

FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL
FOR THE
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
QUARTERLY MEETING
February 21, 2008
Daytona Beach Resort and Conference Center
Daytona Beach, Florida

1:00 pm: Meeting Convened.

Joan Haber, Council Chair, opened the meeting by first welcoming the two new Council members, Lois Maroney, representing the Association of Late-Deafened Adults, and Melvin Herring, the Florida Department of Health representative.

Members Present: Joan Haber, Joe Naulty, Lois Maroney (who gave a brief biography), Eloise Williams, Randy Ellsworth, Melvin Herring (who gave a brief biography), Julie Church, Chris Wagner, Sarah Harris, Lisa Schaefermeyer, and Karen Anderson, Liaison to the Department of Health, and Mary Grace Tavel, Assistant to the Council.

Members late arriving: Laurie Gaylord, Tanya Ward English.

Members absent: Rick Kottler, Carol Christopherson, Stan Gustetic, John Jackson and Dawn Saunders.

Joan introduced the Service Providers: Amanda Brata, SSP for Joe Naulty; Interpreters Dr. Len Roberson, Dr. Sherrie Shaw, Brenda Diley, and Shannon Simon from Signs of Interpreting; Mike Cano, CART provider from ACS; Louis from CODA Sound, and interns from the Hillsborough County Junior College interpreter program, Marci Bryant and Karrissa Manchester.

Amendment to Agenda:

Joan added “adoption of the agenda” to the agenda.

Chris Wagner made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended and Sarah Harris seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Guest Speaker:

Joan Haber introduced Tom Galey, Executive Director of the Georgia Council for the Hearing Impaired (GACHI) and read a brief biography.

Tom Galey, Executive Director of GACHI, gave a presentation on the history of GACHI, and entertained a question and answer session afterward. GACHI is a 501 (c)(3) with no rule making powers of its own. The State of Georgia contracted with GACHI to make it aware of the needs of persons living with hearing loss and to assist it in meeting those needs GACHI has an annual operating budget of approximately \$1.7 million. Fifty percent of that comes from the State contract and 50% comes from GACHI's Public Service Commission equipment distribution contract. GACHI operates six service centers in Georgia.

In his presentation, Mr. Galey emphasized the importance of involving the entire Deaf, Late-deafened, Hard-of-hearing, and Deaf-blind community in grassroots outreach to government whenever government contemplates an action contrary to the interest of these populations. He gave as an example of when Georgia almost shut down GACHI in 1997 because the state decided it needed to save some money and proposed cutting the budget for Deaf services. GACHI had support from the Deaf community and the Hard-of-hearing community and the Late-Deafened and the Deaf-Blind communities, and they rallied at the capital and legislators heard them and left that line item alone. The example demonstrated how the community saved GACHI. Mr. Galey discussed the need for collaboration and allowing the community to develop a sense of ownership of their GACHI centers.

To cut administrative overhead, GACHI minimizes its state-funded payroll by outsourcing service delivery to independent contractors whenever possible rather than maintaining a large internal staff. This causes a higher percentage of GACHI funds to be spent on direct delivery of services and less on administrative overhead. Georgia's Department of Labor is considering contracting with GACHI to place a person in each one of GDOL's service locations that would be its expert in the field of working with Deaf, Hard-of-hearing, Late-Deafened, and Deaf-Blind people. GACHI has also worked closely with the well-known organizations (such as the State Association of the Deaf, the state chapters of HLAA, the local chapters of ALDA, etc.).

There are five programs provided by GACHI: Advocacy, information and referral, community outreach, educational services, and telecommunication equipment distribution. Mr. Galey emphasized that the word "advocacy" should not be used in outreach because there is a strong aversion to the term. "Support services" is a more neutral term. Consequently Mr. Galey said GACHI stresses that it provides support services that assist persons with hearing loss and he gave specific examples of situations where GACHI was able to provide significant support to assist persons with hearing loss.

For more information the reader is referred to the GACHI website, www.gachi.org.

