

**Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Full Commission Board Meeting – March 8, 2013
Lincoln Medical Education Partnership
4600 Valley Rd, Lincoln, NE 68510
8:30 am**

B. Roll Call

Members present were Ms. Eileen Dakan, Mr. Dillard Delts, Dr. Carol Lomicky, Mr. Steven Manning, Ms. Diane Muelleman, Dr. Jan Moore, Ms. Margie Propp, and Mr. Michael Brummer. Member absent was Ms. Amy Kasch. Staffs attending were Dr. Peter Seiler, Executive Director, and Ms. Traci Cooney, Staff Assistant II. Ms. Sharon Sinkler and Mr. Ben Sparks were the sign language interpreters.

C. Acceptance of Agenda

Mr. Manning asked for acceptance of the agenda. Ms. Dakan stated that the next meeting is June 7 not June 8. Dr. Seiler stated that under 4. J., the year should be 2013, not 2012. Dr. Seiler also stated he wants to add Budget Hearing Update. After “Annual Report”, Dr. Seiler wants to add “Working with Western Nebraska Community College” and the “Deaf Blind Equipment Distribution Program”. **Mr. Delts made a motion to accept the changes to the agenda. Dr. Moore seconded the motion.**

Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Ms. Dakan, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Kasch, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

D. Acceptance of Minutes

Full Commission Meeting – December 14, 2012

Mr. Manning asked the Board if there were any changes to the minutes. Dr. Lomicky asked that abbreviations be spelled out in the first instance in minutes as not everyone is familiar with what they stand for. Ms. Muelleman stated that, under D. Acceptance of Minutes, she didn't ask for the changes to the minutes as stated, Mr. Manning did. Dr. Seiler stated that there is a part missing to that section and needs to be added. Ms. Muelleman stated that in section I, toward the end, Ms. Dakan's name is listed with her last name first. Ms. Muelleman stated that, under Roll Call, it should state “Staff Attending were”, not “Staff Attending was”. Dr. Lomicky asked that the pages be numbered in the minutes. **Ms. Muelleman made a motion to accept the changes – full name spelled out, under Accept Minutes add the changes to the minutes, add page numbers, under section I correct Ms. Dakan's name – as articulated by Dr. Seiler. Dr. Lomicky seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Ms. Dakan, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Kasch, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes.**

Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

Audience Comments - NONE

E. Chairperson's Report

1. Welcome and Introduce New Board Members

Mr. Manning introduced Ms. Propp and Mr. Brummer. Mr. Brummer shared with the board his background information and mentioned that he was moving to Omaha in July to start a new job

Ms. Propp shared her background and mentioned that her parents (Dr. George Propp and Elly Propp) had served on the board. She is proud to continue their work.

2. Role, Responsibilities, and Function of the Board Members, # 16

Mr. Manning asked if anyone had questions regarding how this paragraph is worded. He explained that what it states is that if the Director is gone for up to 6 days, the Director has a plan in place to cover the office. If it is more than 6 days, the Board becomes responsible for that plan. Ms. Muelleman asked what the plan is for less than 6 days. Dr. Seiler explained that he still allows staff to be able to contact him. He checks his email and reply to what needs to be answered immediately. He explained that he shared with Mr. Manning that he can recommend a staff person to be the acting director. He stated that he has a good person lined up and has discussed this with them. Dr. Seiler reminded the Board that, when the previous Director, Ms. Tanya Wendel, left with short notice, the Board had to determine how to provide quality leadership to the NCDHH staff. The Board had asked Ms. Peggy Williams to be the Interim Director. Ms. Muelleman felt that the specific person's name should be listed in regards to serving as the Interim Director. Dr. Seiler felt it was best to not name a specific person.

Dr. Moore recommended changing the 6 days to 10 days. She also stated that the current language states any absence which could cause concern for micromanaging. Dr. Lomicky recommended changing it to "extraordinary circumstances". Everyone also discussed changing language to picking "a qualified administrative leader" instead of using the language Interim Director.

