

Southwest Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, April 4, 2011 (Rescheduled from 3-11-11)

2:00 – 3:30 pm – Ability Building Center – Conference Room

Present: Jean Correll, Julie Oakland, Sue Gensmer, and Mary Ellen Bondhus (via phone conference).

DHHS Staff present: Tracy Bell.

Interpreters: Stephen Medicott.

- I. Tracy opened the meeting with introductions. Wes Brandenburger led a very fascinating tour of Ability Building Center facilities. Wes also talked about the assistive equipment library program at ABC – it is available for anyone who needs to borrow assistive devices on a short term basis. The most popular item that is loaned is the IPAD2. Thank you, Wes for taking the time to give the members a tour.
- II. Mary Ellen Bondhus joined us via phone conference after the tour.
- III. Tracy gave staff updates:
 - a. Dawn Crowson the administrative assistant, retired in December.
 - b. Paula MacDonald resigned in December.
 - c. Jenny Stenner was hired in December for a temporary four month assignment as a program consultant. Her assignment ends on 4/7.
 - d. Jerry Pouliot was also hired for the same four month assignment and his assignment ends on 4/28. Both Jenny and Jerry were hired to catch up on services in the Southern region.
 - e. Nancy Karkoska is still serving Southern MN as the TED Specialist.
 - f. Sara Swanson continues to be a part time program interpreter, working two days a week.
 - g. Administrative Assistant is hoped to be hired in the coming weeks. We are working on the posting for the consultant, but the process is lengthy because of the several different levels it must go through before posting.
 - h. Advisory members want the names and contact of current DHHS staff. This is attached to the minutes.
- IV. Report from Tracy Bell, Regional Manager
 - a. Tracy discussed the roles of the staff as listed above. Jenny and Jerry have been working with consumers in Southern Minnesota, particularly with the southeast area, trying to strengthen the relationship again with the deaf community after the closure of the Rochester office.

- b. Jenny and Jerry also are setting up monthly meetings or presentations in the Rochester area. The next events are on April 9 and May 10.
 - i. On April 9, ZVRS will present to the Rochester Deaf Community on ZVRS and their equipment.
 - ii. On May 10, Stephen Medlicott, the mental health staff interpreter from the St. Paul office and Tracy will present to the deaf community and other interested people on working with interpreters.

- V. Feedback /Reports from Advisory Members
 - a. They request that flyers with events be sent to them.
 - b. Members would like an updated list of staff serving DHHS in the Southern Region.

- VI. MCDHH Alerts
 - a. www.mncdhh.org is the website for further information.
 - b. Tracy encouraged Advisory Committee members to add their email address to MCDHH Alerts. Also to encourage others outside the Advisory Committee to sign up to receive alerts.
 - c. Next MCDHH meeting is on May 20.

- VII. Future Meetings and Agenda Development
 - a. Due to reductions of staff and an office, both Rochester and Mankato Advisory Committees will meet face to face two times a year and the other two times a year via email update sent to members.
 - b. Next face to face meeting will be on October 4, 2011 from 4:30 to 6:00 in Rochester. Location TBA.