

COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES

January 23, 2020

*To be approved at the April 24, 2020 Council meeting*

*Note: Full Transcripts are available upon request*

**PARTICIPANTS:** Council Members: Joelynn Ball, Chairperson (Representing Interpreters), Emilie Banasiak (Representing an organization of hard of hearing persons), Steven Birkby (Representing an organization of deaf persons), Valerie Player (Representing parent of deaf child), Jacob Robison (Representing physicians), Gretchen Fors (Representing parent of a hard of hearing child) and Marva Kubalik (Representing hard of hearing person over age 60)

Excused: Kate Savage (Representing Audiologists)

Ex Officio Members: Steven Snow, Doug Clapp, Brian Shakespeare, Betsy Duncan, Kelli Toohill, Birgit Luebeck

Others: Cindy Schreiner, Sierra McIver, Lauren Seale, LaVona Andrew, Lisa Doyan, Ray Lockary, Ashley Camp, Stevana Corder, Kaylee Morin, Davia Gutierrez, Leah McElwee, Holly, Thomas-Mowery, Fran Bennett

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

The meeting was called to order by Joelynn Ball and introductions were made.

**APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2019 MINUTES:**

There was one typographical error on page one. (McElwer to McElwee). Jacob Robison motioned to approve minutes with the one correction. Gretchen Fors seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 21, 2019 MINUTES:**

There was one typographical error on page two (Remove extra Steven in sentence). Gretchen Fors motioned to approve the minutes with the one correction. The motioned was seconded by Jacob Robison and Emilie Banasiak. The motion passed.

**PERFECTION OF AGENDA:**

Emilie Banasiak motioned to accept the agenda as presented. Gretchen Fors seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**OATH OF OFFICE:**

Chairperson Joelynn Ball administered the Oath of Office to new member, Valerie Player, representing a parent of a deaf child.

## **DEBRIEF MEET AND GREET:**

Various council members commented on the success of the Meet and Greet. Steven Snow said he spoke to several Legislators. There were many comments about the new location of the Meet and Greet this year, being on the first floor of the Capitol instead of the fourth floor. There was discussion about how the preschool children from Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind's performance attracted many observers and Legislators. Steven Snow said the Council wants to include new vendors every year and if the members have a specific new vendor in mind, please let him know so they could be invited. Steven Snow said he would like to invite Dogs for the Deaf at a future Meet and Greet.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:**

### **Federal Legislation:**

Steven Snow said there is little to report because of the Impeachment Trial going on in the National Senate. Steven Snow said there are several items that the Council is paying attention to: The first one is Senate Bill 719 concerning solitary confinement for individuals with disabilities, the second is Senate Bill 2446 which is the Medicare Audiologist Accessibility Act concerning reimbursement process for audiology services. Steven Snow said the third item is House Bill 3691 which directs the TSA to provide all their printed materials be accessible in foreign languages including to people who are deaf or blind. Steven Snow said this bill passed the House but is currently held up in the Senate. Steven Snow said he will keep the Council informed on the progress of this bill. Steven Snow said the last Federal bill the Council is looking at is House Bill 55485 also know as Ali's act which would amend three laws concerning the patient protection act, the public health service act and the Affordable Care Act. This bill concerns many items also includes implanted devices such as cochlear implants and Baha devices. Steven said this bill is still in committee. Steven Snow said he would keep the Council informed on the progress of the bill.

### **State Legislation:**

Steven Snow said House Bill 314, which is the act relating to changing "hearing impaired" language to "deaf or hard of hearing" Steven Snow said he presented the Bill to the House Health and Welfare Committee and it was passed unanimously. Steven Snow said the bill will now go to the House of Representative floor for a vote and then to the Senate committee for consideration. Steven Snow said Representative Melissa Wintrow will sponsor the bill on the House floor and Senator Ward-Engleking will sponsor the bill on the Senate floor.

Steven Snow said Senate Bill 1236 is proposed by the State Board of Education which would clarify language within the Educational Interpreter Act.

