

**SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS COUNCIL  
MEETING MINUTES  
MAY 17, 2012**

**PRESENT:** Faye Jordan-Peters, Joel Mankowski, Carlos Jaramillo, Christopher Woodfill, Suzette Garay

**NOT PRESENT:** Steve Smart, Debra Gorra Barash, Joseph Riggio

**INTERPRETERS:** Amy Fryman, Sandy Peplinski

**STAFF PRESENT:** Berni Mattsson, Executive Director; Lydia Thompson, Legal Counsel; David Carlson, Bureau Assistant

**GUESTS:** Troy Peters (Deaf Community); Donna Langwasser (Waukesha County Technical College); Julia Jourdan (Community Interpreter); Averil Holcomb (Community Interpreter)

**CALL TO ORDER**

Joel Mankowski called the meeting to order at 9:16 a.m. A quorum of five members was present.

**ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Christopher Woodfill moved, seconded by, Suzette Garay, to approve the agenda as submitted with the following correction, move item 6a to item 5a. Motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION:** Carlos Jaramillo moved, seconded by Christopher Woodfill, to approve the Minutes of December 20, 2011. Motion carried unanimously.

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Berni Mattsson reviewed the Board Member Guidebook which was included in the Council packet. Ms. Mattsson asked that each member sign the acknowledgement form and return it to the Department.

## **FOLLOW-UP ON VRI/VRS**

Lydia Thompson reported that she had reviewed practices in other states to see if any regulated VRI or VRS services and noted that she failed to find any such requirements. Lydia Thompson asked how the Council would feel about the state being the first to enact such requirements. Christopher Woodfill says there have been many complaints from the deaf community about the quality of VRI/VRS services. Christopher Woodfill indicated his understanding that Wisconsin may be pioneers in enacting such guidelines and other states are looking at our laws as a guide. Suzette Garay didn't think it would be a problem to get these providers licensed. Joel Mankowski said Wisconsin should be a leader and "raise the bar". Lydia Thompson said it appears the Federal government is moving towards requirements for VRI and the state should be cautious about doing something that might interfere with Federal requirements.

## **DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION TO THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMUNITY**

Joel Mankowski and Christopher Woodfill have been working on laws and developing a video on how to file a complaint. This will need to be posted on the web. Christopher Woodfill warned that the video will be long and that it cannot be condensed.

Lydia Thompson reported on a contact from Carol Schweitzer at the Department of Public Instruction (DPI). DPI wants to publish a bulletin on school interpreting issues. DPI is planning a summit in mid-July, and has requested that a representative of the Sign Language Interpreters Council (SLIC) attend the summit to provide information on licensing issues, etc. Joel Mankowski will send an email to the Council regarding the summit when he receives more information from Lydia Thompson.

## **PRACTICE QUESTIONS/ISSUES**

### **Report from Credentialing Regarding Exemption Requests**

Lydia Thompson reported that the Department had not received any exemption requests since the last meeting.

## **LIAISON REPORTS**

No liaison reports were provided for review.

**MOTION:** It was moved and seconded to approve credentialing liaisons to send credentialing related questions to the Executive Director for placement on the agenda as a report to the Council. Motion carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Leia Sparks, VRS manager for Sorenson Communications in Milwaukee. She said providing VRS is about functional equivalency and customer service. Education and training are a priority. Leia Sparks inquired if complaints about VRS services have been received. She said the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is considering rules which would require VRS interpreters to have Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) certification.

Julia Jourdan, freelance interpreter, sits on the advisory board at Milwaukee Area Tech College. She spoke to an article that had been posted questioning the validity of the testing process. She voiced concerns in that licensure problems could occur if the requirements aren't attainable. She suggested that there may need to be some communication with RID about these concerns.

Donna Langwasser, Waukesha Technical College, spoke supporting licensure. She encouraged the Council to allow deaf persons to make the choice of using VRI instead of a live interpreter if one is not available.

Christopher Woodfill said they have approved qualified out of state interpreters in the past. The Council can make decisions on exemption requests within a few days.

**MOTION:** Christopher Woodfill moved, seconded by Faye Jordan-Peters to approve Joel Mankowski as the spokesperson for the Council to speak with Linda Huffer from the Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing regarding the impact of suspension of the Wisconsin Interpreting and Transliterating Assessment (WITA). Motion carried unanimously.

## **CLOSED SESSION**

**MOTION:** Carlos Jaramillo moved, seconded by Suzette Garay, to convene to closed session to consider individual histories (s. 19.85 (1)(f), Stats.) and to confer with legal counsel (s. 19.85(1)(g), Stats.). Roll call vote: Carlos Jaramillo-yes; Faye Jordan-Peters-yes; Joel Mankowski-yes; Suzette Garay-yes; and Christopher Woodfill-yes.

The Council convened into closed session at 11:20 a.m.

## **RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION**

**MOTION:** Faye Jordan-Peters moved, seconded by Christopher Woodfill, to reconvene to open session. Motion carried unanimously.

Open session reconvened at 11:27 a.m.

## **OTHER BOARD BUSINESS**

Christopher Woodfill suggested that for future closed sessions, the Council should consider covering windows to prevent people who know sign language from eavesdropping.

Suzette Garay asked about lunch choices.

Joel Mankowski said he received contact about a “rouge” interpreter. If someone is aware of this individual, they should report it.

Christopher Woodfill announced this will be his final meeting as a member of the Council as he will be moving to New York and working for Helen Keller National Center. Berni Mattsson requested that Christopher Woodfill submit a letter of resignation to Governor’s Office.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** Carlos Jaramillo moved, seconded by Suzette Garay, to adjourn the meeting at 11:40 a.m. Motion carried unanimously.