

ILLINOIS ADVISORY BOARD FOR SERVICES FOR  
PERSONS WHO ARE DEAF-BLIND

Minutes

October 30, 2014

PRC, Glen Ellyn, Illinois

**MINUTES**

**Members in Attendance:** Bob Griffith (Chair), John Jun, Catherine Klein, Eliza Ellett, Roseann Slaght, Catherine Klein

**Members Absent:** Shelle Hamer (Secretary)

**Members Attending by Phone:** Marcia Breese (not yet appointed member)

**Regular Attendees Present:** Elizabeth Klein, Lori Clampitt, Joan Rushing, Michele Clyne, Joann Hiatt, Ingrid Halverson, Seth Harkins

**Regular Attendees by Phone:** Brandi Hayes (IDHHC, replacing John Miller), Rollin Barton (Department on Aging); Jessena Williams (Department on Mental Health)

**Guests Present:** none

Called to order 10:10 a.m.

I. Minutes of August 27, 2014 meeting were opened for discussion. There was no discussion. John Jun moved to pass the minutes as written, and Eliza Ellett seconded. Motion passed.

II. Old Business

1. PRC Strategic Plan: Seth Harkins thanked the Board for looking over the PRC Strategic Plan and giving feedback. He acknowledged concerns that possible future out-of state students admitted to the school mat become entwined in the Illinois adult services system. He expressed a commitment to avoiding this “by way of the contract between ourselves and sending party so that they're aware and whatever local district or state board of education is a party to that agreement knows in writing that any services that would be required above and beyond the services at the Phillip Rock Center would be either provided privately or would be provided at another state sponsorship rather than the State of Illinois.” Seth also shared that he, Gary Ofisher and Dr. Michael Connelly (fiscal agent Keeneyville District 20), district lawyer Brooke Whitted, Nicky Bazer (chief legal officer for the state board of education) and Patricia Olson also from ISBE legal met and discussed language that would govern how PRC could accept out of state students. It was decided to do this through the Joint Commission on Administrative Rules (JCAR). Language was drafted that would regulate the process, and was sent to ISBE for approval. Bob wondered if JCAR has any time limits in this process.

Seth then reviewed the new committee structure for the school, and expressed his hope that he could report on progress on short term goals later in the year.

Rose asked how many out of state students were being considered, and Seth assured the board it would not be many, and Illinois residents would always get first priority. Seth thinks the maximum number of students will be 20 – 25,

Bob mentioned that DCFS sends a number of children out of state because their needs cannot be met in state. He recommended involving DCFS in the marketing for out of state students. John recommended modeling policies and procedures of DCFS to expedite the appeal to JCAR. Justina said she would like to do a site visit with her executive staff.

2. Deaf-Blind Liaisons to State Agencies: Bob shared that liaisons have been tapped for all agencies except veteran's affairs. He is not a veteran himself, and feels the VA prefers to talk with veterans. Other agency liaisons are:

DHS-DD: Joann Hiatt

DHS-DRS: Ingrid Halverson

DHS-DMS: Jessena Williams

ISBE: Lori Clampitt (acting)

DCFS: Becky Patton

DOA: Rollin Barton

Agencies to be contacted

IDHHC: Brandy Hayes

DHS-Bureau of Early Intervention

Bob shared that they're only guideline is to be a liaison, but they have been given no ideas of what the board would like for them to do within their own agencies. He asked for suggestions for the board and attendees on ways liaisons could be advocates for the deaf-blind. Rose suggested that they be invited to see PRC, Helen Keller, and the annual IADB meeting. Michelle suggested they be asked whether they know how many of their clients are deaf-blind. Jessena said that her long term goal is to get additional funding to do more tracking of deaf, hard-of-hearing, and deaf-blind in mental health services. She then provided an in-depth introduction of herself. Her position began in the mid 80's, and was not filled for about 8-14 years ago. Nobody has been in the coordinator position for quite a while. Want to provide adequate supports to clients and service providers. She has replaced two people. She has two family members who are DB.

Another topic discussed was whether training is needed in the various agencies. Helen Keller did provide training to DOA.

Marcia wondered if there was a training available on deaf-blind etiologies. Michelle mentioned that the Intervener Modules include etiology information. Marcia said she was looking for something that was less of a time commitment.

