



DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES December 13, 2011

- I. Call to Order – **6:32 p.m.** Rosemary W. Diaz presiding
Board Members Present: Rosemary W. Diaz, President (RWD), Jonathan Silva, Treasurer (JS), Sue Stone, Secretary (SS), John Eberwein (JE), Laura Casuga (LC),
Board Members Absent: Beatrice Bejar (BB) excused, Ronald Reagan, Vice-President (RR) excused
DHHSC Staff Members Present: Michelle Bronson (MB), Executive Director, Jesse Lewis (JL), Operations Director
Visitors: Marilyn McCallon
Interpreters: Nikki Wolfe, Pam Warkentin
- II. Public Comments (3 minutes per visitor) – none
- III. Approval of Agenda Items – added item XIV c. CVRS contract M/S/P
- IV. Approval of **November** Board Minutes – will add a note to indicate that the October treasurer's report is incorrect, and include the corrected report in this month's minutes. M/S/P with corrections
- V. President's Report – RWD
- A. Michelle and I met with a Board member of the Fresno County Board of Education as well as principal of Hoover High School along with other administrators in the district and found that they are planning to implement an ASL High School starting in the Academic Year of 2013/2014. This will create a new employment opportunity for a Deaf instructor to be on the campus and will be great to allow for more peers for our Deaf students as well as orient hearing students to possible future careers working within the Deaf Community. This is very exciting! ASL will be offered as a foreign language credit for two years for all HS students (hearing and Deaf) to be eligible to enroll.
- B. Thank you everyone for a successful Valley Deaf Festival. The Board really pulled together as a team and did a great job in the kitchen with food sales and service.
- C. The leadership summit will take place January 21 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and include lunch. Michelle and I are still working on the details.
- D. The goal for 12 board members in 2012 is still on. We have several people who have contacted me as well as Michelle and/or Jesse with interest in applying for the board. This includes both Deaf and hearing individuals. A full 12 in 2012 looks like it may very well be possible. Encourage interested individuals to submit their applications and then Ron and I will follow up with board interviews.
- VI. Vice-President's Report – RR absent
- VII. Secretary's Report – SS no report
- VIII. Treasurer's Report – JS
November Financial Report distributed and reviewed. Note that 3 months reported but are in previous minutes.

	October (corrected)	November
Checking/savings balance	\$406,764	\$461,945
Accounts receivable total	\$317,883	\$214,708
AR grants	\$209,322	\$105,968
AR interpreting	\$108,560	\$108,739
Accounts payable	\$3,593	\$8,635
Mortgage payable	\$155,731	\$151,396
Board private fund balance	\$1,361	\$2,604
P/L overall	(\$5,829)	(\$32,769)
DSS grant for 11/12	\$650,564	\$650,564
Grant spent	\$214,262	\$267,899
Grant unspent	\$436,301	\$382,664

VDF: \$4,931.70 profit!

JS noted that the negative P/L is similar to the trend for last year. We have plenty of money in reserve.

IX. Executive Director's Report – Michelle Bronson

A. During the month of November, Jesse and I, along with the management team, and two board members met with Nancy Delich, a Deaf Ph.D. student from Washington. As part of her doctoral project, she is consulting with us on how to become a better and more efficient agency. We want to grow as professionals and to see DHHSC thrive. She will work with us through the end of April, and she is now compiling feedback that we provided her during our Nov. 15th meeting. She guided us through the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats [SWOT] that we face here at DHHSC, and this analysis will lead to new solutions and approaches. She will meet with us again in January.

B. We recently hosted our 23rd Annual Valley Deaf Festival on Nov. 19th and it was a huge success! We all had fun, and we had more than 700 people attend, which was amazing. We very much appreciate everyone's hard work, and a big thank you to Board, staff, and volunteers. VDF would not have happened if not for you. Thank you! Feedback was very positive, including smiling staff, fun entertainment, games, friendly staff and board, Wayne Boring and his ship, etc. The pirate theme was great, and I look forward to what theme staff will decide for next year's VDF.

C. We just celebrated Silent Sleigh's 25th Anniversary last Wednesday, and it was a fun event. DHHSC was in charge of creating 25 games to commemorate 25 years of Silent Sleigh, and volunteers did an amazing job putting together the games. Again, a big thank you to staff and volunteers who assisted with the event preparations, including our lovely Kathy as Mrs. Claus. Jason Jackson was a great Santa Claus. Volunteers are such a crucial part of our agency, and they provide much-needed help with projects for which staff do not have time. We are thankful for everyone's time and willingness to pitch in and assist where needed. It was fun seeing delighted expressions on children's faces, especially when they see our local signing Santa. Kathy and I also enjoyed collaborating with the Silent Sleigh committee and school districts to host this longstanding tradition. There were about 200 children there.

D. We recently hired April Davies as our part-time interpreter. We are very glad to have her back.

E. Stacy Constantino, our Information and Referral Specialist/Volunteer Coordinator, is currently on leave, and Amanda Soto is our temp person until Stacy returns.

F. Jesse and I are currently working on our Komen grant that is due this Friday. We will keep you posted! This is our 5th year and we are asking for \$50,000.

X. Operations Director's Report – JL

A. Recently I had the opportunity to participate with two groups that focus on disability issues in Visalia and Tulare County. I attended a meeting of the City of Visalia Disability Advocacy Committee for the first time. The focus of discussion was about developing a brochure to raise awareness about the DAC and disability issues. My contribution to the discussion focused on making sure that D/HH are included in this, that they consult with DHHSC on what is included, and I also made a point that just an informational brochure alone isn't always enough- we should make the brochure useful in other ways such as including information on ADA law and including contacts for where people can call if they face discrimination.