Business Meeting:

Joan Haber introduced Laurie Gaylord and Tanya Ward English, who joined the meeting during the GACHI presentation.

Joe Naulty asked for clarification as to whether he could converse with legislators on behalf of the Council. Karen Anderson answered that all citizens have a right to talk to their elected officials, senators, and representatives but as a member of the Council they cannot lobby on behalf of the Council. Council members are allowed to educate and inform elected officials and tell them about the mission of the Council. If a Council member really wants to lobby a representative or senator for change, they need to wear their other hat as a representative of some association other than the FCCDHH. This certainly can be done, as almost everyone who is on the Council represents some other organization.

Joan Haber then introduced the two finalists for the Outreach Coordinator's position. Barbara Millios and Valerie Stafford-Mallis, who were interviewed earlier that day; both women gave brief biographies for the Council.

Joan Haber then asked that members of the Council whose seats were up for reappointment in the summer of 2008 make their wishes about staying on the Council known to their respective organizations. Joan then mentioned the Governor's Office has requested at least two candidates be submitted for every vacancy and opened the floor for suggestions as to how to go about finding other candidates for their seats. Joan will be working with the Governor's Office to help assist with the selection process and with publicizing the vacancies to the relevant FCCDHH organizations. The Council members whose positions are coming up for renewal were urged to begin searching for candidates to submit now.

3:25 pm: Break.

4:07 pm: Meeting Reconvened.

Public Comments:

Joan Haber, Council Chair, welcomed everyone to the Public Hearing, and thanked Julie Shaw from Ormond Beach for inviting the Council to come to that area of the state.

Joan Haber then read the mission and vision statements of the Council and stated that the public hearings were the most important things that the Council does.

The Council members introduced themselves and their affiliations for the audience.

Joan Haber acknowledged the service providers.

(1) Julie Shaw: She is the Executive Director of Disability Solutions Center for Independent Living. She had good news to share. The first Youth Senate was formed that week and they were in the Governor's Cabinet and in the Senate that day. She spoke of the cases that come to her center, particularly a young man (18 years of age) with multiple disabilities. She asked the Council for advice as to how she can help him. She also asked that the Council pursue funding for direct services for Deaf Service Centers

throughout the state. She suggested litigation if legislation fails. She offered to partner with the Council, and reminded the Council that she has resources through her directorship of a Center for Independent Living and her contacts within the CIL system. She wants to get positioned in the Legislative system for introducing funding for Deaf Services next year.

(2) Tom D'Angelo, Sprint Representative: He stated that the Council Outreach specialist was just what was needed.

(3) Amy Barber: She works for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services in Ormond Beach in collaboration with Julie Shaw. Before the Center was an independent agency, they were part of Easter Seals. She is a volunteer. She had a list of issues to bring up to the Council.

Top Priorities:

Advocacy for accessibility and fundraising. She urged collaborations. Working collaboratively with the Deaf Service Centers (DSCs) to ensure that all areas of the state have DSCs and to ensure funding is available. Increasing Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) collaborations and training. Assisting the communities with funding for education and training. Housing.

Medium Priorities:

Doorbells, clocks, telephones, "Alert-Master" (an all-inclusive device). Use of computers. Efforts to enforce Americans with Disabilities Act. Increase awareness of deaf issues. Increasing cooperation between state agencies. Providing videophones. Researching effectiveness of interpreter assistive devices.

Low Priorities:

Working to increase open-captioning in film industry.

(4) Barbara Chertok, Sarasota, mailed in her comments: She suggested the Council undertake counting the population of Sarasota and Manatee counties who are deaf and/or hard of hearing who do not use American Sign Language (ASL) in order to assist grant writers in justifying services in the area. Joan Haber said she had just gotten an e-mail on that subject today—3% of 109,936 deaf or hard of hearing consumers in the Manatee/Sarasota area use ASL.

