

**Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Full Commission Meeting - March 14, 2014 – Approved June 13, 2014
Lincoln Medical Education Partnership, Room 4A
8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.**

Chairperson Manning called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

A. Welcome

New Board Members

Mr. Manning introduced Ms. Regina Frerichs. Ms. Frerichs is from Columbus, currently working as a nurse at the East Central District Health Department with the WIC Program. She has been hard of hearing for two years; her hearing loss resulted from serving as a military police officer with the Army Reserves.

B. Roll Call

Members present were Mr. Michael Brummer, Mr. Dillard W. Delts, Ms. Regina Frerichs, Dr. Carol Lomicky, Mr. Steven Manning, Dr. Jan Moore and Ms. Margie Propp. Members absent were Mr. John Hogue and Ms. Diane Muelleman. Staff members present were Mr. John Wyvill, Executive Director, Ms. Lori Burrage, Business Manager, Ms. Peggy Williams, Mental Health Specialist, Ms. Traci Cooney, Staff Assistant, Ms. Kelsey McGerr, Public Information Officer, Ms. Kim Davis, Field Representative and Mr. Ben Sparks, Interpreter Program Assistant. Interpreters were Ms. Sharon Sinkler and Ms. Lorelei Waldron.

C. Review of Agenda

Mr. Wyvill reviewed the agenda and identified the items requiring a formal vote.

D. Acceptance of Agenda

Mr. Manning asked for acceptance of the agenda. **Mr. Brummer made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Ms. Propp seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, absent; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

E. Acceptance of Minutes

1. Full Commission Meeting – December 13, 2013

Mr. Manning asked for acceptance of the December 13, 2013 minutes. **Mr. Delts made a motion to accept the minutes as presented. Mr. Brummer seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, absent; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

F. Vocational Rehabilitation Director – Mr. Mark Schultz

Mr. Schultz reported that Vocational Rehabilitation's (VR) purpose is to help people prepare for, find and keep a job and can provide assistance with anything related to employment. They also help businesses train, recruit and retain employees with disabilities. Mr. Schultz provided information on VR's services and statistics specific to individuals that are deaf or hard of hearing. Discussion was held and Mr. Schultz answered questions from members of the Board.

Ms. Muelleman arrived at 8:50 a.m.

G. Chairperson's Report

1. Deaf-Blind Equipment Program Audit Report

a. Presentation of Audit Report/Staff Response

b. Acceptance of Audit Report

Mr. Manning reported that he attended the exit conference and asked for questions related to the audit report. Seeing none, Mr. Manning asked for acceptance of the audit report. **Dr. Lomicky made a motion to accept the audit report for the Deaf-Blind Equipment Program. Dr. Moore seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

c. Discussion of Staff Recommendation for the Program

Mr. Manning reported that the recommendation is to de-certify the program effective June 30, 2014. Mr. Wyvill stated that if the Board votes to de-certify the program, a letter would be sent to the FCC ending the program on June 30, 2014. That will provide the FCC adequate time to put the program out for bid. There are two programs that may be interested in the program, Perkins School for the Blind and the Helen Keller National Center. The agency will continue to serve Deaf-Blind consumers just not administer the Deaf-Blind Equipment Program. Discussion was held. **Mr. Brummer made a motion to de-certify the Deaf- Blind Equipment Program effective June 30, 2014. Dr. Lomicky seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

2. Letter to Ms. Tanya Wendel – Clarification on Flower Fund

Mr. Manning reported that a letter thanking Ms. Wendel for her service has been prepared. A recommendation was made to use the money collected for a donation to the Nebraska Deaf Museum in Ms. Wendel's name. Discussion was held and the Board agreed with the recommendation.

3. NADC Form C-1 – Due April 1, 2014

Mr. Manning reminded the Board members they are required to file their forms with the Nebraska Accountability and Disclosure Commission no later than April 1, 2014.

H. Business Manager's Report

1. General Ledger Report

2. Carryover Funding Update

Ms. Burrage reported that the agency continues to operate under budget. Both vacant positions have been filled; equipment and supplies have been purchased for the new employees. The carryover funding update reflects that several projects are ongoing. Ms. Muelleman requested that the Commission host an open house at the Ameritrade Ball Park to promote their loop system and help educate the general public on the benefits of a loop system. Discussion was held.

