

NC Self Help for Hard of Hearing People, Inc.
Board of Trustee's Meeting
Saturday - November 20, 2004
Heritage Greens - Greensboro, NC
Approved May 7, 2005

Voting Trustees in attendance:

Wayne Giese (Blue Ridge SHHH), President	John Black (At-Large)
Richard Wilson (Guilford SHHH), Vice-President	Ruth Miller (Chapel Hill SHHH)
Hal Van Pelt (Lake Norman SHHH), Secretary	Joan Black (At-Large)
Beverly Elwell (Charlotte SHIP/SHHH), Treasurer	
Dianna Attaway (Hendersonville SHHH), State Coordinator-West	

Non-Trustee members and guests:

Jan Riddle (HHSS-MRRC)	Judith Pittillo (HHSS-ARRC)
Terrye Fish (DVRS)	Karen Caputo (HHSS-WRRC)
Nancy Gordon (Guilford SHHH)	Betty Jo Van Pelt
Rachael Ragin (DPI)	Bernice Penn
Jean Deese (CAN)	Loveeta Baker (CAN)

PRINTED MATERIAL DISTRIBUTED:

1. Agenda for November 20, 2004 meeting
2. Minutes of May 22, 2004 meeting
3. Treasurer's Report
4. State Coordinator's Report (Western)

The President called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m. It was determined that only 7 of 16 (43%) voting members were present, therefore no quorum was established.

Wayne asked there be a moment of silence in memory of Rocky Stone (former President of National SHHH), and for the husband of Winnie Hargess, from Atlanta.

Minutes:

Hal Van Pelt passed out the May 22nd minutes to be read by everyone. The only change was to clarify that Dianna Attaway is State Coordinator for the Western part of NC and that Susan Wilson is State Coordinator for the Eastern part. Since that meeting, Susan has resigned as State Coordinator-East.

Treasurer's Report

Beverly gave the treasurer's report. The balance in the bank is \$5,214.33. One expected expense not on report is \$109.36 for stamps and copying for the annual meeting mailing. Beverly reported that Wachovia now requires a monthly fee for banking, even for non-profit groups. She suggested that the new treasurer might want to change banks.

State Coordinator's Report:

Asheville:

Dianna indicated that the Asheville group is getting re-established; they have 8-10 people interested.

Macon County:

Judy Pittillo reported that Macon County group is very small. They will meet again in February and try to decide what to do from there.

It was suggested it is probably easier to establish new group rather than resuscitate an old when the group has dwindled to 1-2 people.

Cape Fear Group (Wilmington):

Pam Horn is the new HHSS and is working with that group now. The Board feels she will be very involved and have a successful chapter.

Charlotte:

This chapter is not growing; it has same people for the last 20 years. It has become more of a social group but has good attendance at informative meetings. This chapter has been around for many years and has accomplished many good things in the Charlotte area.

Durham:

The Durham group is struggling and needs help. Dianna will try to drive there but would like to coordinate that trip with some other groups at the same time.

Chapel Hill:

Ruth Miller reported moving location for their meetings. They want to reach out to younger people, perhaps college students with hearing impairment. Working on ways to increase membership by perhaps doing joint meetings with other SHHH in the Triangle Area.

It was noted that most groups have mostly older members and we all need to reach out to younger people with hearing needs.

Greenville:

Karen Caputo reported nothing has happened in Greenville in last 3-4 years. They have met these last two months and are getting started again.

Dianna feels most groups fail to get involved with things nationally. They start to dwindle from the group because they don't feel connected or that they are making a difference. She feels that as the groups are resurrected they should focus on a bigger picture --- more than just meeting every month about hearing topics. She would like to see members writing Representatives about legislation to get things past so they would feel like they are making a contribution. She stated it's very hard for her and Susan to cover the entire state and would like to see the groups become more independent.

Guilford:

Richard reporting they are struggling with 4-5 attending. Sometimes they get few new faces who don't show again. They feel the need to re-evaluate how the group is going. There are now captions for real-time news and for emergencies in the region due to the efforts of this group.

Polk County:

Not meeting

Lake Norman:

This group is also struggling with only a few attending. They may move meeting location from Lake Norman Hospital to the new Huntersville Hospital.

Wake County:

No representatives were present, but Ruth reported they continue to meet but that membership is low.

General Discussion about Chapters:

Dianna suggested that perhaps a few meetings to cover larger area with a newsletter going to a larger area might benefit many more. Nancy suggested they might want to meet in a different location each month.

Beverly pointed out this is happening all over the country. Local chapters used to have to do a lot, but now national does many of those things. It was suggested that maybe we should step back and take a look and think about re-grouping; maybe try to capitalize on socializing. A good example of capitalizing on resources is the Charlotte group meeting at Charlotte Regional Resource Center rather than at a church or a hospital.

Joan agreed there are lots of hard of hearing people and maybe SHHH needs to go to them, perhaps by going to Senior Centers with programs. She noted in her work with Sprint that she sees many hard of hearing who have many questions and want to talk about it.

Jan Riddle pointed out they get lot of contacts through hearing screenings but many won't come back for a meeting. She agrees that we need to get younger people involved.

Wayne feels we have an advantage over many states because of our state reps. He feels SHHH is doing well working with state employees with the Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

The consensus is that rather than focusing on community meetings, we need to get out and go to where Hard of Hearing people are.

