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**Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

**1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 200, Henrico, VA 23229-5012**

**Advisory Board Meeting**

**February 7, 2018**

**Minutes**

| **Members Present:**  Traci D. Branch  Shantell D. Lewis, Au.D.  Roy B. Martin, IV  Timothy R. Patterson  Deborah L. Pfeiffer, Ed.D.  Susanne B. Wilbur  Jason M. Zuccari  **Members Absent:**  Carrie N. H. Humphrey, NIC  Kathi A. Mestayer  **ASL Interpreters / CART Reporter:**  Catherine A. Clough  Emily Haynes McGee  Rhonda D. Tuck, Cavalier Reporting  **Invited Guests:**  Dorothy A. Spears-Dean, Ph.D., VITA  **Members of the Public:**  Alissa Conover, Civic Access  Jim Slessi, Gallaudet University student and Civic Access intern  **Staff Present:**  Tressela K. Bateson, Community Services Specialist  J. Steven Burkarth, Program Specialist  Leslie G. Hutcheson, Interpreter Programs Manager  Eric H. Raff, Interim Director  Christine C. Ruderson, Technology Assistance Program Manager  Gary W. Talley, Community Services Manager  Elaine S. Ziehl, VQAS / EIPA / ISP Coordinator |
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1. **Working Breakfast: Networking**

At 9:30 a.m., the members of the Advisory Board of the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) convened in the conference room at the VDDHH Central Office, 1602 Rolling Hills Drive, suite 200, Henrico, VA 23229-5012.

1. **Call to Order**

Chairwoman Traci D. Branch called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. The members of the Advisory Board introduced themselves, followed by staff, guests and members of the public.
2. The members reviewed the Advisory Board membership roster. No corrections or revisions were requested.
3. **Approval of the Agenda**

No corrections or revisions were requested to the meeting agenda. The motion to approve the agenda was made by Dr. Pfeiffer and seconded by Dr. Lewis. The vote was unanimous.

1. **Approval of the Minutes from November 15, 2017**

Dr. Pfeiffer requested that her board member report from the meeting on November 15, 2017 be revised to reflect that she “hosted or sponsored” several outreach events for children who are deaf or hard of hearing. No other corrections or revisions were requested. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Dr. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Zuccari. The vote was unanimous.

1. **Board Member Reports**

Chairwoman Branch recognized the following members of the board:

* Dr. Pfeiffer informed the board that she will be hosting several outreach events in the coming weeks through the Virginia School for the Deaf and the Blind: a webinar on transition of postsecondary students with deafblindness; a day for families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing at the Virginia Air and Space Center in Hampton, Virginia; and a guest lecture from a representative of Gallaudet University’s Visual Language Visual Learning Center on development of language and literacy in children using American Sign Language (ASL).
* Dr. Lewis reported to the board on her recent experience advocating for a deaf woman, who was displaced from her public housing unit during an emergency. The property is owned by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority, which failed to accommodate and effectively communicate a plan of action to this tenant when her building lost heat at the height of winter. Dr. Lewis also told the board that a local parent teacher association contacted her on behalf of two children, one deaf and one deafblind, who required the use of interpreters in order to participate in an after-school activity. She thanked the staff of the VDDHH for their guidance and assistance in these matters.

1. **Staff Reports**

Chairwoman Branch recognized the following members of the staff:

1. Executive Office

Interim Director Eric Raff provided the executive office report, which covered the following topics:

* Retirement of Ronald L. Lanier, VDDHH director from 1997-2018
* VDDHH leadership transition
* New leadership in the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources
* Gubernatorial transition
* New office space for the VDDHH

1. Virginia Relay

Interim Director Eric H. Raff provided a report on Virginia Relay, which covered the following topics:

* Virginia Relay updates
* Telecommunications Relay Service application to the Federal Communication Commission

1. Interpreter Programs

Interpreter Programs Manager Leslie G. Hutcheson provided a report on the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) and the Interpreter Services Program (ISP), which covered the following topics:

* Improved communication access at the General Assembly for people who are deaf or hard of hearing
* Revisions to the memorandum of understanding between the VDDHH and the Supreme Court of Virginia regarding the use computer assisted real-time translation (CART) in Virginia state courts and the daily pay limit for of ASL interpreters
* Network security issues concerning the use of remote CART in state courts
* Transition from a contract to a service agreement with ASL interpreters
* VQAS new test materials, test results disclosure time, and rater training

1. Community Services

Community Services Manager Gary W. Talley provided a report on the community services program, which covered the following topics:

* Lack of communication access at workforce centers across Virginia
* Accessibility training sessions for Chippenham Hospital, YWCA crisis counseling, Emergency Medical Services Expo, fire safety, and criminal justice academies
* Release of the VDDHH 2018 Directory of Services for People Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind
* Uploading ASL instructional videos to the VDDHH website to explain agency programs and services
* Videophones in public libraries in Virginia
* Text to 911 transition

1. Technology Assistance Program

Technology Assistance Program Manager Christine C. Ruderson provided a report on the Technology Assistance Program (TAP), which covered the following topics:

* TAP statistics and program activities
* Proposed training for the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority and TAP exhibits for RRHA residents
* Lost Chords, national organization for individuals who have total or partial laryngectomies as well as individuals that may have a stroke and are not able to use their voice

At 11:15 a.m., the board recessed for 10 minutes.

1. **Unfinished Business: Interpreter Licensure**

Chairwoman Branch recognized Ms. Hutcheson, who provided background information on the issue of interpreter licensure in the Commonwealth of Virginia. She reminded the board that a motion was adopted at the meeting on November 15, 2017 to create an agency workgroup to study the matter further.

An in-depth discussion ensued among the members concerning the nature of the work group, including objectives, composition, timeframe, and stakeholder input.

1. **Public Comment**

Chairwoman Branch recognized the following members of the public:

* An unidentified member of the public addressed the board regarding the VDDHH 2018 Directory of Services for People Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind. The speaker recommended that the agency develop an application in place of a hard copy in order to save money.

1. **Working Lunch: 2018 General Assembly Session**

Chairwoman Branch recognized Ms. Hutcheson, who provided an update on the 2018 session of the General Assembly of Virginia. Ms. Hutcheson remarked that while the VDDHH was not the lead agency on any bills pending before the legislature this session, the agency is tracking several bills of interest to our stakeholders. In addition, she demonstrated how citizens can use the captioning feature on the General Assembly website to follow live proceedings on the floor of each house and within the various legislative committees. She also explained how citizens can access the state’s Legislative Information System to follow the work of the General Assembly.

Mr. Raff commented on several pieces of legislation before the General Assembly pertaining to

LEAD-K, counting the completion of American Sign Language courses at community colleges for academic credit in public high schools, traffic signage for pedestrians with disabilities, and establishing a statewide standard for the installation and maintenance of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in rental properties.

1. **NG9-1-1 Deployment Plan and Communications Plan**

Chairwoman Branch recognized Dorothy A. Spears-Dean, Ph.D., public safety communications coordinator with the Integrated Services Program at the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA). Dr. Spears-Dean provided the board an overview of the state’s deployment plan to replace the old analog 911 network with a modern Internet Protocol network. She discussed the timeframe for implementation, system features and limitations, and stakeholder input.

1. **New Business / Future Meeting Agenda**

Chairwoman Branch recognized the following members of the board:

* Ms. Wilbur implored her colleagues to review House Bill 676 requiring linguistic readiness and English literacy of children who are deaf or hard of hearing.
* Mr. Zuccari requested that an item be included on a future meeting agenda for the board members to learn about the board’s role in the legislative process. He specifically inquired about the proper channels to use in communicating to and advising the Office of the Governor and the General Assembly on issues impacting VDDHH consumers.
* Mr. Patterson requested that an item be included on a future meeting agenda for the board members to learn about the role the agency plays in providing assistive smoke alarms to private citizens.
* Dr. Lewis requested that an item be included on a future meeting agenda for the board members to review and discuss the new VDDHH 2018 Directory of Services For People Who Are Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deafblind.

1. **Adjournment**

At 2:33 p.m., a motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Martin and seconded by Mr. Zuccari. The vote was unanimous.