

Brain Injury Alliance of South Dakota Quarterly Board Meeting

July 18, 2020 at 9:00 AM (CST) via Zoom Meeting

Present: Mary Ohman, Doris Schumacher, Glenn Schumacher, Karen Brokenleg, Justine Ashokar, Jenny Hallan, Brian Poelstra, and Mary Tommeraasen

Absent: Kevin Stoterau

Mary O called the meeting to order. Attendance was taken.

Mary O told of an article in the paper regarding a man from Aberdeen who sustained a brain injury 15 years ago. He biked across the country; he was hurt riding his bike; he used public housing, etc. and continued cycling ever since.

Mary O introduced herself to Brian and Jenny; the other board members did the same.

Jenny told more about herself. She has been working at ILC since 2015; she started as an IL Specialist and is currently a Program Director there since 2016. She met Doris and Glenn back in 2015 and they taught her a lot. Jenny did attend some of the Large Group meetings from the Center for Disabilities in the past when they were assembling the resource manual regarding brain injuries.

Brian lives in Pierre and has 2 boys—one has a disability, which fits well with his job at Disability Rights of SD. He spent 16 years as a physical therapist prior to his current job. Brian is a Program Lead for Protection and Advocacy for those with traumatic brain injuries at Disability Rights of SD. Twenty-six years ago, he received a TBI playing slow pitch softball; damage was “minimal”, as he was able to obtain his Masters afterward for physical therapist, work as a therapist, and continue serving the citizens of SD through his current position.

Doris moved to accept the meeting minutes from 4-25-2020 with no corrections. Mary T seconded the motion. Minutes were approved.

Justine agreed it would be good to have Brian as a part of our Board. Mary O motioned to accept Brian as a new Board member. Doris seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously to approve Brian as a BIASD Board member.

Mary O stated there was no new correspondence through the Gmail account since the last meeting.

Individual Board Member updates:

Mary T shared regarding the Zoom meeting her and Karen participated in the previous day. It was a Zoom meeting from the Brain Injury Hope Foundation. The Brain Injury Survivor Series has been unable to meet in person, so started using Zoom each month. Yesterday’s topic was “The Benefits of Counseling Following a Traumatic or Acquired Brain Injury.” Mary T will share the link by email to Board members and Karen could put the link on the website.

Jenny has done some work with websites and could possibly assist Karen, if needed. Our email address is braininjurysd@gmail.com. Mary O used the email address to set up the Zoom meeting today.

Karen shared more about the Survivor Series that was very interesting. She explained the facilitators of the support group in Sioux Falls were connecting with individuals and connecting some of them to talk. They hoped to use Zoom for a group soon.

Doris/Glenn have not had any support group meetings due to COVID-19. Thru ILC there have been some Zoom meetings partnered with Avera in Brookings for individuals with disabilities. Doris had sent an email to Board members providing a resource—The Functional Neurology Center in MN. She shared that ND is doing a Mental Health Brain Injury series Wednesdays and a Concussion Symposium is coming soon. Doris could send the email link and Karen could put the link on the website.

(<https://www.ndbin.org/events/webinars> for webinar Wednesdays and (<https://www.ndbin.org/training/brain-injury> for other training). Glenn has not been too active on Facebook; he posted a little on isolation and brain injury. Someone in the support group contacted him to check on him. If Mary O cannot put the Aberdeen story on Facebook, she will send it to Glenn to try.

Justine shared The Brain Injury Rehabilitation Center is starting to open. They are still cautious to take people in, but have been working with the residents and getting them to the park; staff go shopping for the individuals. It has been very slow. They were to open, but the numbers increased for COVID-19. They have people in training classes and have had 8-10 people at a time. Justine has been doing neuropsychological evaluations in the conference room. The support group has been pending. They have not received many phone calls from others; one emailed and talked on the phone. Their individuals in general have been more anxious; more sessions for supports have been provided in the home. Volunteering stopped for individuals; staff have been very careful and not able to enjoy things as before.

