

**APPROVED**  
**DODDBHH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES**  
**Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup> 2015**  
**10:00 AM – 3:00 PM.**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center**  
**104 Conservation Drive**  
**Roscommon, MI 48653**

**Council Members Present**

Jill Gaus, Chair  
David Barbour  
Helen Boucher  
Elizabeth Bystrycki  
Miriam Horwitz  
Jeannette Johnson  
Ann Liming  
Carole Mehling  
KT Maviglia

**Council Members Excused**

Liz Kobylak  
Kathy Mitchell

**Council Members Absent**

Patrick Baker  
Renea Forest

**DODDBHH Staff**

Annie Urasky, Director  
Karlee Rose Gruetzner, Rights Representative  
William Milzarski, Rights Representative  
Cara Di Giovanni, Rights Representative

**MDCR Executive Staff**

Matt Wesaw, Exec. Director, MDCR  
Lori Vinson, Director of Operations, MDCR  
Dan Levy, Director of Law and Policy, MDCR  
Lee Gonzalez, Legislative Liaison, MDCR

**CART**

Sue Deer Hall, Screenline, LLC

**Interpreters**

James Cech  
Stacey Hachey  
Bethany James  
Erin Parrish  
Andrea Rehkopf  
Lisa Rowinski  
Michelle Tocco

**Support Service Providers**

Nick Goodman  
Kara Brown

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Jill Gaus, Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (DODDBHH) Advisory Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM and welcomed everyone, thanking the interpreters, support service providers and CART for their services today. She reviewed the Communication Policy. Karlee Rose Gruetzner explained the hands-down rule for the interpreters and reminded the Council to not overlap comments and to announce their name when speaking. Roll call was taken by Director Annie Urasky and there was a quorum to hold the meeting.

**2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND OCTOBER 2014/FEBRUARY 2015 MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion to approve the Agenda. Council Member Boucher Motioned to approve the Agenda and Council Member Bystrycki seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion to approve the October 24, 2014 DODDBHH Advisory Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Boucher requested a change be made in her report to remove one letter from a word. Council Member Bystrycki Motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes with amendments and Council Member Barbour seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion to approve the February 27, 2015 DODDBHH Advisory Council Meeting Minutes. Council Member Johnson requested a change be made in her report to clarify she was happy to serve on the Council. Council Member Bystrycki requested a change be made in her report to state she worked at Kalamazoo Valley Community College. Council Member Boucher Motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes with amendments and Council Member Johnson seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

**3. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Director Urasky introduced herself and stated she was looking forward to working with the Advisory Council.

Director Urasky reported on the following:

- **Staff Updates:** Director Urasky asked the DODDBHH Staff: Karlee Rose Gruetzner, Rights Representative; William Milzarski, Rights Representative and Cara Di Giovanni, Rights Representative to introduce themselves to the Council Members. Director Urasky announced Christy Hill, Executive Secretary is no longer working with the Division and that a job posting would be announced.
- **Short Term and Long Term Goals:** Director Urasky briefly discussed several goals she plans on working on for the Division. This includes:
  - Ensuring consistency with proper policies and procedures.
  - Developing long term relationships with community stakeholders.
  - Updating forms and resources on Division website, working on signed captioned videos explaining different roles of the Division and the Department.
  - Formed work group to finalize policies and procedures for the Endorsement process.
  - Ten Requests for Investigations related to interpreters submitted with the Division
- **Legislative Updates:** With the historic development of a bipartisan Michigan Legislative Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing Caucus, it is a real opportunity for the community to address their needs. The Caucus wants to resolve addressed issues within the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing community. Director Urasky was invited to participate in giving a presentation at the first meeting which covered education issues. Tuesday, June 9, 2015 is the next scheduled meeting covering mental health issues. The Division will provide feedback and recommendations on specific drafts of legislation which impacts the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing community. Director Urasky will request feedback from the Advisory Council when drafted bills are being discussed for possible legislation. The Caucus is a new idea and it is a work in progress. Additionally, there are bills related to service animals being discussed with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

#### 4. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Gaus indicated a three minute timeline will be set for each person giving public comment, and two people requested to speak.

#### 5. **COUNCIL REPORTS**

##### **Council Chair Gaus**

Chair Gaus indicated she wanted to talk about the DeafBlind Equipment distribution program. The FCC has granted money to each state for free equipment for DeafBlind consumers. If you know someone who has any kind of vision and hearing loss, no matter their age, or if they are not legally blind but have progressive vision or hearing loss,

please contact CAC or DEAF C.A.N.I!. The website for more information is [icanconnect.org](http://icanconnect.org). She then invited Council Members to provide their reports.

