



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS
LANSING

MATT WESAW
DIRECTOR

UNAPPROVED

DODHH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 25, 2014

Holiday Inn Gateway Centre
5353 Gateway Centre Drive
Flint, MI 48507

Council Members Present

Melissa Whalen (Chair)
David Barbour
Helen Boucher
Odessa Carter
Elizabeth Kobylak
Carole Mehling
Kathy Mitchell
Freida Morrison
Brenda Neubeck

Council Members Excused

Jamie Maes-Eischen

Council Members Absent

Patrick Baker

DODHH Staff

Amanda Niven, Rights Representative
Karlee Rose Gruetzner, Rights Representative
Christy Hill, Executive Secretary

MDCR Executive Staff

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

CART

Sue Deer Hall, Screenline, LLC

Interpreters

James Cech
Cori Foster
Theresa Hill
Mitch Holaly
Bethany James
Jennifer Libiran
Lera Lowrie
Danielle Ward

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VISITORS IN ATTENDANCE AT THE DODHH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING

Christa Moran, U of M Hospital
Melissa Gulvas, Interpreter
Kim Willett, Interpreter
Lisa Freeman, Interpreter
Loralie Rodabaugh, Student, MCC ITP
Sandra Maloney, MIRID
Gina Colombo, Visitor
Debra Rizer, Student, MCC
Charlyss Ray, MDCH
Marcy Colton, Deaf C.A.N.!
Barney Morrison, Visitor
Ann-Marie Christman, MCC
Jeannette Johnson, Deaf & H/H Services
Nancy Gingery, Deaf & H/H Services
Debra Morrison, Deaf Link
Nan Asher, Departing DODHH Council Member
Lori Reeve, Student Member

Jessica Meek, Student
Klaudia Rozner, Visitor
Taquetta Crump, Student, MCC
Karen Young, Visitor
Julianne Bonta, HLA 3
Todd Morrison, Michigan Deaf Assoc.
Debby Dietch, Visitor
Janet Jurus, Visitor
Diana McKittrick, Visitor
Millie Hursin, Visitor
Kaitlin Ducham, Student, MCC
Alyshia Hadaway, Student
Donna Hutton, Visitor
James Hutton, Visitor
Franklyn Ash, Detroit Black Deaf Advocates
Natalie Guipido, Visitor

CALL TO ORDER

Mel Whalen, Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DODHH) Advisory Council Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:37 a.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Amanda Niven read the Communication Policy and Chair Whalen explained the hands down rule. Roll call was taken by Amanda Niven and there was a quorum to hold the meeting.

Chair Whalen requested the group give a warm welcome to the three new Advisory Council Members: David Barbour, Kathy Mitchell and Carole Mehling; and the reappointment of Liz Kobylak and also thanked Nan Asher for her many years of service upon her departure as outgoing Council member. She requested the three new Council Members introduce themselves to the group.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 5, 2013 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Chair Whalen requested the DODHH Advisory Council Members move to approve the December 5, 2013 Meeting Minutes. Council Member Mitchell requested an amendment on page four to change her report to reflect that she and staff from the Department of Community Health and not Oakland Community Mental Health attended the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association Conference held last May in Minnesota. Council Member Forrest Motioned to approve the Meeting Minutes as amended and Council Member Neubeck seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

STATUS UPDATE ON PA 204 RULES AND REGULATIONS PROCESS

Director Wesaw wanted to first recognize the individuals who served on the Rules panel and commend them for their hard, dedicated work. The members include: Helen Boucher, Franklyn Ash, Diana McKittrick, Todd Morrison, Janet Jurus, who stepped in to help in the absence of Mel Whalen, and Dan Levy. Director Wesaw indicated the panel has met several times and have been committed to providing the best document possible that protects the rights of all involved. The final product will be a good foundation and starting point from which to work in the future. When the final product is completed, Dan Levy will forward it to the Office of Regulatory Reinvention, (OOR) for their final review. It will then go to the Legislative Services Bureau for proper formatting and then be submitted to the JCAR for final action. Director Wesaw indicated it is our intent to push for adoption before the Legislature goes on summer break which is scheduled for June 12th at this time. Our days are running short, but everyone is moving at a pace that still allows for a quality product. The Council Members discussed with Director Wesaw and Mr. Levy the status of the draft Rules that includes policies related to Michigan Department of Education (MDE), Michigan Administrative Rules for Special Education (MARSE) and the Educational Interpreter Performance Assessment (EIPA). Director Wesaw and Mr. Levy will confirm earlier commitments regarding this issue.

DODHH ADVISORY COUNCIL REPORTS

Chair Whalen requested the Advisory Council Members introduce themselves and give a short report of their current activities.

Council Member Renea Forrest indicated that the Henry Ford Health System is offering ASL classes to the staff and community. They are offering a total of four classes.

Council Member Freida Morrison indicated that the DODHH is not effectively leading the Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. She indicated she would like a discussion regarding the DODHH staff roles.

Council Member Kathy Mitchell reported an article last week was published regarding Deaf Mental Health and has been posted on Facebook.

Council Member Helen Boucher reported that interpreters have concerns regarding getting their renewals processed on time and questions if there is enough staff to accomplish this. MDCR Director Lori Vinson responded there is adequate staff and gave assurance the renewals will be processed on time.

