



Hard of Hearing Task Force Meeting Minutes **February 21, 2020**

I. Call to Order, Introductions, Housekeeping - (HOH Specialist, Christy Abrams)

Hard of Hearing Program Specialist called the meeting to order at 9:02 am

Voting Members Present: Barry Forst, Harvey Smith, Kimberly August, Melanie O'Rourke, Cynthia Amerman, Ron Tallman and Fred Williams

Absent Members: Liz Booth and Roz Seibold

ACDHH Staff Present: Sherri Collins, Executive Director / Betty McEntire, Director of Public Policy and Community Relations / Michele Michaels, HOH Program Manager / Beca Bailey, Community Engagement Liaison / Amber Hansen, ASU Student Intern and Christy Abrams, HOH Specialist

Others Present: Presenter Jennifer Schuck, Caption Pros / CART provider

II. Public Policy & Community Relations Report (Betty McEntire)

- Discussed several legislative public policy bills. House bill 1055 which is the continuation bill of the commission. Every state agency is required to go through a sunset review and it was voted that ACDHH will continue for eight more years. ACDHH is adding the definition of DeafBlind as part of the population that ACDHH serves. Explained ACDHH's statutory requirements to implement new born screening for early hearing detection.
- House bill 2225; a bill that has modifications for hearing aid dispensers, audiologists and speech pathologists to reduce unnecessary regulation and streamline the licensing requirements for those who are coming from out of state. ACDHH met with the sponsor of that bill, regarding concerns of removing the examination that has information related to bill of sale notification requirements relating to T-coil and the Arizona Telecommunication Distribution Program (AzTEDP). ACDHH and the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) worked together on an amendment and ADHS will revise their website to add educational and training materials for all hearing aid dispensers, audiologists, and speech pathologists around the bill of sale notice requirements.



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- House bill 2536 adds hearing aid dispensers, speech pathologists, and audiologists to the telemedicine statute under the definitions of healthcare providers eligible to provide telemedicine.

III. Review & Approval of Minutes 11-22-19 - (TF Members present at the 11-22-19 meeting) There were no recommended changes to the draft minutes.

IV. Executive Director Report Program Report – (Sherri Collins)

- Sherri reported that she will be having a road trip through local city governments, focusing on city areas and having conversations with local officials. She has an appointment with the Mayor of Goodyear next month; which happens to be where she resides as one of her strategies is building relationships and educating the general public. Now that Betty is in her position and working at the Capitol it frees Sherri up to do the things she's been wanting to do for many years. She discussed the energy and effort it takes for all of us to challenge locations where accommodations are needed such as theaters, and other venues. Pointed out that we need to be leaders in the community and step up by not walking away. She explained that one of the initiatives that ACDHH is working on is the Employment Campaign which will launch in July. It will be the first on a state level to focus initiative across the country. Reported the next ACDHH board meeting will be in Yuma on May 14th. Shared we will be engaging the local city government resources, community partners; so the deaf, the hard of hearing and the deaf blind communities has access when they need services. Sherri stated there needs to be full access. It is a human right!

Break Time called from 10:14-10:25 am

V. Hard of Hearing Program Report – (Christy Abrams)

- Thanked the West Valley HLAA group for their inspiring meetings. Noted December's meeting with Dr. Rob nationally recognized Oto-neurologist who gave a remarkable presentation about Tinnitus, its treatments and possible management strategies. The February HLAA meeting's presentation with Dr. Mark Whitaker an Otolaryngologist with extensive CI surgical experience and Dr. Lisa Thompson Doctor of Audiology
- Praised the Sun Lakes HLAA group for their educational presentation with Lynn Meyer's "Living on the Fence". Lynn specializes in the social and emotional issues of people with hearing loss. Also, in



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February Kelly Hernandez taught the group about audiograms an important thing for people with hearing loss to be able to understand.

