



STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION

Administrative Office
3416 Goni Road, D-132
Carson City, NV 89706

(775) 687-4210 • Fax (775) 687-0574
adsd@adsd.nv.gov

ROMAINE GILLILAND
Director

JANE GRUNER
Administrator

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

MINUTES

Name of Organization: Subcommittee on **Communication Services for Persons Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing and Persons with Speech Disabilities** (also known as the Communication Access Council) of the Nevada Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities (CSPD) (Nevada Revised Statute [NRS] 427.750)

Date and Time of Meeting: July 28, 2014
9:30 a.m.

Location: Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation
500 E. Third St.
Carson City, NV 89713

Department of Employment, Education, and Training
2800 E. St. Louis Ave. Conference Room C
Las Vegas, NV 89104

Gary Olsen, Acting Chairperson called the meeting to order at 9:35am.

Members present: Gary Olsen, Mike Eifert, Angela Greer, Julie Balderson

Members Absent: Greg Ivie, Cindy Roller

Public present: Randi Hecht; David Daviton; Kimberly Holloway, Clark County School District; Jim Whitsell, Southern Nevada Center for Independent Living; Linda Raymond, Crystina Scott, ASL Communication Inc; Tearra Donovan, Relay Nevada; Anne Urasky, Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center; Jesse Palmer; Garrett Weir, Public Utilities Commission; Catherine Rojas.

ADSD Staff Present: Desiree Bennett

Interpreters: Deborah Scott, Stephanie Gardner, Christie Walker, Kimberly Dawson

CART Provider: Teri Ward

40
41 **Public Comment**
42

43 Randi Hecht stated that Typewell speech-to-text services should be included in NRS
44 656A to ensure a minimum standard quality of providers in the state.
45

46 Catherine Rojas stated there are issues related to professional development standards
47 for Typewell before it is included in NRS 656A.
48

49 Randi Hecht stated that Typewell, as an organization is working on those issues and
50 that regulation by the State of Nevada should be separate, and necessary.
51

52 Gary Olsen suggested there are options either to further study the issues or make a
53 proposal and amend it later.
54

55 **Approval of the Minutes from the June 12, 2014 meeting**
56 ***Gary Olsen, Acting Chairperson***
57

58 Mr. Olsen made a general comment that the minutes were not a complete reflection of
59 the discussion that took place at the meeting. Mr. Eifert asked for specific examples. Mr.
60 Olsen said that more detailed summary of discussion was needed, especially in the
61 discussion about the deaf service centers and the interpreter pool. Ms. Balderson asked
62 for the page that was being referenced. Mr. Olsen pointed out the minutes didn't have
63 page numbers. Additionally, notating pages numbers and line numbers would make
64 review of the minutes easier. Ms. Greer agreed that page numbers should be added to
65 the minutes. Gary Olsen stated that more detailed minutes allow for members to better
66 remember the discussion and follow up on actions. Ms. Balderson agreed that the chair
67 could assign specific tasks to be reported on in subsequent meetings. Mr. Olsen asked
68 if there were any other corrections or comments. Mr. Eifert moved to accept the draft
69 minutes with the addition of page numbers. Ms. Greer seconded the motion, and all
70 members were in favor. The motion passed.
71

72 **Discussion and Election of Communication Services for Persons Who Are Deaf or**
73 **Hard of Hearing and Persons with Speech Disabilities Committee Members**
74 ***Gary Olsen, Acting Chairperson***
75

76 Mr. Olsen suggested postponing the election of officers because Cindy Roller and Greg
77 Ivie were absent. Ms. Balderson said it could be added to the agenda for the September
78 meeting. Mr. Olsen stated the elections would be postponed until he next meeting so
79 that more members could participate.
80

81 **Discussion and Draft Recommendations to CSPD on Proposed Changes to the**
82 **Laws Relating to Services for the Deaf, Including Interpreters**
83 ***Julie Balderson, Aging and Disability Services Division (ADSD)***
84

