

NEBRASKA TRS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

January 17, 2014, 2:00 p.m. CDT

Location: Nebraska Public Service Commission

300 The Atrium, 1200 N Street

Lincoln, Nebraska.

The Nebraska Telecommunications Relay Advisory Committee met on January 17, 2014 at the Public Service Commission Hearing Room in Lincoln, Nebraska.

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Tami Richardson-Nelson. The following committee members were present at the meeting:

Tami Richardson-Nelson;
Kim Remington;
Commissioner Tim Schram;
Albert Sparks
Dillard Delts

Introduction of Guests:

From the Commission, Nichole Mulcahy, Gene Hand, Steve Meradith and Steve Stovall, from the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH), Peggy Williams and Ben Sparks, and from Hamilton Relay, Beth Slough. Representing Sprint Communications, Emma Danielson, Sprint Relay Program Manager and Chris Smith, Senior Account Executive. Sharon Sinkler and Connie Herndon interpreted the meeting.

Election of New Officers:

Motion by Albert Sparks, seconded by Commissioner Tim Schram, to appoint Tami Richardson-Nelson as chair of the committee. Motion approved. Motion by Tami Richardson-Nelson, seconded by Commissioner Tim Schram, to appoint Kim Remington as vice-chair of the committee. Motion approved.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion by Kim Remington, seconded by Commissioner Tim Schram, to approve the agenda as presented. Motion approved.

Approval of the Minutes of February 24, 2012 meeting:

Motion by Kim Remington, seconded by Commissioner Tim Schram, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion approved.

Chairperson's Comments:

Tami Richardson-Nelson expressed thanks on behalf of the committee members in attendance for their involvement.

Public Service Commission Comments:

Gene Hand shared historical and projected call volume and cost data with the committee. Steve Stovall presented three forecast scenarios based on different surcharge levels. All forecasts include the price per minute proposed by Sprint pursuant to a possible two year renewal of the current TRS contract with Sprint effective July 1, 2014. Steve Stovall informed the committee the staff recommendation to the Commission would be to reduce the surcharge to two-cents (\$.02) for FY 2014-2015.

Motion by Kim Remington, seconded by Albert Sparks, to recommend to the Commission that the monthly surcharge be reduced to two (\$.02) cents effective July 1, 2014. Motion approved.

Steve Stovall reported on the monthly expenditures for the Nebraska Specialized Telecommunications Equipment Program (NSTEP) and explained the forecast assumptions have been revised downward. The monthly projections beginning January 2014 reflect recent declines in minutes of use.

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH) Comments:

Steve Stovall indicated that Tami Richardson-Nelson and Albert Sparks terms on the TRS Advisory Committee expire in January 2014. Peggy Williams indicated that if Tami and Albert agree to continue to serve, the proposal to reappoint will be presented at the March 7, 2014 NCDHH Board meeting. Applicants for the open position on the Advisory Committee will also be solicited by the NCDHH Board.

Sprint Telecommunications Comments:

Chris Smith discussed recent service issues with Sprint Relay, including computer server issues and weather, stating that low call volumes makes it difficult to reverse noncompliant daily answer times.

Upon inquiry of Commission staff regarding service complaints or issues expressed by any members of the hearing impaired community in Nebraska, no committee member reported any complaints.

A possible on-line survey regarding service quality was discussed. NCDHH and the Commission agreed to work together to develop any survey.

Emma Danielson shared a PowerPoint presentation with the committee addressing TRS outreach,

TRS and CapTel minutes and usage, and possible marketing campaigns.

A CapTel awareness campaign with Husker Sports Marketing in 2014 was discussed. Motion by Dillard Delts, seconded by Albert Sparks, to not to pursue a marketing campaign with Husker Sports Marketing, but instead consider alternative marketing/awareness activities and evaluate the effectiveness of such efforts next year. Motion approved.

Old Business: None.

New Business:

Peggy Williams expressed concerns regarding the one NSTEP recipient per household statutory requirement in Nebraska. With wireless devices, per household is possible too restrictive. The possibility of NCDHH sponsored legislation in the 2015 Legislative session to change the TRS Act was discussed.

Commissioner Schram shared with the committee a recent FCC information FAQs sheet regarding Text-to-911 calling. The four largest wireless carriers have indicated the availability of Texting-to-911 by May 15, 2014 on their networks. Commissioner Schram stressed to the committee that none of Nebraska's Public Safety Answering Points have the capability to receive Text-to-911, and encouraged the committee to communicate this to the user community.

Public Comment:

Ben Sparks and Beth Slough offered comment to the Committee. No other members of the public offered comment.

Next Meeting:

Next meeting has been scheduled tentatively for the fall, 2014. Meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m. by Tami Richardson-Nelson.

Respectfully submitted,
Steven G. Stovall - Staff Accountant
Nebraska Public Service Commission
February 3, 2014