

# ***Consortium for Language Access in the Courts***

## ***Executive Committee Minutes***

**November 10, 2011**

### **I. Call to order**

Brenda Aiken, Chair, called to order a teleconference meeting of the Executive Committee on November 10, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern time.

### **II. Roll call**

The following persons were present for the meeting: Brenda Aiken (AK), Janica Bisharat (ID), Carmel Capati (WI), John Goerdts (IA), Katrin Johnson (WA), Emy López (CO), Mara Simmons (AR), and Wanda Romberger, as staff. Patricia Griffin, COSCA liaison, joined the call at approximately 2:40 p.m.

### **III. Minutes**

Wanda reported that the minutes of the October meeting were approved by the members via e-mail and distributed to the membership by Katrin on October 31, 2011.

### **IV. Staff report**

Wanda reported that she is writing an article for the NCSC annual Trends publication on the topic of testing, certification, and qualifications of interpreters and technical problems and issues associated with training and certifying interpreters. The federal program is moving to computer administration for its written examination and Wanda reported that lessons learned from that experience will greatly benefit the Consortium as it considers computer administration of its written exams.

Staff oversaw the recording of the test stimuli for the new Farsi, Vietnamese, and two Spanish examinations. All of those exams will be donated to the Consortium after field testing and final revisions.

### **V. Technical Committee report**

Emy reported that the Technical Committee is convening three separate sub-committees, to do the following:

- Research alternate testing solutions for bilingual staff and for languages for which no oral examination exists and make recommendations to the membership;
- Examine the responsibilities of rater supervisors and document what the rater supervisor does and what his/her responsibilities are; and
- Research some alternatives for a secure web site given the fact that SharePoint has too many access and permission problems.

The committee will move forward to analyze and determine 1) what the written examinations are intended to measure and 2) whether they are measuring appropriately.

Members discussed some of the problems encountered with the SharePoint secure site and the fact that as time goes on, the Consortium will require more and more technical support. Brenda pointed out that COSCA should be made aware of that fact so it can be considering technical challenges that may be faced in the future.

#### **VI. Annual Meeting Committee**

Just prior to the meeting, Mara distributed the invitation to attend the annual meeting, a memo to the membership, the draft agenda, and the registration form to the Executive Committee. She reported that the committee's intention is to e-mail each program manager individually with the packet of information and a personal message. The committee thought that a memo from the Executive Committee would also improve the marketing effort. After discussion, it was decided that the Annual Meeting Committee should send the packets to the program managers and if, later, it appears that additional marketing efforts are necessary, the Executive Committee can draft a memo.

Once each program manager is contacted via e-mail, the packet will be sent to the entire listserv and uploaded to the members' only web site.

Mara explained that Internet access is necessary for the annual meeting since some of the presentations will require such access. The Executive Committee members agreed that Internet access is likely to be necessary for every annual meeting and approved securing Internet access from the hotel.

Mara reported that the committee is designing the yearly state reports in survey format so that responses to the survey will result in the collection of annual state report data. The survey should be ready in approximately three weeks.

#### **VII. 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2011 budget report and 2012 proposed budget**

Janica distributed the final version of the proposed 2012 budget, noting that the line item for "setting aside funds for subsequent exam development" needs to be adjusted to show \$30,000 instead of the \$15,000 that was reflected in the 2011 budget. After discussion, it was decided that the wording on the line item will be revised to indicate "\$15,000 per year, beginning in 2011," so that members can clearly see that the amount should be increasing each year by \$15,000. Staff will revise the text on the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget report before distributing it to the membership.

Janica will draft a memo to the membership for committee members to review and finalize. Staff will then send the memo and proposed 2012 budget to the membership, providing a comment period and then calling for the vote before the end of the year.

Emy inquired whether, if the 2011 budgeted amount for test modification isn't fully used in 2011, some of that money can be rolled over to increase the amount budgeted in the proposed 2012 budget. It was decided that Wanda and Emy will develop a proposal for consideration by the committee.

The committee unanimously approved a motion made by Katrin and seconded by John that the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter budget report be approved (with the change noted above) and distributed to the membership.

#### **VIII. Professional Issues Committee report**

Prior to the meeting, Carmel distributed a copy of the signed Memorandum of Understanding between NCSC on behalf of the Consortium and the New Mexico Center for Language Access. The committee will have a final meeting about the marketing material for the workshops and plan to offer the first course in mid- to late-February and she hopes to report about it at the annual meeting. There will be limited participation – 15 participants for the four-week course. A committee member may sit in and audit the course so that feedback and suggestions can be contributed.

The web page reorganization was discussed. Wanda agreed to check with the IT people at the NCSC to see what a new timeline would look like for the *Resources for Program Managers* web page reorganization.

#### **IX. COSCA liaison report**

Pat reported that COSCA's special sub-committee submitted a report and recommendations to the COSCA board in time for its meeting the week of November 14. If the board approves of the approach, the recommendations will be disseminated to the full COSCA and Consortium membership.

The proposed approach would disband the Consortium as it currently exists. All technical issues and decisions (exam development, modification, and maintenance and all rater recruitment, training, etc.) would instead reside within the NCSC's new "language access services division" which would be working closely with COSCA's language access subcommittee (under the COSCA/CCJ Access, Fairness, Public Trust & Confidence Committee). Policy issues and best practices would most likely be addressed through the language access subcommittee, often working with the new entity that will replace the Consortium and with the new language access services division, which would include an Executive Director being added to staff. The new entity replacing the Consortium might be something like Court Language Access Coordinating Group (CLAC) which would continue to meet and network, focus on professional development for language access program managers, and have a close relationship with COSCA through the language access subcommittee.

Current Agreements with the Consortium would be terminated and new agreements for states that use the test instruments would be entered into by the NCSC.

The committee discussed the issue of sharing this information with the full membership at the appropriate time. Pat indicated that if the Board approves of the approach, notice would go out to COSCA members in late November. She will recommend that when that notice is disseminated, a notice to Consortium representatives be issued at the same time.

**X. Member outreach**

Prior to the meeting, Katrin distributed a proposal for telephonic outreach to the membership which would provide for five separate teleconferences with members by regions, using COSCA's regional breakdown. The calls would all take place between November 18 and November 30, 2011. Following Pat's COSCA liaison report, however, it was suggested that the timing of the calls be changed. After discussion, it was decided that teleconferences would be moved to 2012.

**XI. Newsletter**

Katrin volunteered to collect information and work on the next newsletter to be reviewed by the Executive Committee at the December meeting.

**XII. Needs analysis survey**

The at-large members met prior to this meeting and reviewed the Agreements to develop questions that members could answer to assess the overall work of the Consortium and priorities needing attention. The members discussed whether such a survey would be useful at this time, given the future changes in the structure of the Consortium. John suggested, and the members agreed, to postpone the discussion until after the COSCA mid-year meeting.

**XIII. Adjournment and Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the committee is scheduled for December 8, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern, 1:00 p.m. Central, Noon Mountain, 11:00 a.m. Pacific, and 10:00 a.m. Alaska time.

The meeting adjourned at 3:47 p.m.