

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ILLINOIS DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMISSION

The sixty-fourth meeting of the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission (IDHHC) was held on Thursday, **November 21, 2013**, at the University of Illinois at Springfield, Public Affairs Center Building, 1 University Plaza, Springfield, IL 62703, and broadcasted live via IDHHC’s website.

Call to Order:

Chairperson Childress called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Commissioners Present:

Nancy Abbott	Yes	Tina Childress	Yes	Joseph Culpepper	Yes
Emma Danielson	Yes	Theresa Fuller-Sakolsky	No	Haydee Garcia	Yes
Hershel Jackson	No	Mindy Joy Mayer	Yes	Anil Phadke	No
Amber Smock	Yes	Laura Thomas	No		

Public:

Manako Yabe	Paul Pyers	Eleanore Millick
Drucilla Ronchen	Angela Botz	

Public Comment:

Ms. Yabe is a social worker and currently an intern at Access Living in Chicago. She administers the deaf literacy programs providing 1 on 1 personal coaching with students. Unfortunately, programs are being cut and now there is only one remaining. She teaches two (2) classes. There has been a lot of diversity in the participants both in language and culture. Most of the participants don’t have jobs and very limited resources. However, they have a common dream to be heard and eliminate oppression. The deaf literacy program allows them to improve their English. Ms. Yabe requested support and feedback regarding the deaf literacy programs.

Meeting Minutes:

Amber Smock moved to accept the August 15, 2013, minutes as presented; seconded by Emma Danielson . Motion passed.

Nancy Abbott	Yes	Tina Childress	Yes	Joseph Culpepper	Yes
Emma Danielson	Yes	Haydee Garcia	Yes	Mindy Joy Mayer	Yes
Anil Phadke	Yes	Amber Smock	Yes		

Emma Danielson moved to accept the Commission Retreat Minutes from September 23-24, 2013, minutes as presented; seconded by Nancy Abbott. Motion passed.

Nancy Abbott	Yes	Tina Childress	Yes	Joseph Culpepper	Yes
Emma Danielson	Yes	Haydee Garcia	Yes	Mindy Joy Mayer	Yes
Anil Phadke	Yes	Amber Smock	Yes		

Special Reports/Presentations:

Deloris Summers, Deaf In-Person Counselor for the Affordable Care Act
Jacksonville Area Center for Independent Living

Deloris Summers is currently the only Deaf In-Person Counselor for the ACA in Illinois. All In-Person Counselors (also known as Navigators) must undergo required training and pass the examination to be licensed. On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) which provides health care reform. This federal law focuses on consumer choices and protections and makes it easier and more affordable for individuals, families, and small businesses to find and enroll in health insurance, even if they have not had access to affordable coverage in the past.

There are four (4) ways to enroll: online; telephone; paper application or through in-person counselor/navigators. The In-Person Counselor is there to explain choices and eligibility criteria. They do not make decisions. This service is free to the consumer and all consumer information remains confidential.

In 2014, individuals will be required to carry health insurance or face a penalty. (Individuals already insured through their employer, Medicaid or Medicare do not need to purchase additional health insurance.) Health insurance companies must provide essential coverage regardless of pre-existing conditions. Individuals can compare insurance options, apply and purchase coverage through the new Health Insurance Marketplace. Illinois implemented Medicaid Expansion which allows low-income adults who are legal residents, regardless of parental or health status may be eligible for health coverage through Medicaid. Additionally, employers with fifty (50) or more employees can voluntarily offer affordable coverage to full-time employees; failure to offer coverage in 2015 could result in penalties.

Open enrollment is from October 1, 2013 – March 31, 2014. Those that enroll by December 15 will have coverage starting January 1, 2014. Insurance companies can only rate individuals on: age; where you live; tobacco use; and family size. Some individuals may qualify for assistance with health insurance premiums/out-of-pocket costs. All insurance plans must cover the essential benefits. There are different levels of coverage: Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze available to choose from. Not every county has Platinum choices.

Individuals will be required to report basic information on health care coverage when filing taxes. Individuals failing to sign up for health insurance could face penalties. The penalties increase each year insurance is not obtained. Penalties can only be withheld from a tax refund. The IRS cannot garnish wages or take any other adverse actions they are authorized to take for failing to pay income taxes.

To get more information in Illinois, individuals can go to:

- www.getcoveredillinois.gov
- www.healthcare.gov
- www.abe.gov
- Illinois in-person counselors:
 - Illinois Association of Community Action Organizations
 - Illinois Network of Centers for Independent Living
 - Illinois Association of Public Health Administrators
 - Campaign for Better Health Care.

Chairperson's Report:

Deaf Community is deeply saddened by the passing of Michael Berger. He was very active with the Illinois Association for the Deaf and advocated for deaf rights and community unity.

