



DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

6 PM, Tuesday, May 7, 2024

- I. Call to Order - 6:05 pm
 - A. Board members Present:
 - a. Steve Longo
 - b. Nicole Hurt
 - c. Anna Virnig
 - d. Patty Killough
 - e. Jaime Johnson-Clay
 - f. Christian Gentile
- II. Approval of Agenda Items
 - A. Corrected typo: As discussed, corrected the typo for “Approval of October Board minutes” to accurately reflect the month of “March.”
 - B. Motion to approve the agenda: Carried.
- III. Approval of March 2024 Board minutes
 - A. Officers’ Reports: As discussed, officers’ reports will no longer be summarized. Instead they will be copied in full to the minutes.
 - B. Transcription Support to Ensure Accuracy: In addition, automatic transcription will aid our board secretary in ensuring that everything discussed is included and more clear for future minutes. For example, the March minutes does not include the discussion that took place in regard to why we had to schedule our recent board meeting on a Thursday instead of a Tuesday. Nicole explained: “I was just explaining that Tuesdays didn't work for us, and that Thursday worked best. I think that that's important to put in the minutes, as well as the dates for the gala. The actual date was not included in the minutes. We suggested that just the entire report be included in the

minutes for the secretary.”

C. Timely Turnaround for Board Minutes: “And we did discuss it during email, but Michelle also mentioned that she needed to get that information to the state, so we need to make sure that we do it in a timely manner, because if we are having these reports turned in late, that does not look good to the state, so we want to make sure that we are doing this as formally and punctually as possible, especially when we have to submit things quarterly to the state.” The minutes are typed during the meeting, compared to the transcription, edited into a legible document to be posted onto DHHSC’s website, and also sent to Michelle.

D. Motion to approve the minutes: Carried.

IV. President's Report – Steve Longo

Report:

Nice cool breeze we’re having lately, and it won't be long before summer heat hits Fresno so enjoy it while it lasts! The Walk-through Deaf History event on April 13 had a good crowd with more in the morning than the afternoon. Yours truly participated in the skit fulfilling the role as A. King Jordan, the first Deaf Gallaudet president because of Deaf President Now (DPN) protest. Hats off to the fine team for making it a success.

A reminder that DHHSC’s 40th Anniversary is next month, and we have tickets left for the special celebration. So hope you can get them soon! The weather should be nice that day. Fingers crossed.

I drove to Pasadena on May 4 to attend Deaf Nation Expo and was surprised to find about 2,000 in attendance. I got to meet old friends and new people. I had the opportunity to meet Angelica Martinez, VR Counselor of Merced and had fabulous dialogue with her regarding job training and placement so I look forward to working with her in that direction. Then met with Mark Call, Director of Field Operation with Sorenson to discuss expanding the support for VDF this Fall now that funding is available for sponsorship. I had more conversations with others, so it was a productive day.

I created a Grievance complaint form which is based on the DHHSC Grievance form

and others I have done in the past and have it accessible online by email or website. It will be reviewed by Ed and the Board for correction if any prior to approval.

I also revised the codes from Whisper template that will transcribe audio into text for ZOOM recordings so it would be useful for the Board Secretary in Board minutes or such. The DHHSC website has been updated with the latest Wordpress version with the plugins updated as well to stay in compliance with security and stability.

There was a recent ADHOC meeting last month and Nicole, our VP will cover that. Ongoing tasks—Your president stands ready and armed with Hancock signature for documents to be signed as done recently.

As always, don't forget to send an email to the Board: Board@dhhsc.org with suggestions/concerns or interest in applying for the Board.

Discussion / Sharing of Information:

A. Grievance Form: Nicole suggested adding an ASL video to coincide with the form and written directions.

V. Vice President's Report – Nicole Hurt

Report:

Hello everyone! Happy May and we are almost half way through this year! I hope everyone is doing well. My report won't be long because things are a bit slow right now on the board side.

We recently have set up an Ad Hoc meeting in two weeks from today with a purpose of discussing what kind of baskets and desserts we can get for the raffle that DHHSC will be doing at GALA and how to collect donations. I really love doing raffles whenever I go to events for DHHSC so I am excited about this part. If you would like to donate a basket or to fund a basket please do contact Michelle. We already have discussed some ideas for what kind of baskets that we want to do. The meeting in two weeks will finalize those things. The GALA event will be on Saturday June 22nd from 6-9 PM at Evanelle vineyards in Madera. You can buy your tickets now online.