(5) Mervin Garretson mailed in his comments: He is from Summerfield, and had to leave the meeting in The Villages before his name was called. He said having qualified interpreters was a pressing need in doctors' offices and hospitals. Expressive and receptive signing are not the same. He advocated increasing the number of qualified interpreters in his area of the state. He suggested that Sumter County Community College in Leesburg would be a good place for an interpreter training program. Airports are hardly accessible for the deaf and hard of hearing. He also cited airports that do things

well. Emergency announcements (weather, for example) need to be accessible to people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Attitudes toward deaf people need to change, perhaps with more positive news stories on the lifestyles of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing. Chris Wagner added that Mervin Garretson was a special assistant to the President of Gallaudet University. Joan Haber asked for comments from the Council about his letter.

(6) Judy Martin, from Jacksonville: She said that the Jacksonville airport was installing a new concourse, and that she would be happy to convey information about accessibility to them, if someone could help her with the information. Joan Haber said she would get that information to Judy. (Action)

Discussion

Karen Anderson, DOH Liaison to Council: She gave a report on the recent Disability Task Force for the Department of Health Emergency Operations Center Preparations meeting. Craig Fugate and Chip Wilson spoke at that meeting. There is a weather radio program that applied to the population of persons who are Deaf and hard-of-hearing. They have purchased around 500 emergency radios that are adapted for persons who are Deaf and that will be distributed in the Volusia and surrounding several-county area. They were very pointed that they just had a small amount of money to work with in this area, and that they were going to work with the CILs and the Deaf Service Centers to find candidates to receive the radios. Julie Shaw and Amy Barber put together a list of all the population who would need the weather radios from the division of emergency services. They are having an event in April related to that through the Center for Independent Living, Julie will send an invitation to the Council.

Tanya Ward English brought up the subject of NPR captioning, and asked if that technology was exclusive to NPR. Joan Haber asked Tanya to find out more about that. Tanya said she would find out more about that and report back (Action).

Joan Haber asked James Forstall, Executive Director of Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. (FTRI), who was in the audience, to talk about FTRI's new equipment—two new amplified telephones and some new TTYs. The Public Service Commission (PSC) extended the contract with Sprint for one more year, but there will no longer be an account manager and the call center would no longer be located in the State of Florida. Tom D'Angelo said the call center would not cease to exist. Sarah Harris asked what would happen to the Florida Relay Center. James Forstall said there would be someone in Texas who was responsible for the account, but he was not given a name. Chris Wagner commented, for the record, that it seemed like we were going back in time, not forward, referencing the closing of the call center and the elimination of the Account Manager's position associated with it.

More Public Comment

(7) Shanna Lee Cagle: She asked for help in getting a new hearing aid. She had contacted Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and hadn't heard anything for two weeks. She was encouraged to stay in contact with VR, it takes time. Amy Barber added that you have to have a job or be actively seeking a job. An unidentified male came to the microphone and asked to speak on Shanna's behalf. Joan Haber and Lois Maroney to send their resources for free or low-cost hearing aids to Mary Grace to forward to Shanna (Action).

(8) Walter Brennan from Orlando: He is a 1964 graduate of the Florida School for the Deaf and the Blind (FSDB). He is interested in hearing what the Council can do for the needs of Deaf people. He had a daughter who had an emergency when she was sixteen years old, and tried to call her father from a payphone through the Florida relay and they refused to forward her call.

(9) Julie Shaw asked for help with her local Volusia-Flagler County Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) office, which is violating law in their application process. The VR office is encouraging applicants not to sign and date their applications, in order to get pay incentives for complying with the 60-day closure rate. She asked the Council to formally ask for some data relative to the number of deaf or hard of hearing people actually serviced in the Daytona/Volusia County area. (Action)

5:50 Joan Haber thanked everyone for coming and sharing their comments. She encouraged everyone to chat informally until 6:00 pm.

Joe Naulty shared with everyone his very positive experience with Holmes Medical Center following his recent heart attack.

6:00 pm. Meeting adjourned.

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February 22, 2008

Daytona Beach Resort and Conference Center
Daytona Beach, Florida

8:30 am Meeting Convened.

