



Idaho Council *for the* Deaf and Hard of Hearing

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Quarterly Board Meeting Minutes

Friday, September 15, 2023, at 10am

Zoom Video Conference

Transcripts available upon request

ATTENDEES

Council Members	Joelynn Ball, Valerie Player, Jacob Robison, Gretchen Fors, Steven Birkby, Sonny Cabbage, <i>Absent: Matthew McGraw, Emilie Banasiak, (Audiologist Vacant) (quorum = 5)</i>
Ex-officio Members	Steven Snow (CDHH, Jane Donnellan (DVR)), <i>Absent: Erin Olsen (ICG); Vacant (AG), Katie Stuart (DOPL), Terry Gammel (DOL), Brian Shakespeare (ISB), Brian Darcy (IESDB), Kelli Toohill (Idaho TRS), Randi Cole (SDE)</i>
Other Attendees	Jahaira Faber, Leah McElwee, Jess Raschke, Dawn Wells, LaVona Andrew Carson (interpreter), Carina Johns, Kaia Stuart, Ray Lockery, Bill Andrew

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Council Chair, Joelynn Ball called the meeting to order at 10:02 am and welcomed everyone. Introductions and representations were made.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 19, 2023

Meeting began without quorum. Changes were noted but we don't have quorum to make the changes. They are noted as Vote for Executive Council positions and Motion names missing, Val said she was the one to make that. Add name. Val also suggested we use full names for consistency.

MOTION Valerie moved to approve the January 19, 2023, minutes; Gretchen seconded the motion. The motion passed without opposition.

PERFECTING THE AGENDA

Joelynn Ball looked at changes to the agenda.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT, Steve Snow

At the National Level

- Federal Communications Commission (FCC)
 - FCC Proposed Rule: Video Conferencing Service (VCS) like Zoom, WebEx, Microsoft Teams and other platforms.
 - FCC speech to text minimum standard
 - Integrated with VRS, currently only Sorenson is partnered with Zoom. Request to have interpreter in the Zoom screen is available now but is paid by Sorenson. FCC is proposing any company using the Zoom interpreter feature can be reimbursed by FCC however, it must be integrated in the software.
 - TeleHealth has not been accessible for deaf. Currently gathering comments before final ruling
 - Direct Video Calling (DVC) is when deaf person connects with customer service rep that is also deaf. Skipping the middleman (interpreter). Dealing directly with the expert, not through a 3rd party. This doesn't

have a similar pool of money as VRS companies, so the proposed rule would allow DVC to access VRS funding since it would reduce number of interpreters needed. Hot topic, not sure how it will play out.

- SB-5121 is an amendment to the 21st Century Communications Video Accessibility Act (CVAA) which passed in 2011. The amendment makes updates to the original law which is now missing due to the changes in technology and new things that did not exist at the time. For example, captions on live streamed television, Telehealth accessibility, and now programming in American Sign language, which is fascinating! Disney Plus just came out with the Ant Man movie which has an option to click on for a signed representation of the movie. It is basically interpreted.
- SB-33 which is an amendment to Medicare. Currently Medicare does not cover hearing aids or any audiology services. The proposed amendment will add language to allow for that.
- Human Commission Services announced the 988 hotline number for Suicide and Crisis Lifeline now available. Previously deaf and hard of hearing individuals going through critical emotional times could not access these services. Now direct access is available.
 - Website 988LifeLine.org offers online chat.
 - Video Phone call 988 will connect to a signing mental health worker (not through VRS) coming any day.
 - Text 988 directly.

At the State Level

- Budget for Fiscal Year 2025
 - didn't include everything we wanted. DFM and governor office capped budget requests at 3%. We are a small budget compared to others. We have old tech that needs replaced which already puts us over our 3% at \$7,000. Other wish list items like ASL Classes and renovations are on hold due to the 3% cap.
 - Division of Financial Management (DFM) can make special requests, but it can't be part of the base budget submission.
- The state has contracted with 3 VRI providers, however only 2 offer ASL and neither company have Idaho licensed interpreters. This was discussed with DOP, which they did not realize. Any renewed contact will have to demonstrate how they will ensure licensed interpreter.
- The state technology change (LUMA) has created headaches. Overall, it is a system to manage HR, Financing, Operations, but the roll out has not been smooth. We have vendor, invoice, and HR issues, however the system has a lot of potential.

At the Community Level

- Community Needs Assessment (CNA) was completed June 30th. The trends show insufficient services to the deaf community and agencies inaccessible which coincides with our FY Priority 2024
- Domestic Violence services in the community are lacking. ICDVVA provided a training to 10 deaf advocates throughout the state. The 1-week long, in-depth, all-day, every day, training, was with 2 deaf trainers from Seattle WA with extensive experience. Those Advocates had life changing experiences during that training. Currently ICDVVA is working on who will take the lead. The Executive Director left the agency and they are working with the interim Executive Director. However, the template is ready for any organization to start using their policy. They can take it and make it work for their system.
- The James Castle House is a local Deaf artist museum. Steve gave a presentation and awarded plaque for their empowering work.
- The Town Hall in North Idaho had a good turnout. It had been 5 years since we held a town hall there. We found the 1st biggest issue they wanted to discuss was health care, which is not new. The 2nd biggest issue was sufficient interpreters in the area. We committed to continued presence in North Idaho.
- Deaf Awareness Day was very successful with over 150 people in attendance. This year was a technology theme with all deaf presenters. We had 360 Direct Video, Sorenson Communications, TDI, and Renca Dunn a popular social media influencer. In comparison, 2021 we brought in two deaf doctors, Deaf In Scrubs, that provided COVID education. That was a small gathering of over 70 people.

