**DRAFT**

# VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

## ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

## MAY 2, 2017

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Debbie Pfeiffer**

**Shantell Lewis**

**Carrie Humphrey**

**Traci Branch**

**Kathi Mestayer**

**Tim Patterson**

**Jason Zuccari**

**Roy B. Martin**

**Susi Wilbur**

**STAFF PRESENT**

**Ron Lanier**

**Leslie Hutcheson Prince**

**Steven Burkarth**

**GUESTS**

**Lauren Cramer – Hamilton Relay**

**INTERPRETERS**

**Bernadette Mayhall**

**Emily Haynes-McGee**

**CART**

**Rhonda Tuck – Cavalier Reporting**

## CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS:

The Quarterly meeting of the Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) Advisory Board, called “the Board” was called to order by Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer at 10:00a.m. All members, staff and guests were welcomed and introduced themselves.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS:

### Review/Approve Agenda:

There being no recommended corrections or changes, motion was made by Kathi Mestayer, seconded by Roy Martin and unanimously approved to accept the agenda as written.

### Review/Approve Draft Minutes February 7, 2017 Meeting:

Ron Lanier requested that the spelling of the month February be corrected at the top of the draft minutes.

Kathi Mestayer requested that the spelling of Julia Strickland be corrected to Juliette Sterkens.

Debbie Pfeiffer requested that (Staff Reports – Interpreter Services Programs, #3) spelling be corrected to fine tuned.

There being no further changes requested, motion was made by Roy Martin, seconded by Susi Wilbur and unanimously approved to accept the minutes as written with corrections.

### REPORTS:

#### Board Member Reports:

Shantell Lewis: Dr. Lewis participated in the VDDHH TAP Focus Group Event which took place on April , 2017. The emphasis of this event was hearing aids and related technology and provided information regarding over-the-counter and online hearing aids vs. “prescription” aids. The event was very well attended and generated some very valid questions about blue tooth and t-coils.

Kathi Mestayer: Ms. Mestayer completed two more presentations to nurses in final clinical stages of RN training. She suggested again that we consider recognizing hospitals making an effort to follow the “Best Practices Guidelines” that we collaborated on with the VA Department of Health.

Tim Patterson: Mr. Patterson has recently attended several functions of the national organization “Hands and Voices”, a non-profit group lead by parents, providing support to children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. They support all communication methodologies and languages.

Eric Raff noted that there will be a “Hands and Voices” event here in Richmond on May 11, 2017 and that VDDHH was approached by Valerie Abbott of the organization with interest in launching a project to distribute visual fire alarms to families who need visual alerts.

Roy Martin: Mr. Martin mentioned a deaf and hard of hearing camp at Camp Apasus, a Girl Scout Camp in Norfolk, VA. This is a grassroots event which has grown over the last two years and is sponsored by the local Lion’s Club and Sertoma Club. The next event is scheduled for June 3, 2017.

Dr. Debbie Pfeiffer: Three webinars are scheduled (one took place on April 19, 2017), one is scheduled for May 10th and one for May 17th. They all focus on early language and literacy development for deaf or hard of hearing children.

Martha French, formerly of Gallaudet, developed the Kendall Conversation Proficiency Scales. Ms. French conducted the April 19th webinar and will follow up on May 17th about how to assess a child’s ASL skills and use that assessment to develop goals and strategies for language development.

The May 10th seminar will be conducted by developers of the Visual Communication and Sign Language Checklist, the first standardized assessment for children birth through age six.

Short courses are being offered through the Central Institute for the Deaf on listening and spoken language skills to professionals such as speech and language pathologists, early childhood intervention providers and teachers. A Science Camp0 is being offered in the Tidewater area by Rita Hampton of the Jefferson Lab (Newport News, VA).

Carrie Humphrey: VRID will have a business meeting on June 24, 2017. A workshop will take place before and after the meeting focusing on linguistics and mentorship presented by Miako Rankin of Gallaudet. A task force is currently working on drafting a survey for the VRID membership to identify mentoring needs with Virginia.

Susi Wilbur: Briefly discussed a situation where a patient had been provided the same interpreter for several years in a health care setting which had been provided and coordinated by the insurance provider. When the insurance provider contacted VDDHH about the situation, apparently, the doctor’s office took over the interpreter coordination and a different interpreter was used with whom the patient was not satisfied. The final outcome of the situation is unclear at this time and being researched.

