

BRAIN INJURY ALLIANCE OF SD

November Board Meeting

November 14, 2014

Members Attended:

Ron Sasso from the Rapid City area

Justine Ashokar via Skype

Karen Brokenleg, Mary Ohman, Denise Johnson, Doris Schumacher, Glenn Schumacher, Mary Tommeraasen from Sioux Falls area via Skype

Not Attending: Patricia Patrick

Discussion initially took place regarding tenure. The discussion involved limitations to the terms of the director and possibly staggering them or even removing the tenure section from the bylaws.

After further review, someone realized that the Brain Injury bylaws were approved on March 11, 2004. Article 4 had to do with electing officers. Mary O. motioned to approve the minutes for Article 4. They were approved. (Further discussion had taken place at the meeting on 9/20/2014.)

New Business:

Justine mentioned March is Brain Injury Awareness Month. We could not reach all the schools in the past. She had a discussion with young high school kids in the past regarding concussions, and maybe we could try other high schools. Karen stated she and two others go to O’Gorman High School in May to meet with students. Justine thought maybe with new staff and new students we could reach more people again. Justine reminded us that we have Ron’s PowerPoint we could use and maybe take 30-45 minutes to talk with the students. She could assist in Rapid City. Mary O. wondered if we should each choose a school to speak with them about this topic.

Ron mentioned we have the Letters to the Editor and articles. We could cover that in a column. Mary O. questioned if we did Letters to the Editor if they needed to be signed personally or on behalf of the board. Ron stated that as long as we are not saying anything absurd, we could sign with the BIASD. It is probably the preference to do so, because it tells that we are WITH that organization; or, we could sign that we are a member of BIASD to raise awareness of the credibility of the group.

Denise asked if we should all have one letter to use. Ron stated he could send out his information he had written, but it depended upon the length allowed by the newspapers. Karen mentioned there is a timeline for March, so we need to get the letters in earlier. Mary O. thought January or the beginning of February would be a good timeline to have them sent to the newspapers.

Karen brought up that our Sioux Falls support group was mentioned again in the paper accurately by Avera McKennan. Our brochures are closer to being completed and we will have 500 to start for doctor's offices such as neurologists and psychologists.

Ron and Justine stated they had not seen any conferences set for March at this point. Iowa has one, but it is a bad month for weather.

Justine brought up the mentorship that CO is doing. Family members can call in for a few months or as long as it takes. The mentors have NOT sustained a brain injury. We could advertise this program and they could call us from our website. Karen wondered about the liability. The hospitals did not want to do this, as the liability was a concern if something did happen. Ron thought what we were doing was kind of outreach for them not mentors. Justine mentioned Ron Hoops takes calls (we all do) but this is more for resources currently.

The Center for Disabilities has a Spring Symposium March 30-April 1st at Cedar Shores in Chamberlain.

In April, Ron will have a webinar for BIAA and will post it on the website and email us the information. It will be for an hour or so and discuss social/emotional changes after a brain injury.

Updates:

Ron stated things are busy at the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center. There is a lot going on. They continue to work on the residential unit, but change is going slowly—the building is still in discussion phase. Twila Stibralt took over for Kim for SD Advocacy; she is interested in learning about brain injuries. She may bring more to SD.

Denise explained she is intermittently in charge of the women's brain injury unit. They have their own employment specialist, Valerie Anderson. They have found the women have different issues than the men. The program is not using VR contracts, so can do their exciting work with these individuals. The program has taken off so well and they have used Mini Critters, a car wash, etc.

Karen stated there was a workshop at Avera McKennan and the program in Irene was discussed. Apparently, only 1-2 people were placed elsewhere.

Ron shared that Twila visited Irene with staff. There is no counseling onsite. Therapies are contracted out and they go to Yankton. Staff would like to have the counseling services there, but Medicaid does not cover it.

Treasurer's Report:

\$2,371.25

Karen brought up the fact that we have not heard about the 501(c)3 status. Apparently, applications were divided into two groups. We mailed ours on July 25, 2014.

- 1) Applications can be processed in 90 days.
- 2) Applications needing additional information may be processed in 180 days and were assigned to an Account Services Specialist.

By October 25th we should have had it. Maybe we fell in the second category because we have not heard anything.

Ron thinks we had everything needed. Karen though Ron could contact them with our ID, etc. Karen could call this month otherwise.

Glenn and Doris reported from the Brookings support group. It is small. They had three responses but found it discouraging. Emily Crooks from ILC contacts the individuals she see and Doris put notices in the Brookings paper. Unfortunately, the day the group meets is the day it can be read in the paper. Glenn wondered if it made a difference if the group met on the weekend or weekday. The hospital is where the group meets and the plans were made through the ILC; they chose the day that worked best for them. Karen wondered if a letter that they could hold in their hands might help.

Ron stated he had a staff person currently trying the idea of automatic text messages for the reminder of the support group meetings in Rapid City. They have 8-20 people attending and they ask the group if they want to break into separate groups or stay together.

Karen reported the Sioux Falls group was outgrowing our room so we may need a larger space. She spoke of splitting the group as we meet.

Next Meeting:

February 12th is Disability Awareness Day at the Capitol. We would meet again in the afternoon following our representation at the Capitol. Karen mentioned we need one large table there that day. Some can talk with the legislators. We should all learn about the HRSA grant and we can provide that to the legislators. Ron will send out information to us (has). We are one of two states not taking up the HRSA grant (Louisiana is the other). It regards data collection. It has to be a state entity, but once the incidence rate is determined, then we can go beyond that. SD does have a trauma registry. There was a note stating that for more information on the HRSA grant, Gaye Mattke, DHS, was the contact regarding the state TBI program.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Tommeraasen, BIASD Secretary