- Christy continues to participate in the Audible Talkers Toastmaster Club. If anyone is interested in participating, the group meets in a looped environment at the Tempe Public Library. The next meeting is March 2nd. This group is the first Hard of Hearing Toastmaster Club in the World.
- Shared busy schedule coming up; will be attending the African-American conference on Friday, February 28th, A.T. Still University, E.A.R. Day on Saturday February 29th, the Palo Verde Generating Station for a drill on March 12th-helping them learn how to best assist people who have hearing loss during an emergency evacuation. Michele and Christy will be participating in the University of Arizona Medical School with second year medical students. We will have an opportunity to interact with people who are going to be treating people coping with physical or sensory disabilities. We will help them learn and practice how to do that.
- Reminded group if you know anyone who needs hearing aids and cannot afford them, please have them give Christy a call.

VI. HLAA Chapter Leadership Announcements – (Melanie O’Rourke and Ron Tallman) *All HLAA meetings are in a LOOP environment with CART provided!

- Melanie shared that she has been really happy with the publicity for the HLAA West Valley chapter meeting. She is working to put the word out for the World Hearing Day. They donated the American girl doll to Happy Ears Audiology as they have a large pediatric population. The West Valley HLAA hosted the ASU LWHL classes for the 2nd year.
- Ron shared the HLAA Sun Lakes chapter provided a zoom communication presentation as a chapter meeting with the national director Barbara Kelly! It was well received. Ron shared he believes this technology will open the door for other individuals who can’t make to all the way out to Sun Lakes to do presentations. They are finishing up with the ASU LWHL classes which was also very well received. Announced Dr. Rob is coming out in March to present on tinnitus and in April, Dr. Shawn Stevens from the AOC. Announced leadership changes Ron became the vice president and Virginia Milgram stepped off the board.

VII. AZ Walk4Hearing 2020, Kick-off Event – (Ron Tallman)

- The date is set for the fifth annual Arizona walk on Saturday, November 7th at Riverview Park. The kickoff event will be on



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Saturday, September 12th at the Old Spaghetti Factory from noon until 3 pm. Dr. Shanna Dewsnup from Happy Ears has agreed to be the guest speaker. She will talk personally about raising a child with Usher syndrome. The Website for the walk is up if you want to build a team and raise some money. There will be 20 walks across the nation. The first walk starts in Westchester, Rockland, New York on May 2nd ending with the Arizona walk on November 7th. There is a new walk this year in San Francisco.

VIII. Employment Initiatives (All)

- Michele shared that ACDHH is still in the planning phases and working with a PR firm, discussing the theme and messaging and how we want to have standardize messaging. This campaign is for the deaf, the hard of hearing and the deafblind. We are talking about different opportunities for events and trying to tap into other events that are happening, as there is a lot of employment going on out there which is not targeting our population. Betty and Michele will report more specifics as details become known.
- Michele pointed out during our last meeting Harvey asked the question, how do we get employees that have disabilities including hearing loss and deafness to self-admit? Many are afraid to say I have a disability because they may be treated differently, may not be promoted or looked down upon. It is an individual decision which has to be made by the person, but we can continue to be good role models and examples. The other component is how do you get employers to also be aware that hiring people with disabilities is a good thing? The research is really clear that a person with a disability who is hired and treated fairly and equally and provided accommodations actually stays longer, has more longevity. This saves so much money for employers.

IX. Public Comments - (Public)

There were no public comments.

X. Announcements – (TF Members present today)

- Reviewed the ACDHH Hard of Hearing Website Page
- Shared Sherri's Athena Winning Acceptance Speech
- Shared ACDHH's Community View (CV) video pertaining to voting

XI. Sharing of informational materials – (All)

Douglas A. Ducey

Governor



Sherri L. Collins

Executive Director

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- Ron shared Walk for Hearing Flyers
- Christy shared bags of swag for Melanie-HLAA meetings

XII. Next Meeting date and agenda items – (Christy)

The next HOH TF meeting is Friday May 8, 2020

XIII. Adjournment – (Christy)

Christy Abrams adjourned the meeting at 11:42 am.

Draft minutes by Christy Abrams and revised by Michele Michaels

Draft 02212020 HOH TF Mtg