

**Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing  
160<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Commission Meeting  
January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Kentucky Correctional Industries – Frankfort, KY**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ms. Jeannie Taylor, Ms. Holly O’Mary, Ms. Barbie Harris, Ms. Nancy Perry, Ms. Gerry Gordon-Brown, Ms. Amy Schilling, Ms. Amy Hatzel (designee), Ms. Dodie Karr, Ms. Michelle Niehaus, Ms. Joy Kiser, Ms. Becky Cabe, Mr. Thomas Evans and Mr. Eddie Runyon

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Ms. Edie Ryan and Mr. George Tunstall IV

**STAFF PRESENT:** Ms. Virginia Moore and Ms. Elise Kitchen

**COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS:** Ms. Marva Johnson, Ms. Rita Zirnheld-Anderson, and Ms. Tracy Lundergan

**VISITORS:** None

Ms. Taylor, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. Ms. Harris, Secretary, called roll and welcomed everyone to the 160<sup>th</sup> Quarterly Commission Meeting. Commission members reviewed the minutes from the 159<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting and engaged in a brief discussion.

**MS. HARRIS (Ms. Karr) MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE 159<sup>th</sup> QUARTERLY COMMISSION MEETING AS READ. THE MOTION PASSED.**

Board members reviewed the Executive Board minutes from the meeting in December. There were no items identified for discussion.

**MS. GORDON-BROWN (Ms. Karr) MOVED TO ACCEPT THE EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES AS WRITTEN. THE MOTION PASSED.**

**REPORTS**

**Executive Board:**

Per Ms. Taylor’s request, Ms. Hatzel formally introduced Ms. Schilling, Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf’s (KyRID) current president, for whom she is serving as designee on the Commission board. Following the introduction, Ms. Schilling expressed her gratitude to the board for allowing her to attend the quarterly meetings to ensure a smooth transition.

Ms. Taylor announced that the 161<sup>st</sup> Commission Meeting was originally scheduled on April 19, which is Good Friday, so it has been rescheduled for April 12. She emphasized that attendance at the April meeting is particularly important as elections will take place at that time.

**Agency:**

Ms. Moore requested feedback regarding the new format of the Agency Report. The members agreed that it was very readable and expressed appreciation for the front page reminder of the Commission's Mandates and Goals.

Regarding legislation, Ms. Moore reported that we will not be putting forth Language Equality and Acquisition for Deaf Kids (LEAD-K) legislation at this time, and said there will be additional details regarding those issues during the K-12 Study Group report. She added that there is a literacy bill the Commission is monitoring regarding the potential ramifications for children in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade who are not able to read at a 3<sup>rd</sup> grade level. She pointed out that this is particularly important as it would most likely apply to a disproportionately high number of deaf and hard of hearing children. Ms. Moore stated that we will be watching to see what measures, if any, are put in place to address the issue, since LEAD-K is not on the table at this time.

Ms. Moore indicated that we are also monitoring legislation proposing that materials be included in the driver's education curriculum regarding the appropriate response and responsibilities of a civilian when approached by a police officer. She stated that we have submitted a request to consider amending that to include communication visor cards based on an individual's needs. Ms. Perry indicated that one of the phone numbers on the current visor cards may need to be updated, and Ms. Moore assured her that the cards would be thoroughly reviewed and updated as necessary.

Regarding personnel, Ms. Moore informed the board that The Document Processing Specialist I vacancy was officially filled December 1. The Policy Analyst III position, however, is still undergoing scrutiny by the Personnel office, which is currently backlogged by several months. She said that until the position is confirmed, the vacancy will not be posted. In the meantime, staff has been retained on a temporary, part-time basis to help maintain efficiency while the agency is understaffed.

Ms. Moore reported that staff had an opportunity to preview the preliminary design of the new database, and highlights included features that will significantly increase the efficiency of the Access Center's interpreter referral process. Those features will require that interpreters set up an access portal, which will allow them to be able to view pending job requests and other pertinent details. Ms. Moore also announced that there will be a new mobile app that allows users to log in using a Personal Identification Number (PIN) to track their Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) applications. She pointed out that while some functions will be automated to help streamline responses to consumers, KCDHH will primarily use those features to expedite information retrieval and delivery and will continue to maintain our personal connection to our constituents. Ms. Moore said that we expect to have a prototype of the database available for testing purposes in a few weeks.

