



DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 10, 2024

6:00 PM

I. Call to Order –

- A) Starting time: 6:00 PM
- B) Board members Present:
 - a) Steve Longo
 - b) Nicole Hurt
 - c) Anna Virnig
 - d) Jaime Johnson-Clay
 - e) Christian Gentile
 - f) Patty Killough

II. Approval of Agenda Items

- A) Motion to approve the agenda: Carried.

III. Approval of October 2024 Board minutes

- A) The minutes are not yet complete.
- B) Approval has been postponed.

IV. President's Report – Steve Longo

Report

As Winter is approaching, it is time to prepare for the cold, prevention measures, and the Holidays.

The Valley Deaf Festival saw some changes. It was held at Junior building which is smaller than the previous yet “perfect” for the needs. There were some hits and misses as explained below.

- Hits:
 - The kitchen was sufficient. Despite just three Board members participating, we had several good volunteers making the operation flawless. Thanks to Sean Virnig who helped with the orders, and to staff and volunteers with the kitchen. The building was better suited for visibility of the stage and people and utilization of space.

- Misses:
 - The Board voted to add another Square system that includes an iPad and a terminal. However, we couldn't use it due to insufficient time to install required updates and upgrades; so, we had to use one system this time.
 - Another element of surprise was no Wi-Fi service available to use freely so we had to pay for each device. This is something to investigate for next year.

This will be my last report as DHHSC Board President since my term ends this month. It has been a pleasure and honor to serve DHHSC and the community for the past 6 years and during those years, I was able and with help from my friends to donate over \$1,000 for a good cause and I will still support the agency in any ways I can because DHHSC is an essential agency for families, schools, and community.

Although I had served on the Board in various organizations over 30 years span yet it will be a bittersweet goodbye.

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

V. Vice President's Report – Nicole Hurt

Report

Hello everyone, Happy December!

I can't believe that 2024 is almost done and that 2025 will be here. I hope everyone had a wonderful thanksgiving and enjoyed the cool weather we are having.

We had VDF last month and from what I was told it went really great and had a good turnout. I do hope you all enjoyed it as the staff, board, and volunteers worked hard to put it together for the big day. I was planning on going to help with serving food but unfortunately I got really sick and weak and wasn't able to attend. I'm sad that I wasn't able to attend. Jaime, Patty, and I weren't able to attend VDF for various reasons. But I am extremely grateful for the wonderful board that we have because we had Anna, Steve, and Christian who went to represent the board, and they all worked very hard on that day. Anna with pre-event prep, Steve helping with the technical difficulties, and Christian being able to step in and help while the rest of us weren't able to. But all of the board were able to contribute financially to purchase a thank you gift for DHHSC staff which was given to them on the day of VDF. Thank you Steve for being there to represent us and to give them the gift.

We recently had #GivingTuesday fundraiser and I got wonderful news from Michelle that over \$13k was raised which is really amazing! For our part as the board we set up a fundraiser with Panda Express again and did this on same day as #GivingTuesday and donations we earn from this goes to #GivingTuesday. We had to get \$150 worth of food orders first before start earning donation from Panda Express and I received news from

Christian who set up this fundraiser for us that we earned \$60 for #GivingTuesday so thank you Christian for doing this! And we also received news from Michelle that a kind couple donated \$50 to the board instead of ordering Panda so for the board from my understanding, we have earned the total of \$110 that will go toward to #GivingTuesday fundraiser. I want to thank everyone who's involved in those efforts. It is much appreciated!

And tonight is our last meeting for the year 2024, and I am hoping to establish a schedule with the board for 2025 meetings very soon. I am hoping for the same scheduling but with more advance notice to make it easier for requesting interpreters and for everyone to have dates in their calendar. For example, I noticed so far we would meet four times a year, plus a town hall meeting, and we meet to match months before DHHSC need to turn in their quarterly reports. We tend to meet in the months of February, May, October, and December. We tend to meet on the second Tuesday of month. But I will need to meet with the board and get confirmation. I would like to be more prepared for the town hall meeting and establish the date a few months before by picking traditional scheduling in August and follow it if possible. We will inform the public soon with a flyer on the website for 2025 official board meeting dates.

Again thank you everyone for their involvement, and I hope everyone has wonderful and safe holidays. Also happy new years!

VI. Secretary's Report – Patty Killough

Report

I have a ton to report this month for the Central Coast area! Gabriel and Ruby, our new local staffers, have been working very hard at work to set up several opportunities for the Deaf community to come together, learn, and socialize. Here is a list of the DHHSC events that have occurred since our last board meeting.

