



DHHSC BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, September 13, 2022
7 PM

- I. Call to Order –
 - A) Starting time: 7:02 PM
 - B) Board Members Present: Steve Longo, Nicole Hurt, Anna Virnig, Jaime Johnson-Clay, Jessica Lozano-Delgado, Christian Gentile, and Patty Killough.
- II. Approval of Agenda Items
 - A) Motion to approve the agenda: Carried.
- III. Approval of May Board Minutes.
 - A) Motion to approve the agenda: Carried.
- IV. Auditor's Report- NONE
- V. President's Report- Steve Longo
 1. President's Report Since the last meeting in May with the addition of two new Board members, we had nice weather up to the end of June when we experienced record high heat climate and several wildfires brewing in California so I hope everyone is safe and cool. Now that the summer's nearly over, time to get the ball rolling on a few matters such as Board Policies and Procedures, Board Orientation package lastly but not least – Valley Deaf Festival. We had Community comments gathering last month at DHHSC for the first time in 2 years because of the pandemic. Regardless of small turnout, we got a lot covered so please check DHHSC's YouTube link where the big topic was brought up regarding VRI. With thanks to Michelle who provided the VRI guidelines from DRC (Disability Rights California) on when not to use VRI in these settings:

- Childbirth
- Children

- Deaf Plus
- DeafBlind
- Limited mobility, such as not being able to move the neck or body.

I hope to get more on guidelines once it's available. While on the subject of guidelines, I believe there should be clarification on when to and not to employ CDI because I haven't seen guidelines on it and if there's none, we need to develop one. I suggest we develop a guideline on when to use Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDI)s so money is spent wisely while also providing access to all participants at the DHHSC Board Meetings. Currently, the cost for four interpreters for a two-hour meeting is estimated at \$500 or less. That cost adds up to an average of \$2,000 per year unless additional meetings are arranged or the meeting goes overtime. Because DHHSC is an of, by, and for the Deaf agency, it is generally expected that the Board members should be allowed to sign for themselves and be pinned or spotlighted at virtual meetings. Two certified interpreters should suffice in meeting the overall communication needs of our members who do not sign or need assistance from an interpreter to clarify a message in ASL. They can also be pinned or spotlighted when needed. Proper spotlighting and pinning of the person/interpreter signing will allow deaf/blind members to have a closeup view of the person for easier tracking of communication during meetings. A person could be appointed to handle this so the meeting is run smoothly for all. Michelle suggested to have Taco food truck at VDC which would lighten the load of our shoulders so we're working on details. I have sent out the VDF flyers to all ASL teachers at FCC to distribute to their students. This is our first since the pandemic (3 years ago) so hope to generate a good crowd! I was at the festival in France two months ago and the place was crowded so it looks like Deaf people are eager to get back to the social scene! Don't forget to send an email to the Board: Board@dhhsc.org with suggestions/concerns or interest in applying for the Board. It will be treated with confidentiality and not be shared with anyone else if considered sensitive. Dhhsclly yours, Steve

VI. Vice President's report- Nicole Hurt

1. Hello everyone! Wow this summer came and went! I cannot believe that we are entering fall and hopefully the weather will adjust accordingly and the cooler temps soon will come! I know that we recently had community comments in person at Fresno Headquarters and I was really hoping that I could make it but was still feeling ill on that day and did not want to put anyone at risk. I was so disappointed that I was not able to attend.