Ms. Moore indicated that the TAP Department is running smoothly. She stated that no new equipment has been added at this time and referred the board to the TAP Report for further information.

Regarding Emergency Management, Ms. Moore reported that KCDHH created and posted a vlog calling for interpreters to volunteer their interpreting services in shelters located in areas impacted by natural disasters and other large-scale emergencies. In addition to the vlog, Ms. Moore stated that a list was posted detailing the kinds of information needed from

interpreters willing to volunteer their services. This information will be collected and maintained at KCDHH in preparation for use in coordination with the Emergency Operations Center and the Red Cross. She said that once the list of volunteers is compiled, KCDHH plans to establish criteria and guidelines for providing services following the example of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ACDHH).

Ms. Moore also reported that she met with the Kentucky Emergency Management's (KYEM) Public Information, Awareness and Communication Coordinator in November. She indicated that they are collaborating to develop a plan for the activation, use and management of the volunteer interpreter list to be used during natural disasters and other large scale emergencies. In addition, they will be coordinating interpreting services for any televised emergency announcements at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). She also stated that we are working with the Red Cross to integrate KCDHH into their activation and deployment Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), as they are the organization responsible for managing disaster relief shelters.

Ms. Moore shared that nearly all of the counties in Kentucky have Enhanced 911 (E911) services which means that they can triangulate a caller's location within a 50-300 meter radius. She indicated that some areas of the state also have Smart911 services and said that individuals in those areas can register and create a profile to share whatever personal information they want the dispatcher to have access to in case of emergency. However, she clarified that, unless the caller is calling from a landline, those services don't offer any narrower search band than E911 in terms of the caller's physical location in the absence of verbal communication. Ms. Harris expressed concern for deaf individuals who live in rural areas whom she felt may not have access to 911 services. Ms. Moore assured her that as we are able to pinpoint exactly which counties have each of these services, we will determine the best way to present that information to consumers in a way that offers clarification and easy access.

Ms. Moore informed the board that KCDHH purchased an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and a Bleed Kit for use by office personnel in case of an emergency. She stated that Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), First Aid and AED training was provided for staff members as part of the medical oversight requirements associated with that purchase.

Ms. Moore announced that the conversational American Sign Language (ASL) classes funded by a grant through the Commission for Children with Special Healthcare Needs (CCSHN) will begin February 4. Ms. O'Mary emphasized that the priority is parents of deaf and hard of hearing children; however other interested individuals may attend if there are seats available. She also clarified that because the classes are grant-based, they are free of charge for all who wish to attend.

Ms. Moore shared that we recently posted a vlog explaining the process for obtaining the new Real Identification (REAL ID). She stated that despite the inherent complexities, we were able to clarify the requirements and options in a manner that will make the information more accessible to the public. Ms. Taylor added that the rollout dates have been published online, and Ms. Moore indicated that those dates can be accessed through the KCDHH website. Ms. Taylor also encouraged board members to continue to spread the word that deaf and hard of hearing individuals can inform the Driver's License Office of their hearing loss. That information will then be added to the database so that police officers will be alerted to the potential communication barriers during traffic stops.

Ms. Moore also disseminated samples of the new fact sheets for manufacturing and agricultural industries, which are part of the larger Alternative Outreach Plan. Several of the Commission members shared potential locations and events where these could be distributed, including the Farm Machinery Show in Louisville, University Agricultural programs and extension offices, unions and trade shows as well as the various Chambers of Commerce and libraries. Ms. Moore indicated that the staff is looking at other avenues for advertisement including newsletters and radio. In addition, she mentioned that we also plan to utilize various monthly awareness days such as Macular Degeneration Day, Boost Self-Esteem Month and others to increase awareness of issues surrounding hearing loss through vlogs and social media.

Ms. Moore closed the agency report by sharing anecdotes from the Holiday Open House event in December. She noted that there were several children at the event, and it was especially heartwarming to see all of them playing together, overcoming communication barriers and enjoying their time with Signing Santa.

