

ColoradoRID Business Meeting April 2, 2011

President Report by Kari Baker, ColoradoRID President

It is now time for the President's Report. First, on a personal note, I would like to thank you for coming to the conference, and to the business meeting. I realize that you don't get CEUs, and that you could be spending your afternoon in the sun, but I so appreciate you being here and supporting this organization. This is our second year in the positions of President and VP, and I have appreciated all the support I have received from you as members.

CRID is in a really interesting place right now – we, as a board, have struggled with knowing the direction that the organization should take. CRID has served many purposes throughout the years – as a source of social and professional networking, as a place to earn CEUs, as a place to volunteer and gain leadership experience, as a way to connect with other community organizations, as a way to let our voices be heard and get information by going to district meetings, and so on.

The board, over the last several years, has begun to see some of these things shift. Starting a few years ago, social gatherings began to be offered less often because they were not well attended. Workshops provided have and continue to break even or lose money due to poor attendance, volunteerism is down – we've had a difficult time recruiting people into the many open positions, meeting attendance is very low (with less than 10 people at district meetings all over the state) etc. The board has talked about these trends at length and has realized that CRID is really in a state of transition. Things have changed for us as interpreters – the economy forces many of us to work more often, leaving less time for volunteering, there seems to be shift toward focusing on our families, taking care of ourselves, and dealing with our busy personal lives. Workshops cost money and time, and advances in technology means that meetings don't seem to be as necessary as they once were. Whatever the reason, the board has recognized these changes, and really wants to do what is in your best interest at this time, whatever that may be in terms of the organization.

I believe the recent survey did provide some insight into your priorities for the organization, which we will talk about shortly.

First though, I have some other information to share with you! The first is in regard to the restructure of the organization that was completed this year.

Restructure:

The State Board started off the fiscal year last July realizing that we were in a bit of a bind. The information I am about to share was sent to all of you in a series of emails, but I wanted to recap it here since this is the first time we have been together since these changes occurred.

As a membership, we passed a motion 2 years ago that changed all four affiliates into "committees" by July 30, 2010. Therefore, on that date, all affiliate chapters (MH, PP, N, WS) were technically dissolved (along with their affiliate bylaws) and were reconstituted as local committees. The state bylaws remained intact. Without affiliate bylaws however, affiliate officer positions (President, VP, Secretary, Treasurer) technically no longer existed. As there was no formal structure for the affiliate board, there was therefore no formal structure for the state board (as the state board is made up of affiliate officers). Therefore, the state board could not properly vote nor could it conduct any business until a new structure was in place.

The board recognized this problem early on, and was actively seeking out members to serve on a restructure committee, but no one stepped forward. So when the state board held its annual retreat in August, we spent the majority of our time talking through a new structure. The ideas came from:

- A board retreat several years ago that Gordon Vernon (from RID's Affiliate Chapter Relations Committee - ACRC) led. He gave the board LOTS of input on what a structure could and should look like that would fall in line with RID's mandate.
- The work of the previous CRID restructuring committee who presented recommendations at the 2009 ColoradoRID conference. This committee had attended affiliate meetings and talked to members all over the state to gather input about what members wanted in a restructure.
- **The survey** done at last year's conference, which you may remember filling out – 50 members completed the survey with representation from all 4 affiliates. There were several key take aways from that survey. Namely:
 - The number one reason you wanted affiliates is for CEUs, then information distribution, then social events, then being heard.

- Only 6-13 members attend affiliate meetings more than once a year (which is consistent with what we see in the Districts – about 5-10 people attending each meeting).
- Over 50 % wanted to maintain affiliate bank accounts
- Comments in support: members need affiliate representatives so that members get local representation on the board, members like the small groups and camaraderie found in the affiliates, and said it's a great training ground for upcoming leaders.
- Comments in opposition: there is a lot of duplication of responsibilities (the affiliates are often doing the exact same thing the state is doing), there's no need for affiliates now with technology that can give us information, affiliates don't really provide anything that the state couldn't provide, etc.

