



**Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
June 2, 2009
Maryland Department of Transportation – Hanover, MD**

Attendees: Dirk Albrecht (MSD), Alexis Allenback (DLLR), Marian Bland (DHMH), Amy Bopp, Laurie Corcoran, Cheri Dowling, Alicia Epstein, Sue Griebler (MSDE), Annette Jones-Wilson (Governor's Office), George Kosovich, Gary Monroe (MCHR), and Jennifer Whitcomb.

Guests: Craig "Hank" Passi (DORS)

Absent Members: Carl Bailey (DHR), Thomas Brett, Julie Moyer (MDOT), John (Jack) Rouse (DHCD), and Judy Stout.

Staff: Lisa Kornberg, Laura Quinn, and Julie Schafer

Interpreters: Erin Harrison and Andrea K. Smith

CART: Sherry Knox

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Laurie Corcoran made a motion to suspend Robert's Rules of Order for this meeting. The motion was seconded by Alexis Allenback, and was passed by unanimous vote.

MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the March 30, 2009 meeting were approved with no changes.

DORS PRESENTATION – Hank Passi

Craig "Hank" Passi is the new Statewide Coordinator for Deaf and Hard of Hearing for the Department of Rehabilitative Services (DORS) under the Maryland Department of Education. He came to present to the Advisory Council about his role at DORS.

Mr. Passi provides technical assistance and consulting to different agencies in areas of employment, policy, training, and development and implementation of programs. For the next couple of months he will be meeting with Community Rehabilitation Programs (CRP) and reviewing their policies to help with their provision of services. He is a member of the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) and can share ideas about how to meet the needs of constituents with hearing loss. Maryland's rehabilitation services are ranked 7th in the nation, but still have a long way to go.

Application and Resume Writing

A lot of deaf individuals do not have the skills to go through the job application process alone. The consumers need individual help getting through the process instead of going through an agency or to a workshop. However, the goal is to help deaf individuals become more independent.

Alexis Allenback noted that The Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) has One Stop Centers around the state which have Federal trained resume writers on staff, but would require that they work through an interpreter. Currently ODHH is providing training to the DLLR One Stops.

Services

There is a waiting list for services through DORS and the selection process is complicated, but in the end it comes down to the availability of funds. There have been 1897 deaf people who have applied for services with DORS.

Wages

The average hourly wages for deaf individuals is \$14/hr, while the hearing population is about \$17/hr. However, about 60-70% of the deaf population is getting supplemental income. There are others who don't want to work or are retired. There is little pay discrepancy between the women and men.

Resources

Ms. Allenback mentioned that the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is always looking for speakers and they would be a good place to get the message out.

ACTION ITEM: Alexis Allenback will provide the contact information for SHRM.

Alicia Epstein pointed out that the Business Leadership Network (BLN) also interfaces with deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT – Laurie Corcoran

Laurie Corcoran, Chair and Dirk Albrecht, Co-Chair, will lead the Council as a team and they look forward to working with the Council as a group.

Everyone is expected to be involved and work towards the goals of the Council. Members of the Council will be required to be a part of the committees and will have an opportunity to join a subcommittee in the coming weeks.

The emphasis of the Council is to pull together expertise from different areas and to support Lisa Kornberg and the rest of the staff of ODHH while advising the Office on how to best serve deaf and hard of hearing Marylanders. The Advisory Council is separate from ODHH, which represents the Governor, but works in parallel with the Office.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT – Lisa Kornberg

Appointments

The terms of the Advisory Council members run through September. There are at least 3 individuals whose terms expire this fall.

- Alicia Epstein – Citizen (MDAD)
 - New appointee to be recommended from MDAD
- Gary Monroe – MCHR
 - To be reappointed
- Tom Brett – Citizen (Hard of Hearing)
 - Determine the number of terms now served

ACTION ITEM: The Advisory Council should have letters submitted to the Appointments Office by October to fill any vacant positions or initiate reappointments.

ODHH Priorities & Accomplishments

The purpose of the ODHH Town Hall meetings is to get feedback from the community. The Office is required to conduct these meetings pursuant to its enabling legislation. ODHH must provide the information gathered to the Advisory Council in order for the Council to make recommendations for the priorities of the Office to be submitted to the Governor.

- Most recent Town Hall Meeting – April 1, 2009 in Montgomery County
- Upcoming Town Hall Meeting – July 24, 2009 in Frederick County (MDAD Conference)

The Office met most of its goals for FY09, with the exception of printing the new brochures and launching the redesigned website.

Some of the recent accomplishments of the Office are:

- Met with DBM about setting up a statewide interpreting contract for sign language interpreters and will follow up with training for DBM.
- Working on the captioning of Governor's speeches and encouraging other State agencies to only post captioned videos on their websites.
- Meeting with statewide stakeholders to draft a letter to MSDE regarding education for deaf and hard of hearing students and establishing a statewide plan.

Outreach and Training

ODHH began training at the police academy and will establish a train the trainer model. In services training is one mechanism for providing training to veteran officers. Other agencies that have provided trainings are MSD and CSD, both in Frederick.

