

# STATE OF COLORADO



**Colorado Department of Human Services**

*people who help people*

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## **COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING December 2, 2010**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the Regular Meeting to order at 2:05pm.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Commissioners Debbie Mohney (Chair), Leslie Ralphe (Vice Chair), Barbara Jenkins, Kirk Neuroth, Jennifer Peterson.

#### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Commissioners Shelley Strickfaden (Secretary), Nicki Runge

#### **CCDHH STAFF PRESENT:**

Cliff Moers, Administrator; Cheri Davis, Legal Auxiliary Services Manager; Tricia Frank, Staff Interpreter; Rob Loveless, Education and Training Specialist; Namati Katungu, Education and Training Specialist; Veramarie McIngvale, TEDP Coordinator; Carmena Minor, Legal Auxiliary Services Coordinator

#### **INTERPRETERS/CART REPORTER:**

Tricia Frank, Jo Linda Greenfield and Steve Young; Interpreters Claudette Mondragon, CART Reporter

### **3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as written.

**4. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

Minutes for the September, 2010 meeting were approved. Approval of the June, 2010 minutes was postponed until the March meeting.

**5. REPORTS**

**Commission Chair's Report, Commissioner Mohney**

- Commissioner Mohney extended thanks to the interpreters and the CART reporter for their services, and to the Department of Human Services and the CCDHH staff for their work and cooperation.
- Commissioner Mohney announced a new format for meetings. Commission business will be conducted in the first half of the meeting. After a break, the second half of the meeting will be a community forum. Presentations will take place during this portion of the meeting.
- Chair Mohney pointed out that while Colorado voters defeated Amendments 60 and 61, and Proposition 101, the Commission still faces challenges, with a new governor in place and a new budget. The Commission needs to continue to educate governmental agencies about their responsibility to deaf and hard of hearing citizens. The new business meeting format is intended to encourage community involvement. Meetings will be scheduled in other locations as well, and at different times, to make it possible for more people to attend.
- Community members are encouraged to ask questions and share concerns with Commissioners and Commission staff.

**Commission Administrator's Report, Administrator Moers**

- Administrator Moers welcomed visitors to the meeting and introduced the Commission staff.
- Administrator Moers reported that Commission staff plans to visit Lowry Park, an assisted living center, on Friday, December 3. The manager of Lowry Park is interested in making the facility more accessible to deaf and hard of hearing residents. Six deaf persons live there at this time. Currently, no hard of hearing residents live there. The Commission staff will meet with the manager and collaborate on ways to expand their services for deaf or hard of hearing residents. A nearby independent living center and a nearby hospice will also be working with Lowry to increase their accessibility. These projects are part of the Commission's larger plans to evaluate and eliminate gaps in many services to deaf and hard of hearing seniors.
- A request has been made to increase the current half-time position of TEDP coordinator to a full time position. The necessary funds for this position are in the Commission's current budget, so the state would not have to provide any funding. That request has been sent to the governor's office for approval.

- The Commission's budget is becoming more constrained due to growth, while the state of Colorado is facing more budget cuts, which may threaten funding outside of the general fund. The Commission may seek funds left over from other agencies.
- Cheri Davis, the Legal Auxiliary Services Manager, reported that the LASAC is now in its fourth year. With the addition of Carmena Minor to the staff, the Commission has assumed responsibility for scheduling auxiliary services for state courts in the 17<sup>th</sup> district (Adams county), the Denver downtown district, and Jefferson county. Working with the ADA Judicial coordinator, Janel Bravo, they are gradually expanding into other districts and improving scheduling efficiency. Demand for auxiliary services has increased by about \$3000 per month this year. New scheduling software has worked well and is improving efficiency. They hope to have all state districts in the system and to provide all court scheduling by the end of the fiscal year. CART requests have increased dramatically, but still comprise a small percentage of the total service requests. Funding for all services comes largely from the Disabled Telephone Users Fund, with 14% provided by the General Fund. Individual counties do not provide any funds. As the need grows, they will be looking into possibilities for additional financial support. They are also helping to sponsor workshops for deaf interpreters through the Veditz center, and working on recruitment and training of CART providers. They are looking for a logo for legal service providers' badges, and Rob Loveless has drafted a logo that may be developed.
- Rob Loveless clarified his role as Education and Training Specialist for the deaf community (and Namati Katungu's role as Education and Training Specialist for the hard of hearing). The program was established in July. The specialists will educate business organizations and government agencies about providing accessibility. They will also work with the deaf and hard of hearing communities to provide resources and train them to advocate for their rights. They cannot advocate for them individually, but they can provide support individuals to self-advocate. Currently, the two of them are working to increase awareness about the Commission and its role by working with PBS to air short informational spots on TV. Radio ads are under consideration. Video logs (with captions and voice) to inform deaf citizens about their rights are under development, and in the future, more Video logs will be developed for distance training. The new office space includes a media room, and they are awaiting an editing computer. One important job for the Education and Training Specialists is to train and educate government agencies. They will partner with the Department of Human Services' seven field administrators to cover the state, using video logs on the respective counties' websites. Rob and Namati will be putting together resource directories and a database of people who contact the office, including individuals who seek information, as well as businesses and government agencies.