B. On another date I joined a very productive Disability Advocacy Team, which is lead by the local agency RICV (Resources for Independence in the Central Valley). They had picked transportation for their current focus, mostly related to wheelchair issues. There was a lot of discussion about how older busses are not as accessible as the newer busses. My suggestion to the group was that perhaps the bus schedule could list which busses are more "wheelchair-friendly" because of being newer. As far as our needs in the D/HH community, I only had two ideas: one is that the phone number that riders call should be prepared to take calls from either TTY or relay calls. The other idea is that bus drivers could be given simple lessons in ASL vocabulary, enough to communicate with bus riders about simple questions. Any other suggestions would be welcome, and I can bring it up with the team.

C. A few updates about outreach offices, for those of you who don't get the chance to visit:

Visalia: We have increased workshops with a variety of topics and look forward to making this a regular program similar to what Fresno does. We have also been offering ASL classes for free to families who have deaf family members. Attendance has been going up and down. We do face an interesting challenge where specific topics are requested and then the people who request them do not attend. We are trying to find a solution to this. On a happy note, our annual holiday party was a great success. People enjoyed the food, the fun games, the funny skit we had, and a good social time.

Salinas: That office continues to be busy and I can see the need for more staff hours when that is possible. We will be applying for a grant in early 2012. We will contact the board for specific approval when we have a specific plan. I also want to mention Salinas had their best holiday party in years, with over 100 attendees having a great time.

Merced: Like the other offices, Merced is keeping busy and doing great. Our Merced grant programs are doing well and all staff is learning to collaborate successfully. Their holiday party is on December 22, from 11am to 4pm, so please attend!

RWD stressed the need to hire Deaf people—seems like less this year.

XI. Committee Reports –

A. Bylaws Committee – SS no report

B. Fundraising Committee – JS

For the last several months I have tried to set up a number of events. Wonders of the Animal Kingdom lost critical support from a sponsor. I finally found a replacement sponsor who will fully sponsor the event, but not until June. I suggest a 2-day event for better attendance: one day with interpreters and one day focused on the hearing community without interpreters. Local radio stations are willing to advertise. I need at least 10 volunteers for an ad hoc committee, subcommittee of the volunteer

committee. We need another sub-committee for on-going events. I would like to get advanced ASL students involved. I am also working on a golf event for February or March. I will coordinate with other events. I want to coordinate the leadership summit with a hometown buffet fundraiser on January 21. Last month I announced a goal of setting up theater for on-going fundraising opportunities--working with various skits such as Romeo and Juliet, Wizard of Oz, and learn those scripts and offer a performance on an on-going basis at DHHSC. This will also serve to educate people about the Deaf community. I have volunteers, but need actors and back-stage help.

C. Grant Monitoring Committee – RWD The grant looks good. DHHSC is on track with goals and I applaud the staff.

XII. General Board Comments – none

XIII. Unfinished Business

A. Auditor report

Last month report. Refinancing meeting will be a special meeting. MB Paul contacted B of A re refinancing. Still waiting to hear about renegotiating the penalties. JS Note that reduction of monthly payment may override penalties.

B. Employment challenges face by Deaf community

RR expressed concern and MB suggested an open forum re what job opportunities are out there. Young people are very frustrated looking for jobs. CLAST program-- people are leaving—why? Many do not want additional training and want a job today. This is short-term. Lisa Painter (CLAST program) suggested motivational speakers and pizza parties to draw people in. Students like the program. Dropping people from the program is not effective, so now offering make-up. To qualify must be a D.O.R. client so need referral from D.O.R. We need to empower the community. JS moved that at February board meeting have a community forum related to employment for Deaf community in place of new and old business. M/S/P. Leadership summit is being held due to a crisis of leadership in the Deaf community.

C. PSA for Deaf kids need L.O.V.E.

This PSA focuses on the importance of language for D/HH children. It emphasizes ASL, but not as a sole means of communication. JL will rework ad to show that a variety of communication strategies can be used, even more than one at a time. Possible video.

XIV. New Business –

A. MB and her husband are going to DCARA's (Deaf Counseling Advocacy and Referral Agency) 50th anniversary gala in Oakland on March 24. This is paid for by the general fund. A motion was made for the Board to sponsor a Board member. M/S/P Several people expressed interest. Who goes will be decided through email.

B. JL requested a change of meeting day and time, perhaps Wednesday, perhaps from 3-5 to get better community attendance. JS thinks evening time still best for community attendance and for Board members who work. We will discuss via email with RR and BB.

C. MB requesting approval for a new contract with CVRC (Central Valley Regional Center) which serves clients who are developmentally delayed. This is a fee for service contract to provide assistance with independent living skills. M/S/P

XIV. Public Comments (specific to agenda – 3 minutes per visitor) –Marilyn commends ASL high school and wonders if it will require deaf students to take ASL. It will provide work ethic presentations and role models. Students today do not have that and there is a big need. Re video tape PSA, whenever she sees children signing she feels very moved. She

wants to see more deaf children signing and communicating. We need to get rid of red tape that delays CLAST enrollment. Many people do not know what happens in the Board meetings. We need community education re the Board. There are pros and cons to moving the meeting time. Nighttime is hard for seniors due to driving and missing TV shows.

MB Y.E.S. program brings role models to individuals in the high school setting.

Razonda suggested once/qtr having board meeting in Merced or Visalia.

She also asked us to consider what does D.O.R do and offer that can be replicated or duplicated through a grant?

XV. Announcements –

A. Holiday luncheon next Thursday, December 22 from 12-3 @ DHHSC. It is free.

XVI. Adjournment – **8:30 p.m.**

Date of Next Local Board Meeting: Tuesday January 10, 2012 @ DHHSC – Fresno at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by Sue Stone, DHHSC Secretary