be entitled to. Terry added that the deaf and hard of hearing applicant should be treated no differently than a non-English speaking person. Peg stated that it is matter of educating the DMV administrators who have to understand the real needs of deaf or hard of hearing persons.

Additions to the Agenda

Loretta announced that Hank Passi and she were co-chairs of the March 27th DODHH/DVR Conference at the Dover Sheraton. Hank has left state employment so HarrietAnn, Loretta and some others are now organizing the conference. HarrietAnn has contacted the presenters to see what topics they are going to present. An agenda and registration will be sent out by the end of February. Kyle asked if there are going to be exhibitors. Loretta replied "yes" and they currently have a list of exhibitors that will be contacted. Kyle asked to be put on the list for exhibitors (e.g. CODHHE).

Terry announced that he had heard from the FCC on an interpretation (i.e. IP, VRS) on a ruling of the order. They did rule on the interpretation in favor of the 911 operations. The FCC basically said that VI who has capabilities of looking at the video screen can offer there opinion as to what they hear or see in the background in relation to any questions that deal with 911. Sorenson said now that there is a field that they cannot provide on the 911 screen so they have asked for an extension while they work through this situation. Sprint has asked for an extension on something that they cannot work through before the July 31 mandate. At this time we are waiting for the FCC's reply on the extension.

The next CODHHE will be on March 18 at 6:30 pm at the Delaware School for the Deaf.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Kyle Hodges
CODHHE Administrator

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