

Minutes for East Central DHHSD Advisory Committee Meeting
January 13, 2009

Member Present: Dr. Rebecca Crowell, Linda Hendrickson, Brenda Hommerding, Michelle Isham, JoLynn Larson, Ernest Watson

Members absent: Jody Gertken-Teter, Beth Schultz, Emily Smith-Lundberg

Guests: Jean Euteneuer and Hearing Dog Lexie (presenters), Diane Wilcox (Opportunity Services)

Staff: Rich Diedrichsen, Diane Leonard and Jennifer Robinson (interpreter)

Meeting was called to order by Diane Leonard who announced that chairperson Beth Schultz was not able to attend; also unable to attend were Jody Gertken-Teter and Emily Smith-Lundberg (new member). Minutes from the September meeting were reviewed and Brenda offered one change, there are four EHDI Regions not three. Rich agreed to change this on the official minutes. Ernie moved to accept the minutes as amended and Brenda second, motion carried.

Diane introduced the new members and gave a brief resume for each. Michelle, teacher of DHH from Stearns-Benton Educational Coop, will also be the new MCDHH representative for our East Central Region. JoLynn is the parent of a Deaf Child and lives in Monticello. Emily is from the Brainerd area and works with Camp Confidence (Camp Sertoma).

DHHSD Report: Rich mentioned the budget information in the media and noted that we are still doing the same work in our region. It is possible we will have some additional cuts, but we expect to still be able to offer DHHSD services in the coming years. He noted that the Central MN Hearing Aid Bank received a grant from Sertoma recently so they can continue to serve the region. Our Pathways to Employment (PTE) initiative in the region received a grant so we could purchase some needed additional equipment. Rich briefly explained the program and services of PTE.

Diane noted that the office is focusing on services to seniors, particularly in the area of assistive technology education this year. All-day trainings are continuing and we had one in Brainerd in October and one is scheduled for Mora in May 2009. Diane gave a brief overview of what is covered in the all-day trainings. Question was asked about attendance and who attends? Diane noted that average attendance is 30-40 and mostly professionals come but anyone can attend, especially parents. She noted that the State Wide Hard of Hearing Conference is coming to St. Cloud in March and Rich handed out brochures. She noted a summary of other work and Rich noted that we have reports on our work-plan and activities and these are public documents if anyone wishes to review them.

New Business: Michelle noted that the Annual Winter Camp for regions 5 and 7 will be February 26-27, 2009 at Camp Confidence. Dr. Ron Lyberger is coming April 16 and will do workshops for professionals and families on the Stress that can occur when working with Deaf or Hard of Hearing Clients. These workshops will be in St. Cloud, MN. There is a SNAP (Socialization, Networking, Advocacy and Parent Support) social event scheduled for March in Monticello, but they are still trying to raise the cost for site rental (\$22.00/hour for about 3 hours). April 8 the ASL film Legend of the Mountain Man will be shown in Monticello. This is a \$10.00 admission

fundraiser for SNAPS events. A PENS (Parent, Empowerment and Networking Support) event will be held in Willmar area in the spring and a flyer will be sent with additional information.

Concerns: There is still concern about TV captioning and Rich explained that all concerns should be forwarded to staff and we will send them on the MCDHH who is addressing this concern. Rich also noted that one of the most powerful things any consumer can do is watch for the announcements that the station is applying for renewal of the License to Broadcast from the FCC. When this happens they will tell you that if you have any comments about the renewal of the license, you can direct your concerns to.... This is everyone's chance to send comments for the FCC to see that say; "this station is supposed to operate in the public interest, yet they do not serve the interest of people who are deaf or hard of hearing. They do not caption some programs or emergency warnings even though this is mandated. The FCC has a lot of power with the stations since they can delay or cancel their license to operate.

Presentation: Jean Euteneuer and hearing dog, Lexie, presented on the hearing dog program and how to qualify for the program. She also talked about the training, responsibilities and other obligations one has if they wish to own a certified hearing dog. She answered questions on the rights of hearing dog owners and some of the common challenges with public places. She also answered questions about eligibility and noted that the program has a web-site www.hsdm.org where people could get additional information, apply for services and read more stories of owners, etc.

MISC.: Diane thanked Erie Watson and Apollo High School for allowing us space for the meeting tonight. Our next meeting will be May 12, 4:30 – 6:30.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.