- Monterey Zoo Tour, October 19, 2024: DHHSC partnered with the Monterey Zoo to give community members discounted access to a very educational tour. About 30 people attended, including a mixture of Deaf and hearing individuals, both adults and children. In fact, several Deaf students participated. The children were especially tickled. After the tour, a great spread of food was provided for an outside picnic in the sunshine. We hope that this event will become an annual thing.
- Coffee Social in Monterey, November 23, 2024: This event was scheduled in beautiful Monterey at Peet's Coffee. A handful of people came, including one family learning ASL for their Deaf daughter. We chatted and played UNO. It was a lot of fun.
- Annual Holiday Party, December 7, 2024: The annual party was a HUGE success. Several families attended, and they ALL participated in our Reindeer Game and Deaf Musical Chairs. Even the parents of Deaf children were having fun and laughing. Santa Clause was very interactive with the children. However, one child was trying to convince her mom to sneak out to go look for the sleigh and reindeer! We really appreciated the generous monetary donations as well as donations for other items, such as the adorable and soft teddy bears that Santa Clause paired with the children.

In addition to DHHSC events, the community members have also planned some great opportunities as described below.

- Friendsgiving at Compass Church, November 2024: Rosemary Wanis planned a Friendsgiving, and Compass Church supported the event by providing a free room and some delicious pumpkin pie. Compass Church continues to provide interpreting services for Deaf attendees every Sunday as well. In fact, they are making their upcoming annual Christmas on Main Street accessible with two interpreters.
- Church Interpreting Workshops, began December 2024: Trevor Tuell is offering monthly workshops to provide support to those interpreting at Compass Church and those interested in interpreting. This is especially in response to several interpreters that have expressed concerns about their skills related to their ability to interpret for a

church service. We want to welcome more interpreters to the church interpreting team to continue to ensure consistent access.

- Streets of Bethlehem, December 2024: A handful of people turned out for the ASL tour of Streets of Bethlehem at First Baptist Church in Salinas. It includes a reenactment of the biblical times, and everyone there volunteers their time to do their part. The Roman Soldiers accused one person in our group of being a witch because of her green and blue hair, and she had to be protected from being burned at the stake! But, besides that trauma (LOL), we also were exposed to hands-on learning at various booths, including but not limited to bread making and weaving. The finale was getting to see Jesus Christ in the manger surrounded by Mary, Joseph, the three wise men, and angels.

Thank you to our volunteers:

- I want to extend a special thank you to the staff as well as the volunteers that made this possible, including Rosemary Wanis, Henry Bergstresser, Maryanne Killough, Rufus Blair, Shawnell Thompson, Harly Taylor, Jaaliya Rice, and I'm sure many more, especially behind the scenes, for volunteering your hard work and time to support our community.

VII. Treasurer's report – Anna Virnig

Report

Treasurer's Report



Checking/Savings Balance	1,580,536.05	As of November 30, 2024
--------------------------	---------------------	-------------------------

Accounts Receivable Grants	140,653.64	Outstanding invoices not yet collected as of October 31, 2024 *
	+	
Accounts Receivable Interpreting	565,830.52	Outstanding invoices not yet collected as of October 31, 2024 *
Accounts Receivable Total	706,484.16	Outstanding invoices not yet collected

Accounts Payable	\$ 2,556.52	Outstanding bills not yet paid
------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------

Accounts Payable	\$ 2,556.52	Outstanding bills not yet paid
------------------	--------------------	--------------------------------

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) *	40,365.99	*** As of April 30, 2024
---	------------------	--------------------------

Status on DSS (Department of Social Services)		
Grant Awarded for 2023-2024	\$ 1,034,987.46	
Grant funds expended (Estimated)	695,274.98	*
Unspent balance of Grant	\$ 339,712.48	*

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

Discussion

- Anna:
 - Cindy gave me two notes to discuss but I have not processed them. CDSS, Ed grant funding, and interpreter invoices are some that have not been processed for the month of November. I think November is the last month that hasn't been processed.

- Michelle: Affirmed that that is accurate.
- Steve: Steve is asking if VDF earned a profit or if we lost money, and if so, how much. Anna responded that Michelle will talk about that in her report.

VIII. Executive Director's report– Michelle Bronson

Report

Budget Updates:

We will soon apply to the Central California Women's Conference for an art grant for women and children, and we will incorporate deSIGN, ASL Summer Program, LEAD-K activities, and our outreach offices into the grant to show how many of our services and programs are interconnected.

We just learned on Monday that we are approved to apply for the United Way of Tulare grant, which is due in January.

We plan to reapply for Combined Federal Campaign in January, once we complete our agency audit. We had to miss the 2024-2025 cycle because of not having the recent audit done in time, but we are determined to apply for 2025-2026.

We will apply for funding from Dollar General in January for adult literacy services.

Do any of you have a connection to State Farm? They have a matching grant but require that a local associate donate before they match that. We would love to do a matching grant through State Farm but need to find a connection first. Please let me know if you are a client yourself or know someone who works for them.

We will reapply for a grant with Monterey Peninsula Foundation in June.

We would also like to explore an opportunity to invest with the Central Valley Community Foundation so donors can donate to our investment. We can decide the amount we want to invest with them and donors can contribute to that investment. This would be a new opportunity for us, and once we finish the audit and see where we stand fiscally, we can then decide our starting amount.

