

**FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL  
FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING  
Quarterly Council Meeting**  
Thursday, February 9, 2017 – Friday, February 10, 2017

**MINUTES**

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CART Captioner: Lisa B. Johnston, RMR, CRR, CRC

**Call to Order and Roll Call:** 9:00 A.M. EST

*Council members present:* Debbe Hagner, Glenna Ashton, Donna Drake, John Jackson, Mary Hodges, Darlene Laibl-Crowe, Cecil Bradley, Julie Church, Cindy Simon, Karen Goldberg, Debra Knox, Eugenia Halliburton

*Via phone & Chat:* Chris Littlewood

*Staff present:* Shay Chapman, Megan Callahan, Monica Pitts

*Presenters:* Linda McMullen: Office of the General Counsel, Jessica Meyer: Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Coordinator, Renee Jenkins: Early Steps Program Administrator, James Forstall: FTRI Executive Director

**Staff Updates:**

*Shay Chapman* – Presented the Department’s Health Priority Goals for the next year and spoke about the funding request for the Council that has moved forward out of the Department.

*Megan Callahan* – Presented a follow up of action items from the previous meeting.

**Legislator Visit Reports**

Four of the Council members went to the Florida Capitol to visit with legislators. They scheduled eight appointments and had talking points that also served as handouts. The talking points covered the purpose of the Council, the past Biennial Reports that contain action that still needs to be taken, the Council’s need for funding and additional positions while also comparing other agencies/departments funding. Several offices were able to give advice on funding requests as well as helping find a champion for the Council’s cause. The members learned that it makes a bigger impact to visit legislators face-to-face each year. The appointments with legislators were successful and the Council is looking forward to visiting them again next year.

**Biennial Report Discussion:**

During the meeting, the Council held a discussion regarding the 2017 Biennial Report. The first draft of the report was completed before the meeting as well as edits to the first draft. The discussion that was held regarded any further changes that needed to be made to the edits resulting in an almost completed report. The report will focus on three different subjects: communication access, funding and coordination of services. Communication access would discuss what all is still needed for equal communication access throughout daily life. Funding would discuss increasing funding for the positions, training and travel that is needed from the Council. Coordination of services would discuss statewide meetings with the different agencies and departments that would meet the communication access needs. It was decided upon that the introduction portion of the report would be taken out of the report and put into the cover letter for the report and that the scenarios be taken out of the report and put onto the website for anyone who is interested. In lieu of the scenarios, there will be pictures with a caption stating what was wrong or the reasoning behind the picture, as well as statistics. It was noted that the language in the report be changed around and the acronyms be spelled out to explain what they are. A lot of wording was cut out due to repetition leaving more room for pictures and captions. At the conclusion of the discussion, it was decided upon that more statistics were needed and pictures were to be found. Once this is completed the report will be sent to the Department's communications/graphics department to format the report. Once this is completed the report will be sent to all members and approval from all will be necessary before being completed and sent to legislators.

#### **Committee Reports:**

*Web Committee* – No update provided.

*Technology Committee* – Reported that the PSA script has been completed and a discussion was held. Scenes one, two, and four were changed; scene one will now state parent with infant: "my child was born with a hearing loss", scene two will include signing and speaking, and scene four will now state adult, 40s: "my service-related hearing loss effects my job."

*Education/Medical/Outreach (EMO) Committee* – No updated provided.

*Legislative Committee* – Reported that there is a bill in process that will provide a \$500 deductible or tax credit for the cost of hearing aids.

*Department of Children and families (DCF)* – No update provided.

*Budget Committee* – Reported that almost all of the travel budget has already been spent. It was reassured that the Department would cover the rest of the meetings for this fiscal year to make sure they are all face-to-face.

*Biennial Report Committee* – Due to the extensive Biennial Report discussion, there was no update provided for this committee.

## **Presentations:**

*Linda McMullen (DOH Office of the General Counsel) – Sunshine Laws Presentation:* Gave an in-depth overview of Florida's Sunshine Laws. The law can be found in Florida Statutes in Section 286.011 and also in the Florida Constitution in Article 1 Section 24. Ms. McMullen touched on certain areas of the laws such as Advisory Council meetings being open to the public, public notice being required for any meetings including committee meetings or meetings involving two or more members, and the communication rules to be followed by all members of the Advisory Council.

