



**DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 12, 2014**

I. Call to Order – **7:04** Amanda Sortwell (AS), president  
Board Members Present: Jonathan Silva , Vice-president (JS), Sue Stone, Secretary (SS), Jill Nolen (JN), Melissa Sortwell (MS), Tess Contreras (TC), Brianna Berg (BB)  
Board Members Absent: Chad Catron (CC), excused  
DHHSC Staff Members Present: Michelle Bronson (MB), Executive Director, Susan Coulter (SC);

Visitors: 9 visitors signed in and the list is filed with the minutes.

Interpreters: Pam Warkentin and Nikki Wolfe

- II. Public Comments (3 minutes per visitor) – none
- III. Approval of Agenda Items – approved by consent
- IV. Approval of **January** Board Minutes – with some name spelling corrections
- V. President’s Report – AS
  - 1) At the university gave a short presentation on early intervention on how it can make a difference, very inspiring. EHDI group: went to conference last year in Arizona and still working on incorporating that into services DHHSC provides. It is mostly focused on infants. Many states have a coordinator. Here the hospitals are connected with EPU, coordinated by Darla. There are struggles around sharing of information.
  - 2) VRI workshop was February 1 but only 3 people attended. We plan a follow up workshop to get more information about community concerns. Please attend, even interpreters or anyone who has had experience with VRI, do not have to be Deaf.
- VI. Vice-President’s Report – JS  
 We have a Board of 8 now: 5 D/HH, 3 hearing, so we can take one more hearing right now. Excited for GALA.
- VII. Secretary’s Report – SS—no report
- VIII. Treasurer’s Report –  
**January** Financial Report distributed.

Checking/savings balance	\$275,934
Account receivable total	\$357,463
AR grants	\$229,655
AR interpreting	\$127,808
Accounts payable	\$-3,182
Board private fund balance	\$2,170
Profit/loss	\$43,481

Grant from DSS	\$650,564
Spent	\$384,284
Unspent	\$266,279

## IX. Executive Director's Report – MB

### Funding:

I am sorry to share Starbucks turned down our grant request to fund YES! through their Youth Leadership Grant. The reason cited was because they receive many grant requests, and they select organizations that closely align with their grant program guidelines and fall within their priority geographic regions. We will continue searching for more grants.

Because we just had to submit a letter of intent to United Way Merced to be able to apply for grants, we changed the D-Well program to \$WIM: Spending and Saving With-In Means. Our Merced D/HH community members have been requesting different workshops and are now satisfied with health and safety-related workshops. Hence, we would like to shift our focus onto financial stability, which falls under one of UW Merced's areas of focus. The goal of the \$WIM program is to provide information, resources, and strategies on how to budget wisely and save money whenever and wherever possible, which is tough for many of our clients on SSI/SSA/SSDI.

### Program Updates:

DOR approved our ILS (Independent living skills) soft-skills curriculum on Jan. 10<sup>th</sup> and we were officially set to start providing ILS classes on Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>. We now have one student and hope to receive more referrals. This is a new fee-for-services program we now offer under DOR, and the goal of this program is to provide D/HH DOR consumers with a knowledge and understanding of soft skills and their importance in the workplace. Many soft skills are learned through incidental learning, but without sufficient language in the home, many D/HH individuals miss these subtle cues. Our ILS class provides direct instruction on soft skills, what they are, and how to properly utilize them to boost the DOR consumers' job-readiness and job opportunities.

### Training Updates:

Some of our staff attended Deaf Community Cultural Wealth workshop presented by Dr. Flavia Fletcher on January 25<sup>th</sup> and the information provided was both excellent and applicable to the community we serve. One of the many important points made was how interpreters, as hearing allies, can work towards shifting the power balance between D/HH clients and hearing individuals who are ignorant about Deaf Culture and communication needs. For example, because the interpreters are hearing themselves but understand the D/HH perspective, the interpreters can provide needed information and clarification whenever appropriate. Because D/HH individuals do not fit under society's norms as a hearing male heterosexual Caucasian who has money, interpreters can serve as important allies in ensuring that the D/HH have a voice and a say in making decisions. As you all know, interpreters and the D/HH have a symbiotic relationship, and together, "power and control" can be more evenly balanced.