The board took all of your comments and by the end of the retreat, the board had outlined a structure that they believe will fit the needs and desires of ColoradoRID. This new structure was voted in at the September Business Meeting. You can see the new structure here on the PPT – oh and the bank accounts were left individualized, not merged into a big state account. This new structure gives the affiliates a lot more flexibility – to do what meets their needs – socials, meetings, no meetings, etc. It also cuts down the number of people having to fill positions.

The major changes: From a 12 member board to a 9 member board (and only one vote per affiliate) and changes in liaisons to committees. Previously, the VP was the liaison to basically all committees. Now, these are divided among board members in a way that seemed to make the most sense. For example, the treasurer now works with the budget committee and the fundraising committee whereas the secretary now works with the membership committee, the communications committee (formerly publications, website and public relations).

I won't go through every detail now, but if you would like more information, please do refer to the attachments that were sent out by email in October. If you need another copy of the documentation, please let me know and I'd be glad to resend.

Licensure

Next, as you may remember, last year I gave a report on licensure. CRID was approached because CAD wanted CRID to take the lead on licensure, so I opted to set up an ad hoc committee to investigate if this is something members wanted CRID to pursue. No one responded to the call for committee members however, so no committee was formed.

A few months ago, I emailed members who had been involved in the licensure process in the past to see what their thoughts were on licensure. Their responses were all over the map – some were in strong support of pursuing licensure for interpreters, while others felt it was the last thing we should do as an organization – therefore the results of my informal poll were entirely inconclusive.

Comments in Support:

- Yes, it should be pursued through a bill brought by the Deaf and interpreting communities to the legislature
- It is needed to improve the quality of services and to prevent people from hiring underqualified interpreters.
- Current Title Protection (which as you may remember was passed a couple years ago and means that interpreters who are not certified may not call themselves interpreters – so the title of interpreting is protected. They may call themselves “pre-certified”, “non certified” etc but the point is full disclosure to all parties. The comment is that Title Protection is confusing for consumers and providers and doesn’t address the issue of underqualified interpreters.
- I believe that licensure is necessary for oversight purposes and the fact that there are MANY people working as interpreters without certification, and because it is the desire of the deaf community.

Challenges:

- Showing potential harm and evidence of harm is very hard to get

Comments in Opposition:

- It adds another layer for those who are already compliant (licensure would likely not include another test for interpreters, but would likely require a yearly fee).
- This isn’t as much of a problem as people make it out to be
- There aren’t that many complaints
- There are other avenues for complaints that are under-utilized – RID Ethical Practice System, Civil Rights, Anti-Discrimination, ADA, etc.

- It should be the responsibility of interpreters, agencies, Deaf people, etc.

My question for you all is where does CRID fit in the licensure process, what is our role, and how should we proceed. It is completely in your hands as members to do with this as you wish – you are free to bring up any ideas under “New Business” if you desire.

Communication Survey Policy Results

The board has been considering the topic of communication with members for quite some time (what information do members want to receive, and how do they want to receive it – email, newsletter, website, etc) and made some changes to the bylaws that the board felt would help simplify communication. However, after receiving feedback from members, the board realized that a lot of factors were not considered in the board’s decision.

So, we went back to the drawing board, and (based on member recommendations) sent out a survey for you to fill out about what information you want sent to you and how you want that information sent. The survey was sent out just a couple of weeks ago to all who were members at the time via email.

We received just over 50 responses. The results have been compiled, and are on various tables around the room. Please look these over. The results were as follows:

Most responses were fairly high – most members prefer that most information be distributed. The lowest priorities seem to be out of state workshops, workshops that are designed to earn profit for a for-profit company, and advertisements.

The winner in every category was e-newsletter with a few exceptions:

- Job Openings (individual emails)
- CRID State Information (website)
- Advertisements (only posted on the web if the company pays for advertising)

As with the topic of licensure, as members, you are free to do anything you wish if you would like to take any action on these results.

That concludes my report – thank you for your attention.