

# Advisory Committee Meeting

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*Southwest*

*12 Civic Center Plaza, Suite 1670 Mankato, MN 56001*

*Tuesday, June 13, 2018*

**Chairperson:** Howard Rosten

**Members:** Jacqui Shasky, Mike Goodlander

**Guest(s):** Chandra Petersen (attended due to conflict with SE AC meeting date)

**Absent:** Lisa Dembouski, Cassie Ramerth, Curt Slater

**Staff:** Tracy Bell, Dan Millikin (Vidyo)

**Interpreter:** Sara Swanson

**Note taker:** Tracy Bell

## Director Updates:

- Redesign. There has been some dialogue in the past year relating to the redesign. We have been following the same vision and model since day one – almost 40 years. Same structure and operations. Over the last 40 years we have seen changes in the people we serve – increase in people with dual sensory loss, as well as improved technology. We are also in the process of modernizing the TED program. Regional offices will be more program based. We are looking at keeping the Mankato office, and assigning a specialist to Rochester to focus on the SE region and Faribault.
- DHHS Act requires that we have six regional site centers to provide services through the state for the population we serve. Talked about how things have changed over the last 40 years – needs of people with hearing loss, increase in people with dual sensory loss, advances in technology. The study showed how we can improve services and provide services in an effective and efficient manner.
- We are looking at continuing services without brick and mortar, or have staff work remotely, satellite, co-locate with another agency. We don't have the answer but we are resistant to the idea of having 100% virtual offices. Our goal is to look at the makeup of our regional offices to encourage spreading out of our staff to different parts of the state. We are state services and we need to have some physical attachment. We are looking at the fiscal impact on the number of positions required to meet current and future needs for services because we follow the funds we receive from legislation.

- The reporting channels for supervisors and managers will change. Our current set up is that regional managers supervise Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialists, TED specialists, Administrative Assistants (OASIs), Interpreter Specialists in their regional office. Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialists will report to a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist Supervisor who will be housed in St. Paul and will be responsible for overseeing Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialists statewide. The goal, albeit not guaranteed, is to add three new specialist positions to our current seven specialist positions. TED specialists will report to the TED Administrator. Central Office operations (contracts, budget, grants, strategic plans, etc.) and the Mental Health program will remain intact.
- Information and Referral Services will be a new program based in St. Paul, and staff from this program will work with all offices statewide. They will be responsible for doing the legwork of developing information and referral services, and coordinating services.
- The goal is to have plans in motion by the end of this year, 2018.
- Our statewide meeting is on June 14 & 15, and staff were sent an agenda for the meeting. The focus is on one word – equity. DHS is pushing forward under Community Supports Administration (includes behavioral health, housing supports, Disability Services Division and DHHS) in incorporating equity in our services and how we tailor services to meet certain needs in our community. We focus on people with hearing loss in general – senior citizens, culturally deaf and ASL users, immigrants and refugees, deafblind individuals. We provide grants to nonprofit service providers and we have the right to mandate them to include specific focus of services.
- This year’s legislative session just finishing its bonding year. They took a look at finance and dollars. Next year is the primary year, and legislators will propose bills, do legislative reviews, make decisions, vote to make proposals into law, add/take away changes in statutes. Next year will be a big year and we are evaluating our priorities for FY 19.
- We have focused on the same model for many years, and this is where our advisory committee meetings become important – any stories, narratives, and anything that is important, please bring to the table.

### **Community Updates:**

Howard Rosten:

- Works for SMILES, and builds handicap accessible ramps, and they are very busy during this time of the year. He has done a couple of presentations at Lutheran Social services, caregivers in New Ulm and Fairfax, talking about different services to help with families with various issues. He does mention DHHS and TED. The TED program continues to be one of the best kept secrets, and it doesn’t matter how much he talks about TED, many

people still unaware of the program. He still manages the STAR equipment loan program and in February and March there were a lot of loans.

