

CODHHE MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, May 18, 2011

6:30 PM – Delaware School for the Deaf
Newark, Delaware

PRESENT: Loretta Sarro, Chair, DODHH; Peg Stewart, Treasurer, DSD; Karen Miller, Deaf Ministry; Josh Weinstein, D.A.D.; Terry Whitham, DSP; and Kyle Hodges, Staff.

INTERPRETERS

Theresa Muschiatti & Pamela D'Occhio

GUEST

Scott Vien – Division of Motor Vehicles

CALL TO ORDER

Loretta called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM. Everyone introduced themselves.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

The following items were added to the agenda:

- ♦ Rescheduling of June Meeting
- ♦ World Language Teacher Certification

APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 19 & MARCH 16, 2011 MEETING MINUTES

The January 19 and March 16, 2011 minutes were approved as submitted.

TREASURER'S REPORTS

Peg distributed the Treasurer's Reports for March 31, 2011, with an ending balance of \$9,743.41 and the April 29, 2011, with an ending balance of \$9,743.99. Kyle provided a brief history of the account. The Treasurer's Reports were approved as submitted.

BUSINESS

DMV – Driver's License – Scott Vien

Loretta thanked Scott for attending. Loretta spoke about an issue with the label that is placed on Driver's Licenses for the deaf and hard of hearing and spoke about a consumer contacting her regarding her experience in requesting a label for her driver's license. Loretta stated that the consumer, after some difficulty, ended up with a handwritten label

that said “Hearing Impaired”, and added that others have received stickers with different wording. Loretta commented she thought the practice was that people could have this sticker upon request.

Loretta asked Scott what other states use as a standardized practice, so that Delaware can implement a similar standard. Scott stated that he has not had time to research this, but will do so and provide Kyle with the results. Scott added that there is a written procedure, but each facility has been doing something different. Scott added that he wants the procedures to be consistent and the wording used to not be offensive to anyone in the deaf community. Scott explained that DMV has not been able to automate this process due to resource limitations, but there is an indicator that can be placed on the license. DMV does not have the programming in place at this time. Scott passed around several samples of what driver’s licenses will look like when the system is automated and explained the notation in the front and back of the licenses. Scott explained that the sticker process used currently will be used consistently until the automated process can be activated. Scott asked for feedback on acceptable language to be placed on the stickers currently used and added that customers can make individual requests. Scott distributed a draft Medical Alert Program Procedures document and asked for feedback on updated acceptable language. Kyle thanked Scott for this information and requested that anyone who had comments to send them to him and he will forward collected comments to Scott.

Kyle stated that he would like to share this draft with the Policy & Law Committee under the State Council for Persons with Disabilities at the June meeting. Kyle commented that he is comfortable with consumers requesting what they want on the sticker and happy to hear that the procedures will eventually be automated. Kyle asked Scott about the process to implement this system, including cost. Scott explained that a program needs to be created for the indicator to be placed on the license, which involves creating a new functionality within their licensing system. Scott also explained that cost would depend upon if a vendor is needed, but he thinks it could be accomplished in-house with their programmers. Kyle asked about timeframe and Scott responded that it would not happen for a year due to three other major projects that need to be completed. Scott stated that he would bring this discussion to the Director’s attention. Scott added that the automated process will be beneficial for all concerned. Kyle asked if the automated process would remain voluntary and Scott responded that it would. Josh asked about other medical conditions and if verification from a doctor is required; Scott explained that it is completely separate from the medical program. Kyle asked how frontline staff would be informed consistently. Scott explained that he will be discussing the procedure at the next monthly meeting with Supervisors in Driver Services which will be held in June.

Loretta commented about an email she received from a constituent in Sussex County that had a visor card and the constituent had shown the visor card during the inspection of her car, and had a positive interaction with staff because of the card. Scott distributed his business card. Scott thanked everyone for bringing this issue to his attention. Scott will pass along this information.