*Jessica Meyer (DOH EHDI Coordinator) – Newborn Hearing Screening Presentation:* Gave a presentation discussing what hearing loss and impairment in children is, what tests are conducted, and how referrals are made. Ms. Meyer stated that this has been a requirement in Florida since October 1, 2000 unless a parent objects to having a screening conducted. A statute has been put in place for this and its intent is to provide a statewide comprehensive and coordinated interdisciplinary program of early hearing impairment screening, identification, and follow up care for newborns. The newborn hearing screening program serves the babies who were tested and had a confirmed hearing loss from birth to age three. The objective of the newborn hearing screening program is to either confirm normal hearing or a diagnosis of hearing loss or impairment. Ms. Meyer discussed the two different types of screening tools, the OAE (Otoacoustic Emissions device) and the ABR (Auditory Brainstem Response). If a baby does not pass two hearing screenings per Florida guidelines, they should undergo diagnostic hearing testing to rule out or confirm a hearing loss.

*Renee Jenkins (DOH Early Steps Program Administrator) – Early Steps Presentation:* Gave a presentation on the Early Steps program at DOH and what their purpose and process is. The population that Early Steps serves are infants and toddlers from birth until their third birthday who have a developmental delay or established condition that might be associated with the developmental delay. The purpose of the program is to not only work with the child's development, but also prepare the family so that they are better able to address the child's developmental needs from birth through their third birthday and then are better equipped to work with systems beyond their third birthday when they leave Early Steps. This program is authorized under both the federal and state statutes.

*James Forstall (FTRI Executive Director) FTRI Presentation:* Gave an overview of FTRI, who they are, what they do, discussed their outreach program, the Florida Relay, and the new Bluetooth technology they will be introducing into the program. FTRI was established back in 1991 through Florida Legislature and was in conjunction with the ADA due to the fact that the ADA came out with a requirement that each state have a relay service. Mr. Forstall explained that FTRI is the administrator of the TASA law and they report to the Public Service Commission who has oversight. FTRI is located in Tallahassee, FL and their primary function is to create awareness, educate the public, promote the Florida relay service, and distribute specialized telephones to Florida residents. Mr. Forstall discussed the requirements of who is eligible to participate in their program. Those requirements are: you must be deaf, hard of hearing, deaf

blind, speech challenged; be a Florida resident; three years or older; and be certified as having a hearing loss. Mr. Forstall also gave an overview of the Florida Relay Service which basically connects a person who has a hearing loss with a person who doesn't through the telephone system. FTRI does not provide this relay service. Mr. Forstall stated that FTRI just launched some new Bluetooth technology back in January of this year. The Bluetooth technology allows people who have Bluetooth technology in their home to pair this up with it.

**Public Comment:**

*Lauren Trainor (teacher for the deaf and hard of hearing in Palm Beach County):* Lauren voiced her concerns regarding the national shortage of deaf and hard of hearing teachers resulting in those students being underserved. Ms. Trainor voiced her second concern which was the number of parents she has met with during meetings that have had their children screened for a hearing impairment but weren't aware of the resources. The parents need to be more educated.

**Next Meeting:** The next meeting will be held in Palm Beach County May 11-12, 2017, meeting location TBD

**Action Items:**

1. Get the exact number requested for funding – Shay Chapman
2. Include the FCCDHH website link in the meeting agendas and public comment notices – Megan Callahan
3. Add Newborn Hearing Screening website link to FCCDHH website – Megan Callahan
4. Send final PSA changes to James – DOH Staff
5. Send National CLAS standards to Council – Karen Goldberg & Megan Callahan
6. Send additional statistics for the report to Megan for the Executive Committee – Entire Council
7. Find more pictures for the report – Gina Halliburton
8. Send updated report draft to Council – Cindy Simon & Megan Callahan
9. Work on and send the cover letter for the report – Julie Church
10. Add in introductory paragraph to the report touching on the three areas of concern mentioned – Glenna Ashton
11. Send out FTRI PowerPoint and newspaper insert – Megan Callahan
12. Help with meeting location for May meeting being held in Palm Beach County – Cindy Simon & Glenna Ashton
13. Secure meeting location and hotel for May meeting in Palm Beach County – DOH Staff