Steven Snow said he would keep the Council informed on the status of the Bills.

## **Budget:**

**Fiscal Year 2020:** Steven Snow said the Governor has recommended a 1% budget reduction for Fiscal Year 2020. Steven Snow said the total of this reduction would be \$600 from the Council's operating budget and \$3,100 from the personnel budget. Steven Snow said he has spoken with Vocational Rehabilitation, the agency that the Council pays for indirect costs, and they are willing for the 1% of personnel cost to come from the indirect costs that the Council pays them, so staff pay will not be affected.

**Fiscal Year 2021:** Steven Snow said the Governor has recommended 2% be reduced from statewide budgets including the Council's. Steven Snow said this reduction would result in \$1,200 being reduced from operating costs and \$6,200 from personnel. Steven Snow said, however, there is an increase in employee compensation (CEC) by \$5,200. Steven Snow said there were extra costs for FY 2020 associated with moving into the new office space that will not be necessary in FY 2021, so the Council should be financially stable.

Steven Snow said the Council will be presenting the budget to the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee on January 29, 2020. Steven Snow said all are welcome to attend.

## **Council Activities:**

Steven Snow said the Council has been involved in the following activities:

- Invited to join and participated in the city of Meridian's committee on diversity called "Unity Through Inclusion". Steven Snow said the group wants to collect data about the people who live in Meridian and create a needs assessment for the population.
- Drive thru food vendors. Steven Snow said he was interviewed by Channel 6 concerning the lack of access for deaf and hard of hearing individuals when they want to go through a drive thru restaurant. Steven Snow said there will be more visibility to the general public about this issue.
- 30-year anniversary of the American's With Disabilities Act. Steven Snow said July 17, 2020 there will be an event "Hands Around the Capitol" which will celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ADA. Steven Snow said he has been asked to participate on the committee to organize the events of the day.
- Medicaid eligibility coverage for deaf or hard of hearing individuals. Steven Snow said he and Gretchen Fors met with the Division of Medicaid regarding eligible coverage for Medicaid. Steven Snow said they have met two times so far and will be meeting again. Gretchen Fors said there are many issues that are being discussed and hopefully some changes will be made to assure coverage for children with hearing loss. Steven Snow said Medicaid will be creating a brochure that will explain what coverages are offered. Steven Snow said the group will meet again in February.
- Met with Ada County Commissioner Diane Lachiondo concerning juvenile correction system issues and how they relate to deaf or hard of hearing juveniles in the correction system. Steven Snow said they will meet again in the future.

- St. Alphonsus Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Committee. Steven Snow said he is a member of the committee and would like to inform the Council that St. Alphonsus has developed a training module that is required to be completed by all employees at St. Alphonsus that focuses on working with deaf or hard of hearing patients.
- Vocational Rehabilitation. Steven Snow said the Department of Vocational Rehabilitation has created a position for a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor specifically for Deaf individuals (RCD). Steven Snow said the RCD will serve constituents throughout Idaho, but the office will be housed in Boise. Steven Snow said he will inform the Council when the position is filled.
- Idaho Historical Society. Steven Snow said he will be working with the Idaho Historical Society to improve access to programs offered by the museums. Steven Snow said the first focus will be on the Old Penitentiary Museum. Steven Snow said the focus will be on both having exhibits translated into American Sign Language but also captioned and with increased volume for hard of hearing individuals.
- YMCA. Steven Snow said Sierra McIver has been working with the YMCA to increase accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Steven Snow said the process is continuing and will keep the Council informed on the results.
- Law Enforcement Training. Steven Snow and Sierra McIver provided training to law enforcement departments in Twin Falls and will be travelling to Coeur D'Alene to provide some training in the future. Steven Snow said they will travel to Post Falls in September., and Eastern Idaho in the Fall. Steven Snow said there are two trainings available, one for law enforcement and one for emergency medical technicians.
- Town Hall Meetings. Steven Snow said there will be a Town Hall meeting located in Pocatello on March 6. Steven Snow said there will be Town Hall meetings in Boise and Gooding, but dates are yet to be determined.
- Steven Snow said Sierra McIver has been working diligently with several county jails to set up videophones for inmates to be able to call attorneys and family members.
- Christmas family: Steven Snow said there were two families sponsored by the Council this year, one in northern Idaho and one in the Treasure Valley. Steven thanked all those who participated and donated. Steven said the Council will continue this tradition this year.
- Testing Site: Steven Snow said the Council is now a test site in partnership with the Center for Assessment of Sign Language Interpreters (CASLI). Steven Snow said Lauren Seale will be proctoring the test and the Council is now an approved test site for the National Interpreter Certification Exam.
- Virtual Private Network (VPN). Steven Snow said that yesterday the Council was finally connected to a VPN so we can access the state network. Steven Snow said this will be a tremendous benefit for all of the employees especially Sierra McIver so that she can now update the Council's website without having to go to another office to do so.

