



**DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**March 8, 2011**

- I. Call to Order – **6:34 p.m.** Rosemary W. Diaz presiding  
Board Members Present: Rosemary W. Diaz, President (RWD), Ronald Reagan, Vice-President (RR) , Sue Stone, Secretary (SS), Jonathan Silva, Treasurer (JS), John Eberwein (JE), Laura, Casuga (LC)  
Board Members Absent: Jonathan Silva (JS)  
DHHSC Staff Members Present: Michelle Bronson (MB), Executive Director, Jesse Lewis (JL), Operations Director  
Honorary Board Members: Martha Colletti  
Visitors: Devin Puente, Alyssa Juschson, Katie Wade, Susan Coulter, Martha Eleth, Marilyn McCallon;  
Interpreters: Nikki Wolfe, Pam Warkentin
- II. Public Comments (3 minutes per visitor)
- A. Marilyn McCallon 1) enjoyed MV, especially antique hearing aids collection, wished more Deaf would come, suggested it might be held for 2 days; 2) wants to know why David Denton in human resources is not learning ASL as he has been here a long time. She wishes he were more visible and friendly. 3) Concerned that calling in on the TTY at 1:15 p.m. the answering machine message from lunch break is still on.
  - B. Martha Colletti requested a photo display of staff due to not knowing who some of the new people are
- III. Approval of Agenda Items – approved by consent
- IV. Approval of **February** Board Minutes –M/S/P
- V. President’s Report – RWD
- A. Recruitment goal - there are 6 of us and we need 6 more, so let's make it a goal that this year in 2011 we will each recruit one person. With more people we can accomplish more. The goal: 12 board members by 2012.
  - B. Possible economic venture if franchising doesn't work out is to buy a used U-Haul and establish our own moving/handyman service hiring Deaf individuals for the work (need to research feasibility, liability, and setting up a foundation that will be a for-profit aspect of our organization). JS is not here today but had told RWD that franchising is not an easy process. Money would be separate from general fund but would be part of our foundation fund, held in reserve in case government funding is cut, and at the same time provide employment training and opportunity.
  - C. Update on the caption issue: We will have another meeting on March 16 at 4 p.m. at DHHSC. The first meeting on February 16 was well attended. Everyone was given "homework" and a form to use to document current data regarding captioning accuracy, clarity, and availability of the four primary news providers in the Central Valley. We need participants from outreach

areas as well. On March 16 we will review the data and develop strategies for meeting with each station's General Manager. If you would like to be involved please come. See new blog on DHHSC website with 2 links—each one has a separate listing, one re laws and regulations from Federal Communications Commission, and one re documenting evidence on our current quality of news captioning.

- D.* Thank you to the four Board members involved in Martha's Vineyard--well attended and enjoyable event.
- E.* Update from landscaping will be coming from Michelle. After her report we may need to take action or not.
- F.* Future Director vacation requests-- requesting consent that those be conducted via email and ratified at future meetings. It is not necessary to have these on the agenda and to have a discussion on their vacation leave. They are entitled to vacation leave per their employment contracts with DHHSC and already aware of their need to ensure that they are not off at the same time. All Board members gave consent.

VI. Vice-President's Report – RR

VII. Secretary's Report – SS

VIII. Treasurer's Report – MB (for JS)

**February** Financial Report distributed and reviewed. We are still working on researching our options in regards to refinancing the mortgage.

Checking/savings balance: \$414,914

Accounts receivable total: \$285,899

    Accounts receivable interpreting: \$128,938

    Accounts receivable grants: \$156,961

Accounts payable: \$332

Mortgage payable: \$180,686

Board private fund balance: \$2,864

Per profit and loss statement overall (8 months): \$85,818

DSS grant

    Grant awarded for 10/11: \$650,564

    Grant spent: \$434,256

    Balance (unspent) for 4 months left: \$ 216,307

IX. Executive Director's Report – Michelle Bronson

*A.* On Feb. 22nd, I attended a Health Net Advisory Committee meeting, and among some issues we discussed were how to make their audio library (over 400 topics) on their website accessible to the D/HH, adding the interpreting logo to their Language Access cards, making videos to include signing and captioning, setting up informational workshops for the D/HH, and making marketing CDs accessible to all. They were receptive to those ideas. MediCal is changing to Health Net or Blue Cross options. There will be a training for community on April 8 to help them decide which plan is best for them. Health Net is sensitive to people with disabilities as well as the Deaf community.

*B.* Sean Johnson, the new Emergency Preparedness Officer for the City of Fresno, came to DHHSC on February 24th, and we gave him a tour, explained our services, and demonstrated how the videophone works. Rosemary and I had a very productive meeting with him, and we discussed our concerns regarding lack of communication accessibility during broadcasting of local and national emergencies and how to make the news more visual to the D/HH. In addition, after explaining our then upcoming Martha's Vineyard event to Sean, he encouraged 80 of his EMT students to attend. Approximately 15 of the

students attended, which is fantastic because this means more exposure to our culture and community.

**C.** Staff Development Week (SDW) went very well, and I provided a brief training on Language Access as required by our interpreting services contract with Fresno County Department of Social Services. We also completed our annual Sexual Harassment Prevention training. Jesse can share more details about SDW.

**D.** Please use SHARES cards for the benefit of DHHSC.

**E.** Deaf Women's Leadership Conference raffle tickets are on sale for the quilt donated by Anne Ogden.

**F.** Landscaping report. Projected costs: 4 ½ ft redwood trees 6 for \$120, or 7 ½ ft trees for \$239. Drought-tolerant bushes: one gallon for 12 is \$60, but 5 gallon is \$160. Money has been spent so far on a tree removed and the sprinklers fixed. We are pricing rocks. With the sprinklers fixed we now have a lawn. Most of the remaining money (\$1,548) will go to the sign. SS noted there is a free service from city re drought-tolerant landscaping.