### **THE AGENCY REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.**

#### **Finance:**

The Financial Report was reviewed by the Commissioners, and no items were identified for discussion.

### **THE FINANCE REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.**

#### **K-12 Education: Birth-5 Study Group:**

Ms. Hatzel began by noting that several things have transpired since the Executive Board meeting in December that have caused the group to change course a bit. She explained that the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) decided not to pursue LEAD-K at this time due to the short Legislative term but will revisit it in the future when there's more funding available and there's a better opportunity to pass it successfully. Ms. Hatzel stated that although the decision is disappointing, KDE granted approval for the work group to continue meeting to further develop the LEAD-K legislation. She added that the Common Ground group that includes the Kentucky School for the Deaf (KSD), Heuser Hearing Institute and Lexington Hearing and Speech Center will also continue to meet to ensure that the legislation doesn't stagnate.

Ms. Hatzel reported that Ms. Moore and Ms. Dowd attended a meeting with a research group that received a \$3.4 million grant through the University of Kentucky (UK) to study behavior and behavior issues in children who have hearing loss but use amplification technology such as cochlear implants or hearing aids. She stated that the meeting provided an opportunity to discuss the impact of language deprivation on deaf and hard of hearing children, which opened the door to seek financial support for LEAD-K. Ms. Moore explained that LEAD-K could potentially fit into the communication and language access part of their grant, which the research group had not yet fully defined and for which KCDHH could potentially provide support. She added that they were very open and enthusiastic about the opportunity to collaborate with KCDHH and would take the request to Dr. Bush who is leading the research group. Mr. Evans recommended that they contact Dr. Susan Lally who is a well-known expert in the field, and Ms. Niehaus indicated that there was a possibility for further discussion on that topic. Ms. Niehaus asked for a more detailed explanation as to

how the requested funds would potentially be used to support LEAD-K, and Ms. Moore provided additional details regarding the collection of statistical data and the development of educational milestones. Ms. Taylor compared the language deprivation issue for children who are deaf and hard of hearing with that of the refugee population whose children with disabilities have not had access to any services or steady education. Ms. Perry shared related information about a study conducted in California regarding language acquisition for deaf children. Ms. Hatzel and Ms. Moore reaffirmed their determination to continue to forge ahead in preparation for presenting LEAD-K legislation in 2020.

## **THE K-12 EDUCATION STUDY GROUP REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.**

### **Services for Seniors Study Group:**

Ms. Niehaus reported that they have had a lot of activity in the last several months in all three of their focus areas: education, aging in place and long-term care. She indicated that the study group's work on educating deaf and hard of hearing seniors and service providers will culminate in a Senior Summit, which will be held in June or July, bringing both groups together for a day of education and information. She indicated that one of the ways they intend to bring people together is to bring in a deaf presenter to present in American Sign Language (ASL) and provide captioning and interpreters to include all the attendees regardless of hearing loss. Ms. Niehaus stated that the workshops will be based on topics that they've identified through the needs assessments that were done previously by the study group. She said that they are working to coordinate with Nigel Howard to do an ethics workshop on a Friday night for interpreters, focusing on interpreting for seniors who may have cognitive issues that impact their ability to communicate. She added that he would then present a workshop on Saturday for deaf and hard of hearing seniors.

In regard to aging in place, Ms. Niehaus announced that the group is continuing to collaborate with ElderServe, which provides services to deaf and hard of hearing seniors in Jefferson County. She indicated that they currently have six people who are trained to provide TeleCare services by phone, text or Videophone to check in on deaf and hard of hearing seniors and reduce isolation. She stated that they are currently struggling to get referrals, so they sent out several letters to deaf churches and other deaf organizations in the Louisville area to recruit both volunteers and referrals.

As for long-term care and accessibility for people in nursing homes or assisted living facilities, Ms. Niehaus reported that they are still writing the grant for the Civil Monetary Penalty (CMP) funds. She said that they are currently applying to fund a part-time position for three years that will handle the care teams that would include a deaf senior, an interpreter and someone from the long-term care ombudsman office. She explained that the teams will go into the nursing homes that have deaf seniors and provide education designed to meet their needs. Ms. Niehaus indicated that they plan to submit the draft soon to be able to kick off the project in July or August.