### **Council Member Barbour**

Council Member indicated he works in the Dearborn school district and would like to add his concern with the recent closing of the program. It has been a source of frustration within the district for those who work with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. There was strong support from the community to attempt to keep the program open but unfortunately the decision was made to close that program. There may be other Total Communication or center-based Deaf and Hard of Hearing programs that may be discussing closing as well. He hopes future involvement with legislative action will help to block this progression happening in the educational community.

### **Council Member Boucher**

Council Member Boucher indicated members of the interpreter community had questions about the new endorsements requirements and whether the Division would provide training on BEI testing, the upcoming requirements for educational interpreters, and the endorsement requirements. Additional concerns were raised on whether the Division would acquire additional staff in order to handle the influx of applicants scheduled for testing since many people are expecting an increase in requests for testing. Council Member Boucher asked about the interpreter renewal application and the Code of Professional Conduct. She also wanted to know about State of Michigan policy on state employees' usage of Facebook.

### **Council Member Bystrycki**

Council Member Bystrycki indicated she used to work in Grand Rapids for the mental health agency, and five years ago, there was a program for the deaf with deaf staff. The program was closed leaving no mental health services for the deaf located on the west side of Michigan. We need help for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and it is very frustrating because the agency is in a brand-new building but they argue there's not enough funding to provide services for the deaf.

### **Council Member Horwitz**

Council Member Horwitz indicated she had questions on the number and availability of BEI raters. She also asked questions on the expected response rate for candidates taking the BEI tests and commented many have questions on the endorsement process.

### **Council Member Johnson**

Council Member Johnson indicated recurring issues with local businesses on interactions with deaf individuals. She cited a situation where a deaf person filed a complaint after being kicked out of a bar for no reason. Additionally, there are some issues with sensitivity training for law enforcement. For example, in Romeo, a group of

high school students with good intentions tried to teach law enforcement individuals how to sign. That is sensitive for the deaf community since there could have been errors made with improper use of signs; training should have been provided by an individual who has expertise in teaching sign language. In regards to Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services in Grand Rapids, the 20th annual banquet will be held on June 6, 2015 at Pinery Park. Everybody is welcome to come.

### **Council Member Kobylak**

Council Member Liming read the report for Council Member Kobylak in her absence. HLA-Michigan hosted an annual meeting on April 18, 2015 and the guest speaker was Brian Jensen, and he spoke on Perseverance to Triumph: The Five Things Resilient People Do. Another event was the annual Walk4Hearing for HLAA at Kensington Metro Park on May 16, 2015. There were about 400 people and \$50,800 was raised. Also, a good resource for Deaf, DeafBlind or Hard of Hearing students is the Described and Captioned Media Program. This is a free-loan described and captioned educational media made accessible through captioning and description text. Information on this program may be found on the HLAA website.

### **Council Member Maviglia**

Council Member Maviglia indicated that as Miss Michigan 2014, her platform is Listen Up: Advocating for Those with Hearing Loss. She is currently working on a bill introduced in the Senate about a month ago by Senator Dale Zorn.

### **Council Member Mehling**

Council Member Mehling indicated it has been very quiet in the Upper Peninsula and that she has been apprised of concerns but nothing has been brought up.

### **Council Member Mitchell**

Council Member Boucher read Council Member Mitchell's report in her absence. First, the second meeting of the Legislative Caucus will be June 9, 2015 from 4-5 focusing on mental health issues for deaf individuals. There will be three mental health professionals and one mother of a Deaf child speaking on several topics. Topics of discussion will be insurance and billing issues, lack of access to services, lack of system care, and lack of policy, as well as consumers' experience. Regarding the Deaf Mental Health bill, she is working with Representative Phelps on drafting the Deaf mental health bill. This bill is similar to the Alabama Mental Health bill which ensures Deaf consumers receive appropriate assessment and treatment from culturally and linguistically appropriate mental health professionals.

### **Council Member Liming**

Council Member Liming indicated she co-chairs the Technology Committee and chairs the Advocacy Committee for HLA-Michigan. She shared Committee Reports providing information on the Hearing Technology Specialist program. Hard of hearing people are trained on how to demonstrate Hearing Assistive Technology in presentations. Also,

HLA-Michigan has a grant with the Michigan Disability Rights Coalition regarding equipment for hard of hearing people. Some equipment has been redistributed to Michigan Centers for Independent Living. Through webinars, CIL staff can learn how to demonstrate and use the equipment. For the Advocacy Committee, she reported Michigan legislators received a document showcasing statistics and issues for people with hearing loss. Additionally, several bills are being supported by HLA-Michigan. Three are Congressional bills: Medicare coverage of hearing aids, tax credits on hearing aids, and the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Hearing Act. She hopes more members from the community will advocate and promote awareness for these bills. HLA-Michigan shared three major concerns with Representative Howrylak's office regarding the Legislative Caucus: the lack of hearing aid insurance coverage here in Michigan, the Hard of Hearing specialist position at the Division, and CART standardization.

