



**DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**October 11, 2011**

- I. Call to Order – **6:33 pm** Rosemary W. Diaz presiding  
Board Members Present: Rosemary W. Diaz, President (RWD), Ronald Reagan, Vice-President (RR), Jonathan Silva, Treasurer (JS), Sue Stone, Secretary (SS), John Eberwein (JE), Laura Casuga (LC), Beatrice Bejar (BB)  
Board Members Absent: none  
DHHSC Staff Members Present: Michelle Bronson (MB)  
Honorary board Members: Martha and Reno Coletti  
Visitors:  
Interpreters: Nikki Wolfe, Razanda Munyaradzi
- II. Public Comments (3 minutes per visitor) – none
- III. Approval of Agenda Items – approved by consent
- IV. Approval of **September** Board Minutes – M/S/P with one change: in Fundraising Committee report fundraising committee is now a committee of one (not zero)
- V. President's Report – RWD
1. ACT meeting will be on October 18 @4pm @ KMPH for tour. Also planning a booth at VDF to collect feedback on captioning both written and video comments. I will be resigning as chair of this committee. Looking to the Board for another rep - they are working on finding new chairpersons to co-chair the committee. It will continue with monthly meetings for a few more months then hopefully scale down to every other month then quarterly. I will continue attending meetings but not chairing. How would the Board like the report submitted? Beatrice expressed interest in this committee.
  2. Board recruitment, needs to continue to happen at every event we go to. Please do consider non-traditional candidates.
  3. Concern about lack of leadership - getting the community energized again set up a community meeting/summit end of January to develop leadership. Board agreed we should facilitate this.
  4. Planning for Valley Deaf Festival – Board is responsible for food and kitchen. Keep menu simple. Want to see the physical layout and have a better plan. Passing out a paper to find out what hours you will be there and then will set up a schedule to ensure everyone gets an hour break to enjoy the festival. We can email about food ideas.
  5. I am working with FUSD and parents to set up an ASL High School at Hoover HS, to teach ASL to high school students for their language requirement, and also as an anti-bullying effort. There are many Deaf students and there are significant problems between Deaf and hearing students. BB is willing to represent the Board at the FUSD Board meeting if necessary.
- VI. Vice-President's Report – RR no report
- VII. Secretary's Report – SS no report
- VIII. Treasurer's Report – JS
- September** Financial Report distributed but not presented. Copies available for visitors as well. Next presented report will be in December.

Checking/savings balance	\$387,764
Accounts Receivable total	\$326,016
AR grants	\$219,702
AR interpreting	\$106,314
Accounts payable	\$2,849
Mortgage payable	\$162,492
Board private fund balance	\$1,127
Profit/loss	(\$15,523)
DSS grant 2011-12	\$650,564
Spent	<u>-\$168,528</u>
Balance	\$482,036

IX. Executive Director's Report – Michelle Bronson

A. Important to follow the treasurer's report. We have fewer PT staff and more FT, so more expense due to paying benefits. We are trying to provide stability for the agency by hiring more FT staff.

B. Last month, Sept. 11-15, I attended Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) conference focusing on inclusion of people with disabilities in emergency planning. More than 500 people applied, and our Fresno team was among those who were selected to attend. We were one of the four teams from California, and we were really proud of our collaborative team efforts. Others who attended the conference noticed how we already knew and worked well with each other, and we learned much at the conference that we plan to implement within our local community. We are already working on local projects to improve the City of Fresno's emergency planning, especially for people with disabilities and our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community. We want to apply for a grant to facilitate this process. For example, next Monday, October 17th from 1-3 p.m., we will have a Disability Advisory Commission (DAC) public meeting here at DHHSC. We invite the public to attend and share feedback on how to include people with disabilities at our local level. We strongly encourage our Deaf and Hard of Hearing Community to attend so our members can share what is still needed, such as interpreting live news and visual ways to share important information during emergencies. In addition, two weeks ago, Shannon Simonelli and I met with three local interpreters, one of whom is Kathy, who have already undergone specific training for emergency interpreting with the goal of setting up a local Interpreter Strike Team. This facilitates a smoother process for the City of Fresno to know which interpreters to contact should an emergency arise, and to get a Memo of Understanding with DHHSC set in place. We will also be incorporating more emergency planning in our DHHSC workshops so we can better understand what to do to keep ourselves safe.

B. Last month DAC elected me as chair, and I feel honored and privileged to serve. I will do my best in that position, and also to ensure that the needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing are included.

C. I appreciate staff, community members, and students who worked and attended our Deaf Awareness Week (DAW) events in September. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to come. Because of potential conflicts with class times, I plan to coordinate with teachers when planning next year's events. I did notice a decline in numbers of those who attended, and I cannot say for certain if it was due to day and time of event, cost of event, or type

of events. Hence, I welcome feedback from our community as to what they would like to see offered during DAW. I am also thinking of having only three events instead of an event each night during the week, and having those three events be interactive, such as games centering on Deaf Culture, and perhaps a Deaf Comedy night. We want to keep DAW fun for all involved, and we welcome your input.

D. Department of Social Services' visit on Sept. 21st was very positive. Our offices looked beautiful, and I was so proud of everyone. I would like to thank staff for being organized and prepared for Melanie's visit. The feedback we received was very positive, such as having a very friendly staff, and we will continue improving as an agency.

