

**ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING
QUARTERLY MEETING**

**June 26, 2020
Virtual -ZOOM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen Leslie-Henry, Chair, Kay Tyberg, Vice-Chair, Russ Goddard, Jerald Cohen, Michelle Paonessa, Rebecah Lorah, Trish Mader, Amy Letteri

ODHH STAFF: Melissa Hawkins, Director, DeeDee Keiser, Ben Moonen, Denise Brown

GUESTS: Sharon Behun, CIL, Ryan Hyde, OVR, Harry Barnum, Beth Harris, L&I, Matt Seeley, Nancy Kingsley, Jeff Iseman, Steve Pennington, Ambry Ward, Chris Nochese, Alex Van Hook, Loree Drawbaugh

INTERPRETERS: Cindi Brown, Jessica Bentley - Sossamon

CART: Debbie Cunningham

ZOOM Moderator: Nichole Wade

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF December 6, 2019 MINUTES

Corrections were needed with spelling of ODHH Directors Last name in two locations.

Corrections were also needed regarding the number of languages the US Census was using, it should have said 19 languages instead of the 19 million languages it stated.

Amy made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections.

Russ seconded the motion.

Minutes were approved.

Stakeholder Reports

The reports were submitted previously for the council to review and have questions prepared. There were no additions to the stakeholder reports during the meeting except for HLAA announcing they attended the Farm Show.

DBLW - Grace Shirk- Emmons resigned as admin assistant and Heather Snyder was hired full time. Advocacy group was created. Contact Heather if you want to be involved.

HLAA – PA – the lunch and learn was cancelled due to the pandemic.

PA – SILC - PA SILC State Plan for Independent Living (SPIL)- Our board held a public hearing and approved changes. Primary issues brought up during the public comment period were transportation, HCBS, housing, accessibility and advocacy where PA SILC and 16 PA CILs will address over the next three years (October 1, 2020- September 30, 2020). Comment period was to conclude on June 21, 2020.

CAP- Submitted a letter of recommendations for increased budget and more staff. Further actions will need to be taken to strengthen ODHH’s capacity to provide the level of supports underlying the intent of the Act, including greater coordination with State agencies, additional supports for employers seeking to hire deaf and hard of hearing employees, education and outreach to the community and increased advocacy.

Public Time: Sharon Behun wanted people to be aware they were are still having their upcoming training for persons who are interested in becoming an SSP. The training will be August 22 and 23 here in Harrisburg.

Council Reports

OVR Update – Ryan Hyde

Pre-Employment transition services specially have been stalled since the schools have been closed. It really has prevented OVR from meeting with students and enrolling them for various summer programs. We are continuing to open cases. More people have been moved off the OOS wait list. We continue to provide services, we are available. Telecommuting is the preference.

Labor and Industry – Russ Goddard

Vast majority of L&I staff from Worker Compensation, Workforce Development, Disability Determination, Occupational and Industrial Safety, Center for Workforce Information and Analysis, Labor Law Compliance, OVR, and ODHH

continue to work from home o Telework is still strongly encouraged in green phase of Governor Wolf's Process to Reopen

ODHH has been working daily at PEMA to ensure clear communication access is available for the deaf and hard of hearing population across the Commonwealth. The interpreters that are working with ODHH works with during the daily Press Events are Certified Deaf Interpreters.

Department of Aging – Rebeca Lorah

In January, I met with staff at OVR, along with Robert Torres, Secretary of Aging, and PDA Digital Director to discuss accessibility guidelines for the PDA website and for the PACE website (<https://pacecares.magellanhealth.com/>). The PACE website will soon be revamped by the PACE contractor and I want to ensure web designers follow accessibility guidelines.

Department of Health -Stacey Gustin

The Division of Newborn Screening and Genetics received funding from HRSA for a four-year grant which started on April 1, 2020. The purpose of the PA EHDI program's proposed project is enhancing the current EHDI system of care so families with newborns, infants, and young children up to three years of age who are D/HH receive appropriate and timely services that include hearing screening, diagnosis, and EI. The PA EHDI program will focus on four main methods to achieve project objectives. The focus areas are:

- Leading efforts to engage and coordinate all stakeholders in the EHDI system to meet the program goals
- Engaging, educating, and training health professionals and service providers in the EHDI system
- Strengthening the program's capacity to provide family support and engage families with children who are D/HH as well adults who are D/HH
- Facilitating improved coordination of care and services for families and children who are D/HH

Department of Human Services -Trish Mader

Kristen Houser became the Deputy Secretary of the Office of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Service (OMHSAS) on March 23, 2020 replacing Acting Deputy Secretary Valerie Vicari.

Jamie Buchenauer will replace Kevin Hancock as the Deputy Secretary for the Office of Long-Term Living (OLTL) effective June 15, 2020. Jamie previously served as the Director of Bureau of Fee-for-Service Programs in the Office of Medical Assistance Programs (OMAP).

In February, OMHSAS released a revised Telehealth Bulletin related to use of telehealth for behavioral health services. The revised bulletin expanded the use of telehealth to behavioral health practitioners who provide services in the Medicaid Fee-for-Service delivery system (since the previous bulletin only included Medicaid Behavioral Health Managed Care providers.) It also expanded the use of telehealth to include treatment provided by CRNPs, Physician Assistants, Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Licensed Professional Counselors and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists

Nomination of New Council Members

Chris Noschese was interviewed by the Council. He served for 18 years previously under several administrations. He mentions multiple accomplishments in his time and is eager to assist with more. He also said a priority should be getting Representatives from the Senate and House.

Alex Van Hook was interviewed by the Council. He is in law school and will attend virtually next year. He sees challenges in the accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing in the virtual world. He plans to use his law degree to work in the disability rights field.

Loree Drawbaugh was previously interviewed by the Council. She reintroduced herself and mentioned she was a stay at home mom who taught ASL online.

The Council went into a separate ZOOM room to discuss the candidates. They came back voted on all three. All three names were voted on to be sent for appointment.

Karen reminded the council the Governor can do as he chooses.

Nomination and Election of Officers: Michelle Paonessa was nominated for Chair, Russ Goddard and Kay Tyberg were nominated with Vice Chair. As there were no volunteers for secretary. Karen offered to serve. There were questions raised on if a member sitting USQ could be an officer. Multiple people spoke on the subject. ODHH/L&I Legal Counsel Beth Harris was going to investigate the matter and the Secretary Election was tabled for the time being Elections were held with Michelle winning Chair and Russ winning Vice Chair.

Council Work Time

Broadcast letter has been updated multiple times. Karen asked for any further comments or changes on this letter. With none taken, the council voted 5-2 for the letter to go out. Karen wanted to determine the letterhead.

ODHH Staff Letter of Support

Karen asked the council to vote whether they should send a letter of support for the third position for ODHH which was taken away. Council voted 5-1 to work on the letter and send it to the Secretary of Labor and Industry.

Comment

Although Public Time was already held Steve Pennington wanted to speak. He wanted the council and public to know that the letter he wrote in support of the third position being funded again was a collaboration between PSAD and HLAA. They specifically asked for a Hard of Hearing Specialist.

Karen's closing remarks indicated the next meeting was September 26, 2020 the location was to be determined. Amy made a motion to end the meeting. Michelle seconded the motion. Motion passed and the meeting was adjourned.