Other agencies where ODHH is providing training and/or outreach:

- Department of Labor Licensing and Regulation (DLLR) – One Stop Employment Centers
- Department of Aging - Area Agencies on Aging

New Priority:

- Department of Veterans Affairs – Assistant Director, Julie Anne Schafer, to begin outreach to veterans through statewide Veteran Musters
 - The largest disability of veterans returning from war is hearing loss.

AGENCY REPORTS:

MARYLAND COMMISSION ON HUMAN RELATIONS – Gary Monroe

No complaints from deaf or hard of hearing on employment discrimination.

ACTION ITEM: Laura Quinn to follow up on claim from DILA employee that the Salisbury office could not help with a complaint about an employer.

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR LICENSING AND REGULATIONS – Alexis Allencback

Some of the things that are happening at DLLR:

- The web FAQ on the DLLR web site have been improved to help with the increased number of unemployment claims and job seekers.
- Individuals have the ability to file their claim online.
- A video phone has been set up at the Frederick office for the Deaf community.

MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF – Dirk Albrecht

This school year is coming to an end. Here are a few things that are happening:

- The School submitted its comments to Ms. Kornberg related to writing a letter to MSDE about a State plan for the education of deaf and hard of hearing students. The stakeholders will meet on June 22, 2009.
- The new elementary school building is getting ready to open.
- Students are being transitioned to college and work.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE – Marian Bland

Lisa Kornberg provided sensitivity and awareness training to the coordinators at DHMH. The Telecommunications Access of Maryland (TAM) office also presented to the group at the same time.

MARYLAND STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – Sue Griebler

There will be a meeting at the Hearing and Speech Agency on early intervention and the 1-3-6 plan to intervention. This is funded by a grant through DHMH.

Dr. Heath and Sharon West are working on the replacement for the position that Dr. Paul Farrell left at MSDE.

SUBCOMMITTEES:

MENTAL HEALTH SUBCOMMITTEE

The subcommittee is recommending that the Mental Health Subcommittee be restructured and replaced by a Behavioral Health Subcommittee. Deputy Secretary Henry of DHMH is focusing the efforts of the State on consolidating services and it makes sense to follow the State's agenda. If there needs to be a specific focus on mental health, that can be determined at a later day.

The Advisory Council agreed to follow the recommendation of the subcommittee.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

Laurie Corcoran will be sending out an e-mail about joining subcommittees.

Suggestions:

- List where the meetings will meet
- Remote participation options – HASA may have already setup
- Description of subcommittees
- Two weeks or more notice of meetings
- No weekend meetings

ACTION ITEM: Need resources for setting up remote access to meetings.

The subcommittees that the Council has had in the past and will be reestablished and new committees created:

- Behavioral Health Subcommittee (formerly Mental Health)
- Legislation & Policy Subcommittee (formerly Legislative Committee)

- Education Subcommittee
- Ad Hoc Committees
 - Strategic Plan
 - Membership

ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Changes to the membership of the Council:

- Encourage MDAD to submit recommendation for a replacement for Alicia Epstein
- Agency Secretaries appoint their representative

Attendance

Members can not miss more than 50% of the meetings. Reminders will be sent prior to each meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

LEGISLATIVE DAY

There has been no follow up to the recommendation at the last meeting that a Legislative Day be established.

ACTION ITEM: Annette will talk to her office to find out the status of this recommendation.

TOWN HALL MEETINGS

There was an ODHH Town Hall meeting on April 1, 2009. Meeting notes were sent out to the Council after the meeting. ODHH did not receive any feedback from the Council. Most of the questions were answered there at the meeting, but there needs to be a procedure for how the information gets processed after the Town Hall Meetings.

- Opportunity to hear from the community
- Set up topics
- Bring information back to consider for the strategic plan

The Council needs to advise ODHH of the agenda for the town hall meetings if it wishes to predetermine the topic or if it prefers a more general meeting.

DILA is expanding due to the great need on the Eastern Shore. They had about 1,000 information and referral contacts over the last year. They are scattered and remote, so they don't have deaf clubs and organizations in that area as much. The people in that area want to know more about ODHH.

The December 1st Advisory Council meeting will be held at DILA in Salisbury, and will be followed by a Town Hall meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

ORIENTATION

Jennifer Whitcomb requested orientation. Chairperson Laurie Corcoran is willing to meet with her in Salisbury.

ACTION ITEM: New Council member binder needed for Ms. Whitcomb.

STRATEGIC PLAN

A new strategic plan is not yet in place. The committee has been established, but has not met. After becoming the director of ODHH, Lisa Kornberg has been following a two pronged approach that takes into account the State agencies and the constituents. There has been a strong emphasis on building relationships with the agencies.

In order to have ODHH and the Advisory Council work together, it was decided that ODHH would create a draft for a strategic plan. The Council will then meet as a whole, along with ODHH staff, on August 4, 2009 to review the draft and to make recommendation to establish the formal plan to be submitted to the Governor for approval.

NEXT MEETING

Date: September 1, 2009

Tim: 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) – Hanover, MD

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m.