

FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

November 15, 2004
Homewood Suites, Tallahassee FL

Council Members Present: Chris Wagner, Sarah Harris, Lisa Schaefermeyer, Evy Friend, Joan Haber, Carol Christopherson, Eloise Williams, Laurie Gaylord, Joe Naulty, Randy Ellsworth, Tanya English, Julie Church, Rick Kottler, Stan Gustetic. Dr. Karen Anderson, staff liaison and Misty Burns, assistant to the council were also present.

Chris Wagner called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Thursday, November 15.
Committee meetings were conducted until 3:00 p.m.

During the 2005 council report committee meeting the council discussed the definition of late-deafened adults in the report. Barbara Chertok, a member of the Self Help of the Hard of Hearing expressed her concerns to Mr. Wagner and recommended that this definition be changed to specify that technology be used to access speech. It was decided that hearing technology be added to the definition of late-deafened.

The Public Hearing was called to order at 3: 30 p.m. The council members introduced themselves to the public and the members of the public introduced themselves as well: Fran Burns of Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc, Julie Shaw of the Governor's American Disabilities Act Working Group, James Forstall, of the Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc, Dana Lachter of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, and Joe McCleary, an student at University of South Florida. Mr. Wagner explained the purpose of the public hearing which is to gather and comments and information regarding accessibility services provided to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and deaf-blind.

Synopsis of Public Comments

- 1.Fran Burns expressed her concerns in terms of accessibility to hospital services. She recommended that the Council promote changes in hospitals' policies in regarding communication accessibility.
 2. Julie Shaw spoke in detail about the need to educate the DHH community on how to file a complaint and to educate the physicians on what cases are settled and mediated due to DHH accessibility violations. Suggested we collect this information and make a packet.
 - 3.James Forstall reinforced that there is a large shortage of qualified interpreters and that he refuses to use an interpreter that is not qualified.
 4. Dana Lachter commented that there needs to be quality services available to families and children throughout the state.
 - 5.Joe McCleary commented that the diversity of the population will bring persons who are not native ASL users who will truly need to have a qualified interpreter who can identify when effective communication is not occurring.
 - 6.Fran Burns commented that ASL teachers may or may not be culturally deaf themselves.
 - 7.Mr. Wagner reviewed written comments
 - 8.Julie Shaw explained that a school aged person has a right to accommodations under ADA. It is the responsibility of the person with the disability to know their rights under ADA.
- All pubic comments were stated for the record.

Chris Wagner moved on from public comment as there were no more comments or discussion.

He directed the council members to look at the Draft 2005 report. There was review of the ADAWG recommendations and assignment of persons to write brief summaries on this information Groups worked in pairs on summaries of ADAWG recommendations.

Meeting adjourned 6:30pm

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Chris Wagner, Chair of FCCDHH called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Wagner welcomed members and guests to the meeting. All members introduced themselves and the associations or groups they represented. Members of the public introduced themselves. Evan Goldman's arrival to join the meeting was acknowledged at 9:15. The minutes of the September 21-22nd meeting were approved (moved by Julie Church and seconded by Sarah Harris).

The expense report was reviewed by Karen Anderson. Questions were raised regarding the ability to carry over any dollars left and continuing allocations in future years. Dollars will not be carried forward. The FCCDHH then discussed purchasing assistive listening devices rather than renting them. Purchasing procedures through the Department of Health and the requirement to obtain bids must be explored. Laurie Gaylord motioned to purchase the equipment and Carol Christopherson seconded the motion to purchase. After further discussions Laurie's motion was amended to include a maximum expenditure of \$7500. The amendment was seconded by Carol and was approved by the Council. Karen Anderson and Stan Gustetic would be responsible for maintaining the equipment.

A question was raised about the ability of the Council under the Sunshine Law to discontinue the meeting if there was no public comment. The FCCDHH decided that a 3-hour public comment time period would be maintained from 3:30 – 6:30 and used completely. The time period would not be extended beyond 3 hours. Joan Haber suggested that each person who submitted a public comment be sent a letter from the Council acknowledging the receipt of their comment and potential for future action by the Council.

Chris Wagner introduced Julie Shaw, Executive Administrator for the Governor's Working Group on the Americans with Disabilities Act to present to the Council. Mr. Wagner acknowledged that the efforts of Julie Shaw were to be recognized for paving the way to establish FCCDHH. Ms. Shaw presented draft language from 2004 for a bill supporting use of service animals that would change and clarify the current statute. A new bill will be formulated for the 2005 legislative year. The process for effectively filing a complaint was emphasized as something that all persons with disabilities should know at the state and federal level. Information on contacts, disability clearinghouse, and the statute that established the ADA office was distributed. When the ADA Work Group (ADAWG) held public meetings members stayed until all public comment was heard. The majority of persons commenting were deaf and hard of hearing. The