Ms. Muelleman made a motion to accept the changes to E.2. in the handbook – add language to second line "extraordinary circumstances, change to 10 or more working days, add wording to qualified administrative leader. Mr. Brummer seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Ms. Dakan, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Kasch, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes.

Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

3. June: Performance Appraisal of the Executive Director

Mr. Manning stated that he will email the form to members in April. Members will need to send it back completed before the end of May. He explained that, during the June Board Meeting, they will hold a closed session with Dr. Seiler and show recommendations on his duties as well as discuss pay increase. He explained that this board tends to stay within the Governor's recommendations as well as compare to what is in the budget. Mr. Brummer asked if he should complete the appraisal since he is a new member. Members discussed that there may be a few questions he could feel comfortable answering. Dr. Seiler stated that it is satisfactory if only a few members fill out the appraisal and that no one

person has to. Dr. Seiler also added that staff can share concerns with Board members but it is prohibited to contact staff regarding the appraisal.

F. Business Manager's Report

1. General Ledger Report

Dr. Seiler explained that, in the budget, there may be some areas that still have a surplus of money left and if that money is needed on another project or area, it is used. An example is the television program that is being created. It was supposed to be \$10,000 and has turned out to be \$13,000. He explained that \$3,000 was able to be taken from the money set aside for postage as there is extra funds in that line.

G. Executive Director's Report

1. Accountability and Disclosure information

Dr. Seiler reminded the Board members that they should be sure to complete the forms by April 30, 2013.

2. Annual Report

Dr. Seiler explained that all members have received a copy as well as the Governor and libraries throughout the state.

Report on Meeting with Appropriation Committee

He mentioned that he had the meeting with the Appropriations committee yesterday. The members were very friendly and asked questions about staffing, Scottsbluff, services provided, and federal grants. Ms. Muelleman asked which staff was covering the western states. Dr. Seiler replied that Ms. Bonnie Hicks from the North Platte office is traveling to the western portion of the state.

3. I-Can-Connect

Dr. Seiler stated that, once the program was announced, applicants came right away. He also stated that there are approximately 300 people identified in Nebraska with dual sensory losses. He reported that Kim Davis took over the role of Deaf-blind Coordinator. She will administer the applications and made decisions on if they are qualified based on the application. Ms. Cindy Woldt is the IT person for the program. Both staff will travel to New York to the Helen Keller center for training. Staff will not do the assessments; NCDHH has contracted with Perkins School for the Blind to handle the assessments.

4. Plaques

Dr. Seiler stated that Ms. Luanna Duenerman sent a thank you letter to him after she received her plaque in the mail.

5. State Legislative Bills

Dr. Seiler stated that LB71 regarding a requirement of health insurance is still in committee. Discussion followed.

6. Nebraska Emergency Management Agency

Dr. Seiler shared with the Board that the Nebraska Emergency Management Planning Council is not responsive to working with NCDHH regarding plans to help Deaf and Hard of Hearing people during a disaster. Members of the Board discussed issues involving 911 and text to 911. He shared that Ms. Davis was interested in working on a emergency disaster plan for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and that Mr. Brian Bobbie and Ms. Beth Ellsworth were working on developing a list of places in Nebraska that provide access to both Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. The list will be shared with the Board at their June Board meeting.

7. North Platte Office

Dr. Seiler stated that there is rumor that North Platte may be dying because the railroad is laying off workers. Ms. Hicks brought the idea of moving the office to another town. Dr. Seiler asked the Board if they wanted him to prepare a report listing advantages and disadvantages of moving the office. Dr. Moore stated that, if there is a move, the office should be moved to somewhere closer to the western part of the state and Kearney is only 1/3 way across the state. She felt it didn't make sense to move the office from North Platte. Ms. Dakan recommended looking in the annual report and base the decision on where NCDHH has the most clients. No action was taken and Dr. Seiler stated that he will drop this idea.

