



COLORADO

Office of Enterprise Partnerships

Boards & Commissions

Commission for the Deaf & Hard of Hearing
1575 Sherman St, Garden Level
Denver, CO 80203

**COLORADO COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
8100 Lowry Blvd.
Denver, CO 80230
December 4, 2014**

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Regular Meeting to order at 4:09 pm.

2. Roll Call

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Commissioners Kirk Neuroth (Chair), Mary Pat Graham-Kelly (Vice Chair), attending remotely Amy Beckett (Secretary), Liz Konkel, Lucas Marquardt, Leslie Ralphe, and Lisa Weiss

CCDHH STAFF PRESENT:

Cliff Moers, Administrator; Cheri Davis, Legal Auxiliary Services Manager; Timothy Chevalier, Outreach and Consultative Services Manager; JoAnne Hirsch, Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Coordinator; Candice Alder, Outreach Consultant, Tilly Dice, Intern

INTERPRETERS/CART REPORTER:

Interpreters: Tricia Frank, Lynda Rimmel, Darlene Ensenat, Nehemiah Hanson, and Terri Tupps
CART Reporter: Claudette Mondragon

3. Approval of the Agenda

The meeting agenda for December 4, 2014 was approved.

4. Approval of the Minutes

The September 4, 2014 minutes were approved.

5. Reports

Commission Chair's Report, Chair Neuroth

Chair Neuroth thanked the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment hosting the meeting in their facility. He also thanked the Colorado Department of Human Services for providing support to the Commission. And he thanked the staff of CCDHH for working diligently to make everything go so well. He expressed appreciation to the interpreters and the CART provider for making the meeting fully accessible to everyone.

Chair Neuroth made a statement regarding being thankful for the Colorado Deaf Community. It has given him its language, his job, and he has been invited into the community and social events. He appreciates all that has been given to him.

Chair Neuroth discussed the format of the meeting, the community forum, and various sign-up sheets available at the meeting. For the Community Forum, the speaker is Elaine Navertil presenting about the deaf senior citizen's initiative.

Chair Neuroth reviewed information in the Commissioner's Handbook regarding the duties and responsibilities. He wanted to emphasize two areas: we not only have to recognize our constituents and get their input but also we need to represent the commission and be able to respond and reflect and represent the commission.

1. Commissioners are responsible for eliciting feedback and ideas, and getting comments from our constituencies. The Commissioners should be proactive in reaching out to constituents and learning about their perspectives, their ideas, their feedback bringing this back to the commission to provide action items.
2. Commissioners are also responsible in representing CCDHH in the public at large. When Commissioners attend other meetings we should be proactive in promoting the CCDHH and its mission. We should be prepared to answer questions from the public or know how to refer them to the Administrator or correct staff member.

Commission Report, Administrator Moers

Administrator Moers began by recognizing Tilly Dice, the intern at the CCDHH office. She is a student at the University of Colorado at Denver majoring in sociology and has been a valuable asset to the office since starting in September.

Telephone Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) Report

Administrator Moers shared a story about a 100-year-old woman receiving TEDP equipment. We were able to help her maintain an active lifestyle. This is an example of our mission at work. He was impressed with the woman and also with the TEDP for providing the equipment she needed. This is the service the office has been providing for many years to many individuals in Colorado.

The Commissioners also discussed distribution of I-pads through TEDP. We are not distributing these at this time. Joanne Hirsch, TEDP Coordinator, went to the TEDP Association conference last fall in Maine and gathered information about other states that are distributing I-pads. She learned that the states that did provide I-pads went through their funds quickly. The TEDP budget is small and Commissioner Moers led the commissioners in a discussion of the possibility of providing I-pads through the TEDP.

In general, the Commissioners did not support the idea of distributing I-pads. First, it is expensive, both the equipment and the service contracts. Second, the I-pads have more functionality than telecommunication only and there is no way to separately provide that one function. Also, there are other devices and services to provide telecommunications to Coloradoans.

Follow-up Visit to the Department of Corrections Prison

Administrator Moers provided a report of his and Timothy Chevalier's visit to the Department of Corrections prison. Their visit was in August and was a follow-up to a visit made three years ago by the CCDHH Office.



They met with some inmates that had talked to previously and some new inmates. The room where they met had an induction loop, which was not available at the prior visit. This was the only improvement they saw. In January the CCDHH office will have a meeting with prison officials via Polycom to talk about what was noticed during the visit and make recommendations for improvements. The discussion will be documented by the CCDHH office so it can reviewed for follow-up for the inmates to make the prison accessible for them.

