

DHHS – East Central Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

May 16, 2006

4:30 – 6:15 p.m.

DHHS Conference Room, St. Cloud

Meeting called by Ernest Watson

Type of Meeting: Advisory Board's Meeting

Facilitator: Ernest Watson

Note Taker: Deb Riehl

Attendees: Ernie Watson, Beth Schultz, Laura Schmit, Deb Riehl, Jody Gertken-Teter

Absentee: Linda Henrickson

Staff Members Present: Rich Diedrichsen, Regional Manager; Diane Leonard,

Consultant: Lisa Hennen, Staff Interpreter Coordinator who interpreted the meeting.

Ernie called the meeting to order. The minutes from the last meeting were reviewed and no mistakes were found.

The position Susan Franks from Downtown St. Cloud Sertoma Club held needs to be replaced. A person has been contacted and paper work has been sent a second time as the first paper work was not received back. Recommendations from the group were asked for. Diane will attempt to contact the same person about Committee membership.

MCDHH Report (Beth Schultz) was made.

Cliff Miller

Cliff Miller is no longer representing the SHHH group. He was very involved and a great advocate. He died of liver cancer. Whether or not that position will be filled immediately will be discussed at the full Commission meeting on Friday, May 19.

HIPAA Law

The newborn screening (HIPAA law) has not been as successful as it was hoped it would be. Some new parents are opting out of the screening. The hope is to toughen up the law and make it a mandatory screening. Parents have the right to say no regarding their infant being screened for a hearing loss. Parents can currently reject the screening for their newborn, but the law will change to make the screening mandatory.

Discussion about who referrals are made to and who they should be made to when a screening indicates that a child has a hearing loss. Referrals should be made to DHH Services, the school district, an audiologist such as NTD clinic, which is who currently get the referrals.

Discussion led to the conclusion that a packet should be created with information from DHH Services and the school district which could be offered to parents when a screening indicates that a hearing loss occurs. Parents often don't know where to turn as they are in shock and denial about the hearing loss their child is experiencing. They don't know where to turn or what to do. Perhaps a

packet of options would help offer resources and help them have some idea of what to do and where to begin.

DHHS

Currently CSD has a contract with 27 different hospitals which have contracts with individual interpreters. So far this seems to be a good solution for the hospitals and the deaf consumers. Currently there are three full-time interpreters who are on call for 8 hour shifts. They show up at the CSD office and go to the hospital when the call comes in.

A pilot study has been proposed for a hearing person to teach sign language to 600 children at the preschool level. The bill was dropped and did not pass.

EIPA (Educational Interpreter Proficiency Assessment) bill

This bill is currently being reviewed by the RID and MCDHH will be involved in the discussion. If it is accepted by the RID, it will be amended to become a law... The efficiency of EIPA is not clear. Free lance and educational interpreting are separate entities. The breakdown would probably be K-3, 3-6, 6-9, and 9-12. The whole system is very complicated. Beth will keep us informed as to future events relating to this bill.

There was a movement to attempt to add RSC (Reverse sign language certificate). It was defeated immediately.

There is a desire to clarify the bill as it stands and make it more user friendly...to make it clearer. ACCI has changed to NAD. School Districts need the law to be written in a way that is easier to understand.

Closed Captioning

No one has noticed a lot of differences. Some things are captioned throughout the program; others are captioned part way through but not entirely. This is frustrating for the consumer. Consumers should complain when they are not satisfied. TVs which are 13 inches or larger are captioned. Sets which are smaller than 13 inches are not. The companies which do captioning do not seem to understand the difference between subtitles and captions. The National Captioning Institute in Virginia can force everything to be subtitled.

Bill S1955

The insurance companies are working together to ensure that they will not have to pay for hearing aids, audiologists, mental health issues, diabetic supplies, chemical dependency issues, optometrists, etc. This is a huge threat to the health of all Minnesotans. On Friday we will know for sure what happens with this bill.

Update: This bill did not pass!!!

Regional DHH Report by Rich Diedrichsen and Diane Leonard

Parent Survey. The results of the online and the paper surveys were tallied. Our focus is the central Minnesota area, but the results were of the statewide surveys completed. A total of 119 were completed. The consensus is that Parent Conferences need to be within specific regions of the state. Our needs are different than those of other regions of the state. A collaboration of DHH Services and the school district would probably be the best benefit to the parents.

Central Minnesota was the third largest group in the state. Eventually, there will probably be a statewide conference, but there seems to be the need for a local/regional meeting sooner than the statewide conference will occur. The topics of interest in Central Minnesota are community options, literacy, and technology. A workshop on these topics of high interest will be the focus of the regional conference.

Driver's Ed.

The students are currently working with their lawyers and no one on the Board has any specific information. We have to wait and see what will happen.

Recent Activities

There have been three displays up to advertise Better Speech and Hearing month (May) which focuses on preventing hearing loss whenever possible.