### **Committee Chair Reports**

Chair Mohny announced that some of the committees previously established as standing committees have grown into ongoing commission programs that are now handled by staff. Therefore the Commission needs to determine which committees can be disbanded and which ones should continue as standing committees. The nominations committee and the bylaws

committee need to continue as standing committees, and two subcommittees, the Legal Auxiliary Services Advisory Council and the Grant committee, must remain due to legislative mandate. Chair Mohny recommended disbanding the Telephone Equipment distribution Committee, the Legislative Committee and the Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee. Commissioner Peterson moved that those three committees be disbanded, and that any future needs in those areas be addressed by ad hoc committees. Commissioner Jenkins seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously. Chair Mohny asked for discussion on whether the Interpreter Committee and the Media Access Committee should remain as standing committees. After discussion, the Commission decided to consider those committees further and postpone decisions on their status until the next meeting. Commissioner Neuroth agreed to serve as chair of the Interpreting Committee at this time.

**A. Legal Auxiliary Services**

- Chair Valkonen announced that the Legal Auxiliary Services Advisory Committee has a vacancy for a legal member with a background in disability law.
- The committee has been dealing with a consumer complaint. The involved parties have met and appear to be working toward a resolution.
- Chair Valkonen also reported that the Committee is shifting towards a more advisory role and determining what that would entail. Future work will include interpreter and CART provider recruitment and a mentoring program for qualified legal service providers to become more effective.

**B. Bylaws Committee**

Commissioner Ralphe agreed to continue as Bylaws chair unless someone else would like the opportunity. She reported that the committee will be revising the Operations Manual in the coming months with Tricia Frank's help.

**C. Nominations Committee**

Chair Mohny will no longer be serving as chair of the Nominations Committee, and asked for volunteers to fill the position. Commissioner Peterson agreed to chair the Nominations Committee.

**D. TEDP Committee**

The TEDP Committee has been disbanded, but VeraMarie provided a report. From July to November, there were 97 TEDP applicants. Seventy-six phones were distributed: 45 captioned phones, 28 amplified phones, two TTYs and one special order phone. Over 112 accessories were distributed and 167 applications were mailed to individuals. The Commission is currently working on the possibility of promoting the program over the radio, to reach more individuals. There are now three different sites to demo the phones available: one each in Denver, Grand Junction and Colorado Springs. Contact information is now on the website. They are looking into more wireless technologies for the future. Sprint now has a 4G videophone which allows for video communication with a small screen. Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) has started "Project Endeavor" to provide free laptops and internet service to deaf and hard of hearing people, particularly those in rural communities. They have a website with more information.

**E. Media Access Committee**

The Commission will consider whether to retain the committee at the next meeting.

**6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Chair Mohney reported that there was no status change on the Colorado Consumers Protection Law FAQ.

**7. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business.

**8. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Administrator Moers gave an update on the mental health system level advocacy work regarding mental health and substance abuse services. The implementation team has selected 8 different agencies currently providing mental health and substance abuse counseling and services to be “early adopters.” They will undergo intensive training, meet expectations, and share resources with other service providers. These agencies will also need to develop the capacity for tele-behavioral health care, to provide services to those in rural areas. They will also collect data about individuals served, since current data collection does not provide enough information. Training will begin in January.

The daylight project will end in June. The Commission will need to find funding and strategies to continue its progress.