- Human Rights Commission has been an ongoing challenge with the deaf community. Complaints filed with HRC lacked responses and created ongoing frustration. Recently Steve met with Ben Earwicker, HRC Administrator. He was unaware of the frustration with a specific demographic. He agreed to several things to improve accessibility. Currently to process to file is to fill out a complex form in English. An option for a deaf person to submit a complaint in sign language would make it accessible. When the HRC sees they have received a complaint in ASL, they would use an interpreter to give an English rendition. We often refer to HRC so this falls under the 2024 priority of improving state services.
- Christmas Families is gearing up again. We want to support as many families as possible instead of referring to other organizations. We are reaching out to companies now, so it is in place at Christmas. Looking to grow the event as big as possible.

EX-OFFICIO MEMBER REPORTS

Brian Darcy, Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and Blind (IESDB)

Over the summer we held Work Readiness Camp with 35 deaf participants and Sawtooth Camp with 14 kids.

On campus the 18-21, Independent Living Skills program (ILS) did not encompass what we wanted from it. Now it is called BRIDGE program, Building Resilient Individuals through Direct Guided Education. They are running a food truck Ravenous Raptor to gain work skills needed in life, learning budgeting, how to make appointments and so on. Campus has 6 cottages, of which one is used by the BRIDGE program so they can prepare breakfast and dinner in a cottage instead of going to the cafeteria.

We are in need teachers. Currently we are contracted with America School for the Deaf, an online school for science class. We need an ASL teacher, PE teacher, and 3 interpreting positions are open.

All major bathrooms in the school were renovated. We have a new roof & fire alarm system. Today we started renovating the playground for an accessible wheelchair slide, swings, and communication board.

Our track is cracking, we requested a budget for a new track, 2 years ago. We were about \$300,000 short of the lowest bid. Will send it out for re-bid in the spring.

Outreach is training a new group of deaf mentors for the Deaf Mentor program.

We just hosted National Center for Deafness on campus. NCD gave a training on a new program, gathered students feedback on what they would like to see, where they want to go, along with community feedback. We will meet again.

We have a facilities request that is not tied to the budget, of 2 new cottages. Currently we have a wait list for the school due to cottage space shortage.

This summer we hosted the 1st Hall of Fame. Over 20 people were inducted from beginning of ISDB to 1970. There was so much history and great stories.

IESDB Zoo event has had over 200 people in past, this year it is being held on October 22nd.

We have a new statewide Transition Coordinator, Davina Snow.

Jane Donnellan, Administrator IDVR

It's been a very busy several months. Aug 29th met with Director Snow

LUMA has been a painful transition. HR and Fiscal Team have been phenomenal in providing support and guidance as we move forward.

IDVR is going through significant transformations, a deep dive in effectiveness of serving customers. 2014 was a significant change in law WIOA. Under the law customers are not just job seekers. Our customer base are individuals with disabilities, students with disabilities, and business are customers. We as organization are not designed to support customers the way the

law was designed to. July 31st brought a restructure of the organization, which is very different, a sphere with the customer at the center. Everything we do should lead to support of our customers. We will have some bumps & learning lessons.

Staff capacity is stretched, and we have a line-item budget requesting more counselors. Treasure Valley is growing fast, and East Idaho needs additional counselors. New positions have not been added since 2016. We are serving by repurposing and moving people around however it isn't sufficient. Positions are unfilled, wages are not competitive, our staff are going to food pantries to support their families. Compensation is limited by state appropriation.

VR Success Stories is highlight on a National level for IDVR. Success Stories is to highlight the work of VR. A young man Tim, who is a teacher from Valley View Academy in Caldwell, has his story on our website. He was asked to go to DC and be one of two VR customers, that were part of a national panel telling their success with the VR program. It is an honor we were chosen as one of the 2 states.

Terry Gammel, Idaho Department of Labor

Skip LUMA complaining, Official comment is, absolutely love LUMA.

Working on optimization of services and advancement of the program. IDOL received funding for an apprenticeship expansion, we are working with VR and IDOC to expand.

If anyone has apprenticeship ideas, how that can fit in your organization please reach out. Always looking to expand and for partnerships.

We are interested in the CNA findings and how IDOL can make changes.

Will have a meeting with Steve Snow to discuss ways the deaf and hard of hearing community can benefit and possible additional services. Most people are unaware programs are available. VR and IESDB would like to be a part of that meeting and everyone brainstorm how to benefit

Steve Snow suggested a meeting soon to discuss ways the deaf and hard of hearing community can benefit and possible additional services. Most ppl no idea programs available. IDOL, VR, IESDB and CDHH all want to meet and brainstorm how to benefit us all.

Erin Olsen, Idaho Commission on Aging

Falls Prevention Month is September. Upcoming seminars:

- Why Falls Matter and How to Prevent them
- Identifying and Removing Hazards from the Home
- Simple Steps, Ways to Improve Balance and Prevent Falls

Erin fell 4 days before Fall Prevention Month (Sept) began. She fractured her humerus in half and has a large incision.

St. Luke Plaza Saturday Oct 21st will be doing a screening:

- Fall test
- Hearing test
- Medication check list
- All things to check if at risk for falling
- Anyone with any disability is at higher risk for falls

ICA is in the middle of new state plan. Erin will be reaching out to discuss more deaf and hard of hearing resources and interpreters.

ADJOURNED

Minutes recorded by Dawn Wells

NEXT MEETING

Friday, November 17, 2023 over Zoom