

# West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Minutes  
August 6, 2015

Snowshoe Mountain Resort  
10 Snowshoe Drive, Snowshoe, West Virginia

Commission Members Present:	Commission Members Absent:	Commission Staff Present:	Visitors:	Interpreters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paul See</li><li>• Marty Blakely</li><li>• Gwen Bryant</li><li>• John Burdette</li><li>• Karen McNealy</li><li>• Rachel Gill</li><li>• Gloria Hollen</li><li>• Angela Wilson</li><li>• Tammy Phillips</li><li>• Pam Roush</li><li>• Nancy Sullivan</li><li>• Roy Forman</li><li>• Mekell Golden (proxy for C. Mullins)</li><li>• Erin Riggleman (proxy for M. Gandolfi)</li><li>• Ruth Anne King (proxy for A. Carey)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Susan White</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earnest Covington</li><li>• Sarah Lowther</li><li>• Rachel Torrence</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sean Gerlis</li><li>• Paula Forman</li><li>• Donna Williams</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ashley Cobb</li><li>• Stephenie Woodall</li></ul>

## I. Call to Order

Paul See called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

## II. Reading of Mission Statement and Introductions

Pam Roush read the Mission Statement.

## III. Public Comments

- Donna Williams
  - a. Continuing efforts to send out a monthly flier for Deaf and Hard of Hearing events.
  - b. Trying to recruit members of an educational committee with April Hottle.
  - c. WVAD wants to rewrite the Deaf Child Bill of Rights because they feel that it has no power. They are waiting on NAD to finalize a model so that WVAD can replicate it. The bill will have more power coming from NAD. Around 20 other states have Deaf Child laws. She wants WV to have one that is strong and enforceable.
  - d. Need to improve education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in public and Deaf schools. Earnest agreed and offered the support of WVCDHH.

#### **IV. Minutes**

The minutes from the May 8, 2015 meeting were reviewed. Minutes were approved.

#### **V. Staff Report**

Earnest Covington shared information from the written staff report.

- Highlights included:
  - a. Completing an annual report.
  - b. Updating the WVCDHH website and logo.
  - c. Setting up more Deaf and Hard of Hearing events statewide.
  - d. Presentation by Sean Gerlis from Communication Services for the Deaf. The presentation included information on services, devices, communication access, and technology offered by CSD, which may benefit members of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in West Virginia.
  - e. Budget information

#### **VI. Committee/Task Force Reports**

1. Executive Committee: no report
2. Interpreter Task Force:
  - Current members: Earnest Covington, Rachel Torrence, Liz Leisure, Donna Williams, Ruby Losh, Jennifer Casto, Antonia Vaughan, Janelle St. Martin, Christina Davis, Annette Carey, Rachel Gill, and Teresa McGonigle. The meetings are closed to the public.
  - The WVRI is being updated. There are 80 registered interpreters on the WVRI. 53 are in West Virginia. 27 are out of state. There are no Certified Deaf Interpreters in the state.
  - WV Deaf Awareness Day will be held on March 8, 2016 at the State Capitol.
  - Current projects:
    - a. Update the Interpreter Directory. It has been condensed to include only relevant information. It was approved by the Interpreter Task Force.
    - b. Create an interpreter pay scale to be included in the Interpreter Directory.
    - c. Discussing WVCDHH becoming a non-profit agency for interpreters.
    - d. Remove the three references requirement from WVRI registry process. A workaround now has the three members of the WVCDHH staff writing the three reference letters.
3. Nominating Committee: Roy Forman has been appointed to the board by the Governor. His term will expire on June 30, 2017. Tammy Phillips has been reappointed to the board by the Governor. Her term will expire on June 30, 2018. The board still needs an ENT member. Once the ENT position is filled, there will be a full board.

#### **VII. Strategic Plan**

- Many goals from the Strategic Plan have been met.
- The board will go over the Strategic Plan at the next board meeting.

#### **VIII. Emergency Information/Notification for Deaf/HH**

There will be a meeting with Kim Nuckles, the ADA coordinator for the state, before the next board meeting.

## **IX. Board Member Reports**

- Gloria Hollen
  - a. Received a letter from WV Advocates regarding the Senior Center in Martinsburg. The center is working with advocates around the state to give information regarding services to senior citizens.
  - b. Cass Railroad refused to provide interpreters for tours at the facility. They offer accessibility for people in wheelchairs, but would not provide accessibility for people who are Deaf and/or Hard of Hearing
- John Burdette
  - a. Very proud of the work of the WVCDHH staff getting information out to the community.
  - b. Attended the Appalachian Power event on July 31, 2015, along with other board members.
- Paul See
  - a. There has not been an Executive Director evaluation since Earnest started working for the Commission. Earnest will be evaluated by the Executive Committee using the form from previous evaluations. The Executive Committee will meet before the next board meeting to complete the evaluation, and then will bring the information to the board.
  - b. Wants to set up a Retreat in the fall of 2016 or 2017. A retreat hasn't happened since 2013. It will be a closed session. Planning for the retreat will start now, and then be discussed at the next board meeting.

## **X. Staffing Update**

- After interviewing candidates on May 11-14, 2015, Sarah Lowther was hired as the permanent Administrative Secretary with an effective date of July 1, 2015.
- After approval from the Governor and DHHR, Rachel Torrence was hired as the Project Director with an effective date of June 1, 2015.

## **XI. Executive Session**

John made the motion to go into Executive Session. Motion approved.

Tammy made the motion to go out of Executive Session. Motion approved.

## **XII. Future Meeting dates**

- November 13, 2015 – Charleston, WV
- February 19, 2016 – Bridgeport, WV
- May 13, 2016 – Martinsburg, WV

## **XIII. Adjournment**

Marty Blakely made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Nancy Sullivan seconded. Motion approved. The meeting adjourned at 4:16 p.m.