Ms. Balderson explained that the Commission on Services for Persons with Disabilities requested recommendations from the Subcommittee on Communication Services, and sent a draft list of recommendations discussed at the last Subcommittee meeting. The recommendations needed to be finalized for submission to the Commission, as they were meeting the following day. The following recommendations were finalized:

1. The Subcommittee supports the current method for setting the TDD surcharge collected by the Public Utilities Commission; however, the Subcommittee recommends the language regarding budget approval should be revised.
 - o Current language in NRS 427A.797 “The program must be approved by the Public Utilities Commission of Nevada”
 - o Proposed new language “Annually, the Public utilities Commission shall set the TDD surcharge rate to sufficiently cover the cost of the program budget that was approved by the legislature.”

The Subcommittee recommends that CSPD request that the PUC review the procedure, policy, regulations and statute that governs setting the TDD rate, and develop an improvement plan that accommodates both the responsibilities of PUCN and ADSD.

2. The Subcommittee recommends amending NRS 427A.797 to include a list of activities Deaf **Service** Centers may do “including but not limited to” and emphasize that the Centers focus on providing services to gain equal access for deaf, hard of hearing and persons with speech disabilities. Access assistance should not be limited to telephone equipment and relay-related services.
3. The Subcommittee recommends improving ADSD’s ability to appropriately carry out the duties of the Division as stated in NRS 656A by creating sufficient staff positions.
4. The Subcommittee recommends establishing a pool of seven highly qualified interpreters statewide to (a) increase access to the legislature and state agencies by providing interpreter services at government agencies and the legislature when other interpreting services cannot be secured through contract with external referral agencies; and (b) provide mentoring to under-skilled interpreters registered and working in the state, especially in rural areas and school districts. This includes one position to schedule and manage invoicing for the interpreter pool, which may be exempt from engaging in the practice of interpreting. The interpreter pool should be funded via budget administrative allocation.
5. The Subcommittee recommends setting a limitation in NRS 656A that specifies how long an interpreter may be registered in the categories of “apprentice” or “intermediate”. With possible exceptions for extenuating circumstances, and allow for interpreters to remain in a skill category beyond the statutory limit as long as the interpreter pays a fine.
6. The Subcommittee recommends writing a letter encouraging the Board of Regents of the Nevada System of Higher Education to establish Bachelor degree programs in interpreter preparation that reach the entire state.

- 133 7. The Subcommittee recommends writing a letter requesting the Nevada Department of
134 Education to perform a comprehensive review of policy related Deaf education in all
135 areas of education.
136
- 137 8. Legislative meetings should be broadcast via television and internet with mandatory
138 open captions during both regular and interim sessions. The legislature should mandate
139 an investigation of public captioning issues, with findings reported back to the 2017
140 legislature.
141
- 142 9. The term "Deaf Center" should be replaced with "Deaf Service Center" and a general
143 definition should be determined, with specific details left to ADSD with input from the
144 Subcommittee.
145

146
147 Mr. Eifert recused himself from participating in any votes that would make
148 recommendations.
149

150 Ms. Balderson clarified that a voting quorum was present even though Robert Lucas
151 had been relieved of his duties to serve on the Subcommittee. It was determined that a
152 quorum was present and that a vote on recommendations could occur despite Mr. Eifert
153 recusing himself of a vote. Ms. Balderson moved to accept the recommendations as
154 edited in discussion. Ms. Greer seconded. Mr. Olsen, Ms. Greer and Ms. Balderson
155 were in favor, Mr. Eifert recused. Motion carried.
156

157 **Discussion and Approval of Bylaws**

158 ***Gary Olsen, Acting Chairperson***
159

160 Mr. Eifert pointed out that copies of the bylaws were not available for the public to
161 review and that members did not receive a copy as part of the current meeting
162 materials. Mr. Eifert also stated that he'd like Linda Anderson to be present for the
163 bylaws discussion. Mr. Olsen tabled the item for the next meeting, when materials
164 would be made available.
165

166 **Discussion and Possible Recommendations on Communication Access Services** 167 **Program and Interpreter Registry at ADSD Planning and Program Budget**