Jenny has seen an increase in anxiety and depression even with staff at ILC. They provide more weekly calls now to touch base for food resources, seeing doctors, etc. They have provided more phone calls, more mailings, and sent coloring books/crossword activities. They have been meeting with individuals by appointment since the end of May. The use Zoom for support group meetings.

Brian shared that Facebook has “rooms” which is a messenger through Facebook and may be an easier option to talk more easily. Brian will try it; Mary O used it with family. He said all his work is done virtually or by phone. No one is going out or coming in until further notice. Brian has been creating a presence of Veterans with Disability Rights of SD. As Mary, Karen, and Kevin pursue involvement with the DAV they will include Brian to explain program to use as a resource.

Committees:

Nominating (membership): Mary T and Karen—If Kevin stays on the board, we have met the maximum number of 9 board members. Mary T will contact him. Mary O told Justine she would like to resign as president. She is happy there is new blood and interests which Brian and Jenny bring to the board. She would like to resign from the board but participate in creating a newsletter maybe.

The board members asked if our support groups in the state could be connected. We can post to the Facebook page, but not sure about working with the other features without a password.

Legislation: Justine—Justine stated nothing was new with the legislation due to COVID-19.

Newsletter/Advertising: Doris and Mary O—Doris asked Brian to add an article for the newsletter regarding Disability Rights of SD. They thought they may include information regarding COVID issues—about how survivors are dealing with COVID-19.

Technology: Glenn and Karen—Nothing new. Jenny will check with her supervisor and see if she may be on the committee, also.

Fundraising/Brain Injury Awareness Month: The fundraising with Dairy Queen is still on hold. Mary O asked if we should go out and hire someone to do fundraising, and wondered if we were there yet. Doris stated someone from CA has contacted us regarding helping boards to do this. Mary O preferred to hire someone one of us knew rather than just an individual reaching out to offer assistance like that. Mary T mentioned she could contact the BIAA as she was in contact with someone on staff there recently. A discussion took place regarding membership with BIAA (too expensive for us still) or United States Brain Injury Alliance (\$500 for an individual member, but not sure for a state membership). It was agreed it should be an agenda item to discuss further. Mary O will look into it.

Scholarship: Justine, Doris, Karen—Doris asked to have her name removed due to other committees.

Veterans: Kevin and Mary T—Brian may be added to the committee but will check with his supervisor. Mary T will contact them at the DAV again soon. Contacting them again has been put on hold due to COVID-19. Mary T has contacted someone from the VA she knows and she would like to be included in developing a support group for these individuals who have a brain injury.

Brian and Jenny will need to sign Conflict of Interest forms. Doris agreed to send them to Brian and Jenny and have them returned to Mary T.

Treasurer's report: Karen--\$4,583.71 currently. Doris was reimbursed \$98.30 for brochures which was deducted from the \$4,682.01. Glenn had a fundraiser on Facebook for his birthday. A check came for \$380.65 from Network for Good in that amount. No information was given. Mary O found Network for Good and noticed 3.95% tax deductible fee; we are not sure if it was used to pay the bank, credit card, costs, etc.

“Giving Saturday (SD)”;
Justine will look into how to give electronically. We now know donations can come through Facebook and that you can look at your donations. Justine will look this up for November to have the Dec. 1st SD Giving date and email all of us; she will work with Karen for the needed banking information.

Mary O shared her Google search for “Brain Injury Alliance of South Dakota.” On the right side, it showed Karen’s home pictured and address and Doris’ phone number. It doesn’t take you to our website; on the **website** there is a yellow picture of the Black Hills, not Karen’s house. Google maps does this to be helpful based on the address. It does not allow editing of the phone number on Google; the website lists all of us under contacts rather than just that phone number.

Add Brian and Jenny to Contact Us. Mary T will provide that to Karen.

Thank you, Karen, for filing taxes for our group; Karen said they were pending.

The next Board meeting is set for Nov. 14th at 9:00 CST. (Brian will not be in attendance due to volunteering to assist with deer hunting for individuals with special needs that day.)