



Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind Council meeting (11/21/19)

Meeting Minutes

Call to order

A meeting of Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind Council was held at Waterbury State Office Complex (Ash Conference Room) on 11/21/2019.

Attendees

Monica Hutt, Bill Hudson, Ralph Gallo, Laura Seigel, Tracy Harris, Julie Stefanski, Sharon Henry, Deb Charlea Baker, Rebecca Chalmers, Susan Kimmerly, William Pendlebury.

Congratulations to William Pendlebury!

Thank you to Bill Hudson for being an excellent interim Vice Chair for the Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind Advisory council. The votes were cast by the council and William Pendlebury was elected as the new vice-chair of the council!

General Updates

- ❖ Minutes from September 2019 are accepted by the council (Quorum = 50%)
- ❖ 9East Network: EHDI Update (\$235,000) 4-year grant with Vermont Department of Health. The funds are dispersed as follows, most of goes to VDH and UVMMC and then there's a break off for PIP program and Hands and Voices. At 9East Network, 30% of contracted service hours were achieved within the first 10 weeks of the school year. Linda Hazard is now part-time at 9East network. 9East's goal is to collect more data and set up systems for ages 3-4, additionally - to focus on teacher of the deaf training.
- ❖ FDA: Hearing Aid Bill. In 2017, there was a proposal for over the counter hearing aids. Goal was to have these available by early 2020, the FDA is supposed to have guidelines for a new category of hearing devices. The intended consumer for the over the counter aids is someone with mild-moderate hearing loss. The timeline for the rollout for this is pushed back to Summer 2020. (How can people get fitted for a hearing device without the official consult from an audiologist?)
- ❖ Vermont Medicaid only covers a portion of the cost for hearing aids (as it's considered after potential primary insurance), and the benefit does not always extend to older demographics.
- ❖ Rebecca: Vermont Hands and Voices wants to thank Linda Hazard for her grant writing assistance. NASDSE (National Association of State Directors of Special Education). National Special Ed Director's guidance document (2018) for Deaf/Hard of Hearing/Deaf Blind students, piqued interest at the National Hands and Voices conference. (Rebecca, Tracy Harris, and potentially Cheryl Johnson will collaborate to create educational training opportunities around the guidance this document gives).

- ❖ Open caption updates AARP and HLAA: There's a hearing in human services in the early 2020 legislative session.
- ❖ Hearing Aid coverage: Bills are due December 2nd, AARP. VSEA (Vermont State Employee's Association): is very interested in advocating for hearing aid coverage.

Legislative Updates

- ❖ Monica's update on Director position: The first round of interviews for director candidates got snowed out with the early winter weather. The current rescheduled date to hold first round interviews is December 10th, 2019. Video conferencing will be available for some out of state folks. There are plans to have a council meet and greet with prospective directors. Late January, early February is the current timeline.
- ❖ If the council is the advisory committee for this new person, how do we design opportunities for success for them? The new director will not be writing the legislative report for the next year, as the report is still the responsibility of the Council. The Council remains its own entity as it's built by members representing their own entity or perspective. Although the Director will partner with the Council, they will not become a single perspective.
- ❖ Report to the governor: should we include the new research about hearing loss with dementia? The legislative report needs to be submitted by January 1st, 2020. Therefore, the deadline for edits is December 10th, 2019.

Future Agenda Topics

- ❖ What plans could we have for the subcommittees, should there be edits?
- ❖ Is there further coordination that can be done with the Department of Corrections around accessibility for inmates who may be deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf blind?
- ❖ How might the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention division of Vermont Department of Health (known as ADAP) provide support for folks attending AA meetings who may be deaf, hard of hearing, or deaf blind?
- ❖ H.E.A.R.D: Talila Lewis (community lawyer and consultant around intersectional thought, education, organizing, advocacy and litigation that highlights and addresses the nexus between race, class, disability, other marginalized identities, and structural inequity).

Announcements

- ❖ Workgroup for Legal-deaf system (from point of entry to re-entry after prison) (<http://vtrid.org/survey-interest-legal-interpreting/>)
- ❖ Vermont Hands and Voices/VT Association of the Deaf (Holiday party December 14th in Richmond, VT). If you sign up (RSVP) children can receive a gift from Santa. <https://vthv.org/events>
- ❖ Deadline is December 10th for edits to the legislative report.

New Dates + *locations* for 2020 council meetings:

January 16th, 2020 - *Ash conference room*

March 19th, 2020 - *Cherry A conference room*

May 21st, 2020 - *Cherry A conference room*

July 16th, 2020 - *Cherry B conference room*

September 17th, 2020 - *Cherry B conference room*

November 19th, 2020 - *Cherry B conference room*

Next Council Date

01/16/20 (Ash Conference room, Waterbury State Office Complex) - 10am - 1pm.

Secretary

Date of approval