Thankfully we could record it on the video and because of my temporary secretary position, I was required to take notes of this meeting. I spent last week watching the whole meeting and had to rewind few times and taking notes. This did help me to really listen to what everyone was expressing. WOW it was refreshing to see more people came and commented this year than last. It gave me a confirmation that our community DO have things to say and also seem to be more comfortable expressing this year knowing that we the board are much more present and listen to them. We DO listen and we DO want to tackle the issues and try to find ways to resolve them or to improve. So the community comments are very much appreciated because it is helpful to understand what the community perspective is and what their needs are. Even some of the board did come back to me with reports or notes they have taken by taking to you. That shows me that they do care and want to do things for our community. As Michelle mentioned at the community comments meeting, we the board decided on serving tacos this year for VDF. I am excited about VDF finally happening physically this year mostly because I can attend in person and will be able to meet people in the community and be present if anyone want to talk. To get a feeling of the community out there. That is something we cannot do over the Zoom or online. It is hard to feel connected between the community, the agency, and the board when there is no physical presence. So I do feel that it is extremely important to have physical presence and be involved as a board member. I also learned from the community comments that next year will be 40th anniversary for DHHSC. WOW! What a huge milestone. We should celebrate! I am looking forward to event planning once the VDF is out of way. I am so proud and excited for DHHSC to serve central California soon to be 40 years! I did use DHHSC services when I was a child in particular for advocacy and getting resources that I need. I am grateful for this agency and can't imagine what our deaf and hard of hearing community would be like without having this agency. It have helped so many people including myself. So in a response to our community with their comments, DHHSC DO have resources and provide advocacy, they WILL work alongside with you. I did wish I was able to attend workshop after the meeting, it sound like it would be really beneficial for us. I do hope you did find the workshop beneficial and was worth your time. Also I wanted to say thank you to all of

our board members for keeping up with paying their dues. The board was also ready and quick to respond when Jesse Lewis and Michelle Bronson needed us to approve one of their grants last week for Salinas office. Thank you all for making it easy! You are a great team and I love having you all on the board. That is all for my report today and thank you!

VII. Interim Secretary's Report- NONE

VIII. Interim Treasurer's Report- See the attachment.

IX. Executive Director's Report- Michelle Bronson

1. Budget Update: We are thrilled to share that we received a \$1,000 donation from Alpha Delta Chi for our Reaching Out and Communicating with our Kids (ROCK) program. What a total surprise! We are most appreciative to this sorority for supporting our program because we are getting more and more requests from families with D/HH children. Thank you! Also, we received a donation for Valley Deaf Festival (VDF) in the amount of \$1,750 from Whole Foods! Again, we applied through their online application and were thrilled to be approved for this much. Every penny counts for hosting VDF, especially with increased costs this year. We are wrapping up our Fansler grant that ends on Sept. 30th and they've been a wonderful funder for our ROCK, Youth Employment Services (YES!), Literacy Program, and IFSP/IEP advocacy services and programs. We are grateful for their continued support. Regarding the Monterey Peninsula Foundation grant that we recently contacted you for a letter of support, they approved a second year so we are to hold off on our application until next year. The funding for a second year was a nice surprise! Because we really appreciate our funders, we do our utmost best to maximize our services and stretch every dollar we receive because we know money does not grow on trees and we take pride in our work. We care about our community, and if we don't do the work, who will?
2. Staffing Updates: We are sad to share that Candice Goodie resigned in July and we wish her all the best! She will be a wonderful language and role model at her new job. Before Candice's last day, we are grateful that she helped train Viviana Reyes on the duties of Client Services Specialist. Viviana is already moving quickly forward and we are thrilled to have her on our DHHSC team. Elisa Castillo also resigned in August to focus on graduate school with Gallaudet University. We wish her all the best too and

hope she goes far in her future career. We also brought on a temporary bookkeeper, Toni Carmona, from Robert Half Talent Solutions, a temp agency, to assist our bookkeeper, Kyu Kyu Myint, with catching up on bookkeeping needs. When Gary was working with us and because we were one of his 14 clients, he was not able to take care of all the little details involving grants, etc., so Kyu Kyu and Toni are working on updating QB from October 2021 to present. We are moving forward and Kyu Kyu has been working hard on submitting EDD and CDSS invoices. We are not yet done with the 2021-2022 Fiscal Year but we are in communication with our funders and they are aware of our situation. Once everything is up to speed, we will not need Toni's services anymore, but we are grateful for her work.