3. Biennial Budget Planning and Process

Ms. Burrage reported that a preliminary budget will be prepared for the Board's review at the June board meeting. The final budget will be presented for Board approval at the August board meeting since the budget is due September 15th. Discussion was held.

I. Executive Director's Report

1. Director's Written Report

Mr. Wyvill reported that when he started in October, he began providing the Chairperson with a bi-weekly report outlining his activities. Based on the response at the December meeting, the Chairperson asked that Mr. Wyvill continue providing the reports.

2. Annual Report – 2013

Mr. Delts stated that the report should have an ROI (return on investment) summary at the end. Mr. Wyvill responded that the report was prepared consistent with previous reports and welcomed any suggestions for future reports. Discussion was held. **Ms. Propp made a motion to accept the annual report as written. Mr. Delts seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

3. Employee Handbook

Mr. Wyvill reported that he reviewed the employee handbook and made several changes. Upon Board approval, it will go Employee Relations for review; they will submit it to the NAPE/AFSCME Labor Union. Mr. Delts stated that the term Board of Directors on the front page is wrong; it should say Board of Commissioners. Dr. Moore recommended changing number seven on page two to treat people with dignity and respect. **Ms. Propp made a motion to table this until June. Mr. Brummer seconded the motion.** Ms. Muelleman requested that hard copies of the board packets be sent two weeks in advance so that future meetings go more smoothly. Discussion was held. **Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, no; Mr. Delts, no; Ms. Frerichs, no; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, no; Dr. Moore, no; Ms. Muelleman, no; Ms. Propp, no. The motion failed.**

Ms. Muelleman made a motion to accept the handbook with two amendments, Board of Directors will be changed to Board of Commissioners and number seven on page two will be changed to treat people with dignity and respect. Dr. Moore seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms.

Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

4. Commissioner Handbook

Mr. Wyvill reported that Mr. Delts submitted additional edits to the handbook. Ms. Muelleman stated it is still not written in people first language. Dr. Moore and Mr. Brummer disagreed. Mr. Delts stated the awards section will have to be approved by State Personnel since it has been changed. Discussion was held. **Mr. Delts made a motion to approve the Board Member Handbook with two amendments; eliminate Commissioners from the title NCDHH Commissioners Distinguished Service Award and add the wording suggested by Ms. Stacy Dvorak. Dr. Moore seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, no; Ms. Propp, yes. The motion was passed with seven votes in favor and one vote against.** Mr. Delts will provide the exact wording from Ms. Dvorak after the meeting.

5. Alegent Creighton Health Letter

Mr. Wyvill reported that this letter was the result of work with Alegent Creighton Health on access issues relating to medical services.

6. PSC 911 Letter and Response

Mr. Wyvill reported on the Next Generation 911 study. The Enhanced Wireless 911 Advisory Board will discuss issues surrounding the implementation of text to 911 services on April 14, 2014.

7. Review of Nebraska Department of Education Statistics

Mr. Wyvill requested information regarding students that are deaf or hard of hearing from the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE). NDE identified 610 students that are deaf or hard of hearing, eleven families have chosen to send their children to the Iowa School for the Deaf (ISD), which costs \$90,000 per student. Mr. Wyvill reported there is work group led by Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson looking at educational opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing students. Discussion was held.

8. Interim Study – LB 39/Interpreter Shortage

Mr. Wyvill reported that he is working with Senator Ken Haar’s office to conduct an interim study on the interpreter shortage.

9. Interpreter Review Board (IRB) Vacancies

a. Application Form

b. IRB Applicant

Mr. Wyvill reported that he received an application from Ms. Pamela Duncan to serve on the IRB. **Mr. Brummer made a motion to accept Ms. Pamela Duncan’s application for the IRB. Mr. Delts seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

10. Telecommunication Relay Service (TRS) Advisory Committee

a. Vacancies – Reappointments

Mr. Wyvill reported that Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson and Mr. Albert

Sparks are willing to continue serving on the TRS Advisory Committee. **Mr. Delts made a motion to reappoint Ms. Richardson-Nelson and Mr. Sparks to the TRS Committee. Ms. Propp seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

b. Re-bid on Relay Contract

Mr. Wyvill reported that the Public Service Commission has put the Relay Service out for bid through an RFP. Members of the Deaf community and the general public will be able to offer their input to PSC prior to any final decision being made. Discussion was held.