Council members introduced themselves.

Members Present: Joan Haber, Julie Church, Melvin Herring, Randy Ellsworth, Eloise Williams, Joe Naulty, Carol Christopherson, Chris Wagner, Lois Maroney, Tanya Ward English, Lisa Schaefermeyer and DOH Liaison Karen Anderson and Staff Assistant, Mary Grace Tavel.

Members Absent: Rick Kottler, Stan Gustetic, John Jackson and Dawn Saunders, Sarah Harris.

Late Arriving: Laurie Gaylord.

New Business:

Minutes:

The teleconference minutes from September 11, 2007 were introduced. Randy Ellsworth made a motion to accept the minutes; Julie Church seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

The minutes from the Quarterly meeting in the Villages, November 8 & 9, 2007 were introduced. Lisa Schaefermeyer made a motion to accept the minutes as written, Randy Ellsworth seconded the motion. There was no opposition and the motion passed unanimously.

Action Items:

The action items from the November 8 & 9, 2007 Quarterly meeting were reviewed. Eloise Williams said Department of Elderly Affairs had not yet posted the FCCDHH information on its website but assured the Council this open action item would soon be completed. Randy Ellsworth gave Mary Grace items regarding resources to assist dissatisfied hearing aid consumers to post on the website and information about the Children's Foundation to pass along to Dawn Saunders. (Action)

Budget:

Eloise Williams introduced the budget and explained that as of now there is a shortfall. A 4% across-the-board reduction in the FCCDHH budget was mandated at the end of January because of the passage of the property tax reduction. Further across-the-board budget cuts are anticipated as a result of the 2008 Legislature session beginning March 1st and running through May 1st. Those amounts were not quantified at the time of the February meeting. There was a discussion about having a teleconference in May instead of a physical meeting. Consensus was the Council needed to hold the

meeting as planned in the Sarasota area, if at all possible. Eloise Williams stated that adequate funding appeared to be in place for the FCCDHH's remaining quarterly meeting.

Action—MG to see if the warrant to Early Learning Coalition can be cancelled.

In response to a question from Joan Haber, Eloise Williams said that the Council needs to come to the May meeting with projections for all of next fiscal year's budget.

Chris Wagner mentioned the extra dollars that the outreach position would require. Eloise Williams added that additional promotional items need to be purchased.

Tanya Ward English discussed the \$\$ encumbered for the website that we had not been able to spend, despite all good intentions. Eloise Williams suggested that we determine before the May meeting whether we can release some Liquifusion funds or not.

(Action—MG)

Strategic Planning Discussion:

The Council meeting was turned over to Chris Wagner for an extensive Strategic Plan discussion. Chris opened by asking the Council whether its original purpose, Mission and Vision statements were still accurate reflections of its wishes. The Council confirmed that they were. Chris reviewed the many initiatives the FCCDHH decided last August to pursue and suggested that the Council might be spreading itself too thinly. Chris suggested that the FCCDHH should increase its effort into that part of its mission concerned with making recommendations of policy and legislation and doing what it can do within the limitations set forth by statute. Establishing funding for future direct services should also be a priority.

Chris then addressed the factionalism that has come to exist within the community of persons living with hearing loss and suggested a need for more unity within the community as a whole and the FCCDHH in particular. Chris stated that, in his opinion, re-establishing that unity should be a primary goal. Several examples of the disunity currently existing among persons with hearing loss were compared and contrasted with the unity presented outwardly by other groups representing citizens with other disabilities. Carol Christopherson talked about her work as the FCCDHH's representative on the newly formed Governor's Commission on Disabilities and restated her need for the Council's recommendations for a May report on removing the barriers in housing and independent living, transportation, education, employment and civil rights. The Council assured Carol that these recommendations already existed in past FCCDHH Reports to the Governor and that she could use Mary Grace as a resource to help compile the information in a format the Governor's Commission on Disabilities could include in its report.

