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**MINUTES**

Standing Committee on Communication Access Meeting

Location: Disability and Communication Access Board

919 Ala Moana Blvd., Room 103

Honolulu, HI 96814

Date: November 1, 2016

Time: 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Misella Tomita, Chairperson; Colin Whited, Board Member; Francine Wai, Kirby Shaw, Kurstin Chun, Staff

ABSENT: Ed Chevy, Board Member

SIGN LANGUAGE

INTERPRETERS: Michele Morris and Susie Kahl

GUESTS: Mala Arkin (first attended via phone, then later attended in person), Heather Benjamin, Kim Duncan, Ann Ito

# Call to Order

Chairperson Misella Tomita called the meeting to order at 11:27 a.m.

# Introductions

The attendees introduced themselves.

# Approval of October 3, 2016 Meeting Minutes

The Committee approved the October 3, 2016 meeting minutes (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

# Old Business

## Amend Hawaii Administrative Rules, Title 11, Chapter 218, “Communication Access Services for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and Deaf-Blind” – Continued Discussion

Francine Wai raised a concern from a community member about the following motion passed by the Committee on August 29, 2016: “As a part of the application process for the HQAS test, the applicant must have one Deaf community member endorsement and one local interpreter endorsement.” She said the concern was that the endorsement requirement is not a normal practice for other professions and that taking a test should be a private matter for the person taking the test. The Committee agreed that this should be a confidential process for the candidate applying for the HQAS test. Ann Ito added that making the process confidential would show a high respect for potential interpreters.

**PAST MOTION WITHDRAWN:**  Withdraw the motion passed on August 29, 2016, “As a part of the application process for the HQAS test, the applicant must have one Deaf community member endorsement and one local interpreter endorsement” (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

Kurstin Chun distributed the “3 Stages for HQAS Interpreters” packet. She explained that the diagram is the same as used in previous discussions, but that these pages were updated to incorporate motions passed in previous meetings. On the second page of the packet, she pointed out that the Committee tabled the decision on keeping or increasing the HQAS test fee. She said that some states provide grants to assist interpreters cover the cost of the state screening test, but unfortunately Hawaii does not have such a grant at this time. The Committee asked the guests who are freelance interpreters their opinion about increasing the cost of the HQAS test from $300 to $360. Kim Duncan asked what the $60 increase would go toward. Staff explained that the money received for the HQAS test is used to pay the test evaluators and that the increase would provide a small bump up in remuneration. Kim Duncan suggested that acceptance of the increase would depend on the anticipated changes to the recommended fee schedule as there are some interpreters with national certifications who took the HQAS due to the recommended fee schedule. Kurstin Chun said that students coming from an Interpreter Training Program might not be prepared to pay upwards of $700 for the national test and may need to use the HQAS as a stepping stone. Kim Duncan added that if she were a student, the $360 cost would not stop her from taking the test. The Committee agreed to increase the fee to $360.

**MOTION:** The candidate fees for the HQAS interpreting/transliterating performance test shall be $360.00 (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

Kurstin Chun then continued through the rest of the information on the page to show the flow of the HQAS Test Procedure through the Credential/Renewal process.

Kurstin Chun recollected for the Committee that it voted earlier to remove the written ethics portion of the HQAS test and to instead require candidates who pass the test at a Level III or higher to watch an ethics video and sign a confirmation statement that they watched the video. The ethics video and confirmation were made a part of the Credential/Renewal process so that persons who apply for, or renew, a state credential must do so before receiving the credential. Kurstin Chun then distributed Appendix F of the Hawaii Administrative Rules Title 11, Chapter 218, and a copy of the Code of Professional Conduct as listed on the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc. (RID) web site. Discussion ensued about whether to include questions for applicants to answer to demonstrate that they watched the video. Kim Duncan mentioned that she recently took the national interpreter written test and although she passed it, she did not receive feedback on the questions she answered correctly or incorrectly. Heather Benjamin mentioned that when she earns Continuing Education Units (CEUs) online, there is often a pop up to click during the session to demonstrate that the person is watching and that if the person fails to click on the pop up, then CEUs cannot be earned for that workshop. Francine Wai explained that the specifics on confirmation can be addressed later, but asked the Committee to decide whether on replacing the HQAS Interpreter Code of Ethics with the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct. The consensus was to replace the one for the other. Kirby Shaw and Francine Wai mentioned that there should be some minor amendments to the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct to be adapted for the Hawaii state credential.

