

West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Minutes
February 6, 2012

405 Capitol Street
Charleston, WV

Commission Members Present:	Commission Members Absent:	Commission Staff Present:	Visitors:	Interpreters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marty Blakely• Ruth Ann King (for Annette Carey)• Paul See• Lynn Boyer• Pam Roush• Angela Wilson• Tammy Phillips• Robin Simmons (for Christina Mullins)• Rachel Gill	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Charles Abraham• Jamie Mallory• James Ennis• Mike Sullivan• Pierre Sevigny	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marissa Sanders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• John Burdette	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connie Pitman• Brianna Butler

I. Call to Order

Marty Blakely called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Reading of Mission Statement and Introductions

Angela Wilson read the Mission Statement.

III. Minutes

Minutes from the December 9, 2011 meeting were reviewed. The minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. Staff Report

Marissa shared highlights from the written report.

- WVCDHH has permanently moved into the office at 405 Capitol St., Suite 800.
- Marissa updated the board on the smoke alarm project. She is waiting on approval to hire Barb King for a temporary position in which she will assist with the project. The application process will require an audiogram to determine eligibility and to determine what type of device is needed. DRS will provide financial assistance. Barb is working on the application and the Commission will be developing brochures.
- Marissa reported that in the future we may consider trying to loan other devices as well, like baby monitors.
- Nominations: Nomination committee has not taken any action. Applications have been received from John Burdette and Donna Williams. Donna is from Ohio so there is a question about whether she is eligible. By code, she is; however, the board will have to approve it. The nomination committee will meet soon to make recommendations to the board.
- Personnel: Marissa has not posted Roy's position yet as she is waiting on DOP to make a decision on classification.

OLD BUSINESS

V. Interpreter Task Force

Marissa provided an update. Final plans are still on hold; still waiting to hear from Virginia.

- Task Force decided to go with Virginia. The cost is too much to go with any other state.
- The TF considered required national certification but voted against that for several reasons:
 - It requires a BA.
 - The test is either pass or fail. There were some concerns about pass/fail.
 - There may be a second test in 2013 that requires a master's degree and that test does provide a level on that test.
 - The ITF doesn't feel that WV is in a situation to go with national testing at this time.
- There is concern about the testing fees. Virginia explained that interpreters can take the test for \$100 now, but eventually there will be an out-of-state rate of \$345. May happen as early as July 1. The ITF will encourage interpreters to go ahead and take the test.
- Plans include providing financial support in the future through DRS. Interpreters would apply for funding.
- Legislative rule needs to be changed to require test once every three years instead of the current requirement of two years. (Virginia requires every three years).

VI. State Code

The committee has not met.

- Marissa has heard comments that people want the board to be 50% deaf. Marissa explained that we can't seem to fill the positions we have vacant right now. She would like to hold on this for a year in order to get more information from constituents about why it is difficult to get board members. Angela Wilson made the motion to ask for this information at public forums, Lynn Boyer seconded. Motion approved.
- Questions for a survey for the Public Forums should include:
 - What is making you not want to serve?
 - What does the board need to be doing that it is not doing?
- We need to get a more accurate number of D/HOH in the state. Ideas of places to ask for numbers:

- Hearing aid dealers/audiologists
- School for the Deaf
- NAD
- DRS
- Board members need to do a written statement about their duties as a board members to share with the community.
- In researching the history of the Commission, several things originally requested to go in the state code never made it in. Board needs to decide whether to pursue those things or not.

VII. Blog/Facebook

- Marty recommended that we start a BLOG in order to communication more with the Deaf. Marissa explained that there are technology issues with the website. There is a different IT person and it has been moved to the back burner.
- It may be possible to have students from the School for the Deaf help with the BLOG.
- Paul See asked about the Commission having a Facebook account. The board must make a request to DHHR for a Facebook account. Rachel Gill made the motion for Marty to send a letter to DHHR requesting the Commission to have a Facebook page. Paul See seconded. Motion approved.

VIII. Legislative Update

Marissa gave an update. Two rules were submitted.

- Increase the Interpreter Pay Scale – This applies to agencies and courts. Increase matches the Virginia pay scale: \$50 an hour for certified and \$15 for non-screened. It was introduced into the house and the senate.
- Interpreter Registry – changed the period from 2 to 3 years. The rule-making committee did an analysis. The current rule applies to interpreters and transliterators, but transliterators are not in the code. The term transliterator was taken out of the rule but they are still covered by definition.
- ASL in schools: A study is focusing on creating an exception for ASL for courses. Currently, in order to teach someone must have a BA or Master's degree in Deaf Education. The exception would be that a BA degree in any field would be required and a test.
- Reclassification of school interpreters: This bill has a major barrier due to the state funding for schools. It is very complicated. Marissa had a meeting with educational interpreters in January that was very successful. It educated them on the legislative process.
- Tammy Phillips made the motion to approve the legislation priorities, Angela Wilson seconded. Motion approved.

New Business

IX. Hearing Aid Assistance

- Senator Yost wanted to get hearing aid batteries tax exempt. He uses hearing aids. The Fair Shake Network has been discussing setting up a fund to cover hearing aids.

X. 2012 WV Disability Consensus Agenda

Marissa shared the agenda and requested the board to consent to it. Both Paul and Dr. Boyer had concerns with the agenda, particularly the educational part. Dr. Boyer moved that we not accept this agenda at this time. Paul seconded. Motion approved.

XI. Strategic Plan

Commission Capacity Board/Staff Development

- Orientation for new board members.
- Develop a system to mentor new board members by the December meeting.
- Hire Jennifer Hill to do a face to face training that is videotaped at the fall retreat and conduct the training annually.

Public Engagement and Awareness

- Hold three town hall meetings in Romney, Charleston and Fairmont.
- Hold them in conjunction with other events like the alumni meeting in Romney in October or the annual picnic in Fairmont or Deaf Tech Fair.
- Events need to be advertised in the newsletter, BLOG, etc.

Plan and Conduct First Annual Conference

- Write a proclamation from the Commission for the state that the chairperson will develop a draft by May to identify ways to promote Deaf Awareness.
- Have a celebration during Deaf Awareness Week. Make it an event that children can participate in at the elementary level, art competition, etc. Then have different activities for the high school.

Establish a Facebook page

- Marissa will get the state Facebook policies and forward on to Marty.

Develop and implement a plan to promote the use of Sign Language Interpreters.

- Continue the Interpreter Task Force meetings.
- Develop a Directory of Interpreters.
- At annual conference, bring together employers, Deaf individuals, hospitals, etc. to inform them of interpreting services and using certified ASL interpreters.

Program Development

- Develop a clearinghouse and outreach program for Deaf/HOH, their families and the public, includes workshops.
- Information will be available on the WVCDHH website, and a link will be available for BOE, Birth to Three, services for families, services for adults such as DRS and services for children.
- Develop workshops to address the needs. (This may not be financially possible at this time).

Resource Development

- Board to become more involved, learn the process and develop increasing resources.
- Develop a mentorship program or new orientation program.
- Utilize the School for the Deaf and the BOE by increasing their access and availability to everyone.

Increase infrastructure staff/budget

- Marissa needs to advise on the needs and goals.
- Possibility of hiring a contract worker to do web design

XII. Public Comments

No public comments

XIV. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.

Next meeting: May 11 in Parkersburg (tentative). 10 a.m. start time.