#### **ACTION ITEM:**

Steven Snow said the budget request of April 2019 needs an official vote. Steven Snow said all line items must be removed from the budget. Steven Snow said the items have been removed but there needs to be an approval of the budget request.

Emilie Banasiak motioned to approve the budget with the line items removed. Valerie Player seconded the motion. The motion passed.

## **EX-OFFICIO REPORTS:**

### **Infant Toddler/Idaho Sound Beginnings:**

Brian Shakespeare said Idaho Sound Beginnings and the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management will be providing a training for pediatric audiologists, speech language pathologists, the Idaho Infant Toddler Program and teachers from the Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind to teach the participants how to serve their mutual clients.

Brian Shakespeare said Idaho Sound Beginnings will have a CARE Project camp in June following the example of the North Carolina CARE camp. Brian Shakespeare said this is the third year Idaho has provided the camp which is for families of children with hearing loss. Brian Shakespeare said there will be workshops, seminars and other activities for parents and day care will be provided for children. Brian Shakespeare said the camp will be at Tamarack this year. Brian Shakespeare said there is a need for volunteers and encouraged the Board and others to volunteer.

### **Vocational Rehabilitation:**

Doug Clapp said he attended training for the Employment and Opportunity Act. Doug Clapp said now Vocational Rehabilitation can now offer services to students 14-years-old. Doug Clapp said Steven Snow already reported on the new RCD position. Doug Clapp thanked the Council for allowing him to serve for 10 years as the Ex-officio member.

### **Idaho Commission on Aging:**

This was the first meeting for the new Ex-Officio member representing the Idaho Commission on Aging, Birgit Luebeck. Birgit said she works with Seniors over 60 and with the meal and nutrition program. Birgit said there is a new website for the Idaho Commission on Aging which is [aging.idaho.gov](http://aging.idaho.gov). Birgit Luebeck said her office will be moving to a new location on Overland Road. Birgit Luebeck said she has a meeting scheduled with Sierra McIver to discuss issues and needs of Idaho's aging deaf and hard of hearing population including housing and other services.

### **Bureau of Occupational Licenses:**

Betsy Duncan said there are 177 licensed Sign Language Interpreters as of January 1, 2020. Betsy Duncan said there are 135 licensed audiologist, 125 licensed hearing aid dealers and fitters and 1,022 speech language pathologists in Idaho.

### **Public Utilities Commission:**

This is the first meeting for the new Ex-Officio member representing the Idaho Public Utilities Commission, Kelli Toohill. Kelli Toohill said she will be taking a survey to access the kids of equipment, and services utilized by Idaho's deaf and hard of hearing population. Kelli Toohill

said she will keep in touch with the Council and is looking forward to partnering with the Council on various projects in the future.

**ADJOURN:**

Jacob Robison motioned for the meeting to adjourn. Gretchen Fors seconded the motion. The motion passed

NEXT MEETING FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2020 AT THE BEST WESTERN VISTA INN.