The Division of Behavioral Health provided the Commission with a grant of \$60,000 to develop standards of care curriculum. Certified alcohol and drug counselors can take this additional training and get a special endorsement on their certification. The Commission will also develop standards and criteria for organizations who want to become endorsed as well. These funds from the Division of Behavioral Health were part of a Federal block grant that they received.

When the American Public Health Association had their conference in the area, Administrator Moers gave a presentation on the Daylight Project and system level advocacy here in Colorado.

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

The business portion of the meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

**COMMUNITY FORUM**

Chair Mohney explained that the new format for the second half of Commission meetings would be composed of presentations, followed by Commissioners’ questions, and then a short period for community questions and input.

**1. 9NEWS PARTNERSHIP-Lorri Rainowitz, 9News Business Development Manager**

Lorri Rainowitz gave a presentation on the Commission’s proposed partnership with 9News. 9News has previously partnered with the Colorado Commission on Aging to develop an informational resource for older adults, called Senior Source. They hope to create a similar resource with the CCDHH, called “Communicate Across the State.” It would educate the public about resources available through the CCDHH, provide a direct link to available services, and encourage the marketplace to provide additional services to the deaf and hard of hearing. The

plan involves several components, and 9News would partner with CCDHH to raise the necessary funds. They suggest on-the-air components, including a series of 30-second educational vignettes as well a monthly 15-minute program to air on My20 on different topics of interest. Shows will be captioned and include a sign language interpreter. They would be placed on the website after being aired. There would be an online component running 52 weeks of the year, and CCDHH materials would be available on site during fairs, via mail and at varied strategic partners' locations. The cost would be \$325,000 for all components, or \$120,000 for the online component only, and 9News would be helping raise those funds. The Commission's role would involve providing and reviewing the informational content. Funding would be sought from outside parties, through grants or corporate funding.

**2. ROCKY MOUNTAIN PBS PROMOTION**

Rob Loveless introduced a short interstitial video to be aired on Rocky Mountain PBS. The video shows a broad range of communication access types to emphasize communication as a fundamental human right. This video will air 17 times, as will two other interstitials yet to be developed. The second one will feature the TEDP program, and the third topic has not been determined yet.

A community member from the Boulder Valley School District commented that deaf and hard of hearing students in that district do not get enough exposure to the kinds of equipment that is available to them. More of that kind of information is needed throughout the state.

**3. EDUCATION AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR THE HARD OF HEARING AND LATE-DEAFENED COMMUNITIES-Namati Katungu, Education and Training Specialist**

Namati Katungu reported on the progress of the Education and Training Program for the hard of hearing and late-deafened communities. The action plan involved five target goal areas: public information; education, training and technical support; communication accessibility; publicity and citizen empowerment; and advocacy and collaboration. The next step was a needs assessment, and a task force was assembled to determine gaps in service. Namati also attended a meeting of the Denver chapter of the Hearing Loss Association and asked for their input. The next step was a system analysis, to determine what the commission has done, is doing, and needs to do in the future. The Commission's three year strategic plan, the 2009 Sunset Review Report and the recommendations from DORA were all analyzed, as well as the survey conducted earlier in 2009. Needs were placed into categories, and strategies were developed to meet those needs. The Commission plans to create a National Directory of Support Providers, as well as a state directory, which will be available in hard copy or electronic form. There will also be informational resources about federal and state laws. Technical support strategies include improving the Commission's website to make it user friendly; it will include categories to address the needs of different demographic groups. They plan to add social networking capability, video logs, webinars and youtube, as well as interactive templates. For the training and education strategies, they will develop training modules or workshops, and make them available through virtual media. Workshops for cultural awareness will also be developed for governmental agencies and public entities. In order to analyze those agencies and public entities, they will develop assessment benchmarks, which will be applied to a broad range of services, such as libraries, airports and entertainment venues. Services will be advertised in various

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media: print, radio, television and the web. The goal is to work closely with the community and remain visible, working to empower citizens. Another goal is to establish regional centers in other parts of the state. The Commission plans to continue to seek grant funding to provide more support, including financial aid for those who cannot afford hearing aids. All of the members of the original task force have agreed to be part of the accountability team as plans move forward.

Chair Mohny thanked the presenters, and noted the next meeting would be on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, time and location to be determined. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Ralphe,  
Acting as Secretary