

DHHS ~ METRO ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, June 7, 2011

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jennifer Anderson, Lynn Bloom, Laura Godfrey, Joe O'Brien, Deanna Rothbauer, Jan Swanson, Jason Valentine

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sue Brabeck,

OTHERS PRESENT: Rochelle Garrow, Administrator of the Telecommunication Access Minnesota (TAM) Program, Marie Koehler, DHHS Manager; Stephen Medicott and Sharisse Leier, DHHS staff interpreters; Lisa Richardson, CART provider; Kristi – Lisa's intern.

I. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER/INTRODUCTIONS:

The meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m. Members introduced themselves and were informed that Melinda Johnston resigned from the advisory committee and plans to stay home with her new baby. Rochelle Garrow, from the Department of Commerce, introduced herself and was welcomed. She explained that the TAM Program funds Minnesota Relay and The TED Program (as well as other programs).

II. ACTION ON TUESDAY, MARCH 8, 2011 MINUTES:

Rochelle noted that under IV TED/Minnesota Relay, bullet 3, that "Public Utilities Commission" should be replaced with the "Department of Commerce." Jason made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, Laura seconded.

III. DHHS UPDATE REPORT:

- Related to the DVD Hearing Aid Maintenance project, Laura emphasized that parents also have a lot of questions about hearing aid care and suggested the DVD be geared more generally. Marie did request that 2 DVDs be created, one geared for nursing home staff and another more general one. The students from the university who are volunteering to create this DVD are willing to consider this request, but it all depends on time and the amount of work required. Laura suggested information on hearing aid dryers be included in the DVD.
- The recent promotional efforts of Metro TED staff (targeting special populations groups such as care providers (the "sandwich generation") and parents who have a child with a hearing loss, appear to be effective. The number of applications is on the rise.

IV. TED/MINNESOTA RELAY:

A. TED Update

- Rochelle explained that TAM is transitioning Minnesota Relay outreach efforts from CSD to the TED Program. This change makes good business sense. Minnesota Relay and TED already complement each other; TED staff possesses an understanding of Minnesota Relay, are familiar with the telephone technology and are connected with many of the same stakeholders in their regions. The 3 CSD staff was all housed in the Metro area and TED staff is located statewide. Marie added that TED staff already incorporates information about Minnesota Relay in many of their presentations and when working with consumers. Rochelle said that new duties will include outreach to businesses and training about Speech-to-Speech services. The target date for this transition is July 1st.

B. Feedback Regarding Minnesota Relay, Including CapTel:

Not discussed.

V. OLD BUSINESS:

A. Emergency Interpreter Advocacy Project:

- Heather Gilbert, who presented on this topic at our March meeting, did follow through as requested and wrote an article for the HLAA TC newsletter regarding this service. The article can be accessed on the HLAATC website or by contacting Marie.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

A. Appointment of New Chairperson:

- Marie asked members to consider accepting the chairperson position for this committee. Duties were explained. Due to limited time, Marie asked members to think about this and contact her before the next meeting.

B. Pathways to Employment (PTE) VIDYO Technology Demo:

- Each DHHS office now has a laptop with VIDYO software so that this technology can be demonstrated to employers who employ people who are Deaf/HOH and use sign language to communicate. It is much more cost effective because an employer pays per minute versus a 2 hour base rate for a freelance interpreter. It can greatly enhance communication and productivity in the work place.
- Marty Barnum from CSD called Marie on Metro's laptop computer equipped with an external camera and speaker and members were shown how this service would work.
- Marie shared the Metro plans to have an "Open House" for employers to demonstrate this and other PTE equipment.

C. NEW Minnesota Deaf Rights Website:

- Members were encouraged to check out this new website created by MCDHH which comprehensively includes information on all state laws that are related to hearing loss. The alphabetical index makes it easy to find statutes that relate to a topic area. Long term, MCDHH plans to incorporate federal laws onto this site. It will be a great tool for both consumers and service providers.
(www.deaf-rights.state.mn.us)

D. Set Meeting Date for September:

- Marie suggested a meeting date of either September 13 or September 14. Members were agreeable to either date. **NOTE: The next meeting is: Tuesday, September 13 from 10:00 - Noon.**

VII. Commission of Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Minnesotans (MCDHH) UPDATE REPORT:

- Jason shared that MCDHH is assisting Thompson Hall with submitting an application to qualify the building as a Historical National Site. Such designation will allow Thompson Hall to apply for federal grants. The application has to be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office, the State Review Board and the National Park Service.
- Bruce Hodek talked about the budget challenges that DHHS faces and their efforts to obtain funding from the Children's Mental Health Division which can be directed toward children with hearing loss. There has been resistance from the Children's Mental Health Division to provide funding. MCDHH will work with DHHS to pursue this funding.
- MCDHH plans to upgrade their website to be a model of accessibility. They plan to incorporate web conferencing capabilities, links to social networking sites, etc.
- Jason's full meeting minutes will be emailed to members.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Joe shared that on his recent visit to Red Rock Canyon he learned that people with a permanent hearing loss (or other permanent disability), qualify for a FREE life-time pass to any national park or forest.
- Marie thanked Jennifer for her time and contributions to this advisory committee. She may move to Texas prior to our next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:54 a.m. for the Meet and Greet meeting.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING THE DHHS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING!