We also have established official board meeting dates for the rest of this year: Tuesday October 8th and Tuesday December 10th. We are back to Tuesdays because it worked better for the members here. My apologies for confusing people with our last meeting being on Thursday. There were several members that could not make it on a Tuesday and we needed to hold an official board meeting so we made that decision. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

We will decide on when we will do a town hall meeting when it gets closer. Usually it happens in August but we haven't selected the final date yet. We will announce it on the DHHSC website once it's decided.

Last thing is if anyone is interested in joining our board and willing to be fully committed to several meetings and activities and to give back to our community it's a great time right now. Several of members' terms will be expiring towards the end of this year. I am hoping that we all can renew and stay here longer but also we do need new members to join so they can have time to get familiar with how it works as we cannot stay on the board forever with the term limits. We would like to make those transitions as smooth as possible. If you are serious and interested please do email us at board@dhhsc.org. You are also welcome to use this email to communicate with us or to express any concerns or feedback that you might have for us. We would love to have new people join the board!

That's all for my report tonight and thank you for watching and participating in our meeting!

VI. Secretary's Report – Patty Killough

Report:

A. Staffing

- a. Sadly, Jeff Oropeza, has resigned from the Central Coast office in Salinas. After the recent birth of his new baby, the family has determined that childcare is very expensive and difficult to manage. He reached out to me to let me know that he has enjoyed and appreciated his time with DHHSC; however, he needs to resign for family reasons.
- b. The Central Coast office is now vacant of staff, and there is at least one job

posting on the DHHSC website for a Client Services Specialist. Please note that as our DHHSC Director explained at the last Board Meeting, the applicant must either hold an associates degree or currently in a college degree program. The right person will also require problem-solving skills. There will likely be a second job posting soon to help fill the position previously held by Jeff.

- c. Our community is in dire need of staff at this location. Knowledgeable staff are still needed to educate resourceful organizations, such as hospitals, on ADA requirements. Advocates continue to be a need in the area of discrimination and accommodations in general. If you're interested, please apply now, and help spread the word about these positions.

B. Events

- a. A few community members living in Monterey County have been empowered to set up various events. Mycaela Avila-Terra taught our area's first ASL paint night! (Picture below.) If anyone is interested in a private paint party, she is also available for that! Rebecca Rodick has been running ASL bowling events in Salinas. And, Compass Church continues to support Deaf attendees via paid interpreters, and the number of people attending has been slowly increasing.



Discussion / Sharing of Information:

- A. Painting: Nicole shared that we could possibly hold a future meeting during which we painted.

VII. Treasurer's report – Anna Virnig

The following document was shared on-screen:

Checking/Savings Balance	1,533,734.52	As of April 30, 2024
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Accounts Receivable Grants	218,822.74	* Outstanding invoices not yet collected as of March 30, 2024
	+	
Accounts Receivable Interpreting	354,979.72	* Outstanding invoices not yet collected as of April 30, 2024

Accounts Receivable Total	573,802.46	Outstanding invoices not yet collected

Accounts Payable	\$ 15,250.60	Outstanding bills not yet paid
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Board Private Fund Fiscal Year Balance	840.79	** 07/01/2023 - 02/29/2024
Board Private Cumulative Fund Balance	5,558.07	** Pending Reconciliation

Per Profit and Loss Statement (Overall) *	25,802.55	*** As of April 30, 2024
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Status on DSS (Department of Social Services)		
Grant Awarded for 2023-2024	\$ 1,062,017.00	
Grant funds expended (Estimated)	548,675.22	**
Unspent balance of Grant	\$ 513,341.78	**

- * Approximately
- ** To Be Determined and reconciled
- *** Invoicing to be entered and/or collected; approximate

Discussion / Sharing of Information:

- A. Steve asked “I noticed that the \$513,000 unpaid, which means that we have a balance through June, right, Michelle? Is that what we have to spend through June?” Michelle replied that that is true.
- B. Michelle clarified that DHHSC does have funds for April through June, and that the money needs to be spent by June or it will be lost.
- C. Board members pay monthly dues, and the purpose of this is to show a strong level of commitment to the organization. When DHHSC applies for funding, many sponsors look to see if all members have been paying their dues as evidence of support and commitment for the organization they represent. According to Michelle, there was a time when a sponsor had declined to support a grant due to board members’ not paying their dues. The amount, \$20.00 per month, is an agreement outlined in the board’s bylaws. If there is a financial issue, a board member can contact Steve, our Board president, to make an alternative agreement for a lower payment. Cindy, DHHSC’s accountant, will be verifying who might need to catch up in paying their dues and those members will be notified individually.

