

## COUNCIL MEETING

### MINUTES

November 13, 2020

Via Zoom

*(Draft minutes to be approved at the January 21, 2021 Council meeting)*

**PARTICIPANTS:** This meeting was chaired by Joelynn Ball (Representing Interpreters)

Council Members: Joelynn Ball, Chairperson (Representing Interpreters) Steven Birkby (Representing an organization of deaf persons), Gretchen Fors (Representing parent of hard of hearing child), Valerie Player (Representing parent of a deaf child) Sonny Cabbage (deaf individual), Marva Kubalik (Representing a hard of hearing person over 60) Emilie Banasiak (Representing a hard of hearing individual who represents an organization of persons who are hard of hearing) Kate Savage (Representing Audiologists), and Jacob Robison (Representing Physicians)

Ex-Officio Members: Steven Snow, Dr. Charlie Silva, Brian Darcy, Julie Eavenson, Kelli Toohill, Birgit Luebeck, and Brian Shakespeare

Others: Kayla Adams, June Flannery, Bianca Leon, Raymond Lockary, Ashley Camp, Caitlin Quiroz, Dawn Wells, Jill Radford, Tara Belisla, Logan Bitterli, Lean McElwee, Lisa Doyon, LaVona Andrew, Lauren Seale, Sierra McIver, and Cindy Schreiner

### **INTRODUCTIONS:**

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

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 18, 2020 MEETING:**

There were 2 typographical errors in the minutes. Valerie Player motioned the minutes be approved with the corrections noted. Gretchen Fors seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **PERFECTION OF AGENDA:**

Emilie Banasiak motioned to accept the agenda as presented. Jacob Robison seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:**

**Federal Legislation:** Steven Snow said with November 2020 national election, Federal Legislation has been put on hold. Steven Snow said the Council will monitor upcoming legislation that might be proposed during the next session.

**State Legislation:** Steven Snow said on November 6, 2020, the Legislative Council met and voted to propose a supplemental request for live captioning for all legislative session and committee meetings. Steven Snow said the Legislative Council voted to approve a \$250,000 supplemental

request for fiscal year 2021. Steven Snow said the request will have to be approved the Joint Finance and Appropriations Committee and will be ongoing if approved.

Steven Snow said the Concurrent Resolution that the Council had planned on taking to the Legislature this session concerning closed captions in public places will have to be postponed. Steven Snow said the Governor has asked due to COVID-19 that agencies only bring legislation that is critical and urgent to the next legislative session. Valerie Player asked if the public could suggest the legislation, Steven Snow said the public could bring up the legislation instead of a state agency. Steven Snow said if Valerie Player wanted to meet with him about how to proceed, please contact him.

### **Activities:**

**Clear Masks:** Steven Snow said the Council distributed approximately 12,000 masks to the public. Steven Snow said the Council has kept approximately 1,000 to distribute as request come into the office. Steven Snow said we will distribute only small request so that the masks will not be depleted. Steven Snow said the State Department of Education distributed 3,000 masks and in addition, St. Alphonsus Hospital purchased many masks after receiving a \$50,000 grant with support from the Council. Steven Snow said St. Alphonsus will distribute the masks to health care and front-line workers, but if necessary, they might be another avenue for the public to receive masks.

**Pins:** Steven Snow said the Boise Public Library has produced pins to attach to a mask that requests people to speak louder. Steven Snow said the Council has distributed several of these pins and have a few more if requested.

**Commending Interpreters:** Steven Snow said the Council offices has been responding to several request regarding the pandemic. Steven Snow said he wanted to commend Steven Stubbs and LaVona Andrew for the interpreting they have provided during the Governor's press conferences.

**Deaf Awareness Week:** Steven Snow said the Council posted several videos on social media to celebrate Deaf Awareness Week. Steven Snow said the videos were well viewed and very popular.

**The Americans with Disabilities Act 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration:** Steven Snow said the Council has been participating in the celebration which concluded in October. Steven Snow said the Council has provided captioning, voice overs and interpreting for the various videos that were produced for the celebration.

**The Center for Assessment and Sign Language Interpreters (CASI):** Steven Snow said CASI will be distributing the Certified Deaf Interpreter examination starting in early 2021. Steven Snow said the Council offices will be a location where that exam can be taken. Steven Snow said the Council offices have been a location for the National Interpreter Certification exam. Steven Snow said there have been about 20 exams administered to interpreters this year. Steven Snow said he anticipates more participation when the pandemic is over.

**iPad Program:** Steven Snow the Council has purchased 25 iPads with another 25 to be purchased when the Council gets reimbursed from the federal governments through the CARES act. Steven Snow said the iPads will be distributed to deaf and hard of hearing individuals to help with communication needs and to be able to feel connected to family, friends and other entities in order to help with the feeling of being isolated because of COVID 19. Steven Snow said the Council staff will be meeting to determine how individuals can apply and other logistics concerning distribution of the iPads.

**Disability Advisory Council:** Steven Snow said the Council and other disability organizations have met with Boise Mayor Lauren McLean to recommend establishing a new Disability Advisory Council. Steven Snow said there will be continued discussions and hopefully Boise will be the first city in Idaho to have such a council.

**Disability, Equity, and Inclusion Summit:** Steven Snow said he participated with this virtually held summit. Steven Snow said he shared his story about 9/11. Steven Snow said many stories were shared via video and at the conclusion of the videos, those who had been featured participated in a panel to answer questions from participants.

**Idaho Caregivers Alliance (ICA):** Steven Snow said the Council is partnering with the Idaho Caregivers Alliance. Steven Snow said the partnership will focus on providing access to resources, information, training, cultural awareness, and sensitivity training for those caregivers who are deaf or hard of hearing. Steven Snow said this partnership has just started but as it becomes stronger, deaf and hard of hearing caregivers will have support in their work.