accommodations provided by ADAWG has set the standard for accommodations for deaf and hard of hearing at state meetings. One of the most challenging barriers for the deaf and hard of hearing is access to the legislative process. Captioning of the legislative session, including provision of captioning providers, has been an issue that the ADA office has been working on. The cost of providing interpreters for persons who are deaf and hard of hearing is not a fixed cost like facility accommodations plus the short public notice time period compounds the difficulty in providing quality interpreter services. She suggested that Legislators are not aware of issues and vocabulary related to issues of the deaf and hard of hearing and that the FCCDHH report should be clear in its descriptions and exactly how to achieve recommended changes. There is an education barrier in disability awareness, etiquette, and entitlement obligations to meet effective communication. A concerted effort must be made in building Capital accessibility. Ms. Shaw also discussed the contacts at the MQA for effective filing of complaints. Large numbers of persons who are deaf, hard of hearing and deaf-blind contact the ADA office with their issues and concerns. This in conjunction with public comment by the deaf and hard of hearing at ADAWG hearings led to the development of the FCCDHH, especially once the community of deaf and hard of hearing clearly communicated their main issues and priorities. At this point it is critical to improve the captioning on Emergency Operations Center announcements. Evan Goldman commented about the service animal bill and offered that that FCCDHH legislative committee could be actively supportive of this effort. Background was provided on the bill. Senator Wise and Representative Carol are co-sponsoring the bill. Ms Shaw acknowledged that any support of the service animal bill would be very beneficial. ADAWG is committed to assist FCCDHH in its endeavors and would like to see FCCDHH become a body where the deaf and hard of hearing community to readily turn for leadership.

Discussion was lead by the Information and Referral committee, with statements by Tanya English regarding duplication of information. FCCDHH does not want to duplicate information that is already available on other websites. The best way to do this is to link to websites where pertinent information is already established. The major links for deaf-blind will be put prominently in one area on the website so that persons who are deaf-blind can be linked to the most relevant websites. Linking to sources in which the information will be updated is preferred over providing information that we will need to be updating. There is a concern about putting information on the website with information that is already obsolete. Consensus is needed as to how extensive and complete a list of services for any area will be included. Mr. Wagner suggested that something like an application be developed and sent to different businesses and services asking for them to agree to be added to the FCCDHH website and providing information is up to date. James Forstall from FTRI stated as a member of the public that he liked the idea of one stop shopping but as a consumer wanted to see on the website only persons who are licensed or otherwise credentialed to provide quality services. Eloise Williams is in charge of the information and referral services under the Department of Elder Affairs. She stated that we need to be clear about what our standard for inclusion or exclusion for sites that are included and partner with other state agencies that have websites. We need to consider having an OPS person or a data management specialist who can assist in gathering and managing the data in the website.

The Council reviewed the two proposals by website developers. The Information and Referral Committee discussed the proposals at length. Stan Gustetic provided information on behalf of the committee requesting additional proposals. An idea was proposed that the FSDB webmaster be used by FCCDHH for development of the website. Financially this could be beneficial as a line item transfer can be made between DOH and FSDB. This would of course need to be approved through channels at FSDB. Julie Shaw offered to have persons on the ADAWG test the website once it is developed for accessibility. Issues were discussed regarding the TTY numbers and

Misty Burns' computer capability. It was agreed that the issue of website development would be tabled until more information could be gathered.

The logo for FCCDHH was discussed and developed.

The council reviewed the first draft of the 2005 report. Laurie Gaylord made a point that the report needs to be very professional, without errors. She suggested all abbreviations be spelled out. Julie Church offered to review the final draft for editing as she has a background as a newspaper editor. Randy Ellsworth is relatively new to the terminology of the field of deaf and hard of hearing and it was recommended that he review the draft for understandability. Julie Shaw recommended that the Council refer to Bobby Silverstein's framework writing a report and recommendations for Effective Framework for Disability Policy Change in writing the 2005 report. Rick Kottler recommended making Executive Summary brief and to the point including the recommendations of the Council. Tanya English indicated a need to define captioning and CART so the difference is clear. Evan Goldman suggested that we place WHO we are prominently in the beginning of the report. Laurie suggested that it would be appropriate to include the criteria for credentialing teachers of the deaf if concerns about education are included in the report. Evy Friend passed out copies of the state board rule defining credentials for teachers who are hard of hearing. Ms. Gaylord raised concern about lack of credentialing for persons who provide services to children under age 3. Mrs. Church indicated that it is important to limit the information contained within the report so that it is to the point and we can prioritize long term issues. Stan Gustetic indicated that the responses from the state agencies need to be condensed into a single bullet – we need to make sure the requirements of the legislation are fully addressed.

Chris Wagner indicated that the report was incomplete and another meeting is necessary. The group decided to meet via teleconferencing on December 9th.

Joan Haber discussed the matrix of services. There were 3 goals in developing the matrix (1) identify gaps in service, (2) developing information to include on the FCCDHH website, (3) to identify issues related to data collection problems. Discussion occurred about if real-time captioning is available only for emergency purposes or available for other broadcasts. The group agreed that the matrix would reflect stations that provided real-time captioning for all broadcasts. Julie Shaw will provide the contact information to the Council. Once the matrix is completed it will be sent to staff and Chris with a summary of the findings. Julie raised the issue that gaps in services are due to lack of uniform statewide funding to provide services.

The FCCDHH worked to establish recommendation areas for the 2005 report. Members voted on prioritizing the nine recommendations. Priorities were set as follows:

The FCCDHH worked to establish recommendation areas for the 2005 report. Members voted on prioritizing the nine recommendations. Priority issues were set as follows:

1. funding and activities to facilitate accessibility to medical and legal services
2. educate, monitor and report compliance with minimum standards for accessibility to public services, disaster response/recovery, and broadcasted public information
3. increase uniform availability and access to support services for deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, and deaf-blind individuals
4. define competency standards and training for persons who provide intervention services or education for children ages birth to 22 years
5. expand funding for hearing aids

6. increase availability of qualified interpreters, Real-time captioning services, CART providers and other accommodations (report to address this issue Jan 2006)
7. pursue expansion and improvement of quality, outreach and awareness of telecommunication relay services
8. decrease barriers to successful transition to employment

Members worked on strategies under each of the priorities.

The next meeting will be held in Tampa on January 13th and 14th, 2005.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.