VIII. Fundraising Report - Submitted by Jessica Lozano-Delgado

Report:

Our nonprofit can become members of The Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (\$150) so we can be part of the committees for their events. We can have a booth at El Grito (no cost if you're on the committee) & pass out information about DHHSC.

We can sell raffle tickets for a prize to make money at the event. If we can have enough people volunteer from DHHSC at El Grito, we can sell waters to raise money. We can also become Sponsors for the event, promote our agency, see attachment. This event will happen on Saturday, September 14th, 2024, 9 am - 1 pm.

Discussion / Sharing of Information:

A. Due to only having one hearing interpreter, the discussion is being tabled until a follow-up AdHoc meeting can be held.

IX. Executive Director's report– Michelle Bronson

Report:

Budget Updates:

We are pleased that the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) approved our Request for Application (RFA) for the next five years! We are relieved and thrilled that we can continue serving our local Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities. Another reason to celebrate during our 40th Gala next month, and I hope you all will join us there!

We were approved for the City of Visalia grant, which is for this calendar year, and it covers interpreting and event expenses for Imagine U, Adventure Park, Halloween Party, and Holiday Party. We are grateful for their support!

We submitted our First 5 of Merced County grant application last Friday, and the grant focuses on needed supplies, equipment, and materials for our Merced office. We want to purchase two licenses for "ASL at Home" curriculum to use with our ROCK families, a new Mac laptop and projector to use at our workshops and events because many of our equipment is old, and a new "Monster Hands" book with ASL illustrations developed by a Deaf team to distribute to our Merced families. We will

keep you posted.

We got approved for the Stevenson Philanthropy grant, which is to provide interpreting services for our events and services in Monterey County. This includes ASL and Spanish interpreting for the individuals and families we work with. We got the highest number of votes by the students, 16 for DHHSC and nine for the second place, which touched us greatly, and we want to do well on this grant. We also want to thank Dr. Rosemary Wanis for attending the ceremony in Pebble Beach last Saturday on behalf of DHHSC, as it was important to us that someone be there to represent DHHSC and show appreciation for the students' support.

Our Employment Development Department (EDD) Request for Proposal (RFP) is due May 22nd, and we will reapply. EDD services are important to our Deaf and Hard of Hearing clients, and we want to continue this grant funding. Please share with any Deaf or Hard of Hearing student or person looking for a job!

Staffing Updates:

Jeffrey Oropeza resigned as Salinas Client Services Specialist last Thursday, May 2nd, and he will be greatly missed. We wish him all the best. Joshua Blanco, our ASL Instructor/Program Specialist, will now serve Monterey and San Benito clients remotely until a new person can physically work in the Salinas office. He was part-time but now full-time, doing 20 hours a week for the Salinas office and the other 20 for DeafBlind Support Group, LGBTQIA+ Socials, and ASL classes. In the meantime, Joshua's job title will be Central Coast Outreach (CCO) Client Services Specialist (CSS)/ASL Instructor. In addition, Dr. Rosemary Wanis has offered to work in our Salinas office every Wednesday for a few months to continue a physical presence in the meantime, for which we are grateful!

Compliance Issues/Concerns:

No issues at this time.

Agency Updates:

We hosted our first time "Walk Through Deaf History" on April 13th, and we had 182 people, including staff and volunteers. We were pleased with the numbers and we

hope to see the event grow over the years. This event is good for our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community members and ASL/Interpreting students to learn about important Deaf figures and milestones in Deaf history. For 20 years, we hosted Martha's Vineyard in the Central Valley, but that is only one era out of many important historical events, so we wanted to expand the event to include different eras, important/influential Deaf individuals, and situations, such as Milan Conference, that have adversely or positively impacted our community. If you attended and have feedback for us, please do share with us as we want to continue improving the event and make it as fun and informative as possible.

