



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS
LANSING

MARLON I. BROWN, DPA
DIRECTOR

MICHIGAN BOARD OF INTERPRETERS FOR THE DEAF, DEAFBLIND AND HARD OF HEARING

May 8, 2024

APPROVED MINUTES

In accordance with the Open Meetings Act, 1976 PA 267, as amended, the Michigan Board of Interpreters for the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing met on May 8, 2024, at the Lansing Community College (LCC) West Campus, Cadillac Room (M-121 to 122), 5708 Cornerstone Drive, Lansing, Michigan, 48917.

CALL TO ORDER

Heather Keel called the meeting to order at 10:14 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mitch Holaly
Sarah Houston
April Davidson
James Cech
Rowan O'Dougherty
Linda Sykora
Diana McKittrick

Members Absent: Leslie Pertz
Miriam Andrade Cuevas

Staff Present:

Larry Horvath, Bureau Director, Bureau of Community and Health Systems (BCHS)
Heather Hosey, Division Director, Health Facility Licensing, Permits and Support, BCHS
Colleen Curtis, Qualified Interpreter Program, BCHS
Heather Keel, Analyst, Qualified Interpreter Program, BCHS
Katrina Johnson, Human Resources Developer, Qualified Interpreter Program, BCHS

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION by Houston, seconded by Sykora to approve the agenda as presented.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

ELECTIONS

Keel ran the election for Chairperson.

MOTION by Holaly to nominate Sykora as Chairperson.

MOTION by Houston to nominate Holaly as Chairperson.

A roll call vote was held: Holaly as Chairperson

Yeas – Houston

Sykora as Chairperson

Yeas – Davidson, Cech, O'Dougherty, Sykora

Nays – None

Abstained – None

Not present during vote – McKittrick

MOTION PREVAILED

Keel ran the election for Vice-Chairperson.

MOTION by Holaly to nominate Houston as Vice-Chairperson.

A roll call vote was held: Yeas – Holaly, Davidson, Cech, O'Dougherty, Sykora

Nays – None

Abstained – Houston

Not present during vote – McKittrick

MOTION PREVAILED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION O'Dougherty, seconded by Sykora, to approve the meeting minutes from the meeting on February 14, 2024.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

SUBCOMMITTEES

MOTION by Cech to create a subcommittee to collect and review data concerning the cause of the QI shortage. Seconded by McKittrick.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

MOTION by McKittrick for Cech to lead committee, with Davidson, McKittrick and Sykora participating. Seconded by Houston.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

MOTION by Houston for a subcommittee on public relations and providing BCHS with a list of people to contact. Seconded by McKittrick.

A voice vote followed.

MOTION PREVAILED

NEW BUSINESS

A. Representative Matt Koleszar

Representative Koleszar appreciated the opportunity to speak to the Board – not only as a representative, but as a family member of Deaf individuals. Rep. Koleszar has received community concerns and inquiries from interpreters about lag times on testing results and whether legislation or a rules change is the answer. They mentioned that access to interpreters should be increased. Rep. Koleszar mentioned that communication is a basic right and looks forward to partnering with the Board. Rep. Koleszar introduced Representative Joe Aragona from District 60. Rep. Aragona looks forward to helping solve issues within the community.

B. LARA Director Marlon Brown

LARA Director Brown thanked Board members for their service and for challenging LARA. They discussed the proposed budget, the Flint roundtable and appreciates the opportunity to support the Board and the Deaf community.

C. Partner Update

1. Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (MDCR, DODDBHH)

Annie Urasky with the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, Division on Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (MDCR, DODDBHH) provided a partner update to the Board. They mentioned they look forward to the partnership between the offices continuing. Urasky provided details on the fall committee meeting and spring training sessions with the Attorney General's Office and the Michigan Health & Hospital Association.

Urasky provided details on the PEHI project on promoting equity in healthcare and requested that interpreters looking to work in the medical field apply. Experience and education will be reviewed during the application process.

2. Michigan Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (MIRID)

Cech provided an update as the Michigan Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (MIRID) President. MIRID hosted a panel and social event on April 26. Cech mentioned that they are working to network and collaborate with their members.

D. Department Report

Hosey discussed updating the Qualified Interpreter Rules and recent program involvement in the community. Highlights included participation with a roundtable discussion at the Michigan School for the Deaf. Hosey mentioned that many interpreters should be sending renewal applications soon and provided information that may be useful to those individuals. Hosey also discussed testing data for the preceding six months.

Discussion

McKittrick inquired about the best way for the Deaf community to get information and mentioned that it would be good to have more community involvement.

Sykora suggested that an email blast could be sent out about current information or events.

Houston mentioned that LARA has been making progress and suggested the department reach out to people that are not attending the big events. They provided suggestions such as The Flint Association for the Deaf, DeafCan, or other associations.

O'Dougherty suggested that a deaf individual or group that is specialized with the community be involved with planning the Town Hall meeting.

Holaly noted that the Board should communicate any suggestions to BCHS.

McKittrick suggested that several different organizations could be part of a panel discussion.

O'Dougherty mentioned that the Deaf community is active with social media. One suggestion is to have a Facebook page to connect with the community and show what LARA is doing.

Discussion occurred about mentorship programs, resources and opportunities for individuals to have opportunities to practice and gain experience to advance.

Holaly mentioned that the passing rates are an issue. They questioned if its an education or recruitment problem, and if it is presented to potential college students as a profession.

Houston noted that the validity of the performance test is important and discussed the possible barriers to the written test.

Discussion occurred amongst the board about accepted credentialing exams and the need to get proficient, quality interpreters.

Cech suggested sending out a renewal reminder card similar to what licensed professions receive. They also mentioned that many interpreters have work conflicts and cannot attend earlier meetings and an evening meeting might gain more interaction.

Davidson mentioned that there is a disconnect between providers and interpreters and the database is a barrier. Improvement was suggested on getting interpreters where they are needed most.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was provided in-person:

Warren Coryell provided public comment to the Board. They noted that someone mentioned 87% of doctors refuse to hire in person interpreters. They said that McClaren and Genesis in Flint require VRI on IPAD. Another concern is underqualified interpreters in legal settings. They noted that VRI and VRS give the community less input in the ability to communicate.

Deb Atwood with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services provided public comment to the Board. They mentioned that out of state agencies make it difficult to receive quality workers and monopolize assignments. Their agency is working with area hospitals on mentorship in west Michigan and getting the deaf community on board. They are looking into having LARA talk to our senior community.

Comments provided via Zoom:

Justine Bryant provided comment to the board. They inquired if PPO is considered as ethics continuing education in Michigan.

Karen Mrazik provided comment to the board. They said that the NIC is now considered a generalist exam. This is a delineation from previous forms of the exam, which had been considered the more difficult option. They said evening meetings have been requested for many years. Many educational interpreters are unable to participate, other than watching the recordings. They appreciate the Board and LARA staff for being receptive to ideas.

Shaylee Kales provided comment to the Board. They asked how to send a complaint as a deaf individual about someone's certification or medical endorsement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Sykora mentioned that the Attorney General's Office will be presenting at their building on May 23.

O'Dougherty said that Northview PAH will be hosting an event on May 17, at Northview High School.

Houston mentioned commencement ceremonies and offered congratulations to ITP graduates.

Davidson mentioned that the ITP programs are planning on speaking at the fall Board meeting.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on October 16, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION by O'Dougherty, seconded by McKittrick, to adjourn the meeting at 1:14 p.m.

A voice vote was held.

MOTION PREVAILED

Prepared by:
Heather Keel
Bureau of Community and Health Systems

May 22, 2024