### III. New Business

Future Site Visitations: Bob mentioned that in the past, this group has made site visits, at members own cost, to various sites. The purpose of the visits is to let people know we appreciate their service to individuals with deaf-blindness. He said that the Mary Bryant house in Springfield serves individuals with deaf-blindness and that he could pull together a tour. Joann also suggested the Center for Sight and Hearing in Rockford. Rose suggested board members attend the LeCOBDA meeting just to learn about the group. Joann asked is the board visited the center for sight and hearing in Rockford?

1. Next Helen Keller Week: Helen Keller Week is the last week in June. Bob asked if PRC will be doing anything, Michelle said not sure if PRC will do something as we will be celebrating 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, not sure of dates.
2. Best use of Annual Report
3. ISU Department of Ed Grant: Not discussed

3. Website Discussion: The website link was sent out and people in the room looked at the projected website and others looked from their location. The person Eliza had looked into to update the website is not available. Project Reach will get a quote from their vendor about the cost of getting the website into a more volunteer-friendly platform. Eliza did not renew all of the extra URLs and now the only one being used is bemyvoice.com, helping to manage costs. Board members and visitors were invited to go through the website and send Eliza notes on suggestions. Links on the website were reviewed and Eliza explained what is offered and archived there. Eliza has been updating board member information as official appointments are approved. Rose suggested that IADB families be invited to submit profiles and photos for the website. Project Reach said it could invite the over 400 families served. HVC is now HVEIO and Sue Brosmith is the interim director. Financial assistance for diagnostics is no longer under DSCC and needs to be read over. Rollin suggested a link to agency websites, and it was felt a 1 – 2 sentence description of the agency would be helpful.

### III. New Business

1. Illinois Advocates for the Deaf-Blind: Rose asked whether the IADB could be included in the future in the standing reports section of the meeting. The IADB group will meet March 7-8 in Peoria, and will support some families' attendance. Eliza Ellett is the new treasurer, replacing Karen Olehy. It was agreed that information will be shared between the Board and IADB.
2. There will be an international conference on the hearing impaired in Washington, DC in 2016. ALDA and HLAA have been involved in the effort. The next HLAA conference will be in St. Louis. HLAA stands for Hearing Loss Association of America and ALDA stands for Association of Late Deafened Adults.
3. The CHARGE Syndrome Foundation Conference will be in Schaumburg July 30 – August 2, 2015. IADB will have a "Welcome" reception for Illinois Parents that Thursday night, and Project Reach, PRC, and IADB will share an exhibits table at the conference. The conference runs on volunteers, especially volunteers that sign. Information is available on the foundation website.

### IV. Standing Reports

1. LeCOBDA: Catherine submitted it online. Catherine provided an overview of the group: The Club for Blind Deaf Adults meets at the Chicago Lighthouse, and is basically a social club. About 20-30 adults with deaf-blindness attend, along with SSPs. Often a lunch is shared, or a special seasonal event. The group supports itself with membership dues, donations, and fundraising.
2. IDHHC/ SSP Task Force: No report.

3. HKNC: No report

#### V. Agency Reports

4. HVEIO: No report
5. ISBE: Todd's position has been posted, but it is unclear how quickly the process will go. Todd had an unusual, dedicated position.
6. PRC/ Project Reach: Report was submitted by email. Michelle discussed the Westat surveys.
7. DHS/DRS: No report
8. DHS/OMH/ODD: No report
9. LeCOBDA:
10. Illinois Advocates for the Deaf-Blind: Rose asked whether the IADB could be included in the future in the standing reports section of the meeting. The IADB group will meet March 7-8 in Peoria, and will support some families' attendance. Eliza Ellett is the new treasurer, replacing Karen Olehy. It was agreed that information will be shared between the Board and IADB.
11. DCFS: No report
12. Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind: The Lighthouse has been very busy with ICanConnect, and they have other "pre-grants" running through the deaf-blind program. ICanConnect requires 2 full time and 1 part time staff person. Through ITAC (Illinois TeleCommunications Access Program) they are loaning braille phones that work through land lines. They also have a Title 20 grant. Joann shared details about the number of clients served through ICanConnect as well as a case study of a 12-year-old boy. Also Veramarie will be doing a presentation with Ingrid and Michelle on VASPs, SSPs, and Interveners. Also, the next deaf-blind retreat will be in 2016 at ISVI. ISVI will try to get wi-fi to accommodate the program. They are also changing the name from deaf-blind retreat to deaf-blind rocks, and "rocks" stands for resources, opportunities, communication, knowledge, and services.

Next board meeting dates:

- December 4, 2014
- February 5, 2015
- April 4, 2015

**Motion to adjourn: 1:00 p.m. on motion by Gail Olson.**

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Clyne, visitor to IABDB