



## **DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES (January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016)**

- I. Call to Order – JS 6:11 PM
- II. Board Members Present: Jonathan Silva, VP (JS); Chad Catron, treasurer (CC); Melissa Sortwell (MS); Jill Nolen (JN); Justin Gaines (JG); Joshua Blanco (JB)  
Board Members Absent: Sue Stone, Secretary (SS) -excused  
DHHSC Staff Members Present: Michelle Bronson (MB), Executive Director,  
Interpreters: Pam Warkentin, Nikki Wolfe
- III. Visitor Comments (3 minutes per visitor) –
  - \*Skippy Sumner -Welcome to 2016, it has been awhile since the last meeting, and I do have some concerns in reviewing the bylaws. Jon has been here since 2009 and my understanding is that there is a 6 year limitation. There is a similar situation with Sue Stone. Also, Jill has been a member since 2012 and there is no indication of continuation, and Chad's is coming up soon. In addition, there is a replacement of staff in Merced and I was thinking of setting up flowchart and only having 1 headquarters. In historical info, there have been 7 replacements, which will not look good in terms of reputation for an organization.
  
  - \*JS In terms of bylaws, historically our Board has struggled with numbers and we did address those issues. We decided to continue the membership until someone is available due to need, since we didn't have enough manpower to fill those positions. We will have to look at the minutes, but everyone did get an extension and Sue's was extended due to her leave of absence, which we all agreed not to include as part of her term. If someone had applied during that time for her position, we could have considered that replacement. So until then, for my extension for example, when there is an eligible person for president i will step down. However, it's not a good idea for DHHSC for me to leave. In terms of Merced, I will invite Michelle to talk more about that, but it's tough and has always been an issue.
  
  - \*MB We just recently interviewed a person for the CSS position today, and we know that area is difficult as students tend to move on, but we are confident in this person's qualifications. Harvey reports to me as to what's going on and what the needs are, so we are hopeful in this person.

\*Skippy Sumner- The problem is that in the past, the structure has not been successful, so we need to look at that. Is it money or funding, or a part-time issue? Are we losing money in Merced? Would it be better to spend that money to keep a person here and help Merced?

\*MB I believe the structure works, but there is never a guarantee that a person will stay. The CSS coordinator is in charge of overseeing it, but Omar is gone so we will have a person here in Fresno to oversee it temporarily.

\*JS This is why we try to conduct workshops, but the attendance is low and we understand that the drive here is hard for those in Merced, and yes the turnover there is horrible, but remember that is not a reflection of the DHHSC structure.

#### IV. Approval of Agenda Items –

\* JS We need to move item B in the New Business section that says “New Board Members” to the President’s report. We need a motion for that. JG made a motion and JB seconds. Approved.

#### V. Approval of November Board Minutes –

\* MS I noticed that the approval of minutes last time says “November”, but should be “September”?

\*JS okay that will be corrected.

#### VI. President’s Report – N/A

#### VII. Vice-President’s Report –

\* JS Two new members have been invited to join the Board : Dr. Janice and Dr. Peter -they both accept. We are very excited to have these recent additions to the Board and we thank you both. We are interested in more Board member additions and do have people interested. Side note, Secretary Sue Stone has an excused absence and is not here tonight, so I will read her report:

We did review the bylaws and found a few issues. There will be a discussion of our plan of action for these issues -a total of 4, in which 2 were gray areas and we're not sure if compliance is met or not. The other 2 need amendment because DSS requirements say we need a meeting every month. As of now, we have one meeting with staff and one large meeting as well. Also, the bylaws state the Secretary is responsible for the interview process, but I feel that we limit the process if needing the Secretary there. Instead, we should allow one officer and one general Board member to be present. Whether the individuals are Deaf/Hearing, we need to allow greater flexibility. There is also a limit on the terms, and 2 people are technically not compliant -myself and Sue Stone. The Board already made a motion for me to extend my term for 1 year until I can be replaced or until I step down, and Sue's LOA did not count against her. We do have qualified individuals who need to be asked if they are interested in becoming Secretary. The Board is required to donate \$30/month, which we discussed to be changed to \$20/month and can only be monetary, not exchanged with time given.

As of right now, it is stated that the Secretary is primarily responsible for keeping track through interviews and records of potential members. Do we have thoughts on this? Does anybody not agree, or is it fine as written?

We could do this:

- Secretary maintains responsibility for record keeping
- There is one officer that accompanies and a general Board member for interviews
- At least one of the individuals present must be Deaf

If no discussion, then we will move forward to making a motion.

\*CC makes motion regarding the bullets above.

\*Dr. Janice seconds.

Now open for discussion...

\*JS The reason why we are discussing now and not via email is because we need to be FULLY compliant to this change. Email is not the best resource for communication as over half of our Board does not use English as their first language.

\*JG My personal preference would be to hold things off. I think that we are all feeling a bit overwhelmed by the matter because we don't have enough information to continue with this concept. I'm a little confused myself. I would like to focus more on the foundation first.