Chris summarized the Strategic Planning portion of the Board Meeting as follows:

CHRISTOPHER D. WAGNER: “Okay. One more time, do we all understand these goals, the top priorities will be to recommend policies, work for increase in funding for services and keeping those two things in mind we want to think about the proviso language for the statute, and secondarily build the united support by all of the different organizations? So I would like to have a motion to accept all of these that is on this chart paper as our strategic plan with the understanding that the committee will come up with the action items and the tasks and who is responsible, and we will send that information to you before the next meeting in May.” (Action)

Action Item – The leadership of the FCCDHH stakeholders groups to be invited to the FCCDHH May Meeting in Sarasota for the purposes of input and buy-in to the Strategic Plan.

Action Item — Mary Grace to send CART to Chris Wagner.

Chris made a motion to have a teleconference with the full Council prior to the May quarterly meeting, either at the beginning of March or the end of April. Tanya Ward English seconded the motion. The vote passed with one opposition. Further discussion was held and Laurie Gaylord changed her vote to “Yes”.

Legal Systems Accessibility Task Force (LSATF) Report:

Lisa Schaefermeyer presented the LSATF report. She asked that the CAPP portion be deleted from her report and replaced with the free-standing report that Tanya submitted. In the report is a request for \$5,700 for a CART Access Pilot Program (CAPP).

Lisa wanted to clarify her request to use the remaining \$9,400 from her two past allotments of \$10,000 each to do whatever they deemed necessary to carry out the mission of the task force.

Karen Anderson clarified the limits on spending imposed by the opinion of DOH legal counsel and the specific deliverables that would be required under DOH purchasing policies and procedures. The types of usual and customary things that money can go for are the things that the FCCDHH typically does: the accommodations, the rooms, the travel or the teleconferences, that sort of thing, which can all easily utilize FCCDHH funds. Anything else that's a deliverable, anything specific where the Council would have to pay for something beyond those things previously mentioned is considered a different process and that would have to be asked for very specifically.

It is the standing opinion of the DoH general counsel, specifically to the LATF training video, that he saw nothing in the statutory language authorizing the Council to fund continuing education or indirect or direct subsidies, and it was his opinion that in order to engage in this type of activity that the Council would need to get appropriate amendments to the statute.

Lisa asked that the remainder of the \$20,000 be used for whatever they can use it for-- Outreach and education, whatever Tom Koch, DOH Legal Counsel, agrees to as a result of the ongoing e-mail dialogue between him and Sharon Caserta.

Public Relations:

Julie Church gave the Public Relations report. Julie reported that, as of the February Quarterly Meeting, the PR Committee had used up all of its money. She had gotten quotes from two firms, neither of which are Florida businesses, and they differed in price by about 2/3. It was not certain that the two prices reflected the same amount of services for the same time period. Consensus was to defer this until the new outreach person is on board and the new fiscal year begins.

Website:

Tanya Ward English gave a report on the status of the website, and asked the members to give recommendations to Tanya and Mary Grace as they come up. A suggestion was made for a calendar of events where we put everything up. Tanya also asked for each Council member to give her a list of searchable phrases she could submit to Liquidfusion for Search Engine Optimization. Information has to come from members of the Council.

Joe Naulty spoke about the possibility of putting deaf-blind events up on the website on an event calendar and Chris joined in with the idea of creating a state-wide calendar that all stakeholder group events would be displayed with a link to their individual websites.

Staff Report:

The staff report was given by Karen Anderson and Mary Grace.

Public Hearing Discussion:

- (1) Shanna Cagle's issue. Randy Ellsworth said he had offered to help her obtain hearing aids. Karen Anderson reported that she had e-mailed the VR component of her question to Dawn Saunders, who will ask Cecil Bradley and report back. Joan Haber asked that Dawn be asked about the timetable for VR as well. Action—Karen to relay questions to Dawn.
- (2) Joe Naulty reported that a news release about an accessible radio had sparked a conversation with people at VR. Tanya Ward English added information about the technology, which has been in use in the BBC for quite a while.
- (3) Joe Naulty asked if the Council was going to do anything else in regard to Julie Shaw's presentation. Chris Wagner responded in the affirmative, saying it would be part of the strategic plan.
- (4) Joan Haber to follow up with Jacksonville airport. (Action)
- (5) Tanya Ward English urged the Council to try to share success stories with the media.