E. On Sept. 26th, I attended a Parent Resources Committee meeting in Sacramento, per Nancy Sager's request, and it was a very positive meeting. The goal is for the state of California to develop a resource guide for parents of D/HH babies and children. We are looking at Colorado's guide and trying to develop one for our own state. Apparently, this is the third attempt to develop such a guide because the previous two committees disbanded due to political differences between those who support oralism and those who support ASL. However, this time we appear to be moving forward because of recent strides in recognizing ASL/English and English (spoken only) as both language opportunities. We are able to agree on certain classifications, but we just started on the process, so we will see how it goes. I am hopeful we will complete the guide as one is much needed, and I would like to see deaf agencies, such as DHHSC, included in the guide as valuable resources for parents of the D/HH. We are supposed to meet again this month, and date is yet to be determined.

F. On Oct. 3rd, I attended a Deaf Education teleconference at FSU, and we discussed what changes we would like to see on the current individualized educational plan (IEP) form, particularly the area of social and special considerations for the D/HH child. We are also seeking ways in which professionals throughout California can collaborate and maximize resources. In addition, because we do not have a residential school for the Deaf in the Valley, we'd like to find ways for FSU, DHHSC, and local school districts to combine resources for families of D/HH children.

G. Kathy and I are involved with the Silent Sleigh Committee, and we are gearing up for the 25th Anniversary event, which will be in early December. It's amazing how time flies, and we would love to have volunteers from our community. Please let me know if you are interested, and we definitely need volunteers as we will have many stations consisting of games and activities. This is also a wonderful opportunity to serve as positive D/HH role models for D/HH children.

H. I would also like to thank Purple for being one of our proud sponsors of VDF, which will be on November 19th. Thank you Purple Communications!

X. Operations Director's Report – Jesse Lewis (JL)

A. The YES program "Youth Employment Services" where we prepare D/HH teens for future employment is off to a good start. I feel excited about this year ahead and that we will be successful.

B. Visalia is noticing an increase in numbers. Recently when I've walked into the office during a workshop, it has been crowded as I weave my way to my office. We are thinking that we may need to move to a larger office in 2012. If so we will seek approval from the Board, DOR, and DSS. Possibly a move in February would be good.

C. Recently, we finished our annual End of Year report to DSS. I feel good about how DHHSC has done this past year. However, I'd like to see us increase our numbers. Currently about 5% of our services are to children. My personal goal is to see that number increase to 10%, 20%, or even 30% eventually.

D. There is a link on the website for donations.

E. There are only 30 staff on average at DHHSC, but lots of community members. We need all of you involved. Any time you feel frustrated with lack of communication, you can be a part of our effort to educate the community. Teach people a few signs or encourage them to write notes, whatever your communication preference is. You have power and can contribute to our effort on a daily basis.

F. Right now I'm working on developing several grants, so you will see requests for approval on these soon. Just want to ensure that you're aware we are indeed working on finding more funds for new programs.

G. Our internet here is still a problem and is very slow. We've switched to AT&T but it is not good enough yet, and we're working on resolving this. As a result, our advisory councils (AC) can't yet meet on Videophones. Hopefully this will be resolved soon. May require overhaul on the server.

After JL's report the Board discussed what to do about the AC as bylaws call for meetings 6 times/year and they are not able to occur yet. Potential solutions will be presented to JL.

XI. Committee Reports –

- a. Personnel Committee – RWD—no report
- b. Bylaws Committee – SS—no report
- c. Fundraising Committee – JS Wonders of the Animal Kingdom is scheduled for December. Also home town buffet, which offers 50% off with a donation to DHHSC, is a great opportunity for fundraising. May schedule this for January or February. There are many interpreting interns from FSU. JS recommends that the Board have a fundraiser for them. RWD knows an interpreter who could set up a golf tournament for a fundraiser and volunteered JE for coordinating this event.
- d. Grant Monitoring Committee – RWD This looks good, but notes that some information is missing.

XII. General Board Comments – RR California pizza kitchen for fundraising up to 20% RWD sweet tomatoes maybe about 30 people, was fun; JS leadership summit talking about DHHSC Board responsibility worried about manpower on the Board for that, wants to focus instead on FUSD. ACT--fine for the Board to continue to do that. Recommend DHHSC staff for the leadership summit.

XIII. Unfinished Business – none

XIV. New Business –

**A.** Community comments action items:

1. JS discussed movie captions. RR Hanford is ahead of Fresno.
2. A need was expressed for interpreters for AA meetings. BB stated that it has been difficult for her to find AA meetings in Merced with ASL interpretation. RWD stated that there are at least 10 in Fresno every week.
3. A monthly social @ John's incredible pizza was suggested. RWD thinks probably not viable monthly, but suggested that we start with one event as a board fundraiser and if there is a good turnout we can hand it over to Fresno Deaf Events and see if they would like to keep it as a monthly or quarterly event.
4. Requests re health fair, vaccinations, emergency preparedness, education re elder abuse: Susan will utilize PEP program for that.
5. LC "We started an ASL club this year, and we have about 30-40 students every week. We had Paul Ogden as our first guest speaker today, and he brought his service dog, Bree. The kids loved it. They're all really having a lot of fun and becoming excited about learning sign language and learning about the deaf community."

**B.** Grant requests

1. Komen Breast Cancer \$37,000 grant as much as \$40,000, may add Visalia M/S/P
  2. Deaf Kids Need Love grant (LOVE = Language Opportunities and Visual Education) with support from first 5 and Bank of Sierra. The deaf kid kits would include books, DVDs, and other resources in book bags for families with deaf kids, and a Public Service Announcement video that would be about deaf kids needing communication to succeed. M/S/P
- XV. Public Comments (specific to agenda – 3 minutes per visitor) –Martha Coletti: possible virus from DHHSC on email, Michelle reassured her that this is not the case—DHHSC is well-protected from viruses.
- XVI. Announcements –none
- XVII. Adjournment – **8:27 pm**

**Date of Next Local Board Meeting: November 8 2011 @ DHHSC – Fresno**

Draft submitted by Sue Stone, DHHSC Secretary