

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

**September 25, 2020**

**Virtual -ZOOM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Michelle Paonessa, Chair, Russ Goddard, Vice-Chair, Lori Leiman, Karen Leslie Henry, Alexander Van Hook, Rebecca Lorah, Trish Mader, Amy Letteri, Stacey Gustin

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

**INTERPRETERS:** Cindi Brown, Jessica Bentley - Sossamon

**CART:** Debbie Cunningham

**ZOOM Moderator:** Nichole Wade

**Review and Approval of June 26, 2020 Minutes**

Corrections were needed with Karen Leslie Henry asking for changes in herself nominated by herself for Secretary.

Also needing changed was the following meeting date was the 25<sup>th</sup> not 26<sup>th</sup>.

Motion was made to accept minutes with both changes by Russ, Amy Second the motion. Minutes were approved with changes.

Presentation: Christa Cervantes with Hamilton relay.

Crista spoke about real-time text and how it is available on wireless devices. Hamilton was thinking that perhaps that might be a solution for people who use a TTY from their home and don't have a wireless device. For whatever reasons maybe they don't want one or maybe they don't have access to a wireless device depending on where they live and the coverage. Hamilton has developed a phone that works with the home phone

system and wi-fi and it is an RTT compatible phone. This is going to be used in a trial in Pennsylvania of this RTT device to see if it is something that people want to use, like to use and to get feedback on how it works. Crista invited anyone interested to contact her for more information.

### **Department Reports:**

The reports were submitted previously for the council to review and have questions prepared.

### **Labor and Industry –**

Jeremiah Underhill the Deputy Director of OVR introduced himself and spoke for a bit on his background.

Melissa Hawkins spoke on staff all working remotely and are handling calls and requests for assistance with IEPs and everything else that comes their way. They recognize the challenge the virtual world is for those that are deaf and hard of hearing and Deaf-Blind. They have been working collaboratively with community partners to improve on that service.

### **Department of Human Services – Nothing to Report**

**Aging** – working to update the PACE cares website. I Rebecca works for the PACE program with the Department of Aging. She reports the PACE care site is outdated. As they update that they will be following the guidelines provided to us by OVR to ensure that it is up-to-date with any guidance that they provide.

**Department of Health** -Two small updates: Department of health received some additional funds. What we are using those funds for had to do something with COVID. What we are going to be doing is having virtual round tables with all our stakeholders to discuss telehealth and who we invited to these upcoming meetings are part C early intervention providers and other stakeholders. The

second update is that they had a vacancy within our division right now and one of those vacancies was our early hearing detention coordinator.

### **Public Comment –**

Nancy Kingsley spoke to let everyone know that the Walk for Hearing was being held Virtually on October 18<sup>th</sup> from 9:45 – 11. There will be captions.

Jeff Iseman from PA SILC spoke and let everyone know that the State Plan for Independent Living is being reviewed by the Feds. SILC hopes to have final answers by the end of this month. The issues they heard about were home and community-based services, housing, transportation, advocacy, and accessibility

### **Council Interviews -**

Kallie Mendenhall was interviewed by the Council. She considers herself deaf and taught herself ASL at age of 18. And really I feel like I have such a rich experience and background information and resources that I can contribute and share with this council and bring new ideas, new resources, new collaborations, partnerships, programs, schools, departments, et cetera, the Department of Health,

Debi Shostak was interviewed by the Council. She is a CDI She spoke of her with senior citizens. She has a lot of variety of experiences working with people and different organizations such as the national association for the deaf, the registry of interpreters for the deaf. The Pennsylvania association of the deaf, the New Jersey register industry of interpreters for the deaf. She has a lot of connections out there in the community.

The Council went into a separate ZOOM room to discuss the candidates. They came back voted to move both names forward to the Governor's office for approval.

### **Council Worktime**

Two Subcommittees were developed: Early Intervention and Distance Learning. Each council member selected a group they wanted to be a part of, and planning would continue after the meeting via email.

Michelle made closing remarks and reminded everyone the next meeting would be on December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2020 via Zoom. Karen made a motion to adjourn. Rebecca made a second.

**Meeting adjourned.**