Council Member Liz Kobylak announced there was a HLAA meeting April 12, 2014 in Lansing, which was a success. She invited everyone to attend the May 17, 2014 annual Walk for Hearing at the West Boat Launch Pavilion at Kensington Metropark in Milford, Michigan. She indicated there will be assistive technology information and equipment demonstrations.

Council Member Odessa Carter indicated she has requested that Deaf Blind be added to the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing name many times now. Chair Whalen responded that it is on the agenda for the day and will be discussed further.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Whalen indicated a three minute timeline will be set for each person giving public comment. Seven people gave public comments.

MOTION: Chair Whalen requested the DODHH Advisory Council Members move to extend Public Comment to 12:00 noon. Council Member Boucher Motioned to approve the extension and Council Member Mitchell seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

Chair Whalen announced the continuance of Public Comment with eight more individuals giving their comments.

LUNCH

Chair Whalen announced the group will now break for lunch and return at 1:00 p.m.

OLD BUSINESS

ADDING DB TO THE DODHH NAME

MOTION: Council Member Carter called for a Motion to add DeafBlind to the Division on Deaf and Hard of Hearing name. Council Member Forrest seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

The group discussed whether to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to investigate the DODHH Advisory Council Mission Statement to reflect the new name.

MOTION: Council Member Boucher called for a Motion to establish an Ad Hoc Committee to develop a new Vision and Mission Statement. Council Member Morrison seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

Chair Whalen requested Council Members volunteer to be on the Ad Hoc Committee. Council Members Boucher, Forrest, and Carter gave affirmative responses.

CLARIFYING DODHH STAFF ROLES

Director Wesaw introduced the DODHH staff to the group: Christy Hill, Secretary; Karlee Rose Gruetzner, Rights Representative and Amanda Niven, Rights Representative. He discussed with the group that the staff is doing well and are available when requested to attend meetings and will be attending in-house trainings, which members of the Rules panel offered to provide. He also indicated that Director Emery is on extended leave which is a personnel matter and cannot be discussed at this time. Director Vinson gave an overview of the DODHH staff positions and duties they are responsible for. She clarified that Karlee Rose is a Rights Representative Interpreter Coordinator and Amanda is a Rights Representative

Investigator. Also, she informed the group that she and the Department's Executive Team and not the DODHH staff is filling in for Director Emery's position and performing the executive duties of that position; however, the staff does attend meetings, shares information and is working closely with the MDCR Executive Management Team. All inquiries or work that is ordinarily handled by Director Emery should be directed to Lori Vinson.

NEW BUSINESS

HARD OF HEARING SPECIALIST POSITION

Council Member Kobyack reported that she, and Council Members Neubeck and Asher met with Director Wesaw to work on reinstating the Hard of Hearing position within DODHH and distributed a copy of the position paper they developed. They met with Director Emery, previously, to discuss the former DODHH Hard of Hearing Specialist position description. Director Wesaw indicated the next steps will be working with Civil Service to create the new position description and he also plans to meet with the Governor to request the 2015 fiscal year budget include a Hard of Hearing Specialist position within DODHH.

DEAF CULTURE TRAINING FOR CURRENT STAFF AND LEADERSHIP AT MDCR

Chair Whalen led a discussion about in-house training for MDCR staff. MDCR Director Wesaw indicated he not only agreed it was needed, but he had already begun to look at different ways it could be accomplished within very tight budget constraints. Council Member Boucher stated that she believed it is important to bring Director Emery back as soon as possible as the budget doesn't have allowance for an interim Director and the need for an experienced Deaf leader will be particularly essential once the Rules are promulgated. Director Wesaw reminded the group that Director Emery's position is not eliminated and the matter is following a state process which the MDCR Executive Team cannot control.

SCHEDULING UPCOMING DODHH ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETINGS AROUND THE STATE

Chair Whalen discussed with the group the logistics of upcoming Council Meetings for this year. Discussion included holding a meeting in Grand Rapids and the Upper Peninsula. Council Member Mehling suggested Escanaba as a possible venue because of the large population of deaf and hard of hearing people residing there and an opportunity for them to meet the DODHH Advisory Council Members and Staff. Council Member Forrest indicated she had previously sent a letter to the Advisory Council which outlined the populations of the major cities in the UP and the distance of travel from Detroit to each of those cities. Director Wesaw indicated that from a budget standpoint, the UP would be more expensive in the summer months; thus, suggested meeting in a summer month in Grand Rapids and then plan for the UP in the fall. Council Member Boucher indicated the time of day the meeting is held should be considered as many people are unavailable during normal work hours but would be available late afternoon and evenings during the week or possibly weekends.

MOTION: Council Member Neubeck called for a Motion to hold the next Advisory Council Meeting, from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. to allow opportunity for workers to not take too much time off. Council Member Mitchell seconded the Motion. Motion approved.

Chair Whalen reported the next meeting will be in June, the venue will be in the Grand Rapids area and it will be held from 3:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Christy Hill, DODHH Secretary, will be contacting the Council Members and staff for their schedules. The group agreed that a fall meeting in the UP could be discussed further at the June meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Whalen indicated that a few people requested Public Comment after the noon break. She requested they come forward before adjourning the meeting. She thanked everyone for attending, and motioned to adjourn. Council Member Mitchell seconded the Motion. The meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

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