Funds for 2012 Kids Summer Camp

Josh explained that this Committee has funds available to send several children to summer camp, beginning in 2012 and hopefully continuing. Kyle referred to the list of potential camps, along with a sample application and a list of criteria (handouts) that Josh was proposing. Josh suggested having a sub-committee work on this and develop criteria. Kyle suggested committing to the \$800 initially as a pilot to ensure success and then determine continuance of the program. Josh added that applications could be accepted during the fall and winter, and then a selection could be made. Peg commented about the need to be careful about some of the particulars, for example, requiring that the applicant use ASL (American Sign Language). Peg raised a question if any of the summer camps have their own criteria and that it would be important to include all types of hearing loss. Josh will follow-up to see what other camps require in terms of criteria (for example 80DB (decibels) or greater of hearing loss). Loretta stated she would like to send out the application packet by late fall. Loretta also stated that an interpreter would be needed if anyone submits a DVD (verbal). Josh made a motion to set aside \$800 annually for a camp scholarship for 2012. The motion was seconded and approved. Kyle suggested using the June meeting agenda solely to discuss and finalize this issue.

DOE Educational Interpreter Regulations Update

Kyle referred to a letter (handout) sent to DOE from the SCPD (State Council for Persons with Disabilities) and CODHHE, along with an analysis by Brian Hartman of SCPD. Kyle stated that the regulations have been published and are final. Kyle addressed the following critical issues:

- ♦ DOE did not recognize that CODHHE has issued comments also, but recognized SCPD and GACEC.
- ♦ DOE did not include that the regulation would be in conformity with the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Child's Bill of Rights, although such an agreement had been made in the meetings held earlier.
- ♦ DOE did not address comments regarding the limited context of intramural sports and extra-curricular activities that might not have a qualified interpreter if agreed upon. A question was raised that, since it was not mentioned in the proposed or final regulations, DOE has no obligation to supply certified interpreters for after-school activities. Kyle explained that in discussions with DOE, it was assumed that certified interpreters would be required across the board, and we had recommended in the letter that there be a waiver for using a non-certified interpreter which parents could sign that could be used for after-school activities.

Kyle explained that the final regulations are effective May 1, but comments should still be sent. Kyle stated that SCPD will be following up on these issues and wants to know if CODHHE wants to be part of that letter. A motion was made that CODHHE would be included on the SCPD follow-up letter. This motion was seconded and approved.

DOE Resident Advisory Regulation Update

Kyle referred to a letter from SCPD and CODHHE (handout) and spoke about DOE not addressing comments in the final regulations regarding the regulation authorizing issuance of a permit to serve as a resident advisor in the Statewide Program for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing to persons with no ASL capability or special communication skills. Peg questioned whether the regulation differentiates between hiring a resident advisor for the autistic program and/or deaf and hard of hearing program. Kyle reviewed documentation and confirmed that it does and that DOE should differentiate between these two programs. Kyle added that DOE did not provide its rationale regarding our comments. Kyle stated that SCPD will be following up on this issue with a letter and asked if CODHHE wanted to be included. A motion was made, second and approved to include CODHHE in the letter sent by SCPD.

DSHS – Voluntary Registry Online for Emergency Preparedness with Governor Markell

Kyle referred to a one-page letter to Delaware Residents (handout) taken from the following webpage: <http://www.de911assist.delaware.gov/>. Loretta commented that an event was held recently which was attended by the Governor and other invited guests to “kick-off” the voluntary registry. Terry presented at this event. Loretta added that, if people do not have a computer, they can call her and she will enter the information for them. Kyle added that this website is for persons who have any type of disability, and they can register information with the Delaware 911 emergency system. Kyle stated that Terry was instrumental in the success of this project, which took two years to complete.

Karen spoke about a program in Pennsylvania, where a deaf person with a video phone is having a crisis can call a “Warmline” and speak with someone who also has a video phone instead of 911 and wanted to know if that could be done in Delaware. Karen indicated that the person on the “Warmline” has specialized training in handling these types of calls. Kyle spoke of the 211 system which is in operation in Delaware. Terry commented that 211 is connected with Delaware Helpline and includes suicide prevention; he does not know if they have video phone capabilities and recommended following up on this. Peg asked who runs the “Warmline” in Pennsylvania and if it was statewide. Karen will research this further and give the information to Kyle. Karen added that the program started recently. Karen suggested that possibly someone from “Warmline” attend an upcoming meeting. Peg suggested that an agency that already handles these types of calls could add this service to their existing program, for example, 211. Terry commented that it is difficult to gather subject level experts to make sure everything is covered. This topic will be added to the September agenda. Kyle will follow-up on this after Karen provides him with additional information. Terry will follow-up with the 911 Coordinator in Pennsylvania and how find out how this program works with their 911 operations.