**G.** Re Board recruitment: requesting we look for someone from Merced on the Board per requirement of United Way.

**H.** David Denton is trying to learn to sign and has already picked up several vocabulary signs and uses them daily. We will make it a point to introduce him to our Senior Citizens on a Thursday.

**I.** It is possible to have MV for 2 days—will investigate.

**J.** We will work on having the front desk covered better.

**K.** Update on Martha's Vineyard--226 people attended, and we raised over \$1,300.00: \$ 200 in admission and approximately \$200 in Deaf/Blind bake sale. A big thank you for everyone who contributed to the bake sale and definitely a HUGE thank you to Susan Coulter for overseeing yet another successful Martha's Vineyard. The staff and volunteers were amazing Friday night in assisting with the set-up; practically everything was put into place within three hours, a record that I know of!

X. Operations Director's Report – Jesse Lewis

**A.** Last week we had our annual SDW on Thursday and Friday. After gathering a lot of feedback from our staff, the format was changed to best meet their training needs. Topics such as How to Work With Clients Who Have Housing Issues, Networking & Public Relations, and Writing Professional Letters & E-mails were just a few examples of topics staff received training for. We also discussed the future of Staff development for our agency. As you know, we are always striving to improve our services to the community, and staff development is the key. The management team has developed a new plan to restructure how future Staff Development Days will work, including an increase in staff training each other. More visual aids like PowerPoint's, pre-tests and post-tests, and activities will become a huge part of future Staff Development days. This will be more effective than just standard presentations, and we believe our clients will notice a difference in how services are provided.

**B.** We've been working on revising our vocational assessment to use with clients who are seeking employment. We recently met with DOR to discuss the assessment and got a lot of great feedback to make this tool more effective for our staff.

**C.** I've been working on outreach to organizations like Lions Club. There are lots of organizations out there that have a history of supporting D/HH people. It's equally important that we reach out to these organizations like Lions Club or Grange International and build bridges between our organizations. I welcome your involvement in this goal. Please contact me if you're interested in being a part of this effort.

D. Last, we are planning a new program to meet a need that has always been present: improving relationships and communications in hearing families that have D/HH children, as well as families that include Deaf parents with CODAs. Our program, Connect with Deaf Mentors, would match up volunteer Deaf mentors with these families. We've got a lot of planning and program development to do before this will begin, but to start, I am setting up a discussion meeting for April 20th at 1pm to 3pm here in the Fresno community room. If you're interested in helping brainstorm ideas for how best to make this program work, or you'd like to become one of the volunteer Deaf mentors, please join us. Working with these families is a service we already provide. The challenge we face is that with a limited number of staff, there's just not enough time to provide the amount of personal mentoring that a large team of volunteer mentors could accomplish. This program would focus on training volunteers to become the kind of mentors these families need, then match them to the families where they'd be the best fit. At a later date, we will likely ask the Board's support to seek grant funding for the program, possibly for a Mentor Coordinator position.

- XI. Committee Reports –
- a. Personnel Committee – RWD met with staff and passed out forms to get feedback for MB and JL. LC and RWD will review the feedback and provide the Directors will a summary as well as a list of goals with a specific timeline.
  - b. Bylaws Committee – SS no report
  - c. Fundraising Committee – JS Absent
  - d. Outreach Committee – CCO, MOO, SVO no report
  - e. Grant Monitoring Committee – RWD no report
- XII. General Board Comments – LC attended MV, 1<sup>st</sup> time lots of fun and interesting.
- XIII. Unfinished Business –
- A. Economic independence within the Deaf community—postponed as JS is not here
- XIV. New Business –
- A. Consent agenda dates for the rummage sale, April 29-30 and Community comments/dinner/bingo fundraiser, August 13. M/S/P
  - B. Bylaws discussion: Advisory council proposal from JL. RWD explained the gist of the proposal, which is to have one advisory council for all 3 outlying offices, which would also include Fresno and JL. They can meet via videoconferencing from their home—that way no travel issues and more motivation to meet. Suggest meeting 8 times/year and requiring 75% meeting attendance and 50% informal event planning attendance. No RRO. Board will have minutes of meetings. Advisory council focus now is event planning and not agency needs so they would stay as event planners and we would have new people on the new advisory council, to focus more on providing feedback to the Board on current trends and needs in the D/HH community. Motion to accept Jesse's proposal and have bylaws committee start exploring necessary changes for this proposal. M/S/P
- XIV. Public Comments –Marilyn McCallon 1) notes that there are lots of changes in the health plans, Medicare changes are very confusing, and Rx prices have increased. 2) notes that redwoods need a lot of water so perhaps a drip-line would be better than sprinklers; 3) emphasizes that the rummage sale is open Friday to the Deaf community *and friends of DHHSC*. 4) suggests that a Fresno Deaf Events member be appointed to the advisory council.
- XV. Announcements –
- A. SS is leading a PEP on Wednesday, April 27 at McKenzie Preserve, one of Sierra Foothills Conservancy-owned preserves. It is about a 40 minute drive from DHHSC.

USER 3/15/11 12:13 AM

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It will be some easy hiking and education about the plants and animals of the foothills.

XVI. Closed Session – none

XVII. Adjournment – **8:10 p.m.**

**Date of Next Local Board Meeting: April 12, 2011 DHHSC – Fresno**

Submitted by Sue Stone, DHHSC Secretary