**MOTION:** The “Hawaii Quality Assurance System, Interpreter Code of Ethics” will be replaced by the NAD-RID Code of Professional Conduct with amendments to report to DCAB instead of RID (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

Returning back to the Credential/Renewal process, Kurstin Chun asked the Committee what to call the simplified levels of interpreter ranking. Discussion ensued, but the Committee did not come to an agreement. Francine Wai read the HQAS Levels – Functional Description as voted on in previous meetings. The item was tabled and staff will ask agencies for wording that would assist in understanding the different levels.

Due to time constraints, Francine Wai asked the Committee to focus on the next area of discussion, then return to the simplified levels of interpreter ranking if time permitted.

After going through the rest of the ‘Old Business’ as listed on the agenda, the Committee decided to return to the remaining unfinished items in this section.

Kurstin Chun pointed out the next section of the Credential/Renewal process would be for the interpreter to earn CEUs according to the requirements. She noted that pursuant to the Committee’s earlier decision to consider other test credentials/certifications, the CEU requirements will be associated with the credential level and not the HQAS level. The Committee reviewed and discussed the CEU requirements and made the following motion:

**MOTION:** The Committee accepts the CEU requirements as recommended by staff (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

Kurstin Chun explained the last section of the Credential/Renewal process involves what occurs when the credential cycle comes to an end. Interpreters who earn the required CEUs will be eligible to renew their credential at the same level, but that those who do not earn the required CEUs may file for an extension. Currently, there is no written rule to limit the number of extensions an applicant may request and there is no fee associated with extension requests. The Committee asked how RID administers its extensions. Kurstin Chun said that the RID web site indicates that an interpreter may request only one extension during the time the interpreter is with RID, that the reinstatement fee is $200, and that several other documents are required. After discussion, the Committee decided on the following:

**MOTION:** A state credentialed interpreter may apply for only one extension of up to three months with an extension fee of $50 (M/S/P Whited/Tomita).

The Committee further discussed that the fee should be equivalent to the cost to apply for a credential to discourage interpreters from using the extension.

## Task Force – Continued Discussion

Francine Wai reported that DCAB had been checking in with the Deputy Attorney General to ensure that we are appropriately following procedures for having a Task Force. She emphasized that the Task Force is a body to offer recommendations only and that allowing interpreters to vote would not be breaking any laws. In addition, she noted that the Board members involved could not be part of the voting group, and could only be involved as observers and be available to answer questions as they arise.

Francine Wai named the different groups that were asked to be in the Task Force. Mala Arkin pointed out that there should be a Deaf Interpreter present as well. Staff mentioned that Colleen Cidade, who is listed to represent the Hawaii School for the Deaf and Blind (HSDB) and is also a Deaf Interpreter, will be asked to either represent HSDB or join the Task Force as a Deaf Interpreter. Kurstin Chun mentioned that Heather Benjamin, who left the meeting, said that she will check with RID to make sure that she can be a Task Force member.

The issue of balancing the voting rights was raised. Francine Wai said that if things get too convoluted, the Task Force can take the role of a non-voting group or some other form. Further discussion on the matter will be needed.

Due to time constraints, all guests and the interpreters had to leave for personal reasons. The Committee continued the meeting.

1. Licensure Legislation – Update

Francine Wai reported that the proposed bills were discussed by the Department of Health (DOH) and the Governor and that they support the concept of a study. She noted that when the bills were submitted, the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) was designated as the agency to monitor the licensing of interpreters and/or interpreter referral agencies. However, DCCA was unaware of this and was vehemently against being the designated agency. Therefore, DOH is looking into submitting the bill with no monitoring agency listed; thus, the bill is currently pending.

# New Business

No new business was shared at this meeting.

# Next Meeting

The Committee decided to reconvene on December 1, 2016 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

# Announcements

## Kapiolani Community College Interpreter Program

Francine Wai briefly mentioned that Louise Pagotto forwarded an email from Jan Fried, and that because of time constraints she would forward the email to the Committee members for their review.

# Open Forum: Public comment on issues not on the agenda, but to be considered for placement on a future Committee meeting agenda.

No public comments were made.

# Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:48 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

KURSTIN CHUN