### **LUNCH**

Chair Gaus announced the Council will pause from noon until 1:00 p.m. for a lunch break.

## **6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Bylaws:**

Chair Gaus indicated that each Council Member had been provided with a copy of proposed bylaws, which showed the existing bylaws as well as all changes recommended by the committee previously tasked with reviewing the bylaws for this purpose (identifying deleted as well as additional or substituted language). Chair Gaus then proceeded to go item by item and asked whether Council Members wished to discuss, amend, or reject that particular item before a motion would then be entertained on whether to adopt the bylaws as a whole. Discussion took place on each section where any Council Member indicated that he or she had a question of concern. When any Council Member deemed it to be appropriate, a motion was made to change the proposed bylaws and a vote was taken as indicated below. A final motion was then made to adopt, in their entirety, the bylaws as proposed and amended by the Advisory Council.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a Motion to add a recommendation in 4.3. Council Member Maviglia Motioned that a recommendation be added in 4.3 and Council Member Horwitz seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a Motion to insert specific language in 4.3. Council Member Liming made a Motion that 4.3 should include the following "It is further recommended that the Governor appoint at least two members from each of these three groups." and Council Member Boucher seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 4.5. Council Member Liming made a Motion that the word “CART providers” be added after the word “business” and the word “interpreters” be added after the word “health care professionals”. Council Member Horwitz seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 4.8. Council Member Liming made a Motion that 4.8 should include the President of the Hearing Loss Association of Michigan- Michigan State Association (HLA-MI), and the President of Self-Help for Independency in Michigan Equalizing the DeafBlind (SHI-M=DB). Council Member Bystrycki seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 4.9. Council Member Liming made a Motion that 4.9 should cite four ex-officio members, not two and Council Member Boucher seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 5.2A. Council Member Boucher made a Motion that 5.2A should read “A member engages in activities which represent a conflict of interest with the Department work; and/or” and Council Member Horwitz seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 5.2B. Council Member Boucher made a Motion that 5.2B should read “A member is absent for three consecutive meetings, unless the absence is due to extenuating circumstances as approved by the Council Chair and/or” and Council Member Barbour seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 5.2C. Council Member Boucher made a Motion that 5.2C should read “A member acts in an unprofessional or unethical manner with respect to the mission, the purpose, or the goals of the Department.” and Council Member Johnson seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 6.3. Council Member Barbour made a Motion that 6.3 should read “The Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the Council at its first meeting of each calendar year and serves until the election of its successor.” and Council Member Maviglia seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 6.4. Council Member Johnson made a Motion to change 6.4D and E to 6.4 A and B, and Council Member Boucher seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion for 7.2. Council Member Johnson made a Motion to remove 7.2 from the Bylaws because it seems duplicitous with 8.2 and to also add changing the numbers respectively after that bylaw is removed. Council Member Boucher seconded the Motion. The Motion Passed.

**MOTION:** Chair Gaus requested a motion that the Advisory Council adopt the bylaws as proposed by the committee and amended by the Advisory Council. Council Member Bystrycki made a Motion that the Advisory Council adopt the proposed and amended bylaws in their entirety. Council Member Horwitz seconded the Motion. The Motion passed.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS**

### **Accessibility at Centers for Independent Living:**

Council Member Johnson addressed accessibility issues with a local independent living center. Inaccurate information was published regarding interpreter certification and requesting volunteer interpreters who were not certified. She feels there is a direct conflict with the fact programs at CILs are supposed to be fully accessible and they are not at all accessible for deaf individuals. Council Member Johnson asks the Advisory Council to discuss their response and hopes they will be proactive in either deciding to formally send a letter or to see if a deaf representative could be appointed on the State Independent Living Council Board. Council Member Liming commented that if there is an issue at a specific CIL, there are probably issues at other CILs in the state. Director Urasky and Lori Vinson both commented that if a deaf individual requests an accommodation and is denied that accommodation, then complaints should be filed with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights.

## **8. CONTINUATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Gaus indicated a three minute timeline will be set for each person giving public comment, and four people requested to speak.

## **9. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Director Wesaw welcomed the newly appointed Advisory Council members and congratulated the fact there is now a full Advisory Council. Director Wesaw then went on to introduce the new Division staff, Director Annie Urasky and Rights Representative Cara Di Giovanni. The new incoming State Superintendent Brian Whiston met with the Division recently. This relationship is important because the Division is going to be working very closely with the Department of Education on many issues. Another recent meeting for the Division was with MIRID with the intention to build a better relationship with the interpreter community in Michigan. Additionally, Director Wesaw wanted to recognize and thank Chris Hunter for his dedication to the community and coming out of retirement to provide assistance for the Division.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**



Chair Gaus thanked everyone for attending and asked everyone to join her in thanking those who provided accommodations. She called for a Motion to adjourn. Council Member Boucher moved and Council Member Johnson seconded the Motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:00PM.