COUNCIL MEETING

MINUTES

September 16, 2022

Via ZOOM Video Conference

**PARTICIPANTS:** Council Members: Kate Savage (Representing Audiologists), Steven Birkby (Representing an organization of deaf individuals), Jacob Robison, M.D., (Representing physicians) Valerie Player (Representing parent of a deaf child), Gretchen Fors (Representing parent of a hard of hearing child), Sonny Cabbage (Representing a deaf individual) Matthew McGraw (Representing hard of hearing over 60)

Excused: Emilie Banasiak (Representing an organization of hard of hearing persons)

Joelynne Ball (Representing Interpreters)

Ex Officio Members: Steven Snow, Randi Cole (substituting for Charlie Silva) Erin Olsen, and Kelli Toohill

Others: Cindy Schreiner, Jahaira Faber, Jess Raschke, Leah McElwee, LaVona Andrew, Ray Lockary, Bella Brock, Amber Deutsche, Sarah Bonannon, Deidra Lattin, Carina Johns, Helena Cahill, and Emily Mandera

**INTRODUCTIONS:**

The meeting was called to order by Valerie Player and introductions were made.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 22, 2022 MEETING**

There were 2 typographical errors in the minutes. Kate Savage motioned to approve minutes as corrected. Jacob Robison seconded the motion. The minutes of April 22, 2022 were approved as corrected.

**PERFECTION OF AGENDA:**

Jacob Robison motioned to accept the agenda as presented. Gretchen Fors seconded the motion. The motioned passed.

**OPEN FORUM/ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

There were no announcements presented.

**OATH OF OFFICE:** Valerie Player administered the Oath of Office to Matthew McGraw.

**INTRODUCTION OF NEW STAFF:**

Steven Snow said the Council has hired three new employees. Jahaira Faber introduced herself as the new Communications and Outreach Coordinator, Jess Raschke introduced herself as the new Human Services Program Specialist for the Council and Leah McElwee introduced herself as the new Executive Interpreter. The Council welcomed the new employees.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT:**

**Federal Legislation:**

Steven Snow said on August 16, 2022 the Food and Drug Administration approved rules to allow hearing aids to be sold over-the-counter to adults 18 and older with mild to moderate hearing loss. Steven Snow said individuals with severe or profound hearing loss will need to continue to obtain services from audiologists. Steven Snow said the rules state that manufacturers must adhere to specific criteria and specifications for the over-the-counter hearing aids. Steven Snow said the Council will monitor this situation closely to consider if these rules are providing good services.

Steven Snow said the Council is monitoring Senate Bill 3333 which relates to providing information and entertainment at airports and airlines facilities. The Bill states that airlines must provide captions or ASL interpretation on devices that provided entertainment on airlines. Steven Snow said many airlines are beginning to offer captions when announcements are made at the airport, but many do not. Steven Snow said Senate Bill 3333 was sent to the Transportation Committee and there are no further updates, however, the Council will continue to monitor and keep the Board informed.

**State Legislation:**

Steven Snow said there was recently a Special Session of the Legislature called which focused Idaho’s surplus budget amount. The Legislature passed the three issues presented: tax rebate, 150 million for tax rate reductions and 410 million for education. Steven Snow said the issues didn’t specifically benefit deaf or hard of hearing individuals, however, being a part of the community, they will receive the same benefits. Steven Snow said the new Legislative session will begin in January. Steven Snow said there are no specific state bills that will affect Idaho’s deaf or hard of hearing populations, however, the Council will monitor bills as they are presented.

**Other CDHH Activities:**

Steven Snow said with the addition of Jess Raschke to the staff, there will be more opportunities for training and the Council will be able to reach more people and accomplish much more.

**ADA Manager Hired by State of Idaho**

Steven Snow said he met with the Division of Human Resources, Civil Rights/Americans with Disabilities Act manager. Steven Snow said the position will apply to both Title I and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The manager will work with employment issues and will work with state agencies to provide accommodations to anyone who receives state benefits. Steven Snow said the manager will have the responsibility to ensure that compliance is being met. Steven Snow said this position will help ensure that the priority of the Council to ensure that State agencies are providing an appropriate accessible program and services will be easier to accomplish.

**Driver Placards:**

Steven Snow said the Council has created and purchased placards for drivers who are deaf or hard of hearing to be able to present to police officers in the event of a traffic stop. The placard has symbols and icons that can be used as well as information about communication needs. Steven Snow said Chief Kingsbury of the Twin Falls Police Department reviewed the cards before they were printed and provided some feedback from the perspective of law enforcement. Steven Snow said the feedback was good and revisions were made in the placard before they were printed. Steven Snow said the Governor’s office supported the cards and agreed to fund the printing of the cards. The cards have been distributed to some senior citizen centers, and other entities. Steven Snow said the Council has additional placards that are ready to be distributed. Steven Snow said another priority of the Council is to provide training to law enforcement and first responders, and the placards will be provided during the training for the police officers can keep the placard in their car in case it is needed.