Ms. Moore asked about interpreters' options when faced with a situation in which the deaf person for whom they are interpreting shows signs of cognitive impairment via their language production. Ms. Hatzel and Ms. Schilling indicated that there is currently no formal direction on a national level, but they're looking at revising the Code of Professional Conduct (CPC) for interpreters, so that could be something that's addressed during that process. Ms. Perry shared a situation in which she was able to provide Deaf Interpreter (DI) services for a senior citizen in a counseling situation to overcome those cognitive

communication issues. She also stated that exposure to ASL users of varying ages, backgrounds and signing styles is an important part of interpreter training.

Ms. Niehaus concluded the report by stating that they are in the early stages of planning the Senior Summit, so they are open to suggestions if anyone has ideas regarding set up or sponsorship.

## **THE SERVICES FOR SENIORS STUDY GROUP REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.**

### **OPEN FORUM**

Mr. Evans announced that the AG Bell Association for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing has released a new parent hotline. Any parent with a child that has been diagnosed with hearing loss can call Monday through Friday to get information and resources that may not be readily available in their community. He stated that they are offering information on multiple communication modalities including sign language. Ms. Taylor requested additional information, and Mr. Evans directed her to the organization's website.

Amy Schilling announced that the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) has established a new requirement for continuing education as of January, 2019. For each 80 hour cycle, ten of those hours must fall under the heading of Power, Privilege and Oppression (PPO).

Ms. Moore requested an update on the status of Interpreter Training Programs in universities in the area and asked how the Commission could support them. Ms. Schilling stated that Cincinnati shut down their program, but the Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) program is still going strong. In response to questions from Ms. Taylor regarding the University of Louisville's program, Ms. Schilling indicated that there's some concern due to recent faculty turnover, but there's been no confirmation that the program is in trouble.

### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Ms. Taylor stated that there was no unfinished business for discussion.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Ms. Taylor reminded the board that several members' terms expire in June 2019, including her own term representing Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), Mr. Evans' representing Kentucky Speech-Language-Hearing Association (KSHA), Ms. Perry's representing Kentucky Association of the Deaf (KAD) and Ms. O'Mary's as Service Provider. She stated that applications have been made available to anyone wishing to reapply for their seat on the Board as well as to the organizations they represent and other interested individuals. She also reminded the board that the deadline for those applications to be submitted is February 28 to ensure that the Governor has plenty of time to appoint or reappoint representatives who will begin their term in July. She stated that Officer elections will be held in April following the timeline prescribed in the bylaws, which she recommended that the members review before the election. She reminded the board that following the election, the newly elected officers will appoint the two at large members to complete the Executive Board.

In addition, Ms. Taylor stated that the Executive Director evaluation questionnaire will be forthcoming and encouraged all Commissioners to participate for Ms. Moore's benefit as she continues to grow and develop professionally.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- Ms. Niehaus announced that they are soliciting proposals now for the System of Care Academy which will take place in June. The deadline for submissions is February 5. She also announced that there will be a Sober Event in Lexington in February at DV8 and another on March 22 in northern Kentucky.
- Ms. Harris announced that the KSD Agricultural Program will be hosting two Honeybee Clinics presented by Janis Scott. The first clinic, “Why are Bees Important?”, will be held on February 6 from 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. in the Ag shop in the Argo Building, and the second clinic, “Planting for Bees”, will be held on March 6 at the same time and location.
- Ms. Perry announced that KAD will be hosting a Safety and Health Awareness workshop from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. in Bowling Green.
- Ms. Karr announced that the Grassroots Movement of Kentucky will be meeting for Deaf Awareness Day in the Rotunda on March 11 from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- The next Executive Board meeting will be held in the KCDHH Conference Room on Friday, March 1, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- The 161<sup>st</sup> Quarterly Commission meeting will be held on Friday, April 12, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., with the location TBA.

**MS. HARRIS (Ms. Perry) MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION PASSED** and the meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m.