

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

**Mental Health Advisory Committee Meeting**

**Approved January 8, 2019**

**Date:** November 6, 2018

**Time:** 2pm – 4pm

**Location:** 4600 Valley Rd, Room 4A, Lincoln, NE

**Interpreters:** Frances Beaurivage, Sharon Sinkler

**Minutes:** Cindy Woldt

**CART:** Margaret “Mydge” Heaney / Exclusive Reporting

**Members Present:** Ms. Vicki Steinhauer – Campbell, Ms. Kathleen Valle

**NCDHH Staff Present:** Ms. Carly Weyers, Behavioral Health Coordinator; Mr. John Wyvill, Executive Director; Ms. Kim Davis, Advocacy Specialist

**NCDHH Staff Absent:**

**Technical Advisors Present:**

**Members Absent:** Ms. Tracey Minto, Ms. Lisa Vogel, Ms. Mandy Leamon

**Technical Advisors Absent:** Ms. Sue Czaplowski, Ms. Jan (Loretta) Goracke, Ms. Diane Meyer, Ms. Ann Thompson, Ms. Tina Work

**Guests:**

**Meeting called to order:** by Ms. Vicki Steinhauer – Campbell at 2:13pm

Ms. Carly Weyers, Behavioral Health Coordinator announced the notice of the meeting was duly given, posted, published, and tendered in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and all board members received notice simultaneously by email. Publication of official notice of the meeting appeared in the **October 30, 2018** edition of the Omaha World Herald, a legal newspaper of general circulation in this state, as required by the Open Meetings Act.

Introductions made with all in attendance.

**Approval of the November 6, 2018 Agenda** – could not vote due to not having a quorum

**Approval of the August 7, 2018 meeting minutes** – could not vote due to not having a quorum

**Approval of the May 8, 2018 meeting minutes** –could not approve due to not having a quorum

## New Business

- **Education Summit** – Ms. Weyers reported that NCDHH recently hosted the second annual Education Summit that was held in Omaha on October 26 – 28, 2018. There were two presenters; Friday evening was Dr. Beth Benedict who is with Gallaudet University Administration team and a professor. Her presentation was on the importance of collaboration between family, educators and social life. All of this is important for a deaf child. On Saturday was Mr. Corey Axelrod from Chicago. His presentation focused on what it is like to be hard of hearing and how a sign language interpreter can work with the students who are hard of hearing. Explained the differences between the two types of students. A hard of hearing student's communication preferences / needs change throughout their school years.
- **Behavioral Health Website** – Ms. Weyers shared that she just added two more counselors to the behavioral health webpage (<https://ncdhh.nebraska.gov/services/behavioral-health>).

Ms. Weyers added that she is working on the hospital training with Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI) Health going to various locations in Omaha, hopefully will expand to Council Bluffs. Added that she also has been providing training to Methodist Hospital. At some point she would like to provide training to the hospitals in Lincoln.

Ms. Weyers has met with the Executive Director of the State Troopers Association here in Nebraska. He runs the Grand Island Academy, which happens annually, he is interested in having me come out to provide training to the 400 troopers who attend the academy.

- **NCDHH Executive Director Report** – Mr. Wyvill
  - Educational Advocate, Ms. Jenny Corum's last day of employment was on October 28, 2018. Interviews for this position will begin next week.
  - Recently extended a job offer to replace the Advocacy Specialist position in Omaha that was recently vacated by Ms. Beth Ellsworth. NCDHH is not announcing the name until the person is actually physically on site.
  - NCDHH is hoping to fill the interpreter program coordinator position in the next couple of weeks.
  - Legislative Updates

- Defending our agency budget. The budget includes a request for \$100,000 to fund the Hear U Program to provide hearing aids for ages 0 to 21.
  - A companion piece of legislation that will require insurance companies to provide hearing aids as part of their comprehensive health insurance plan. NCDHH is working closely with Nebraska Speech Language Association regarding getting this passed.
  - Also going to be looking at legislation similar to a couple of other states that have removed offensive language in the state constitutions referring to deaf and hard of hearing individuals at hearing impaired. The Nebraska Association of the Deaf (NeAD) has taken the lead on that with past president Mr. Jonathan Scherling. Mr. Wyvill added that he thought the sponsor was Senator Howard.
- Recently started a group called Council of Deaf and Hard of Hearing, which is made-up of all stakeholders in the deaf and hard of hearing community. The first meeting will be on November 14, 2018 at The Swanson Public Library in Omaha. The desire is to have four meetings a year. NCDHH is excited to be collaborating with these organizations. There will be more information to share on this group.