#### Agency Reports:

Director’s Activities Report (copy included in folder) – Ron Lanier: Among a number of activities listed, Mr. Lanier highlighted the following:

1. On January (??) 19, 2017 the Video Relay Services panel with representatives from Sorenson and Purple Communication met with the Statewide Interagency Team as they move forward in collaboration with the Libraries of Virginia to have video phones installed in public libraries. These installations are beginning in Southwest Virginia.
2. In the quarterly meeting update with Secretary of Health and Human Resources Bill Hazel, Mr. Lanier noted that Dr. Hazel had concerns about retirement and replacement of VDDHH staff plans since many staff are eligible.
3. On March 4, 2017 Mr. Lanier attended a meeting in Norfolk, VA with the Deaf Resources of Hampton Roads group. They are interested in having a Deaf Resources Center established in the Norfolk, VA area.
4. On September 29 and 30, 2017, VDDHH will celebrate its 45th Anniversary with an Open House. That week is also Deaf Awareness Week. He asked Board members to “save the date” for the event.

Virginia Relay Report (copy in folder) – Eric Raff:

1. The report provided to Board members shows no significant changes in call traffic.
2. VDDHH has been working with Virginia Information Technology Agency (VITA) on extending the captioned telephone contract. A four year extension (through 2021) has been awarded beginning April 2017.
3. The Virginia Relay website has been upgraded and is now accessible from smartphone. Editorial and formatting changes have been made.
4. A meeting of the Virginia Relay Advisory Council (VRAC) took place in April 2017. The focus was on real-time texting. It was noted that a seat on the Council is available for a hearing Relay user.
5. Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc. (TDI) will have a conference in Bethesda MD focusing on telecommunication, media and information technology on July 27 through 29, 2017.

Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) Program – Leslie Hutcheson:

New VQAS assessment materials will be ready to launch at the end of July 2017. Some Rater training has taken place in preparation for the launch.

New cameras are being prepped and Ms. Ziehl will receive training on their use. The new cameras will use SD Memory Cards instead of the high-definition mini videotapes now being used. It is anticipated that the visual and audio quality of the memory cards will be much improved.

New laptops have been ordered for the VQAS Program to be used for the VQAS and EIPA Written Assessment. It is anticipated that they will be delivered and set-up for use within the next month.

Interpreter Services Program (ISP) – Leslie Hutcheson:

VDDHH received an inquiry concerning Interpreter licensure in the state of Virginia. Ms. Hutcheson noted that the VDDHH Advisory Board requested a study on licensure and/or regulation of sign language interpreters in Virginia about ten years ago. A study was done by the Department for Professional and Occupational Regulation (DPOR) involving public hearings, public input, etc. and, based on all gathered information, the final decision at that time was not to regulate the profession.

Ms. Hutcheson put the request before the Board for input on pursuing another study. In the previous study, VDDHH provided technical and administrative assistance. The decision for regulation is made by the General Assembly; in order for the request to get to the GA, the study must be done by DPOR. VDDHH has no role in the decision however, input from the community and consumers, including the Board is important. Several Board members asked for a copy of the previous study which Ms. Hutcheson will provide.

Mrs. Humphrey noted that the challenge is Interpreters completing an ITP are not necessarily prepared to go into the workforce as a qualified Interpreter. The support to provide them necessary skills will still be needed if licensure or regulation were to take place.

Ms. Hutcheson noted that she will meet in June with staff from the Office of the Clerks of the Virginia House of Delegates and Virginia Senate to discuss communication access in the General Assembly. She will report on that meeting at the August meeting.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT:

There being no guests attending requesting public comment, the meeting continued as scheduled.

**LUNCH BREAK**

Strategic Plan Update (Provided by Leslie Hutcheson during break):

VDDHH has been required to do a Strategic Plan Update for fiscal year 2018. This is a non-aspiration Strategic Plan update, meaning the budget has already been decided for next year by the General Assembly so this does not include budget requests. The main initiative reflected is the shift in Outreach and Technology Assistance Program (TAP). The TAP Outreach will not include all contracted TAP providers (assistive technology provided to community, installation, training, etc.) and outreach will focus on training and technical assistance.

As we go into the new administration, state agencies will be working on a full strategic plan for fiscal years 2018 – 2020.

Outreach and Community Services – Gary Talley:

Mr. Talley is developing two new workshops, one for seniors and one for young people, to encourage interest and help make a connection with VDDHH and services provided.

He is also developing a new Employee Work Profile (EWP) for a new staff member who will be recruited soon.

Two video phones have been installed in public libraries in Southwest Virginia; one in the Pulaski Library and one in the Virginia and Washington County Library in Abingdon. Both now have operational Sorenson video phones. This will be promoted with local media over the next few days.

Technology Assistance Program – Christine Ruderson:

Ms. Ruderson attended a workshop on April 18, 2017 at the Federal Trade Commission entitled “Now Hear This”. The workshop focused on hearing aids and topics included self-screening, audiology, over-the-counter hearing aids, bundling vs. unbundling, hearing healthcare regulations (costs and benefits, insurance benefits). A follow-up meeting will take place on June 5 from 1p.m. to 3p.m., location TBA.