- (6) Joe Naulty was concerned about attendance by the public at Quarterly meetings. (Action—Mary Grace to send her contact lists to the Council).
- (7) Joe Naulty talked about his recent hospitalization. At the hospital, there is an empty floor, which would make a great meeting place for the deaf. He also spoke of a plan to coordinate with the insurance companies. (Action—Mary Grace to relay this information to Rick.)

12:45 Break

1:00 Meeting Resumed.

Upcoming Meetings:

The next meeting in Sarasota was discussed. The meeting has to be in a green location; there are only two in the Sarasota area. Consensus was if it was necessary, we could move the meeting to Tampa.

Dates for the August meeting were discussed. School starts two weeks before Labor Day. Julie Church made a motion that the meeting be held on August 7 & 8. Lisa Schaefermeyer seconded the motion. There was no opposition and the motion carried unanimously. Location TBA, Lakeland was suggested; Mary Grace to look for a location near there on the green list. (Action)

November meeting: Miami was suggested as a location, since they are losing their Deaf Service Center. Lisa Schaefermeyer made a motion to have it in Miami. Laurie Gaylord seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Upcoming Vacancies on Council:

There will be vacancies on the Council in July. Joan Haber urged that people who were retiring contact their respective organizations and ask for suggestions for replacements. She asked that the organization send a letter to the appointments office. Chris Wagner made a motion that the Chair send out a letter to all organizations affected. Lisa Schaefermeyer seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

As for positions which were not representative of a formal organization, such as CART provider, deaf-blind individual, parent of a deaf child—Tanya Ward English suggested we advertise all the open positions on the website. (Action--MG and Tanya to get those up on the website).

Emergency Preparedness Disability Task Force:

Joan Haber read a request from Reid Jaffe for a representative from the Council to be on his Emergency Preparedness Disability Task Force, which focuses on accessibility issues during emergency situations. Chris Wagner gave a brief history of the group. Julie Church suggested Rick Kottler as the representative. There was no opposition.

Announcements:

Joan Haber thanked Randy Ellsworth for his attendance at the prior meeting of the Governor's Commission on Disabilities (GCD). Carol Christopherson gave a report on the Commission's work. (Action—MG to send the packets that Carol gave to her to the Council members. Joan will put Carol on the agenda for May to give a report. Action.)

Laurie Gaylord announced that Alexander Graham Bell would be having their annual convention in Deerfield Beach on April 11 & 12, 2008.)Action - Mary Grace and Tanya to relay that information.)

Eloise Williams announced that the Florida Statewide Conference on Aging is August 15—17 in Orlando. She asked for anyone to come and give a presentation at that conference. Presentations are due April 29. Eloise asked Chris Wagner for contact information with Lissette Molina and DawnMarie Caggiano. (Action) Eloise also gave a presentation on the Council to her CARES group. She showed the video, "We May Not Hear, But We Must Be Heard." She asked for more DVDs. Mary Grace told her there were none left.

Tanya Ward English said the Council could model FTRI's event calendar for its website. The same web developer the FCCDHH uses did the FTRI's event calendar.

Randy Ellsworth reported that the Don Ellsworth Foundation had fit two more children for hearing aids in the last two months.

Joan Haber announced the Florida Walk4Hearing on April 12 in Safety Harbor.

Chris Wagner said he hoped that we would accomplish a lot at the next meeting, since that would be the last meeting for several members.

Eloise asked whether Joan Haber had heard anything from John Lake recently and Joan said she had not. (Action - Eloise said she wanted to get in contact with him about the status of grants for strobe lights and fire detectors for seniors.)

1:55 pm: Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Julie Church, and the motion carried unanimously.