\*JS- If unclear, you are free to ask me anytime and I will be happy to update you. We currently have 9 people and do have room for more members on our Board. I believe that Sue can be involved in the process, yes, but for her to be the ONLY one involved isn't as strong as adding another individual to support one another. I am not satisfied with the way it is written now, it's not clear enough. Additionally, there is a sense of urgency, we are in the process of applying to grants, and they aren't always sure if we are fully compliant to their requirements. If a change isn't going to be made, then understand that this will continue to be just her responsibility. Verbiage for the new bylaws will be reviewed after the discussion and then submitted to be made accessible to everyone.

Motion is agreed upon and approved.

Officers serving as current Board members will be accepted by vote and must be done so by the Board of Directors and further requires a vote of 51%. Our time for election is typically in September, which has historically been an issue. So a change is in need. When an officer's term ends after 2 years, they automatically go back to being a general Board member unless they have been reelected. As of right now, we are not compliant with our current Secretary, however, nobody has expressed their interest in taking over the position. We need to formalize the process of how people are elected for officer positions. Chad is a unique situation where he was elected Treasurer right away when he was invited to join the Board. The position was open and he was

interested so we waived the bylaw at that time for him to be our treasurer. So Board members, are we willing to change the bylaw verbiage from narrow to more flexible on when positions are filled?

\*JG I would like to propose that we on a quarterly system check the progress of the officer.

\*CC So does that mean that we will be voting quarterly or when it happens to work out for us?

\*JB I agree with this concept because of the flexibility it provides to filling a position. We will have the freedom to vote on a quarterly basis and account for each officer according to their status.

\*CC So I think the idea is great to have that opportunity every month, if no vacancy of officers, then fine otherwise vote to reelect or not for the current officer if their time is up.

\*JS Yes, I like that as well. Now we have the issue of reelecting Sue Stone. Remember, she is not out of compliance. If I'm correct, I think she has 5 months and I believe we should allow her to finish her 3rd term. Also, we do have 2 people interested/qualified to take her place, so I need 2 motions.

Section 2 of bylaws, month of September changed for elections to become quarterly as needed.

\*Dr. Janice motions.

\*CC seconds.

\*JS all in favor, motion carries.

Our Secretary ...we did not go through the official process to reelect her, so I need a motion to keep the bylaws as they are but just to address her situation at this time. Therefore, we are compliant as of now until the formal process. We have really struggled with our numbers on this Board and we've had to adjust accordingly.

\*JB I move that we keep section 2, until the completion of her term.

\*Dr. Janice seconds.

\*JS all in favor, we are now compliant.

VIII. Secretary's Report – included in previous bullet, given by JS.

IX. Treasurer's Report – CC

\*JS I have a request, please include the Board's contribution to the private fund, thank you.

\*CC will do.

**November and December Financial Reports distributed and reviewed.**

Checking/savings balance	\$267,327.65	(As of December 31 <sup>st</sup> 2015)
Accounts receivable	\$390,730.28	
AR grants	\$190,896.14	(Outstanding invoices not yet collected)
AR interpreting	\$199,834.14	
Accounts payable	-\$14,873.98	
Board private fund balance	\$680	(Year to Date Balance)
Profit/loss	\$19,326.45	(For 6 mnths)
Grant awarded for 15-16	\$650,564.00	
Spent	\$301,870.71	(Up to 12/31/2015)
Unspent	\$348,693.29	(For 6 mnths remaining- ending 06/30/2016)

X. Executive Director's Report – Michelle Bronson

**Financial Updates:**

As we approached the end of 2015, we received some sizable donations, for which we are very appreciative. They donated \$500 or more, and we would like to publicly acknowledge our appreciation for their support of DHHSC:

- Martha Coletti
- Marty Pigott
- Benjamin Salisbury

I would also like to take this moment to thank Dana Butcher Associates and Channing Court for their \$1,100 donation to our ROCK program, in addition to donating office supplies, emergency aid kits, fire alarms, and ASL materials for families in need of resources. We are very appreciative of Dana Butcher Associates' support of DHHSC, especially because they selected DHHSC as the focus of their year-end giving. I would like to thank Ashton Hart for making this possible because she heard about us and shared DHHSC's information with her place of employment, which led to this wonderful surprise. She is also our social work intern for this semester and we are delighted to have her involved with the ROCK program.

We are applying for several grants right now, including:

- UW Tulare for the READY program, due Feb. 15<sup>th</sup>, which is this week.
- UW Merced for the D-Well program, due March 18<sup>th</sup>.
- First Five of Fresno for the READY program, due Feb. 10<sup>th</sup>.

We completed the Words in Hands grant program in our Salinas office last December and the final report has been submitted.

For the Salinas office, our Client Services Specialist is facilitating the READY program, funded by Monterey Peninsula Foundation. We are grateful for Monterey Peninsula Foundation's support, and Krystal Rios, our Salinas Client Services Specialist, is doing six hours a week for this grant.