3. Compliance Issues/Concerns: As required by our HealthNet and Elevance (formerly Anthem) audits, I am to report to the Board of Directors any compliance issues or concerns relating to our interpreting services. We do not have any concerns or issues at this time, but I have to include this section in my reports going forward. The auditors can request to see our meeting minutes and/or my reports as evidence that we are in compliance.
4. Agency Updates: As you may know, we have Deaf Awareness Week next week, from September 18th-24th. Please check out our website for activities that we have happening each day of next week, except Sunday the 18th. This is to celebrate our culture and language, and also during DAW, we will be offering VDF tickets at discounted rates. \$10 per adult instead of the normal \$15 and \$5, instead of \$10, for kids ages 4 to 13. Take advantage of this deal! We wanted to do this to celebrate DAW and to encourage people to come to VDF. It will be a fun week that includes Deaf Trivia, LGBTQIA+ Trivia, Game Social, "Whose Sign is it Anyway?," Deaf Panel, ASL Games, etc. Join us for either a fun night or two or for the entire week! We're still planning for VDF and working hard on finding a taco truck business that is available that day. Three are already booked and one is recovering from heart surgery and may not be able to do the job. We are still contacting companies and we will keep you posted! #Giving Tuesday will be on Tuesday, November 29th of this year, so please support our fundraiser!

The focus will be twofold: 1) To make our kitchen more accessible to everyone, including those in a wheelchair. 2) To replace our ceiling because we have the old, acoustic tiles that are stained and dropping down in some areas. Places, such as Home Depot and Lowe's, and subcontractors don't even do that kind of work anymore because that style is too old. We would like to have the ceiling stripped and perhaps made industrial looking or just have drywall installed for insulation purposes. Our building is old so it requires ongoing TLC! Please support us when it's time to do #GivingTuesday. Thank you! Our staff just had CPR/First Aid Training as part of our September Staff Development Day so we are current. We have more required trainings coming up for the rest of the year so we can ensure we're in compliance. I am still doing Deaf culture/awareness trainings with Marjaree Mason Center (MMC) almost every two months, but I am excited that Lynn Toschi and I will be doing training with Valley Children's Hospital on Sept. 29th. They want to know how to make their hospital more hospitable and welcoming to D/HH individuals, how to work with ASL and Spanish interpreters, and how to use assistive listening devices. We are to cover those topics in 90 minutes and we'll do our best to address everything in that short span of time!

5. Nicole Hurt asked Michelle Bronson what is their goal for the #GivingTuesday fundraiser and also commented that if anyone happen to know a licensed contractors please do ask and see if they are willing to give us a discount on the ceiling repairs/kitchen upgrades.
6. Michelle Bronson responded that they are hoping to raise \$10,000 because those necessary renovations can be quite expensive.
7. Nicole Hurt also suggested that after a discussion last year that the board should join in the #GivingTuesday fundraiser efforts to show support and to create their own team. Every year for #GivingTuesday the DHHSC staff like to split up in different teams for a friendly competition among each other and to raise money.
8. Jessica Lozano-Delgado has networking and would like to advertise and try to fundraise to support the agency.

9. Nicole Hurt suggested that Jessica could do a fundraising committee because know that she have a lot of networking and that can be helpful for us.
10. Steve Longo mentioned that we can discuss that more further after this meeting.

X. Fundraising Report- NONE

XI. General Board Comments-

Steve Longo asked Alexander Sanborn if there are any comments from the audience on YouTube. Alexander Sandborn checked and said there are none.

XII. Old Business-

Bylaws has been submitted and is still waiting for the attorney's office for a review.

XIII. New Business-

Steve Longo is thrilled to announce that both positions for the Treasurer and Secretary have been elected and filled.

1. Anna Virnig is our new Treasurer.
2. Patty Killough is our new Secretary.
3. Steve Longo mentioned that it would be nice if we can return to in-person meetings so we can develop more connections but we dont know when.
4. Nicole Hurt suggested an idea of conducting hybrid meetings (both in-person and on video or Zoom), Steve Longo said it is in the revised Bylaws.
5. Michelle Bronson mentioned that they do not have all equipment that's required to set up for hybrid meetings and would need help with the costs for the equipment.
6. Nicole Hurt suggested to the board to do a fundraiser to cover the equipment that's necessary for the hybrid meetings.
7. Steve Longo asked if there are any more comments from the audience on YouTube or from the board and there are none.

XIV. Announcements- NONE

XV. Adjournment- 7:57 PM.