Speaking of power and control, three of our staff, Everett, Rochelle, and Shelley, provided a powerful DV/SV workshop for our February SDD. They provided history and resources on DV/SV and explained DeafHope's "Power and Control" wheel, which include descriptions of physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, spiritual, immigration, and financial abuse. We also had to do an activity developed by ADWAS, whereby we drew a card with a description of a specific individual with a DV/SV story, and we had to make choices, which would then tell us which choice/consequence card to choose based on our choice. For example, my card stated that I was a Vietnamese woman who moved to America to open a flower shop. I married an American man who eventually started controlling my finances and abusing both me and my son. Based on my choices, I then had to decide whether to go to my clergy or family and friends, CPS

or the police, court or find a job, etc. etc. This activity was powerful and showed us how things can be extremely difficult and frustrating for DV clients and not simply fixed with a phone call to the police. I would like to thank those three for sharing the training they received from DeafHope that they attended last fall and for sharing their experiences. As you know training is important to me and it benefits all of us when we each bring back information we've learned and gathered from workshops/seminars we attend.

#### Staffing Updates:

I am sad to share that Stacy Constantino is no longer with us. We just posted the Information & Referral Specialist/Volunteer Coordinator position today. Please encourage interested persons to apply. I would like to thank Nat Strobel for being our temp front desk person and our other volunteers for assisting whenever needed until the position is filled.

#### Event Updates:

As you all may know, our DHHSC staff have been very busy preparing for our upcoming 30<sup>th</sup> Gala that will take place on April 5, 2014, less than two months away. I have contacted many local business, community, and school partners to see if they would like to contribute a theme basket for the silent auction, and I am thrilled to share that many partners will donate different theme baskets. I feel very honored and blessed to have such community support, and it will be fun and exciting for our Gala attendees to bid on the many beautiful baskets that we will have available at the event. We are also honored to have quite a few Gala sponsors, including Sorenson Communications, Purple Communications, Central Valley Mayors' Committee, AT&T, and The Grand 1401. I am still contacting potential sponsors, and it is so heartening to see such a strong support for DHHSC. I would like to thank all donors and sponsors for their support, especially as we celebrate 30 years of service.

#### X. Committee Reports

- a. Bylaws Committee – SS—no report
- b. Fundraising Committee – JN Was in cahoots with a couple of restaurants mid-January then their approval came too late for me to advertise for it. They've (Chili's) agreed to allow me to look back at our community calendar and reschedule with them. Once I know the date I will be sure to share via community email & Facebook.
- c. Grant Monitoring Committee – JN Our grants look great thus far. The monies look to be serving our community well. I just wish I could see it for myself rather than just on the paper/spreadsheet that has been made available to me.

#### XI. General Board Comments – none

#### XII. Unfinished Business

A. VRI: only 3 people showed up at the workshop February 1, so we will have another workshop because many people wanted more information about VRI. JS relayed a story told him by a deaf man who spent 3 days in the hospital at CRMC with no interpreter. They finally brought in the VRI but the patient could not understand the interpreter on it, who then proceeded to get mad at the patient. He thought maybe the interpreter was from the East Coast. The patient told them he could not understand the interpreter but they continued to use the same interpreter.

B. GALA: SS is working on silent auction baskets on behalf of the Board. Board members have been asked to serve on committees. MB clarified what formal dress means: like you would dress for a very fancy wedding. Men in suits, do not have to be tuxes.

C. Rummage sale: lots of conflicts, especially with monthly meetings- SC will look at the schedule and let us know.

#### XIII. New Business

A. Board meeting time/date change: tabled, need to clarify w/interpreters.

- B. Board treasure: CC is interested, but wanted AS to tell everyone that he can't be here because he is in class. Is interested in being Board treasurer and willing to learn. Has met with Paul Barnett. M/S/P
  - C. Public presentation on Microaggression (AS), with particular attention on D/HH community.
  - D. Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) conference AS went to last year is continuing to provide insight into our D/HH community here. D/HH babies need role models; this is beneficial in the hospital setting also. Here they are referred to EPU, but DHHSC needs to be sure that we are also recipients of the referrals
  - E. D-WELL (health and safety) has run its course so changing focus to \$WIM (finances). MB requesting change in grant focus. M/S/P
- XIV. Public Comments (specific to agenda – 3 minutes per visitor) –James McGuire re VRI has not experienced it but it would be great to borrow it and have it here and may help solicit comments.
- XV. Announcements – SC
- A. March 22 10-2 @ DHHSC. Martha's Vineyard in the Valley, will make a new blog for posting
  - B. Women's conference 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday in May.
  - C. First ever Men's conference June 7.
  - D. Wednesday @ FSU, RWD will be part of Fresno Talks, nominated by a student
  - E. 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary GALA, Saturday April 5, 5-11PM @ the Grand downtown. \$60/person, \$100/couple. Formal dress.
- XVI. Adjournment – 8:42

**Date of Next Local Board Meeting: Tuesday, April 8 6-7:30 PM @ DHHSC – Fresno**

Submitted by Sue Stone, DHHSC Secretary