



Region I Disability Access Committee Meeting

February 11, 2020
Minutes

Member Present: James Sigwarth, Anna Stamat, Jamie Phipps, Jeanne Helling, Lisa Curtain, Lisa Farley, Margee Woywood, Michelle Schmitt, Nancy Steffensmeier, Ron Axtell, & Bob Hendrickson

Members Absent: Lynn Gallagher, Kayla Baxter, Kris Cole, Lea Dahlquist,

Others Present: Sue Larson, Clerical Support

- 1.** Call to Order: Nancy Steffensmeier called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. Roll was taken, and it was noted that a quorum was established.
- 2.** Approval of Agenda: Motion Lisa Farley, seconded Margee Woywood, to approve agenda as presented. All ayes. Motion carried.
- 3.** Establish Quorum: It was noted that a quorum was established.
- 4.** Action Item: Motion Nancy Steffensmeier, seconded James Sigwarth, to approve minutes from the January 14, 2020, Region I Disability Access Committee meeting. All ayes. Motion carried.
- 5.** Telecommunications Access Iowa presentation.

Dylan Heur, Program Manager at Telecommunications Access Iowa (A Program of the Iowa Utilities Board) reached out to Jeanne Helling about presenting to the board. This is a state-wide program over seen by the Iowa Utilities Board and is very beneficial to Iowans. They provide vouchers for special equipment for folks that are deaf or have hearing loss and speech impairments for increased quality of living through special devices. Vouchers will help cover 95%-99% of the costs of equipment, with only a minimal cost to folks. You may re-apply for vouchers every 5 years. There are over 125 representatives or dealers state-wide. Dubuque has three dealers. Amplified phones, closed captioning phones and the electrical larynx phone; which has a special tool to connect to the phone and then around your neck to clarify speech. Accessories such as headsets, mouth pieces, amplifies for land line phones plus answering machines. An iPad or iPad mini are also available with a voucher. Specific apps can be downloaded to meet the needs of clients. One voucher for equipment and three accessories allowed every five years. If equipment needs replacing, it would be a special request with a new application and a letter stating why it needs replaced and the State would do the approval. Once you have met the five qualifying questions, applying is easy for the equipment, fill out an application and answer all the questions. A professional signature is required to verify that applicant does have a need for equipment and confirm what type of equipment is needed. This can be an audiologist, teacher, doctor, etc. Vouchers are sent out on Friday and will include a

list of dealers in Iowa. The main office is in Des Moines with a showroom with different devices on display to try out.

Dubuque area dealers are: Business Telephone Supply, Concept by Iowa Hearing Aid Centers and Killean Audiology and Hearing Aid Centers.

Lori Sporrer, Relay Iowa Outreach Project Manager for Relay Iowa, spoke about their services they provide to the deaf, hard of hearing, blind and persons with speech difficulties to allow them to communicate via phone. Provide 24/7 Relay services like voice carry-over, video relay, captioned telephone services. A Communication Assistant (CA) can provide help with phone calls, at no cost. Other services include, TTY Relay, Voice Carry Over (VCO), Hearing Carry Over (HCO), Speech-to-Speech (STS), Captioned Telephone (CapTel) and Deaf-Blind Services (DBS). Spanish Relay is also available for calls. Telephones can either be analog or digital, and some services do require Internet or Wi-Fi connection. No services provided for cell phones. Can work with employers to have these product's in the workplace. Brochures are available from Nancy if anyone is interested.

6. Review of David Mitchell's information from recent WIOA Director's meeting.

Ron Axtell attended the February 4 meeting in Des Moines. Directors of the program are trying to see how the committee is going. We would like to continue with our committee. Would like to us to work together and partner with Core partners. Talked about different categories; one of the things talked about was how can we really take a look at identifying what we want to do and what action steps to take and what are we doing to move forward with our goal. Ron stated from what he was understanding, they still want us to take a look at goals and identify them, but this group has already done that. We have completed the Business Engagement piece. Discussion among others, are we seeing any value in this? What do you see this group doing for you? This group likes other Agency' being a part of this group, partnering and working together with clients. Need other organizations and colleagues to move forward, too. I don't see anything lacking in our partnership and we want others to feel valued in our meetings.

They addressed communication issues and access. Review summary and progress of the Accessibility study. Continuum Model needs to look at the partnership with Workforce Development, Iowa Works and Vocational Rehab to see how we are making referrals to each other. These are all mapped out, how we are working together and providing services for folks. I feel we are doing a great job and we are ahead of the curve across the State. There are always things we can improve upon, like maybe reaching out to more businesses.

2:46 p.m. Michelle Schmitt left the meeting.

Suggestions for promoting our services: Summer camps. Maybe do presentations to Chambers of Commerce, related to barriers in the workforce for people with disabilities. Have we done a survey of local businesses to ask them some questions regarding disability? Ask them what their weaknesses are or help them realize they have access to sensitive trainings. This could be a volunteer survey but promote through local chambers, so we could try to expand our role through businesses.

Agenda ideas March 11 meeting: Survey ideas and Disability Awareness month ideas

Some feel a large disconnect with Zoom meetings, so would like to suggest each office host a monthly meeting.

Motion James Sigwarth, seconded Margee Woywood, to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.
Meeting adjourned at 2:59 p.m.

Submitted by: Sue Larson, Keystone AEA