Lifetracks Resources

There is currently a parent mentor program. They have folders which are filled with resources available to parents of kids recently diagnosed with a hearing loss. They should also include a reference to the educational system.

Volunteers of American

There is counseling available to local DHH kids. The classroom teachers can't make the decision about participation. A meeting needs to be set up to dialogue with superintendent/principals. The counseling is available to go into the schools and to work with families. Joyce Atchison is willing to go into the schools if that becomes available. Presentations will be made to all DHH teachers statewide at their meetings by DHH Services.

Legal Complaint

A client recently filed a complaint about a deaf individual being arrested and no interpreting services were available. We need to work toward continuity between the police, the jail, and court appearances as to the availability of interpreting services for deaf individuals. If we can get a good resolution and a policy can be established, we can send it to other DHHS offices out state.

Emergency Planning Project

There is a committee working on this issue. Lisa worked with Red Cross to establish a process and policy for working with DHH clients in the case of a disaster/emergency. Seven people have volunteered to be on a list to work on a specific disaster site. The local Red Cross needs to have a kit ready which includes a TTY, an amplified phone, a pocket talker, etc. at a potential shelter site to assure immediate access for DHH clients.

A community forum is being planned where we can join, listen and plan for the next five years. The meeting is for everyone interested from our community. The meeting is set for Tuesday, October 3, from 6:30 – 8:30 pm. The location is not yet known, but possibly the Community Ed. Building, or the North Jr. High School Auditorium.

Bonding Bill – Frechette Hall at MSAD

There is currently a bill in the legislature, which would create a treatment program for DHH clients in Frechette Hall at MSAD. This program would require a large sum of money to remodel the Hall. It would become a live-in program for DHH individuals with chemical dependency issues. How much money is needed is not known.

Relay issues

There is current legislation which would allow the Relay operator to disconnect if illegal action is being discussed.

Video Relay Services

The St. Cloud Library currently has a video phone, Central Lakes College will get one, and St. Cloud Technical College will get one. The video phone at the public library has settings which cannot be changed. It will not save conversations. Jody is the new installer and has been working with that since March. If the video phone at the library is used well, other libraries will be contacted about installing them in other locations. The St. Cloud project is a pilot project.

Committee Update

Twenty three students are expected to participate in the track and field day. Hopefully the numbers will increase next year. Several schools had conflicts with the specific date chosen. High School and Jr. High School students will help run the events. The students will meet Friday at Discovery School. The events will run from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm. The deaf softball players cannot take time away from their jobs to help out. If this year is successful, we will try to contact them again next year.

SNO Committee

Want to plan kids Silent Day Out. We could try to connect it to the track and field day in the future. This year there was a conflict with the national sports center in Blaine where the state meet was held. We want our own because of the limits of the school day. With an hour ride each way, it leaves about an hour and a half for the kids to actually participate in events. Also, the price of gas makes travel money an issue. All are invited if they have time to show up.

Plays

MSAD Spring Play in April at Tech High school. About 150 total in attendance. Interpreted plays at the high school.

Tech says yes

Apollo wants more information – do we have enough school interpreters who are interested and willing? Costs are much higher if free lance interpreters are hired.

Fundraising

Nothing so far. What does the group want to do? What do we need the money for? We currently have:

Deaf Duckling, New Clothes for the Emperor, interpreted performances at Paramount Theater, SNO Activities, Deaf Club, Softball, and Volleyball.

Goal is to set up funding resources so we can take advantage of opportunities which might arise. Having NTID here if the funds were available would be wonderful, or to pull in something from the Minneapolis area. Those are good ideas, but would it mean charging admission to the events? Would people show up?

Idea is tabled for now...we'll wait and see what happens.

MADC Board Meeting

There will be goal setting meetings around the state. The meetings will be traveling. There is a meeting set for Sept. 9, 2006 in St. Cloud. This is to be a team building workshop in morning with the goal of working for a better future. The time has been established, but the location has not. The MADC board meeting will be after lunch.

Update: As of now, it will be at Newman Center on SCSU campus. MADC – D.E.A.F. meeting will be at 8:30 a.m. Team Building workshop starts at 10:30 a.m. Potluck lunch at 12:30 p.m. After that, MADC Board meeting will start.

911 Workshop

The DHH Services Division wants to work on preparedness. The plan is to have a 911 presentation for deaf individuals. The workshop would explain what 911 is for...which situations are appropriate to call 911. The meeting would be brief and include the need for short descriptions of what the situation is...and of the need to send someone right away. We would like to set up this workshop for fall at the dispatch center. Don't want to include MADC in this workshop...want only our region involved. Want to include St. Cloud Deaf Club. Jody attended a similar workshop in Duluth. The explanation of what to do in an emergency was good. What to keep in preparedness kit like food, water, paper towels, sleeping bag, etc. Discussion of various specific situations including skits was helpful. Made her stop and consider things she'd not thought about before. The workshop in Duluth was a two-hour workshop. Real time captioning was helpful at the Duluth workshop too.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2006 from 4:30 – 6:00 pm.