

DHHS - West Central Advisory Board Meeting
MINUTES
April 2nd
2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Willmar Health & Human Services Bldg. Conference Room 2057

Meeting Called By: Lisa Hennen
Type of Meeting: West Central Advisory Board Meeting
Facilitator: Lisa Hennen
Note Taker: Lisa Hennen
Attendees: Rosanne Kath, Dodie Johnsrud,
Adrienne Haugen, Ed Van Der Heiden, Deb Bruflat,
Jill Rohman, Jerry Pouliot, Stacey Abraham
(Interpreter).
Absentees:
Staff Members Present: Lisa Hennen, West Central Consultant; Rich
Diedrichsen, Regional Manager; Bruce Hodek,
Division Director; Sharisse Leier, Interpreter.

Agenda Topics

Topic: Welcome & Approval of Minutes for November Mtg.
(Membership Updates & Approval of Minutes)
Time Allotted: 5 Minutes
Facilitator: Advisory Council Members
Discussion: Minutes from Novembers Advisory Council Meeting were
approved. Introduction of new member, Jill Rohman. Jill is a
D/HH consultant with South West/West Central
Educational Cooperative. Jill formerly served on the
Mankato (southwest regional) Advisory Council for DHHS
and has transferred over to the West Central council. She
also is currently a member of the MCDHH and will replace
our current representative, Ade Haugen, when Ade's term is
completed in June.

Conclusion: NA

Topic: MCDHH REPORT -
Time Allotted: 20 Minutes
Facilitator: Ade Haugen & Jill Rohman
Discussion: March has been a busy month, several legislative efforts.

- Main goals of MCDHH have been focused at fighting cuts that and
preserving programming for deaf & hard of hearing.

- Current legislation, include amending the law that was passed in 2008 and reinstating school staff as operators of type three vehicles. This has directly affected West Central consumers, as the recent Deaf & Hard of Hearing Skating/ Social Events for students had to be cancelled since schools couldn't afford to hire drivers to bus the students to the even. In the past school staff had transported the students.
- MCDHH has also been advocating for accessible state websites and equipment. This requires technology be accessible & website and software and hard ware.
- The MCDHH is working toward reporting outcomes regarding d/hh students with the Dept. of Education.
- A new legislative effort, is being put forth to protect the tax status of non-profits and chartible organizations, such as Thomson Hall.
- Approximately 180 people attended legislative day. West Central Advisory Council member, Ade Haugen received an award in the Rotunda, for her outstanding contributions in Community Organization.

Conclusion: Check the website for updates www.mncdhh.org , contact Jill or Ade with any questions or information to bring to MCDHH.

Topic: DHHS Update West Central Hearing Aid Bank
Time Allotted: 35 Minutes
Facilitator: Ed Van Der Heiden & Lisa Hennen
Discussion:

- **West Central Hearing Aid Bank:**
 A Hearing Aid Bank is in the process of being established in West Central Minnesota. Currently 4 audiologist have committed to donating their time and services to the effort. A presentation and proposal was made to the Willmar Sertoma organization. They have since agreed to fund the hearing aid bank for one year, at the cost of \$1500.00. Negotiations have also occurred with Phonak to purchase hearing aids a dramatically reduced price, with the hope that the funding from Sertoma will provide for the Hearing Aid Bank to serve approximately 10 - 12 people.

Conclusion: Ed & Lisa will share more information as the bank becomes establish and is able to serve area residents.

- **Meeker County Memorial Hospital Access**
 In response to community concerns about the facility not being accessible to people with hearing loss a meeting was held in Litchfield with Lori Rice, MAOM Coordinator of Education & Marketing at Meeker Memorial Hospital. Lori agreed to review the hospitals policies and informed DHHS that

the hospital is currently under-going major remodeling and that now is the ideal time to replace or add new signage that includes information related to accessibility and assistive technology. The hospital is also in the process of reviewing what assistive technology they have and organizing it in a central place.

Conclusion: DHHS will continue to follow-up with the facility to ensure that it is accessible to the community.

- **Deaf Mentor Program**
A new mentor will soon be trained to provide services to families in the Hutchinson & Glencoe area.

Conclusion: Pending program funding and eligible families the mentor should be able to provide services in the near future.

- **Fire Alarm Project**
In collaboration with the Willmar Fire Department, a grant application has been prepared to request funding for flashing smoke alarms, however due to the lagging economy the grant has not opened.

Conclusion: Once the grant is open, the application will be submitted.

Topic: Budget of DHHS

Time Allotted: 30 minutes

Facilitator: Bruce Hodek

Discussion: Every two years the governor proposes & the state passes a budget, DHHS is currently monitoring the budget situation in anticipation of how it may impact services. The budget proposals start in January with the final budget occurring in May. Currently, DHHS monitors 2.2 million dollars in grant contracts. The current budget proposal from the governor proposes a 3% cut for fiscal year 2010 (\$42,000) and 2011(\$57,000) from these grant contracts. This number may rise or decline with legislative negotiations.

DHHS has 26 staff covering 8 regional offices throughout the state of Minnesota. This year DHHS took a 6% (\$200,000) cut in response to the deficit. The governor is proposing a 12 million dollar cut to the Dept. of Human Services over a two year span, this number could fluctuate up to 15 million. In the past reductions have been spread across divisions, this would equate to another 6% (\$200,000) reduction for DHHS, which would be difficult to absorb.

Currently DHHS is researching if it is possible to capture federal funding to cover employment related work to assist in diversifying division funding.

Conclusion: This is an update on the current situation. The final budget will not be known until later this fiscal year.

Topic: Concerns & Comments: West Central Minnesota

Time Allotted: 10 Minutes

Facilitator: Advisory Council Members.

Discussion:

- Caption has been improving, one consumer noted some issues with KSTP, but after a call to the station manager captioning resumed.
- Parents are seeking more networking time with each other during community events.
- Human Service Providers are also hearing of discussion regarding combining county services and creating 15 service sites throughout the state, which could make it difficult for seniors to obtain services.

Conclusion: Jill & Lisa will ensure that the next PENS event (April 20th) will have ample time at the beginning of the evening for the parents to network .

Topic: MRS

Time Allotted: 5 Minutes

Facilitator: Jerry Pouliot

Discussion: MRS has seen a reduction in the volume of calls, however they still are busy with many Deaf individuals still depending on ttys. MRS is celebrating 20 years of service. Information was shared regarding online CAPTEL services www.sprintcaptel.com . MRS has new brochures and Jerry is available to educate various agencies, schools, and employers on how to appropriately utilize MRS services .

Conclusion: Any questions, concerns, or educational needs related to MRS should be reported to Jerry Pouliot.

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 27th, 2009 2:00 p.m.

Adjournment: Adj. 3:50 p.m.

Special notes: NA