Some areas for follow-up include:

Providing Deaf Interpreters or tutoring for classes at the prison. Attendance at these classes help the inmates move through the system to become eligible for parole. The deaf inmates do not have access to and participate in the classes to be able to pass the exams. This was a recommendation from the visit three years ago.

No video phone is available. However, the prison plans to install one soon.

Many inmates are provided with hearing aids, but the aids do not have a telecoil. In most cases, these inmates are given only one hearing aid. Without a telecoil, the induction loop system is not useable.

Administrator Moers and Timothy Chevalier were not allowed to visit the pods where the majority of deaf or hard of hearing inmates reside so they cannot make recommendations for that area.

Driver's License Survey Results

The Commission Office provided an e-bulletin report with the results of the Driver's License Identification Survey. The purpose of the survey was to gauge the interest in having people identify themselves as deaf or hard of hearing and have this information on the driver's license. The survey results are at this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-8ZSGS9LV/>

There were 223 respondents: 143 deaf, 77 hard of hearing, and 3 deaf-blind.

The survey consisted of five questions. Overall, the respondents were in favor of adding a one-lettered communication preference code to driver's licenses and state identification cards. For example, use of an "I" to indicate an interpreter or "H" for a hearing assistive technology.

Administrator Moers' contact at the Division of Motor Vehicles who supports this program is leaving the department; therefore, we will have to work with an interim contact until the replacement is hired. In addition, the state is changing its software for producing driver's licenses in April 2015, so we plan to work with the interim contact to have the codes added.

The Commissioners discussed the pros and cons for making the addition of the communication preference code optional rather than mandatory. No conclusion was reached; the expectation the code would be optional. In addition, the current communication codes don't cover all communication types, such as speech reading. The Commissioners also discussed training for law enforcement throughout the state for using and understanding these codes if or when they are added to the drivers' licenses.



Communication Access Fund

The CCDHH Communication Access Fund (CAF) Task Force had been established to resolve barriers that deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind individuals had typically encountered when receiving legal services outside of the court. We had sent a letter to the Supreme Court legal counsel and proposed they consider adding a fee to attorney's licensing fee for the purpose of establishing this communication access fund. The Supreme Court referred us back to the legislature.

A task force was formed to create an action plan.

1. Amy Robertson, Civil Rights Education and Enforcement Center (CREEC) attorney, attended the Task Force meeting. Bill Bethke, an attorney who specializes in education and discrimination law, wrote the original letter to the Supreme Court. Ms. Robertson and Mr. Bethke will research the process to approach the Supreme Court.
2. The CCDHH will do a financial analysis to determine what the current demands are and what projected annual costs would be. We want to remove the limit for the number of times an individual can use the fund.
3. There are many bar associations in the state of Colorado. We changed the letter that we sent to the Supreme Court and sent it to all bar associations to educate them about the communication access fund and seek their support.
4. CREEC will conduct surveys and tests to determine if they find barriers to legal services.
5. Capitalize on stakeholders for support of the Communication Access Fund while the CAF Task Force is in the process.

Sunset Review

Administrator Moers discussed the Sunset Review that was recently completed by Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA). The report is available on-line at this link: [2014 Sunset Review: Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing](#)

The report had seven recommendations.

Recommendation 1 – Continue the Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing for nine years, until 2024.

Recommendation 2 – Amend the reporting requirement to require the Commission to submit a report to the Governor and the General Assembly by September 1 each year.

Recommendation 3 – Limit commissioners to two consecutive terms of four years.

Recommendation 4 – Repeal the requirement for the Senate to approve the appointment of commissioners.

Recommendation 5 – Clarify that the Commission serves people who are deaf-blind.

Recommendation 6 – Repeal the requirement for a member of the public to serve on the Commission and add a deaf-blind person to the membership of the Commission.

Recommendation 7 – Make technical amendments to the Act.

DORA will submit a legislative bill in January, which will go through the legislative process.



If the recommendations from the Sunset Review are approved, the changes will take place July 1. The Commission will need to make many changes to the by-laws to support the recommendation. There will also be a new Deaf-Blind Commissioner added to the Commission. Administrator Moers recommended that the Commissioners hold a board retreat after the legislative sessions ends to review changes to the by-laws. In addition, the Commissioners can review the final two and a half years for the current five-year plan.