Representation includes from:

- Hearing Loss Association of America Omaha Chapter
  - Nebraska Association of the Deaf (NeAD)
  - Public Service Commission (PSC)
  - Omaha Association of the Deaf (OAD)
  - Lincoln Association of the Deaf (LAD)
  - Hands & Voices
  - Junior National Association of the Deaf (NAD)
  - Nebraska Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (NeRID)
- Strategic Planning – NCDHH will be starting this process in December 2018. NCDHH will be evaluating our goals and objectives of who we are as an agency. In doing so we will be making sure that our resources, personnel, and everything are aligned

Mr. Wyvill shared with the group that we will see in the next 10, 15, 20 years that in rural Nebraska the population will be getting smaller. Also added that the southeast area of Nebraska is exploding, and that the population is getting older. Right now, 90 – 95% of our population that we work with is hard of hearing and 5% happen to be deaf.

In regards to the shortage of sign language interpreters. NCDHH will be looking

at how we can better utilize the interpreter referral program and as an agency how we can provide training and support to sign language interpreters.

- Mr. Wyvill shared with the group that Ms. Weyers has now taken on the title of Deaf Services Coordinator. In addition, Ms. Teresa Hevner is based out of our Omaha office now has the title of Lead Advocacy Specialist.

Discussion on the different programs that are available for assistance with getting hearing aids.

## Old Business

- **Update By-laws** – Ms. Weyers goal for today’s meeting was to approve going from four meetings to two meetings a year. Need to change the job title for herself from Mental Health Specialist to Behavioral Health Coordinator. The last time that the by-laws were updated was in 2014. Ms. Weyers shared that she discussed with Mr. Wyvill that another meeting should be scheduled for late January. At that time, we can discuss the changes needed to the by-laws, primarily only meeting two times a year instead of four.

Mr. Wyvill added that we cannot vote electronically on changes to the by-laws. NCDHH will send out a copy of the by-laws for each member to review prior to the meeting, making it easier to discuss at the meeting.

If decided to go with two meetings a year, the dates for 2019 would be:

- January 8, 2019 - Omaha
- July 9, 2019 - Lincoln

If decided to go with four meetings a year, the dates for 2019 would be:

- January 8, 2019 - Omaha
- May 7, 2019 - Lincoln
- August 6, 2019 - Omaha
- November 5, 2019 – Lincoln

- **Grants** – Ms. Weyers has submitted a grant for funding a workshop on scams and benefits for planning retirement. Oftentimes deaf individuals do not get training or access to the information needed on how to manage their money in retirement years. Ms. Weyers will have an answer by December 1, 2018 if she is approved to receive funding.

## Agency Updates:

- **Ms. Kathleen Valle** – Following up from the comment that was made at the August 2018 meeting regarding the department cell phone that CHI implemented on July 1, 2018. This phone is being carried 24 hours a day and is solely dedicated for deaf, hard of hearing and deaf blind patients. Ms. Valle reported that the phone is being used, CHI is receiving positive feedback from the patients that are using the number to contact CHI.

Also added that she is working with Carly and Jenny in completing the presentations at the hospitals in the metropolitan area. Conversation within regarding the benefits of the presentations for both the staff of the hospitals and the deaf, hard of hearing and deaf blind patients.

- **Ms. Kim Davis** – Is working with Douglas County Correctional Department, they have expressed a desire to have additional training to the department. Also added that the Lincoln Police Department is ongoing for training the new recruits. The Omaha Police Department (OPD) training was a bit different, as they only wanted the individuals that attended the training to be taught some sign language. Just this past week Ms. Davis and Ms. Weyers provided a second level of training to the OPD.

Ms. Davis also shared about the various presentations that she has done at local colleges and universities. In addition, she recently had a booth at the Homeless Project that she felt was well received.

- **Ms. Vicki Steinhauer – Campbell** – Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) is using the order by selection process that was discussed in previous meetings. VR has recently took out the first 100 people who were on the waiting list. Conversation within the group on the process that VR uses in serving their clients.

Mr. Wyvill asked what was the number of individuals that VR served the last fiscal year. Ms. Steinhauer – Campbell did not have the number readily available, would find out and relay that information.

**Next Meeting** – January 8, 2019, 2018 at 1313 Farnam St, Room 227 Omaha NE, from 2p – 4p.

The meeting ended at 3:21pm.