

## **Nebraska Sign Language Interpreter Review Board Meeting**

February 21, 2023 from 1pm – 3pm

Omaha Association of the Deaf Hall, 4050 Hillsdale Ave, Omaha NE

### **A. Welcome**

The meeting of the Nebraska Interpreter Review Board (IRB) was called to order at 1 pm by Ms. Nancy Flearl, Chairperson, at Omaha Association of the Deaf Hall, 4050 Hillsdale Ave, Omaha NE.

### **B. Notice of Open Meetings Act**

Chairperson Ms. Nancy Flearl announced the notice of the meeting was duly given, posted, published, and tendered in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and all board members received notice simultaneously by email. The agenda has been kept current and available at the Commission's office and on their website. The materials generally used by the board for this meeting are on the table in a public folder that is available to the general public for this meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, {Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-1412 (8)}. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is available with the public folder for the duration of the meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

Publication of official notice of the meeting appeared in the February 14, 2023, edition of the Omaha World Herald, a legal newspaper of general circulation in this state, as required by the Open Meetings Act.

### **C. Roll Call**

For the record, Board Members, Ms. Nancy Flearl, Ms. Margie Propp, Ms. Vonda Apking, Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson, Ms. Meghann Cassidy, Ms. Kim Davis (representing Ms. Kelsey Cruz, Interim NCDHH Executive Director). Interpreter for the meeting, Ms. Sharon Sinkler, Interpreter Program Coordinator. Ms. Ashley Wulf, Advocacy Specialist was a guest present. Ms. Cindy Woldt, Staff Assistant was present to take minutes.

### **D. Review of Agenda**

Chairperson, Ms. Nancy Flearl reviewed the agenda with the Board Members.

### **E. Acceptance of Agenda**

Chairperson, Ms. Nancy Flearl stated that the agenda has been reviewed. Please note that in accordance with the Open Meetings Law, the agenda cannot be altered within 24 hours of the meeting except for emergency items. If there are no changes, I need a motion to adopt the agenda. Motion by Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson and seconded by Ms. Margie Propp. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Ms. Apking, Ms. Cassidy, Ms. Flearl, Ms. Propp, Mrs. Richardson-Nelson, and Ms. Davis all voting ayes.

### **F. Acceptance of Minutes**

There were no corrections to the meeting minutes from the December 1, 2022 meeting.

Motion to accept the minutes by Ms. Meghann Cassidy and seconded by Ms. Margie Propp. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Ms. Apking, Ms. Cassidy, Ms. Flearl, Ms. Propp, Mrs. Richardson-Nelson all voting ayes. Ms. Davis abstained.

#### **G. Periodic Review of Interpreter Review Board (IRB) Bylaws**

Discussion regarding the review of the IRB Bylaws was started by Chairperson, Ms. Flearl.

Discussion between the members regarding the suggested changes presented:

- Officers – Remove restrictions on terms to serve as chairperson and vice chairperson. Current bylaws restrict chairperson and vice chairperson to serving no more than 2 consecutive years and then needing to sit out 12 consecutive months before serving again.
- Meetings – change quorum requirement of simple majority of active members present.
- Meeting procedures – change to “sent”; “...materials for the agenda items shall be in written form and mailed...” This gives NCDHH the flexibility to use electronic means.

Motion by Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson and seconded by Ms. Margie Propp to approve the 3 suggested changes to the bylaws. It was also requested that NCDHH staff make sure that the suggested changes do not violate any current Nebraska laws. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Ms. Apking, Ms. Cassidy, Ms. Flearl, Ms. Propp, Mrs. Richardson-Nelson, and Ms. Davis all voting ayes.

#### **H. Election of New Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

Chairperson, Ms. Nancy Flearl shared with the members that they needed to elect a new Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

Conversation between the members regarding Chairperson Flearl retiring from the State of Nebraska on February 28, 2023.

Ms. Meghann Cassidy nominated herself for Chairperson. No other nominations were made for Chairperson. Since no other nominations for Chairperson were made, the motion carried by acclamation.

Chairperson, Ms. Nancy Flearl nominated Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson for the Vice Chairperson position. Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson accepted the nomination. No other nominations were made for Vice Chairperson. Since no other nominations for Vice Chairperson were made, the motion carried by acclamation.

#### **I. NCDHH**

Ms. Kim Davis presented the following Agency Updates on behalf of Ms. Kelsey Cruz,

Interim Executive Director:

- NCDHH Board’s Executive Committee is continuing to work on the hiring of the agency’s Executive Director. The Commission hopes to make an announcement soon.
- NCDHH’s Outreach Events for 2023 are in the planning process. Announcements will be made as soon as they are finalized.
- Ms. Davis shared with the members regarding the success of the Text to 911 Presentation that was held in Lincoln on January 7, 2023. Ms. Davis added that the Scottsbluff, North Platte, Kearney, and Omaha offices will also be hosting a Text to 911 Presentation in their areas of the state. Conversation between the members on functionality and the coverage of text to 911 in Nebraska.
- Advocacy Specialists continue to promote NCDHH’s services with presentations, booths, and networking activities through virtual and onsite means. Especially with promoting American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Rural and Legal Communications Access Funds. Would appreciate the IRB members and public attending to get word out about ARPA to the interpreters and service providers. Conversation between the members on various ways that the ARPA funds can be used.
- Ms. Kim Davis presented Chairperson, Ms. Nancy Flearl a Certificate of Appreciation for serving two 3-year terms on the IRB, thanking her for her service and wishing her good luck on her new chapter in her journey. A picture was taken with Ms. Davis presenting Chairperson Flearl with her certificate. The members in attendance thanked Chairperson Flearl for her service on the IRB.

**J. Public Comments**

None

**K. Old Business**

- Mrs. Tami Richardson Nelson shared with the members that following the IRB Meeting on December 1, 2022 she sent an email to the Omaha Association of the Deaf (OAD) members giving them guidance on how to go about filing a complaint against a sign language interpreter if warranted.

Additional conversation between the members on other means of getting the word out to the deaf community on how to go about filing a complaint. Suggestions included having printed copies of the complaint form and business cards listing the NCDHH website for filing a complaint.

**L. New Business**

Ms. Sharon Sinkler, Interpreter Program Coordinator stepped out of her role of interpreting to share with the members that if possible, it is best to set up the 3 remaining meetings for 2023 today. This gives NCDHH ample time to locate sign language interpreters for the meetings in a timely manner. Ms. Sinkler also added that it would also be best if the IRB meetings were not scheduled the week before the full

commission board meetings. Often there are tasks that need to be completed between the 2 meetings, and a week between each meeting is not enough time.

Meeting dates for 2023 from 1pm – 3pm

- May 19, 2023 in Lincoln
- August 17, 2023 in Omaha
- November 17, 2023 in Lincoln

#### **M. Announcements**

Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson shared with the members about “Sound of Metal,” a movie playing at the Ruth Sokolof Theater in Omaha tonight. The movie will be shown and then there will be a panel discussion afterwards.

Ms. Nancy Flearl (representing NCBVI) informed the members about a workshop which will be held in Kearney for clients who are age 55 and older. The “Silver Summit” will take place on May 24<sup>th</sup> through the 26<sup>th</sup> and is a wonderful opportunity for clients 55 and older to network with peers, learn about new techniques and tools, and gain confidence. More information and registration materials will be forthcoming.

#### **N. Adjourn**

Ms. Margie Propp made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:17 pm. Mrs. Tami Richardson – Nelson seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion carried with Ms. Apking, Ms. Cassidy, Ms. Flearl, Ms. Propp, Mrs. Richardson-Nelson, and Ms. Davis all voting ayes.