8. Living with Hearing Loss TV Program

Dr. Seiler stated that the program will air April 28 at 1pm. NCDHH will have copies on DVD for people to look at and it will be on NCDHH website. Panel speakers will be Dr. Seiler, Dr. Stacy Ray from UNL, Dr. Jim Haley who is a psychologist in Omaha. Prior to filming the program, NCDHH will film interviews with people with hearing loss in the community. Clips of these interviews will be shown during the program.

9. University of Nebraska at Kearney Web Design Project

Dr. Seiler handed out a copy of the potential new logo for NCDHH. He also informed members that NCDHH now has a Facebook. Members discussed ideas for the logo. Some felt that there should be hands to symbolize how the deaf communicate. Some felt that the wording "equal opportunity" should be added to the circle after "Equal Access". Dr. Seiler agreed to take the ideas back to the students at UNK as recommendations.

10. City of Omaha Grant in Partnership with WCA of Omaha

Dr. Seiler stated that Omaha has announced that it was offering a grant for \$600,000 to help develop programs in Douglas and Sarpy counties. NCDHH through Ms. Peggy Williams has decided to work with Omaha Women's Center for Advancement and Heartland Deaf Advocacy Services to offer training to domestic violence and sexual assault places to work with women who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. The training will include pairing Deaf or Hard of Hearing

women with the victims.

11. Interpreter License Issue/Bill

Dr. Seiler explained that this bill is on hold because there is opposition from a local school district. The particular district wanted to be exempted from the proposed license law.

H. Subcommittee Discussion

1. Executive Committee

2. Legislative Issues Committee

3. Interpreter Issues Committee

Ms. Propp agreed to be on this committee.

4. Education Issues Committee

Mr. Brummer agreed to be on this committee.

Mr. Manning stated that there wasn't enough time to go over these sections.

I. Old Business

1. Omaha Staff Position: Status

Dr. Seiler explained that Mr. Brian Bobbie is now a Field Representative in the Omaha office. Ms. Bonnie Hicks is now a Field Representative in the North Platte office. Ms. Kim Davis is now a Field Representative in the Lincoln office.

Audience Comments - NONE

J. New Business

1. Special Permission to Work from Home instead of Office

Dr. Seiler explained that for the past few years, he has been asked periodically by staff if they could work from their homes. Dr. Seiler always thought that this was not possible but later learned from State Personnel that this is possible. They stated it was up to the agency director to allow or not allow it. Dr. Seiler requested opinions from staff on language for the new rule. Mr. Delts asked how staff will be able to do things on the computer in regards to the state firewall. Dr. Seiler explained that staff can access their email from home and could store their documents on a flash drive. **Mr. Brummer made a motion to approve the proposal for working from home as written (See attachment for J. 1). Mr. Delts seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Ms. Dakan, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Kasch, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes. Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.**

2. TRS Representative

Dr. Seiler stated that NCDHH is required to provide one member for the TRS committee. Ms. Kasch can no longer serve on the committee. Mr. Delts offered to serve. **Mr. Brummer made a motion for Mr. Delts to be the representative on the TRS committee. Dr. Moore seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Ms. Dakan, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Kasch, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes.**

Vote was unanimous in favor of the motion.

3. Board Interpreter Committee - Replacements

Dr. Seiler stated that, with Ms. Propp joining this board, there is now a vacancy on the Interpreter Review Board. He recommended looking back to the list of applicants on the most recent positions. He recommended that the interpreter issues committee review that list and send to the full board a recommendation for approval. **Dr. Lomicky made a motion for Dr. Seiler be directed to advise the interpreter issues committee to review the previous candidates for the Interpreter Review Board and report back to the board. Mr. Brummer seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Brummer, yes; Ms. Dakan, yes; Mr. Delts, yes; Ms. Kasch, absent; Dr. Lomicky, yes; Dr. Moore, yes; Ms. Muelleman, yes; Ms. Propp, yes.**

K. Next Meeting – June 8, 2013 – Kearney, Other Towns, or Omaha.

Mr. Manning reminded members that a town hall meeting tends to be held the night before the June meeting. Discussion took place on the option of changing the date. It was agreed to set the meeting in Kearney. Dr. Seiler will review the choices and then email to the members choices of dates.

Meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.