Another one of our goals is to apply to Kellogg Foundation and Community Foundation of Monterey County (CFMC) before the end of January. With Kellogg, we want to find funds to support our Reaching Out and Communicating with our Kids (ROCK) program. With CFMC, we want to apply for funds for organizational development focusing on staff and board.

At the time of compiling this report, we raised more than \$13K for #GivingTuesday. Two donors contributed \$5K each while others donated different amounts, and all added up to over \$13K, which has truly blessed us. We were stunned by the donations and the funds will be used for our four goals: 1) To pay off the Fresno HQ's building renovations, 2) Update the Fresno HQ's bathrooms, 3) Have funds for outreach offices' socials, and 4) Funds for our annual events to offset expenses.

Staffing Updates:

Kerry Knighton will become full-time in January. He will go from 20 hours a week to 37.5.

Ruby Mandujano will start working 30 hours a week in January since she graduates with her BA degree this Friday.

Compliance Issues/Concerns:

None at this time.

Agency Updates:

VDF was a success and we had about 500 people in attendance. The number of attendees was about the same as last year's, and because of that, we will look into renting a smaller facility for 2025 VDF. We want to save on costs whenever possible, and if attendance has gone down, it makes more economic sense to rent smaller places, like we did when we started out. When VDF attendance grew, we started renting larger spaces, but now that it has decreased, we need to return to smaller places. We will start calling around to find the right fit for next year.

Staff just voted on the 2025 VDF theme: Lights, Action, ASL! Will be a fun one!

Silent Sleigh is this Friday, December 13th, but it is open only to D/HH school-age students, not Deaf community members or hearing individuals who are not parents or teachers of the D/HH. We want the event focused on only D/HH children, and due to limited time, we have to be strict with this policy so that D/HH children will have time to visit with Deaf Santa. I normally assist with planning the game stations, but this time I will be Mrs. Claus. It hit me that I'm now old enough to be in this role, which is somewhat weird but I'm looking forward to it.

The Salinas office hosted their Holiday Party on Saturday, December 7th and 30 people came. Gabriel and Ruby, our Salinas staff, said the party was successful and that people had a good time. I am pleased to see local D/HH Communities come together for events, especially after seeing so many changes following the COVID pandemic. It is important for people to connect in person, not just virtually or through social media. Human contact is best!

Our Visalia office will host their Holiday Party this Friday evening and Merced will host theirs on Saturday, December 14th. Fresno will have a Holiday Dinner on the 18th from 4-7 pm. We decided to change our event to the evening so that the kids could participate. When we learned that all the schools would still be in session, we decided to move the event to late afternoon/early evening so the kids could come with their families and get their free gifts from our Deaf Santa.

Discussion

- VDF: The profit was \$899. That's actually the most that we've raised for food in a really long time. This is because of the people that were involved with the food, the volunteers and the staff too.
- State Farm: State Farm has a matching funds program; so, please let me know if any of you have connections with State Farm.
 - Jamie: Jamie will check to see if she has a contact that she can connect with DHHSC.
- Building update:
 - As far as renovations, they finally finished today.
 - As far as the AC, we did plan to set it up like a gate but with the AC being on the roof, but the company said that's not recommended because the gate will be too heavy and could cause structural damage to the roof. We're going to have a discussion about how to better protect our air conditioning unit since the gate is not an option.

IX. Fundraising report – None

X. General Board comments – None

XI. Old Business – None

XII. New business

A) Election for President

- a) Steve reviewed the process with the board. There were no questions.
- b) Nominations: Patty nominated Nicole, and Nicole accepted the nomination. Anna seconded the nomination.

- c) Vote: Board members expressed that they have no preference for private or public voting. Anna, Christian, and Patty voted in favor for Nicole to become President. Jamie opposed. Nicole was officially voted president starting in January of 2025.
 - d) Gratitude: Nicole thanked the board members for their support and for Steve's guidance as a mentor. She also expressed her desire to do her best for the board and the community.
- B) Advice from Steve:
- a) Steve is saying we need to focus on recruiting more board members. We need to explain to them the benefits of giving back to DHHSC and what a rich opportunity it is.
 - b) The board's bylaws require that 51% of its members are Deaf so we do need to recruit individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.
 - c) Steve added that he will be transitioning access to Presidential files, etc., to Nicole.
- C) Jamie's resignation: Jamie is resigning because she has two jobs and they are consuming lots of her time, and she is not able to dedicate the necessary time to the board. Steve thanked Jamie for the time that she has invested in the board through the years.

XIII. Announcements

- A) Michelle reminded everyone about upcoming DHHSC events.
- B) Michelle again expressed gratitude for those that donated money to DHHSC and explained how the funding supports DHHSC and the services provided by DHHSC.

XIV. Closed session (if needed) – None

XV. Adjournment – 7:30pm