Last Friday, our staff interpreters worked with Carmela Nyberg in hosting a beautiful Interpreters' Appreciation Night here at DHHSC, and it was wonderful seeing new and familiar faces. We want our staff and freelance interpreters, both hearing and Deaf, to know how much we appreciate them and their work, especially because they serve as communication bridges and cultural liaisons. We recognize it is not an easy job but a very important one.

Our staff are working hard to prepare for National Institute of Technology (NTID) Summer Camp, which will be at Fresno State University from June 16th to June 21st. We are contracting with NTID to provide vocational-oriented workshops and activities to Deaf and Hard of Hearing high school students ages 16-20. Our staff will not stay overnight in the dorms as NTID's staff will handle that responsibility. This will be a busy week, especially because it ends on Friday and our 40th Gala is the very next day!

As you know, we are all busily preparing for our 40th Gala, which is scheduled for June 22nd from 6-9 p.m. at Evanelle Vineyards. We got dessert donations from Nothing Bundt Cakes, Chiffonos Bakery, It's In The Mix bakery, and Whole Foods, but we still need more desserts because we are planning for 200 people and we want to have enough for people to bid on. If you haven't bought your ticket yet, please do so as soon as the deadline is April 1st, and people can choose their table and seats, but it is first come, first serve. Our goal is to have 200 people come and we would love to meet that goal! We have much to celebrate as we have been through a lot the past 40 years, and we hope you join us as we reminisce about our successes and

challenges.

Discussion / Sharing of Information:

A. Gala

- a. Raffle: Board members discussed possible contributions for the Gala's raffle.
- b. Tables: Regarding the GALA, in response to Nicole asking about the cost of a table and how many that would accommodate, Michelle said that the cost is \$800 and there are 10 chairs. Nicole shared that she will be discussing the possibility of all the Board members supporting the event by purchasing a table for the members to attend.

B. Valley Deaf Festival (VDF)

- a. Location: Michelle advised "We're going to go back to the junior exhibit hall. The numbers were down last year, and the ones right by the animals, the numbers are down. So to save money, we're going to go back to the junior exhibit hall. If we grow again, then we can move back to the building we were at last, the commerce building where we were last year. That's what's most financially responsible."
- b. Ticket Prices
 - i. Z & Purple: Steve advised that representatives from Z and Purple, have advised that they will likely be able to sponsor more soon. "And also that would hopefully be able to allow us to decrease our ticket prices for VDF back to \$5."
 - ii. Michelle informed "VDF tickets will be \$8 for advanced ticket prices. We're going to do \$8. \$8 for advanced ticket sales and \$10 at the door." Michelle clarified that our ticket prices must cover the increase that the venue is now charging. Michelle added ". . . we also need to keep in mind that some sponsors want clients' names and contact information. So we're not willing to share that with them."

C. Fresno's DHHSC Community Room Renovation: "I just got bad news today. Yeah, that's how I felt too. I just got told today by the city of Fresno that they want to have \$16,000 for ADA compliance. So I'm waiting for the why. I will file that objection as soon as I get the additional information. And we'll see if we can proceed or not, because \$16,000 is going to be too much on top of the bids that we already have. And we don't know yet what's going to happen. So we will keep you posted. But literally just today, I was told that."

- D. Michelle expressed, for Mycaela Avila-Terra, the host for Paint Night in Salinas: “I forgot to add, can you please tell the community members who have hosted the paint night, Patty, if you can let them know, thank you so much. I really appreciate the community and the partnerships in the community, really, and that they were able to keep the costs low for us. Thank you so much. I know that our supplies are not cheap. And so if you can just extend a note of appreciation from me. Thank you so much.”
- E. Interpreter Appreciation Month: “I just wanted to say thank you to the interpreters, and we couldn't do this without you. So thank you so much. We appreciate you and thank you to the board who came. Thank you to Michelle, and thank you everyone for their time, and I really appreciate it. Yes, thank you so much to Kit and Tracy and Erin for providing services tonight.”
- X. Spotlights - None
- XI. General Board comments - None
- XII. Old Business - None
- XIII. New business - None
- XIV. Announcements - None
- XV. Closed session (if needed) - None
- XVI. Adjournment- 7:55pm