The information at this workshop fit in perfectly with materials presented at the TAP Focus Group which took place on April 29, 2017 at VDDHH. Board member Dr. Shantell Lewis was the Focus Group’s main presenter and information provided by Dr. Lewis was received very positively. Vendors provided loan equipment of Bluetooth and Telecoil compatible equipment used for demonstration.

Three promos were done by WTVR Channel 6 (Antoinette Eassa, Community Events Reporter) and the event on April 29th was very successful.

#### BOARD MEMBERSHIP UPDATE:

Dr. Shantell Lewis’ term will end in 2018. Dr. Lewis expressed an interest in reappointment. Carrie Humphrey is serving an unexpired term and one full term, which will end in 2018. Mrs. Humphrey was encouraged to check with the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth to find out if she can serve a second full term.

**PRESENTATION BY HIMILTON RELAY REAL-TIME TEXT – LAUREN CRAMER AND JEFF KNIGHTON (BY CONFERENCE CALL):**

Lauren Cramer has been the Account Manager for Virginia Relay for the past two years. In January 2017 she was brought into as Senior Relay Outreach and Marketing Manager.

Jeff Knighton is President of Hamilton Innovation, focusing on developing emerging technologies. Mr. Knighton has been involved since the beginning of real-time text in 2005 and has worked on development with some of the original authors. His background is in engineering and software development in the realm of telecommunications.

Two videos were presented. The first is all visual and presents a history of real-time text since 2005. It was created when the FCC was putting together thoughts on how real-time text should be used in IP environments. The second video focuses on mobile technology and how that works with real-time text. This video is more a recap after the FCC made a ruling.

FIRST VIDEO PLAYED.

Mr. Knighton noted that when this video was developed the FCC was requesting comment about how real-time text should be regulated and converting real-time text that might exist on a mobile network.

Hamilton wanted to be sure that providers who support real-time text would not convert to TTY first.

The second point was an offer to the industry saying that, as a Relay provider, Hamilton already knew how to convert to TTY so since they support real-time text (RRT) and TTY, they would be a solution for performing this gateway service that may be an alternate solution. FCC said that carriers have a responsibility to implemen6t the gateways but can do it however they want; by using a relay provider or by providing the gateway themselves.

SECOND VIDEO COULD NOT BE DISPLAYED. Mr. Knighton verbally explained the video and answered questions:

The second video explains the FCC ruling which is directed to wireless phone carriers that provide IP based service. It details requirements as part of the ruling.

The first requirement is RTT intraoperability that says if there is one network that supports RTT and you have another network that also supports RTT, the two need to be able to do RTT between them.

The second requirement is responsibility for backward compatibility. If one network is RTT capable and the other is not, the provider has responsibility of converting that RTT to TTY.

The second video highlights the experience of the consumer and what they may expect on their mobile phones with RTT capabilities. The FCC did not dictate that phones need a button on the phone screen. A standards group called ATIS has been working on standards for how RTT will be used on mobile phones.

The customer will have the ability to set a general setting to make RTT easy to use in making or receiving a call. A RTT call will include a voice channel so there will be the ability to type and use audio in conjunction.

The FCC has timelines for adoption of RTT which affect the local providers; AT&T, T-Mobile, and Sprint. It also affects manufacturers that build phones for those providers. The nearest timeline is at the end of this calendar year, December 31, 2017, that the major wireless carriers (AT&T, Verizon, T-Mobile and Sprint) have an obligation to support RTT on at least one handset. Providers can choose to have the capability built in or available as an application that is downloaded.

The second deadline is a manufacturer deadline that by 2019 (date TBA) all new phone devices have screens that support text communication. Older phones will not have to be retrofitted.

This ruling at this time applies to mobile phone providers and there may be many existing infrastructure phone systems that don’t support RTT.

Ms. Cramer and Mr. Knighton were thanked for the information and presentation. Board members were encouraged to reach out if they had questions or need additional information.

#### PLANNING FOR AUGUST 2017 MEETING:

The following agenda items were requested:

1. Follow-up on Interpreter licensure issue (this would be an opportunity for public comment including written comment that can be read during the public comment period. It was also suggested that a town hall meeting to provide the public with more information be considered.)
2. Follow-up on agency Strategic Plan and member input
3. Follow-up on Virginia Premier Health Plan, a managed care organization
4. It was suggested that, to leave enough time for the issues above to be addressed, Board and Agency reports be emailed in advance to members.
5. It will be decided on the day of the meeting with unanimous approval to extend the meeting time until 3:00 p.m. if needed

#### TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT:

Steven Burkarth noted that all members who meet criteria are entitled to travel expense reimbursement. He asked members to see him before leaving or email him and he would get the paperwork processed.

#### ADJOURN:

There being no further business to come before the Board, motion was made by Roy Martin, seconded by Carrie Humphrey and unanimously approved to adjourn.