

**Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Spring Retreat 2010 - April 23, 2010
Marriott Cincinnati Airport, Hebron, KY**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Nina Coyer, Dr. Patricia Freeman, Ms. Melody Bock-Freeman, Mr. David Bayersdorfer, Ms. Susan Brown, Ms. Cristal Collins, Ms. Michelle Niehaus, Mr. Ed Schickel, Mr. Bob Stuckey, Ms. Betty Timon and Ms. Sharon White

MEMBERS ABSENT: Mr. Jim Thompson, Mr. John Horsley and Ms. Edie Ryan

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Virginia L. Moore, Mr. Derek Drury, , Ms. Leslie Ricketts, Ms. Anita Dowd, Mr. Craig Lemak, Ms. Rachel Payne, Mr. Jim Rivard, Ms. Wilma Wright, Mr. Opé Sotonwa and Ms. Rowena Holloway

STAFF ABSENT: Cole Zulauf and Rachel Morgan

COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS: Ms. Dana Parker, Ms. Tammy Cantrell and Ms. Laura Kogut

VISITORS: Mr. Bruce Freeman

The Chair introduced Ms. Heather Harker, a previous intern at KCDHH. Ms. Harker departed KCDHH and went on to graduate from Harvard with a Master's degree. She presently resides in Boston, Massachusetts and is employed as a facilitator / consultant for a non-profit organization.

The Board Secretary, Ms. Bock-Freeman called roll and as there was a quorum present, the meeting continued. Commissioners and staff introduced themselves stating their position, length of service and what they treasure most about their involvement with KCDHH.

The intended outcome of the Retreat is to come to a shared agreement on strategic priorities for KCDHH, identification of critical issues, a common understanding of our commitment to KCDHH its "culture".

The Commissioners and KCDHH staff accepted the agreements for working together presented by Ms. Harker, which were to listen, respect each person's perspective, assume good intentions and put all pagers/cell phones on silent mode.

The key concepts for the framework of working together were:

- "culture" – shared understanding and commitment to KCDHH;
- "transition" – the end, the closing and the middle (adjustments, changing, shifting) meaning you finish the past but the future has yet to be determined;
- "metanoic" – all parts have identity that they can contribute to the advancement of the greater vision;

- “coalition” – shared values and shared commitment (KCDHH function is more like this).

The meeting recessed at 9:23 p.m. to resume on Saturday, April 24, 2010.

The meeting reconvened at 9:05 a.m.

Participants were the same as April 23, with the exception of Mr. John Horsely (Commissioner) and Mr. Cole Zulauf (Staff) are now present and Mr. Ed Schickel (Commissioner) is now absent.

Ms. Harker reviewed the four key concepts: culture, coalition, metanoic and transition. Discussion followed regarding the application of these concepts with commentary and analysis from the staff and the Commissioners. The group was divided into Commissioners and staff and an assignment was given to find three strengths the agency could build on and three changes that would have a positive effect on KCDHH.

The staff’s suggestions of strengths to build on were:

1. Tap into individuals’ expertise and experiences.
2. Improve the KCDHH team.
3. Shift the community view of KCDHH.

The staff’s transition ideas were:

1. Know more about each person’s role in KCDHH to become more efficient and have a better understanding of KCDHH as a whole.
2. Respect each other as professionals.
3. Dilemma of balancing responsibilities without relinquishing quality of work or giving up any of the priorities within the strategic plan.

The Commissioners suggestions of strengths KCDDH should build on were:

1. KCDHH’s Mission Statement which is to provide effective and efficient leadership, advocacy and direct services to eliminate barriers and to meet the social, economic, educational, cultural and intellectual needs of deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.
2. Diversity and strengths of staff.
3. Technology.

The Commissioners transition ideas were:

1. Respect each other and each person’s Personal Belief System (PBS).
2. Improved communication between staff and the Board and sharing this communication throughout the community within the state of Kentucky.
3. Open Dialogue should be available.

In conclusion, the Commissioners and staff found there were two key elements that were most needed to move forward; engagement and respect.

The Commissioners and staff were again subdivided into groups to review and revise the goals and objectives drafted for the 2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan. After deliberation within the groups, one member presented the changes recommended as follows:

Goal #1: *Improve, strengthen and develop services, including human and communication services.*

Top objectives:

- Education of agencies regarding use of Access Center (AC) – include information on Hearing Assistive Technology (HAT) – use of technology.
- 1.4 Expand partnerships and awareness of what services are out there.
- 1.5 Creative Public Relations – Use to promote agency, TAP, AC as whole.

Recommended Changes:

- Make sure website is effective, inclusive of all information and easy to navigate.
- Clarify language (i.e. develop services) to be clear that we do not provide direct services. Suggested word choices were collaboration, promote communication services or develop program to promote services.

Additional Information:

- Add descriptive information on HAT.
- More inclusion information with partnerships established (schools, churches, non-profit).
- More outreach to schools, business, etc. to educate on all of the services KCDHH has to offer.

Goal #2: *Serve as a clearinghouse of current information from local, state and national resources to provide appropriate information and referral services.*

Top objectives:

- Make sure Public Relations (PR) plan is inclusive of resource centers and other avenues than the website.
- Use web to increase dialogue with blogs, etc. Identify regional resource centers, specifically in rural areas where individuals can get information “community speaks”.

Recommended changes:

- Replace word “clearinghouse”; suggestions offered were hub or central point.
- Move “Launch Aggressive PR” plan to developing objectives.
- Define PR to whom, with whom, for whom. Campaign needs to include face-to-face, media, town halls, etc.
- Develop team for PR and flesh out input on developing plan.
- Share responsibility for implementing.

Goal #3: *Initiate and advise the development of public policy and systems change effort in cooperation with the Governor, General Assembly, governmental agencies, public and private entities.*

Recommended Changes:

- Advocate for appropriate education and testing systems for the deaf and hard of hearing K-12 and post-secondary students.

- Work with state agencies in an advisory capacity in matters related to deaf and hard of hearing issues.
- Continually monitor and promote legislative initiatives that effect deaf and hard of hearing Kentuckians.
- “mobilization of available resources”, explain in more depth
- “restructure” - actual restructure or improving more on who uses sign language
- Add Early Detection Hearing Intervention (EHDI)
- Include study groups
- Work with organizations promoting public access for all disabilities

Goal #4: *Empower constituents by providing leadership, training, advocacy, education, awareness, as well as programs and services that promote culture and self-identification.*

Revise the Goal to read “Empower constituents, programs and services to foster informed cultural and linguistic choices”

Top Objectives:

1. Reduce stigma concerning hearing loss & promote respect and understanding of choices.
2. Advocate for equal public access on behalf of Deaf & Hard of Hearing individuals.
3. Continue developing and expanding modules to train Deaf & Hard of Hearing community members to improve self-advocacy skills.

Goal #5: *Cultivate and maintain an environment where productivity, efficiency and innovation thrive.*

Top Objectives:

- Ensure cohesiveness open communication and interaction of staff members and commissioners.
- Continue to assess workflow & develop methods to improve productivity efficiency.
- Seek professional and personal development opportunities for staff and Commissioners.

Upon completion of the suggested revisions to the goals and objectives, the floor was opened for dialogue. Many ideas were presented within the group, such as KCDHH volunteering for Community Outreach projects in order to increase awareness of the agency, changing the perception of DeaFestival to be inclusive of the hard of hearing and increased awareness that we serve deaf, oral deaf, varying degrees of hearing loss and the hard of hearing regardless of communication mode.

Commissioner Bayersdorfer (Commissioner Collins) MOVED TO ADJOURN. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 P.M.