**Disability Rights Idaho (DRI):** Steven Snow said the Council will be strengthening the partnership with DRI to be able to refer deaf or hard of hearing individuals to DRI if their priorities align with the needs of clients.

**Christmas Family:** Steven Snow said the Council will be sponsoring 2 Christmas families this year to provide some extra Christmas cheer. Steven Snow asked the Council members to nominate a family if they knew of any family that might qualify.

**Website Update:** Steven Snow said the Council will continue having an employment tab to post employment opportunities throughout the state. Steven Snow said if there are any job posting that should be posted on the Council's website, to please contact Sierra so she can post them.

**Birgit Luebeck:** Steven Snow said Ex-Officio member, Birgit Luebeck will be leaving the Council and her position will be filled by Erin Olsen. Steven Snow thanked Birgit for her service to the Council.

**Meet and Greet:** Steven Snow said the Meet and Greet at the Capitol will not be held this year due to COVID, however the Board will still meet. Steven Snow said the staff of the Council will try to find a way to spotlight the individual organizations that participate annually.

## **EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS:**

**Idaho State Department of Education:** Dr. Charlie Silva said with the federal election, there will be a new Secretary of Education. Charlie Silva said she soon will be the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and her office has been asked to create a 3-minute video of how the IDEA has impacted Idaho.

Charlie Silva said the Idaho State Department of Education has added a new number one goal of having all Idaho children reading at grade level by the third grade. Charlie Silva said the State Board of Education has been revamping Idaho's Comprehensive Literacy Plan which will be presented at the State Board of Education meeting in December. Charlie Silva said the department will be getting ready for the next legislative session.

Charlie Silva announced that Joy Cane, a West Ada District teacher, and Shannon Dunston from the Department of Education presented their work on Visual Phonics at a national conference last week.

Charlie Silva said the Department is supporting the over 170 different school districts with their individual plans for COVID 19 for their districts.

Charlie Silva said she and Joelynn Ball will be attending the Task 12 Board meeting. Charlie Silva said the Task 12 is the training and assessment systems for K-12 education supporters.

Gretchen Fors voiced concerns for students with hearing loss and how difficult it is to get services. Charlie Silva said that there is a dispute resolution office within the Department which offers IP facilitation at no cost and encourages parents to contact them. Charlie Silva said there is a Special Education Advisory Panel (SEAP) that is comprised of 51% parents and there will be openings in June. Charlie Silva encouraged parents to apply for that advisory panel.

**Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind (IESDB):** Brian Darcy said the school had everybody back on campus, but then on October 21, 2020, the school went back to virtual learning until January 3, 2021. Brian Darcy said Outreach is still providing services either through technology or limited in home or school visits. Brian Darcy said the campus teacher have received a full day of training through Adverse Child Experiences (ACES) which helps with providing interactions with children who feel isolation.

Brian Darcy congratulated Charlie Silva on her appointment to the Task 12 committee. Brian Darcy congratulated Steven Snow's sister-in-law for being named as the Superintendent for the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind. Brian Darcy said there is concern for language acquisition for students/children which in part is provided through social activities such as playgroups, holiday parties and Signing Santa. Brian Darcy said all these events have been cancelled but the school is doing the best it can to provide what they can at this time.

**Division of Occupational Licenses:** Julie Eavenson said there has been a change in Rule 270 for temporary registration for out of state licensees. Julie Eavenson said the rule has been streamlined and the requirement for reporting interpreting hours within 5 days has been eliminated. Steven

Snow asked if there was a way a company providing VRI services can get a business license instead of having the interpreters getting licensed. Julie Eavenson said that would require a change in the law.

**Public Utilities Commission:** Kelli Toohill said relay usage is about 40% higher than normal. Kelli Toohill said the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has provide waivers so Communication Assistants (Cas) can work from home. Kelli Toohill said Emilie Banasiak is available for Zoom trainings and outreach. Kelli Toohill said Asia Johnson is a new account manager for Hamilton Relay. Emilie Banasiak said Asia Dobson is the contact person for the state of Idaho contract with Hamilton and would know all the specific statistics regarding calls.

**Idaho Commission on Aging:** Birgit Luebeck said this is her last meeting with the Council, her replacement will be Erin Olson. Birgit Luebeck said the Idaho Commission on Aging is providing food for seniors either in person through the Area Agencies on Aging or through drive in delivery. Birgit Luebeck said the agencies are dealing with clients facing mental health issues because of the pandemic. Birgit Luebeck said the agencies are working with schools to have students write cards and letters to homebound seniors. Birgit Luebeck said the agencies are working on providing on-line classes in the future for seniors. Birgit Luebeck expressed her thanks to the Council for all the work they do.

**Idaho Sound Beginnings (Infant Toddler):** Brian Shakespeare said the newborn hearing screening has not been affected in Idaho as much as in other states due to COVID. Brian Shakespeare said the screening rate has dropped from 98 to 99 percent to 97 to 98 percent. Brian Shakespeare said it has been a little more difficult to get appointments with audiologists because of the pandemic, the percentage is usually 80 to 85% now it is down to 70%. Brian Shakespeare said since March there have been 23 kids identified with permanent hearing loss with only 6 enrolled in intervention. Brian Shakespeare said Idaho Sound Beginnings will be starting a deaf mentor program with training beginning in April. Brian Shakespeare said they will be looking to recruit mentors who would mentor what ever kind of communication access is chosen by parents weather American Sign Language, Listening and Spoken Language, Cued Speech, or other language models. Sierra McIver said this program will focus on providing all the options that can be provided to children.

**ADJOURN:** Emilie Banasiak motioned to adjourn the meeting; Gretchen Fors seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting was adjourned.

NEXT MEETING: JANUARY 21, 2021