

CODHHE MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, November 19, 2008
6:30 PM – Delaware School for the Deaf
Newark, Delaware

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joe Drexler, WCD; Christy Hennessey, IRI; and Richard Pelletier, Chair

GUEST: Wanda Strickland, DelTech Student; Dan Fendler, DATI

INTERPRETERS

Lois Steele
Eileen Casey

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Julia stated she was at the May meeting. Regarding the following sentence pertaining to HB 355: “Kyle stated that this bill will require insurance companies to cover hearing aids up to \$1,000 per individual hearing aid every three years for persons less than 24 years old.”, Linda suggested that “\$1000” be “\$1500” and that the bill was for people through the age of 24. Please note that staff checked and the bill covers hearing aids up to \$1,000 per individual hearing aid every three years for persons up to age 24. Therefore, the minutes are correct. Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the minutes as amended.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Motion was made, seconded and approved to accept the Treasurer’s report as submitted. Peg will be sending Kyle a check to put into the State account.

BUSINESS

CapTel

Louisiana, Massachusetts and Delaware are the only states that don’t have CapTel. 71% of the U.S. has Internet access and can use digital CapTel; therefore 29% cannot use digital CapTel. Sprint is the provider and contracts with Verizon. It was noted that

everything is being switched from analogue to digital systems and therefore analogue CapTel may be antiquated in the next couple of years. The Council needs to determine if it is worth it at this point to advocate for analogue CapTel in DE. Linda will try to determine the FCCs position on this issue and develop a report to present to CODHHE. Kyle will try to determine if there is new information on the cost.

Visor Card & Identifiers

Loretta reported that the Visor Card Press Event was suppose to take place on Oct. 28th, but was cancelled. The Dept. of Safety and Homeland Security cancelled thought that more representation was needed from various groups to hold the event. A similar event will be scheduled soon.

Kyle reported that there is now an interest from the U.S. Attorney's Office to develop a system where law enforcement knows that a driver is deaf or hard of hearing prior to pulling them over. This would require some type of identifier in the registration system so an officer can type in a license plate # and then get the information. The Council thought this was a good idea, but it would not capture all drivers (e.g. someone who is deaf that is driving someone else's vehicle, a rent a car). CODHHE still believes the best method is to have a restriction or code on the driver's license. Those solutions will require systems changes and much funding. CODHE believes the visor card alternative at this point is the visor card.

Kyle will talk with DMV and the U.S. Attorney's office to determine if they may want to attend a CODHHE meeting.

VRS/IP Relay to 911 Centers

Terry reported that the FCC has mandated that by December 31, 2008 VRS and IP Relay service providers must deliver emergency calls to Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) via the existing 9-1-1 networks. This includes providing on the ANI/ALI screens the caller's registered location and callback number, as well as the VRS provider company name with Video Interpreter (VI) identification number or IP Relay provider company name with Communication Assistant (CA) identification number.

All 9-1-1 communication centers are encouraged to share the information in trainings. It is imperative that call takers are familiar with the unique processes involved in ensuring that all emergency calls are handled as efficiently and effectively as possible. The new mandate will treat these calls just like all other calls. Calls using Video Relay Service (VRS) or Internet Protocol (IP) Relay Service present additional challenges for call takers. The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) and the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) International have collaborated to develop an training packages for 9-1-1 communication centers throughout the United States.

Terry also noted that there is a petition being distributed on allowing interpreters to provide information, where appropriate, and not simply interpret what the deaf user is signing. For example, an interpreter should be permitted to describe what he or she sees over the videophone and respond directly to any questions from the PSAP regarding what the interpreter sees via the video connection to the caller's premises. This would allow interpreters to describe the scene of the emergency to the PSAP and to provide potentially critical information to emergency personnel that they would not otherwise

obtain. It would also allow interpreters to step in and describe a situation accurately when the deaf user is unable to do so. This will prove helpful when users become incapacitated after dialing 911, become overwrought by the emergency, or, in more extreme situations, feel threatened and believe that they will be harmed if they provide certain information.

Basically, what we are asking is that the VRS/IP relay providers allow the interpreter to answer questions from the 9-1-1 dispatcher. Right now, the order is pretty gray on what they can and cannot provide.

Internship with Police Department

It was agreed to put this on the next agenda.

DMV Driver License Testing Procedures

Kyle provided the latest version of these procedures and SCPDs Oct. 2nd comments. SCPD had noted that it is dangerous to have a technician driving with an applicant with no means of effective communication. Kyle wanted to address previous concerns about SCPDs suggestions of:

A. The DMV could train a few technicians in basic ASL which is the predominant form of communication for the Deaf. The test is fairly repetitive so the level of ASL sophistication could be modest.

B. The DMV could hire or contract with 1-2 individuals who are proficient in ASL and train them to be technicians.

Kyle clarified that the policy calls for no use of interpreters at all in the car. These suggestions are only if DMV is adamant about the policy in this context and these are simply other reasonable accommodations.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Respectively submitted,

Kyle Hodges
CODHHE Administrator

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