DHHSC's major funding is from California Department of Social Services, Office of Deaf Access, and the RFP was due Dec. 15<sup>th</sup>. We submitted our bid on time and will find out if we are approved for funding on February 5<sup>th</sup>. We are keeping our fingers crossed!

### **Staffing Update:**

This is to inform you that Joshua Watson is no longer with DHHSC, effective Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>. We are hoping to fill the Merced Client Services Specialist position soon.

### **Staff Training:**

Last Friday for our January Staff Development Day, we had active shooter training provided by Survival Actions in Violent Encounters (S.A.V.E.) , which discussed ways we can best protect ourselves in case an active shooter comes to one of our offices. Because of potentially violent incidents we have had in our offices last year and with the San Bernardino CVRC shooting incident, we decided to have this kind of training so we can protect our staff and clients in our facilities. The trainers said less than 10% of businesses have this kind of training, so I am glad we secured this training because violent incidents will only continue to rise in the future, and I want my staff to know how to protect themselves.

At our January SDD, we also distributed a new Client Verification Form, which requires our staff to have a client or member of an organization sign off on the form to show proof that our staff was present and/or provided services. This will also assist us with data gathering and reports because we continue to struggle with getting complete and accurate statistics of the services we do provide. I just want to let you know in case people object to having to sign yet another form, but with funders becoming more strict with statistics documentation, this form will assist us with better tracking the number and kinds of services our staff provides.

### **Agency Events/Activities:**

On November 12<sup>th</sup>, we hosted a surprise retirement party for Kathy Yoshida Doerkson, which was a success. Thank you to everyone who came to make the evening special and memorable for her. We had 130 people present, and she was touched by the outpouring of love for her. To mark her retirement, we gave her an award from DHHSC recognizing her 28 years of service, a

signed frame with staff picture, and gifts. She was the first person to retire from DHHSC, and we wanted to show our appreciation for her service and to celebrate this special milestone.

Each of our four offices hosted a holiday event, and all were a success. For the outreach offices, they had approximately 50-65 people participating, and they all enjoyed a potluck lunch and games. For the Fresno Headquarters, we had 161 people participating, and we are grateful for all the donations we received to make a free luncheon possible for them. A big thank you to Sorenson Communications, Valley Deaf Seniors, and California Association of the Deaf, Central Valley for their sponsorships, which covered much of the luncheon expenses. We are also grateful for the many local restaurants that donated food to our luncheon and to Mountain Bear Fan Club for their donation of 50 stuffed animals. The goal of the holiday events was to show our local Deaf and Hard of Hearing Communities our appreciation for their support of and involvement with DHHSC. A big thank you to all the staff and volunteers who assisted with the holiday events and for everyone who came to enjoy the festivities.

#### XI. Committee Reports –

- a. Bylaws Committee – included in Secretary report, given by JS.
- b. Fundraising Committee –

\*JN Hello everyone. with the new year, theres not a lot of busy things happening at the moment i apologize, but coming up within the new year there will be a lot of events, get ready, and happy new year!

\*JS Please get together with HOH for a meeting, because perhaps we can get more involved with events to revitalize the Board’s contribution. The meeting could help align your combined efforts.

\*JN definitely.

- c. Grant Monitoring Committee – JN no report

#### XII. General Board Comments –

\*JS Those of you who are new- this is your chance, as well as anyone else....?

Well I have a few comments ...Dana Butcher Associations -those donations, I feel like maybe we should make more connections like that?

\*MB Well as I said, I met her through a class and she happened to have a Hard of Hearing son and we were able to take advantage. You never know where those various networking connections will take you.

\*JS Yes, and it is making me think about the end of the tax year and organizations feeling generous.

#### XIII. Unfinished Business –none

#### XIV. New Business –

\*JS United way of Tulare county funds was part of what led to our earlier discussion on changes to the bylaws. Here at DHHSC, our goals in our mission and vision statements were worked on recently. Code of ethics needs to be revisited, however, so I will email that out and hope to have

a response by tomorrow. I ask the Board to please read each of the statements and simply reply that you agree, many of you have already seen them, but we want to make the good practice by revisiting that.

XV. Public Comments (specific to agenda – 3 minutes per visitor)

\*Martha Coletti -The Christmas dinner was amazing, really packed and I met many individuals. I am concerned about the next event with all the people –maybe we'll want to think about that. We had 161 people.

\*JS We want to officially say thank you for your contribution to DHHSC, you and Reno have been long-standing members and supporters.

XVI. Announcements –

\*CC I want to announce that I got a job as an instructor at FCC teaching ASL1!\

XVII. Adjournment –7:48

**Date of Next Local Board Meeting: Tuesday March 8th 2016, 6-8 PM DHHSC – Fresno**

Submitted by Melissa Sortwell, on behalf of Sue Stone, DHHSC Secretary