**Idaho Association of Family Physicians:**

Steven Snow said he participated in a panel discussion held by the Idaho Association of Family Physicians who were providing training on providing services to people with various disabilities. Steven Snow said the questions were thoughtful and the discussion was filmed so physicians that were not able to attend can get the information.

**Health Care Interpreting Grant:**

Steven Snow gave an update on the grant funded to Idaho State University (ISU) to promote equality in health care. Steven Snow said the Council is partnering with ISU to help develop training modules. Steven Snow said the first cohort of Interpreters are from Arizona, Kansas and Virginia and started the training this week. Cohorts from 3 more states will be starting the training soon.

**Post-Secondary Education:**

Steven Snow said the Council is partnering with the National Deaf Center to host a round table discussion for post-secondary education and transition from high school. Steven Snow said the roundtable will be held on September 26 starting at 5:30 at the ISU Meridian Campus.

**Idaho Victims and Witness Association:**

Steven Snow said he will be presenting at the annual conference in October. Steven Snow said the conference call is sponsored by the Chief of Police Association and the Council on Domestic Violence.

**Retirement:**

Steven Snow said Cindy will be retiring on September 30, 2022. A job posting has been posted. Steven Snow said the Council will have a retirement celebration on September 29, 2022 from 2:00 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. and all are invited.

**PRESENTATION:**

Krista Kramer gave a presentation on an Assistive Technology Kit that is available for those needing communication access. Krista Kramer said during COVID, the Idaho Assistive Technology Project received funding to assist with communication access. Krista Kramer gave information about what is available such as iPad, assistive listening devices, intercoms for window visits, and generally working with long term care facilities to ensure communication access during COVID. Krista said there are a few kits still available.

**ACTION ITEM:**

* **Approve revised FY24 Budget Request**

Steven Snow said the Executive Committee has approved the revised FY24 budget request for an additional $25,000 for additional interpreter services to be provided at various venues since the Council now has more deaf employees. Gretchen Fors motioned to approve the request; Sonny Cabbage seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**EX-OFFICIO REPORTS:**

**Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind (IESDB):**

Brian Darcy sent an email with his report as he was not able to attend. Steven Snow read the email: The school has 129 students; Cottages are full, and a request has been made to DPW for two more cottages. Eight new staff positions for outreach have been filled, but there are 2 staff positions on campus that are still unfilled. The Independent Living Skills program now has a food truck that is up and running, a ribbon cutting will be held on September 28, 2022. Persons from the National Deaf Center will be observing IESDB’s transition program, the mentoring program is up and running and there is an event at the Zoo planned for October.

**Idaho State Department of Education:**

Randi Cole reported for Charlie Silva. Randi Cole said the Superintendent of Public Instruction presented a budget to the Legislature to restore the career ladder for teachers, increase salaries for para workers, and monies for professional development. In addition, there are monies allotted to address the dyslexia legislation passed in the last year’s legislative session.

Randi Cole said there is a statewide shortage of staff in schools so districts can apply for a small grant to specifically address recruitment and retention of staff.

**Idaho Commission on Aging:**

Erin Olsen said she participated in an Emergency Preparedness activity and was able to recommend and comment on what should be provided for people with disabilities. Erin Olsen said the Idaho Commission on Aging has started the *Falls Prevention Coalition of Idaho*. Erin Olsen said Idaho is one of only 5 states that does not have a coalition and she is happy that Idaho will be starting one. Erin Olsen said there is a seminar planned in the future for falls prevention which will be both in person and virtual. Erin Olsen said the Idaho Commission on Aging has caregiver classes for caregivers and can provide additional information on needs of those over the age of 60 or over the age of 18 with disabilities.

**Idaho Division of Occupational and Professional License:**

Katie Stewart said there are the following licenses:

SLP Assistants 25

Audiologists 319

Hearing Aid Dealers/Fitters 488

Sign Language Interpreters 440\*

SLP 2,317

SLP Aids 49

Not all Sign Language Interpreters live in Idaho, many have licenses for VRI services.

Katie Stewart said there will no longer be licenses for SLP Assistants, now there will only licenses for SLP Aids. Katie Stewart said rules have been changed for Sign Language Interpreters and they can be found on IDOPL’s website. Katie Stewart said if communication accommodations are needed for those with hearing loss, please let her know and she will provide that access for her board meetings.

**Adjourn:**

Gretchen Fors motioned to adjourn the meeting, Matt McGraw seconded the motion, the motion passed unanimously.

**NEXT MEETING**: Thursday, November 17, 2022