Director's Report:

- IDHHC received Best Government Agency in the Deaf Illinois Awards. Commissioners Haydee Garcia and Anil Phadke accepted the award on behalf of IDHHC.
- Commissioner Tess Fuller-Sakolsky was appointed for her 1st full term and will serve until November 2015. Currently, six (6) Commissioners have expired terms but will continue to serve until the Governor makes new appointments.
- In an effort to increase the numbers on the CART registry, staff is exploring outreach ideas including sending letters to those currently holding the NCRA Cart certification (NCCP) and Illinois colleges with court reporting programs.
- The Support Services Provider (SSP) Task Force will be having a two (2) day meeting in January. It will be collaborating with DHS/DRS on the development of training for the Vocational Assistance Support Person (VASP) which is a new program that will focus on DeafBlind clients who are job ready.
- IDHHC is working with Central Management Service (CMS) to switch our network services from the traditional T-1 line to a fiber optic system. The next stage of the project will include transferring the mainframe serve to the Bureau of Communication within CMS. Additionally, the state vehicle was recently replaced due to age and mileage under the CMS vehicle policies. IDHHC was assigned a 2010 Dodge Avenger.
- Fiscal Year 2015 Budget (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015) budget is anticipated to be the same as FY 2014.

- The Spring Interpreter Conference will be at the Hilton in Springfield, IL on March 21-22, 2014. Its theme is “March Madness: Communication Leads the Way.” IDHHC is hosting an Art contest for deaf or hard of hearing students in Illinois to design the front cover of the Conference program book. The location for the Fall Interpreter Conference has not been determined. The Conference is scheduled for September 12-13, 2014.
- IDHHC provided a presentation and information booth during the Express Yourself Healthcare Forum hosted by the Statewide Deaf Service Coordinators on November 8, 2013.
- Director Miller attended the Telecommunication for the Deaf, Inc. and Association of Late Deafened Adults joint conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. It was a wonderful conference with attendees from around the world.
- IDHHC attended the Senate Confirmation hearing for the Illinois School for the Deaf Superintendent Dr. Janice Smith-Warshaw. During the same hearing, the Illinois School for the Visually Impaired Superintendent was also confirmed.
- The John A. Logan Interpreter Training Advisory Committee hosted a special meeting to discuss issues related to interpreter training programs such as the number of students per instructor, impact of Illinois Interpreter for the Deaf Licensure Act of 2007, the ADA and what qualifications are necessary to ensure success.
- Director Miller presented at the South of I-80 Parents Conference hosted by the ISD Outreach Program in Jacksonville Illinois. The presentation focused on preparing students to transition out of school and into the community, how parents can assist in teaching them to advocate for themselves.
- Interpreter Licensure Board will have two vacancies at the end of December 2013. IDHHC is currently accepting applications for those interested in serving on the Interpreter Licensure Board. In July 2013, the Mentorship program under Interpreter Licensure was implemented and has approved three (3) mentoring relationships so far.

Emma Danielson moved to recess from 2:20 – 2:35 p.m.; seconded by Amber Smock. Motion passed.

Nancy Abbott	Yes	Tina Childress	Yes	Joseph Culpepper	Yes
Emma Danielson	Yes	Haydee Garcia	Yes	Mindy Joy Mayer	Yes
Anil Phadke	Yes	Amber Smock	Yes		

Closed Meeting:

Chairperson Childress indicated the purpose was to approve the minutes from the last closed meeting but they are not ready at this time. This will be placed on the agenda for the next meeting.

New Business:

Amber Smock moved for IDHHC staff to set-up a Facebook page and to begin developing procedures for posting and sharing information; seconded by Nancy Abbott. .

Discussion: Members discussed the possibility of using other social media such as Twitter and LinkedIn. It appears that Facebook is a primary source of information for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The State does not have a formal policy but allows individual agencies to make the decision. IDHHC staff has to be concerned with who maintains the account, has access, whether it allows public comments and who oversees it. It was suggested to use it only to share information and not allow public comments.

Motion passed.

Nancy Abbott	Yes	Tina Childress	Yes	Joseph Culpepper	Yes
Emma Danielson	Yes	Haydee Garcia	Yes	Mindy Joy Mayer	Yes
Anil Phadke	Yes	Amber Smock	Yes		

Open Discussion:

Members discussed whether the deaf community is receiving adequate notification of severe weather such as the recent tornadoes in Illinois. It is important to remind the community to sign up for such notifications and if problems exist to contact the local emergency agency in your area and possibly the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA). IDHHC has posted an ASL Video specific to severe weather preparedness at <http://www2.illinois.gov/idhhc/Pages/emergencytips.aspx>.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has been in the news. There was recently an article about its impact on the Illinois School for the Deaf and Illinois School for the Visually Impaired which was incorrect. Currently, the United States has not ratified the CRPD.

Announcements:

None.

Adjournment:

Nancy Abbott moved to adjourn at 3:31 p.m.; seconded by Emma Danielson. Motion passed.

Nancy Abbott	Yes	Tina Childress	Yes	Joseph Culpepper	Yes
Emma Danielson	Yes	Haydee Garcia	Yes	Mindy Joy Mayer	Yes
Anil Phadke	Yes	Amber Smock	Yes		

(Signature in file)

Chairperson

Date

(Signature in file)

Executive Secretary

Date

APPROVED