168 ***Julie Balderson, ADSD***
169

170 Ms. Balderson solicited input on prioritizing program areas to build the next year's
171 budget. The four areas are (1) the Relay Nevada program, (2) the telecommunications
172 equipment distribution program, (3) the interpreter registry, and (4) the access
173 assistance and advocacy services that were provided by Deaf centers. Ms. Balderson
174 mentioned that the services at Deaf centers were contested and awaiting review from
175 the Nevada Supreme Court.
176

177 Mr. Olsen said the interpreter registry needs more staff and should be the number one
178 priority, Relay Nevada should be second, and the equipment distribution program

should be third, with the last being the Deaf center services since it is being reviewed by the Nevada Supreme Court.

Mr. Eifert agreed with the positioning.

Ms. Greer agreed and commented that she would be comfortable with Relay or the interpreter registry in either the first or second positions. She stated that with Hamilton being the new provider for Relay services, it is important that it has priority as the company transitions and becomes a presence statewide.

Mr. Olsen asked if a vote was necessary. Mr. Eifert and Ms. Balderson said they did not think so.

Discussion of Goals and Objectives of Adding a Wireless Option for the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program
(Open Discussion)

Ms. Balderson introduced the topic and explained the four types of equipment currently available through the TEDP. None of the equipment is wireless or portable. Ms. Balderson said that each State's equipment distribution program is set up differently, that some include other assistive devices in their equipment distribution program and others separate the devices to be available as part of assistive technology programs. Mr. Olsen said that a wireless option is necessary for safety and emergency alerts and that Mr. Eifert needed to be involved in looking into options for Nevada's equipment distribution program. Mr. Eifert pointed out that this discussion has been brought up a number of times for over a year without follow-through. Mr. Olsen stated that he's received opposition in the past when he's suggested a working group as people were not willing to work on it and the budget didn't allow for it. Mr. Eifert stated that budget had never been an issue since the issue was brought up. Mr. Eifert stated that he had been, and still was, willing to help on the issue. He stated that Mr. Olsen needed to provide leadership and designate people to work on the issue. Mr. Olsen asked who should chair the working group. Mr. Eifert suggested Mr. Olsen. Mr. Olsen stated he had other issues he'd like to focus on, and that he'd like to see some accountability from other members. Mr. Olsen appointed Mr. Eifert and Ms. Balderson to set up a working group. Ms. Balderson said more research was needed. Mr. Eifert said the Public Utilities Commission needed to be involved. Ms. Balderson added that the Relay provider, Hamilton, should also be involved.

Introduction to Hamilton Relay Services as the New Provider for Relay Nevada
Julie Balderson, ADSD

Ms. Balderson introduced Tearra Donovan, outreach coordinator Relay Nevada. Tearra gave some background on herself and said she was looking forward to serving Nevada.

Review, Discussion and Possible Draft of New Consumer Surveys for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advocacy Resource Center

225 ***Julie Balderson, ADSD***

226
227 Members reviewed the current survey for the equipment distribution program. The
228 group agreed that the survey should be fewer questions and in plain language. The
229 survey should be postcard-sized. It should also capture the type of equipment the
230 consumer chose.

231
232 **Consider Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

233 ***Gary Olsen, Acting Chairperson***

234
235 The following items were suggested for the next meeting agenda:

- 236 -Bylaws
- 237 -Wireless Option
- 238 -Discuss liaisons to other state advisory groups
- 239 -Strategic Plan
- 240 -Elections

241
242 **Confirm Date of Next Meeting, September 11, 2014 in Northern Nevada**

243 ***Gary Olsen, Acting Chairperson***

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245 It was tentatively decided the September 11th meeting would move to September 30th.

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247 **Public Comment**

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249 No comment was presented.

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251 ***The meeting was adjourned by Gary Olsen, acting chairperson, at 12.05pm.***

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253
254 **Current Subcommittee on Communication Services Members**

255 Gary Olsen (Acting Chairperson), Julie Balderson, Angela Greer, Cynthia Roller, Michael Eifert, Greg Ivie, and Robert
256 Lucas