11. Request for Information – Stadium Access

Mr. Wyvill reported that he sent an inquiry to the University of Nebraska regarding accessibility at Memorial Stadium for deaf and hard of hearing ticket holders. UNL’s response was to provide an app for closed captioning capabilities on Smart phones since they do not have the capability for captioning on the big screens. Discussion was held.

12. Nebraska Association of the Deaf (NeAD) Updates

a. Agency Perspective

b. Deaf History/Awareness Month

Mr. Wyvill reported that he is working with the Nebraska Association of the Deaf (NeAD) to set up a booth at the Capitol, March 31st through April 4th, for Deaf History/Awareness month.

13. Senator Coash/Lincoln Association of the Deaf Meeting

Mr. Wyvill reported that he, Ms. Nancy Brt and Mr. Albert Sparks met with Senator Coash regarding services for senior adults that are deaf and hard of hearing and the access issues they face. Senator Coash suggested working with the Nebraska Health Care Association and a possible an interim study.

14. Out of State Travel Requests

a. John Wyvill – AG Bell, National Association of the Deaf Conference and State Agency Director’s Meeting

b. Beth Ellsworth – Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA) National Conference

Mr. Wyvill requested approval to attend three out-of-state meetings and approval for Ms. Ellsworth to attend the National HLAA meeting. **Mr. Delts made a motion to approve the out of state travel requests for Mr. Wyvill and Ms. Ellsworth. Dr. Lomicky seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

15. Staff Monthly Activity Reports – December 2013 - February 2014

a. Time and Energy Reports

b. Counties Served

Ms. Williams reported that the monthly reports provide crucial information when meeting with Senators and preparing the budget to effectively show the areas and the number of citizens we are serving. Discussion was held.

c. Interpreter Rules and Regulations Update

Ms. Williams reported that the Board recommendations to add the Nebraska Regional Program and people first language cannot be done unless there is a legislative change. Additionally, the IRB does not have authority over educational interpreters. A public hearing will be held on May 8th, in Lincoln, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Notice of the hearing will be published in the newspaper, posted on the Commission's web page and the Secretary of State's web page so people can comment through email. There is a detailed process before it can go to the Attorney General's office.

d. Update on NET Program

Ms. Williams reported that NET has a new marketing director who stated the Hearing Loss Program will cost \$20,000.00 and requested an additional \$5,000.00. **Mr. Delts made a motion to approve an additional \$5,000.00. Dr. Moore seconded the motion.** Mr. Brummer requested changing the title from hearing loss to hearing awareness. Dr. Moore suggested that the title reflect the pediatric theme of the program. Discussion was held. **Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Frerichs, yes; Mr. Hogue, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. The vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

17. Update on Scottsbluff Planning

Ms. Williams reported on the Scottsbluff presentations, training and outreach planned for June 10-14, 2014.

18. Update on Mental Health Interpreter Workshop

Ms. Williams reported that the Mental Health Interpreter Workshop will be held on May 30 and May 31, 2014 in Omaha.

19. Update on Website, Facebook and Statistics

a. Discussion and Feedback from the Board

Ms. Kelsey McGerr reported on the website and Facebook statistics and proposed changes to the website. Discussion was held.

J. Old Business

K. Subcommittee Discussion

- 1. Executive Committee**
- 2. Legislative Issues Committee**
- 3. Interpreter Issues Committee**
- 4. Education Issues Committee**
- 5. Awards and Recognition Committee**

The Awards Committee will work on language for the plaques for Dr. Pete Seiler and Dr. Donita Mains which will be presented to the Board at the June meeting.

L. New Business

Next Meeting Date – June 13, 2014 – Scottsbluff – Town Hall Meeting on June 12, 2014

Meeting adjourned at 1:52 p.m.