The Commissioners will also be required to take in-person board training. This ½ hour training can be conducted at the board retreat. The Commissioners can also use this time to prepare the mandated annual legislative report, which is also part of the recommendations from DORA. Administrator Moers suggested Aspen Camp of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing as the site for the retreat. The retreat would need to take place in June 2015 because the in-person training must take place prior to the end of the fiscal year. The Commissioners agreed to this plan.

Committees:

Legal Auxiliary Services Advisory Council (Chair Pendley)

Cheri Davis gave the report. The Legal Auxiliary Services Advisory Council (LASAC) recently added a new hard of hearing member, Carole Custer, from Westcliffe, a rural part of the state. She was on the State Board of Human Resources and has advocated for and supported the Commission and its work. Cheri Davis appreciates Ms. Custer's knowledge and expertise being added to the LASAC. She can also represent the rural areas in the state.

At the last meeting the main topic was collaborating with the Colorado Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Legal Interpreting Committee to expand the pool of Deaf Interpreters for use in the courtroom as well as within the state overall. A group of deaf people have shown initiative and are very motivated to become certified deaf interpreters. It is critical that proper training take place for these individuals including legal system training before they can be placed in the courtrooms.

Chair Pendley suggested a task force to include stakeholders outside of the Council and the Commission. The dilemma is that while the Council is encouraging individuals to become Certified Deaf Interpreters, we need to be able to provide work after certification. These individuals need to gain experience in the community before being asked to provide services in the courtrooms. The formation of this task force will be the next step for this issue.

Another topic of discussion was about videos used in the courts. The courts have a number of videos that they use. Some are captioned and some aren't. Some are captioned well, some are not captioned well. The council wants to review these videos and determine if they can be standardized, then provide feedback for standardizing the captioning of the videos statewide. This will be an additional project for the Council.

By-laws Committee (Commissioner Beckett)

The bylaws committee was tasked with meeting to discuss altering the by-laws to review a motion from the floor at the September 2014 Board meeting to determine if we wanted to appoint a temporary chair at the June meeting and then have the elections in September after the Commissioner appointments are final. The by-laws committee meeting did not take place, but there were discussions with the committee members, Amy Beckett, Mary Pat Graham-Kelly,



and Lucas Marquardt. The consensus was that the by-laws should be changed to eliminate the timing problem to ensure that elected officers have been reappointed to the Commission.

Commissioner Marquardt suggested that we postpone making changes to the by-laws for this issue at this time. In light of the changes recommended from the Sunset Review, major modifications to the by-laws may be needed. Administrator Moers recommended that changes to the by-laws be discussed at the board retreat and the commissioners agreed.

Nominations Committee (Commissioner Weiss)

No report at this time.

Grant Program Sub-committee (Administrator Moers)

Administrator Moers stated the grantees have been selected and these have been given to the Executive Director for approval. The announcement will take place in the bulletin next week.

Deaf Education Liaison (Commissioner Weiss)

Commissioner Weiss stated the report is ready and was just given to her prior to the meeting. Copies were available to pick up at the meeting.

Deafblind Services Liaison (Commissioner Graham-Kelly)

Commissioner Graham-Kelly report the last Deaf-Blind Task Force meeting was in September. She has not received the minutes from the meeting. The task Force is growing. A Deaf-Blind member has been added to the Task Force and another Deaf-Blind individual is interested in joining.

Rebecca Kahn, from Spark Policy Institute, presented a road map that the Task Force will present to the Legislature in January 2015. Ms. Kahn may call another Task Force meeting in January.

6. Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

7. New Business

Commissioner Beckett asked the Administrative Office to examine the possibility of using technology to provide remote access to the Commission meetings and the Community Forums. Administrator Moers will have the staff investigate and bring some recommendations to the retreat or the next meeting.

8. Announcements

Commissioner Graham-Kelly requested the commissioners collaborate more via Facebook. As meetings and information is posted, commissioners can be more proactive about sharing this with their constituents.

Joann Hirsch stated the Facebook page currently has 443 followers.

Commissioner Neuroth announced the Rocky Mountain Deaf School recently finished their new building. On Saturday, December 6th, they are going to be doing their ribbon cutting and having the community come and tour the facility and see this new building.



9. Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 5:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Beckett, Secretary