Chandra Petersen:

- Returned from maternity leave two months ago. Last Friday MSAD finished school, and she met with a few students. MSAD started a transition program for ages 18-21. They used to have this program and then stopped because there were no students, and now will have five students this fall. A lot of the students Chandra serves are Kenyan and Somalian, and they have different language levels and abilities. She is trying to be creative with the resources in rural Minnesota, and this is really challenging but it is a good way to see what services are out there and collaborates a lot with DHHS, ThinkSelf, county services, WorkForce Center. She provides services in southeast MN from Faribault up to Red Wing. She has 60 people on her case load, which includes a large number of students. She also serves students from northern MN if they are attending MSAD. We have lost access to job placement providers who have sign language skills. The Mankato area is fine, there is one option, however Rochester does not have any options of providers who know sign language to work with deaf consumers who need job placement. We are looking for a part time person to provide services, willing to drive, job placement knowledge, sign language and knowledge of marketing, providing communication support. There is a new VR counselor in Marshall, Maggie Gould, and she works with deaf and hard of hearing consumers in that area.

Jacqui Shasky:

- Is a TDHH in Region 9, one of five TDHHS. They are down two teachers, they used to have seven teachers in their team. Makes it busier for teachers and we travel a lot to work with students in our region. We provide various activities throughout the year to allow students to get together since they live so far out from each other. For the 2018-19 school year, we will have two activities with the students – Camp Sertoma in October for two days to interact and meet other kids with hearing loss. We are trying to get funding for the day two trip and will be asking groups in the area for funding. The second activity that we will do is attend the interpreted play “The Grinch Who Stole Christmas” at the Children’s Theater. There is also a two week driver’s education class happening at MSAD this summer. Cost is \$300 for the class, and \$50 to stay in the dorm for two weeks.

Mike Goodlander:

- Works at VRS, and recently went through a role change to serve transition students, mostly seniors in high school up to age 24. He serves in the Mankato, St. Peter, Northfield, Faribault, Owatonna and Albert Lea regions.

**DHHS Updates:**

Tracy Bell:

- We have been doing business as usual – many consumers are asking for technical assistance, particularly for technology that works with their hearing aids, telephone equipment. We have been receiving a lot of donated hearing aids for our Hearing Aid Bank which are sent to Starkey for credit. Nancy Karkoska and Tony Davis have been doing many presentations together about our services, technology and the TED program. PG and I attended the Resource Fair at MSAD on May 4 and had booths to promote our services with graduating students and current high school students at MSAD. The TED program recently had an ad in the Mankato Free Press, and it will be published again on Sunday with the phone number.
- Sara Kreiling began the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Specialist position on May 10 as you know. She has been picking up on work with consumers, and she is wrapping up the DeafBlind Consumer Directed Services program so consumers can continue to receive services beyond June 30.
- Our OASI position remains vacant, however, we are hopeful to have a part time, temporary OASI position for six months, with this person providing support two days a week. This will help with office and phone coverage to free up staff time so they can serve consumers in the community.
- The mental health team attended the ADARA conference in Indiana in April. Christina Costello, the mental health specialist in the St. Cloud office will be leaving DHHS on July 6. The position will be posted after it goes through the approvals process.
- A training for CPSS (Certified Peer Support Specialists) will be offered on July 23-28 if you know of anyone who is interested in becoming a CPSS.
- The Metro DHHS office staff created the communication cards (hand out). Over 1600 of these have been handed out! If you would like more copies, please let me know or contact the Metro office (on hand out sheet).
- We continue to support the deaf community by hosting “deaf gatherings” in west MN and we collaborate the events with the St. Cloud office. The next event will be on July 24 in Olivia, and Sara Gerdts will be presenting to the group on a topic related to healthcare.
- The ADA anniversary event will be on July 26 and will be taking place in St. Paul. The Metro DHHS office will be participating in this event. Do you know of any ADA events in the region?
- Other than that – we have a statewide meeting on July 14 and 15. Many staff are attending the HLAA convention next weekend, and TED staff will be attending the TEDPA national conference in September.

#### FUTURE MEETING DATES:

- Friday, October 5 for Joint AC Meeting, 10:00 am-12:30 pm, Owatonna Public Library
- Friday, December 7