Establish Subcommittee on Caption Telephone (CapTel) Project of Individuals with Hearing Loss

Loretta stated that she and Christy have received numerous complaints and referenced one of the complaints (handout) recently regarding lack of CapTel services in Delaware, adding that she diverts these complaints to Verizon who made the decision not to offer CapTel in Delaware. Loretta said she encourages individuals to speak to government entities, including the Legislature. Loretta spoke about a call from the Governor's Office that Jo had received and she responded in Kyle's absence. Loretta added that she also received a call from Rep. Quinn Johnson in this regard. Loretta stated that no final action had been taken regarding this in three years and asked if a subcommittee should be established, and how best to resolve this issue. Loretta suggested forming a subcommittee which would be open to the public and asked for feedback. Kyle spoke about the need to establish a subcommittee or bring it up again at a DETRS meeting. Terry stated that the providers of the relay service stated they would not fund the CapTel service. Kyle commented that dollars would be difficult to find at this time. Kyle recommended if a subcommittee is formed, that the Hearing Loss Association of Delaware (HLADE) be involved. Loretta commented that this service is not included in Verizon's contract with Sprint. Loretta added that DATI has contacted her several times and web CapTel is offered, but many, including senior citizens, are not comfortable with that choice. Josh suggested building on the discussions with DATI and getting these groups together to send a letter. Terry suggested that this should be a joint venture. Terry added that it would involve writing legislation and addressing funding issues. Loretta will email (and copy Kyle) to check with Jim Cole on how much this service would cost. Kyle will check with Julia about cost since she had done an analysis of different states. Terry asked if texting has reduced the need for the relay service. Loretta commented that it has been reduced, especially with 4G now available on cell phones. Kyle will get the information indicated above and then the Council will decide on a path forward.

Establish Subcommittee on Hearing Aid & Medicaid Project of Adults with Hearing Loss

Loretta stated that those just above the poverty line do not qualify for financial assistance in obtaining a hearing aid. Loretta added that due to the economy and the cost of hearing aids, there is no funding available for hearing aids. Loretta wanted to know if there is interest in setting up a subcommittee to address this issue, adding that insurance does not cover this need. Loretta explained that anyone over age 24 is not eligible for assistance in paying for hearing aids, which can cost up to \$2,000 and people, especially senior citizens, do not have the money to pay. Kyle will contact Medicaid and get a cost (fiscal note). Loretta will forward Kyle the emails she has received from constituents regarding this. Loretta added that The Lion's Club has a two-year waiting list due to lack of funding.

Rescheduling of June Meeting

Loretta explained that due to another meeting being held by GACEC (Governor's Advisory Council on Exceptional Citizens) that she and Kyle need to attend, she suggested that the June 15th meeting be moved. A decision was made to move the June 15th meeting to June 22 at 12:30 pm. Kyle will send out a confirming email on the location.

World Language Teacher Certification

Kyle will speak with Peg briefly about this after the meeting and this topic will be added to the September agenda.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Kyle announced that he and several others are meeting with officials from the University of Delaware in an attempt to get them to accept ASL as qualifying World Language credits. Kyle added that Delaware State University does accept ASL as a World Language.

Josh spoke of a publication entitled "Odyssey" from Gallaudet University and referenced an interesting article about a program in New Mexico's School for the Deaf called "Deaf Role Model Program", which was established in the 2008-09 school year. Josh added that children who are identified with hearing loss through an early intervention program are placed with trained deaf role models who work with the children and their families. Josh added that this is the first program of this type in the country and the program provides exposure to language, walking through processes regarding placement, etc. Josh will speak to Della Thomas about this and suggested putting this on the September agenda.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, June 22 at 12:30 PM, Delaware School for the Deaf, B-6 Conference Room. Lunch will be provided.

Respectively submitted,

Jo Singles
Administrative Specialist

CODHHE/minmay11.doc