DSHHH Update Report:

Karen Caputo reported for Jeff Mobley, who was not present due to illness. The Public Utilities Commission approved a proposal to provide a hearing aid with telecoil as an option for consumers in accessing the telephone.

Jeff has made a formal, written request for a Hard of Hearing Specialist in the Greensboro office (one who does not have to be shared with another office). So far, he has not gotten a lot of encouragement from DHHS.

A proposed draft was presented to Department of Health and Human Services for Hearing Aid Health Insurance. It will require a big lobbying campaign to get passed.

There is a new process for getting CAN operators for SHHH meetings, which requires that requests be submitted to Hard of Hearing Specialists in the resource area being served, along with a written agenda for the meeting. These requests are then given to the central office (DSDHH) for approval.

Medicaid proposal for hearing aid coverage is being rewritten.

Jeff can be contacted at the NC Division of Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing. He is the Hard of Hearing Services Program Coordinator. His e-mail contact is: Jeff.Mobley@ncmail.net.

Beverly suggested that perhaps a letter from NC SHHH might help get additional staffing at the Greensboro RRC. Maybe we should write letter anytime Jeff asks for funding.

Hard of Hearing Specialist for Vocational Rehabilitation:

Terrye Fish, Deaf/Hard of Hearing/DeafBlind Specialist for Vocational Rehabilitation, talked about what might draw new people to a meeting. Suggested having a youth summit in different places across the state. Also encouraged the group to get involved with a state-wide interagency team that meets quarterly. They include VR, DSDHH, DSB, Office of Education Services, etc. She would have SHHH do presentation about organization at each of these meetings. Stated that VR serves people of all ages, starting in High School.

Terrye discussed the upcoming Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness (SERID) conference that will be held in Asheville in October 2005. She would like for SHHH to make a presentation.

VR is trying to reach more with mild and moderate hearing losses (75% or less). They purchase any kind of hearing aid needed, but do not pay for cochlear implants at this time; they are trying to figure out how to fund that.

In February, there will be a teleconference among VR staff in NC, SC, and Alabama with an individual who has been doing training in Texas on the psycho-social aspects of hearing loss. All state agencies involved with Deaf and Hard of Hearing are invited and VR would like a representative from SHHH to be involved.

VR is now putting info on their web site about employment and VR services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

Beverly pointed out NC SHHH has \$2500 set aside from 1995 to be used for a Statewide Conference. She suggested some of that money be used for a session at SERID. It is a big meeting and will have people from NC, SC, Alabama, Georgia, MS, and TN. It was decided this would be discussed on line.

NC Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Ruth Miller reported on meetings of the NC Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; she is the NC-SHHH representative to the NCCDHH. She is taking over Beverly's place as chair of the Communication Access Committee. They are working on funding for hearing service dogs for people who need help getting their dogs trained.

Bylaws have been revised, and one change adds a representative from a cochlear implant facility. The 5-year plan was presented at the Oct meeting. Goals include: to enhance the DSDHH capacity for reaching a broader audience, to enhance the capacity for program management, to develop resources to identify service gaps, and to enhance collaboration with other agencies.

There is a need for volunteers to participate in several State committees. They do not have to be appointed, just attend meetings several times a year.

Housing Coalition:

Not meeting now. May be resurrected at a later date.

Sign Language Licensure Board:

Wants input from HoH individuals; send to Lorene Roberson at Lorene.Roberson@ncmail.net.

N C Mental Health Council:

Beverly is no longer on this council; Susan Wilson is, but is absent today.

Web Site:

Wayne challenged members to notify Steve Barber when they find good info on internet about Deaf/HOH to notify so he can to set up link to SHHH web site.

Steve Barber is trying to get sponsor banners on web site. He says that we need more advertisers and that we need to buy products from them. There was discussion about the benefits of the web site for basic information and how much it is accessed.

Other Discussion:

There was discussion about the National Leadership Training. No one seemed to know when that would be. NC SHHH might want to send someone.

Rachael Ragin is now working with Department of Public Instruction. She works in the schools and with families primarily with deaf issues and wants to spend more time with hard of hearing. Personally, she is having a hard time getting her insurance company to pay for a second cochlear implant and is currently suing.

Ruth discussed the cochlear implant symposium in Triangle Area. Also talked about the ProCare organization that is trying to get insurance companies to put decision-making back in hands of patient and doctor. Feels NC SHHH should advocate for them. Further discussion will be on e-mail.

Wayne explained how members can go to Yahoo/Health Issues and participate in groups – one each for board of trustees, statewide, and executive board.

There was discussion about sponsoring a person/people for the national SHHH convention and about the importance of SHHH writing letters to State concerning why it is important for the Hard of Hearing Specialists to be sent to meetings such as this. There will have to be discussion and motions made on-line about who will go and how much money will be spent on this. Jan Riddle suggested a letter from SHHH would benefit State Hearing Specialists in being able to go to SHHH conference and other conferences throughout the year. Last year, funding was provided for staff to go to SERID in TN.

Wayne presented goals and objectives written by the Pennsylvania SHHH group and thought it would be a good idea for NC. Also suggested having regional conferences – Eastern, Central, and Western.

Discussions about Officers:

Pam Jackson is willing to be treasurer and Beverly Elwell is willing to be secretary. Wayne is willing to continue as President again and Richard Wilson as Vice President. This will need to be voted on online since there is no quorum present.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted.
Hal Van Pelt
Secretary