



MEETING MINUTES

Name of Organization: Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing:

Date and Time of Meeting: Wednesday July 8, 2020 | 9:00 am

Place of Meeting: ZOOM

Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Wednesday July 8th at 9am Join Zoom Meeting

According to NRS 241.020, Meeting Materials are Available at: [ADSD Link](#)

Pursuant to Governor Steve Sisolak's [Emergency Directive 006](#), there will be no physical location for this meeting.

The meeting can be listened to or viewed via ZOOM.

Note: Minutes of this meeting will be produced in summary format. Please provide the secretary with electronic or written copies of testimony and visual presentations if you wish to have complete versions included as exhibits with the minutes.

Note: Items on this agenda may be taken in a different order than listed. Two or more agenda items may be combined for consideration. An item may be removed from this agenda or discussion relating to an item on this agenda may be delayed at any time.

Roll Call:

Members Present:

Catherine Nielsen, Cheyenne Pasquale, Director, Daina Loeffler, Eli Schwartz, Chair, Eric Wilcox, Co-Chair, Jeff Beardsley, Laura Fink, Maureen Fradianni, Mike Eifert, Susan Beckett

Members Absent:

None

Staff/Cart/Interpreters:

Carole Hanley, Sal Fiorentino, Jenn Montoya, Adrienne Navarro, Dawn Lyons, Becky-Caption, Tory Jaramillo-Interpreter, Dawn Duran-Interpreter

Presenters:

Tim Smalley, Lance Ledet, Ken Arcia

Guest

Candace Emerson, Beth Jones, Summer Wright, K-Thomas, Jeff-Nevada, Jay Cafferata

1. **Public Comment:**

(No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item. Comments will be limited to five minutes per person. Persons making comment will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record and to spell their last name and provide the secretary with written comments.)

- Candace Emerson/Nevada Hands and Voices: announced educational Advocacy training for anyone in the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community, parents, and professionals, four Saturdays in August.
- Cheyenne Pasquale: The Nevada Legislature, special session currently in commencement to balance State of Nevada budget. Significant impacts to programs.
- Laura Fink: Has been made official point of contact by DETR for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community to have guidance through the unemployment insurance process. Her video phone number is public information to be shared with anyone in this community who needs her assistance with unemployment insurance claims.

2. **Approval of the May 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes: (For Possible Action)**

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Eric Wilcox moved to Approve the minutes, Daina Loeffler
Seconded the motion, Minutes were approved by a majority vote

3. **Presentation on Hearing Assistive Technologies in Public Places**

Lance Ledet, Hearing Loss Advocate, Deaf Centers of Nevada

- A Hearing Loop works by using the T-Coil device on a hearing aid(s) as well as the cochlear implants. Loops are installed under the carpet or elevated about 47 inches off the ground surrounding a room.
- Comparisons made between Assistive Listening Devices (ALD), such as a Pocket Talker and Hearing Loop technology. ALDs may malfunction, the device must be available at the time of use. With a Hearing Loop system, it is already installed, the user simply turns on the telecoil on the hearing aid(s) or cochlear implant(s) at the touch of a button; advantageous for users who have 20 or 25, 30 decibels of hearing loss, whereas the ALD doesn't meet the needs of those users.
- Advantages of a Hearing Loop: reduces or blocks out background noise, separates speech from music, improves sound quality of speech, intelligibility and concentration of users; universally and directly compatible with any brand of hearing aid and implant that has a T-Coil, they are dignified in they don't require a hearing instrument user to call attention to him or herself; doesn't require the borrowing of ALD; ease of use in transmitting information (e.g. Kiosks and Service Desks); elegant design with minimal training required for users and installers.
- Drawbacks of a Hearing Loop: No signal at some venues; installation of loop where electromagnetic signals produced a "chain saw" sound; improper use of microphones, sound mixing and operator errors.

- Assistive listening system in places of audible communication is used to provide direction of critical information and ALDs are required to be provided for the people with hearing loss.
- Question was raised: Are all the public places in Nevada in compliance with these new standards?

4. Report and Discussion from Deaf Centers of Nevada (DCN):

Tim Smalley, Assistive Technology & Telecommunications Services/Community Engagement Manager, Deaf Centers of Nevada

- Services have doubled with 8,469 contacts made over the last 3 months.
- Due to the increase in numbers and Covid-19, there is a need for more advocacy help and provisional services. DCN built partnerships (62 and growing) and increased collaboration with associates, as they look for resources with community events.
- DCN has their registry of Interpreters; they ensure that they are certified and compliant with the State of Nevada.
- SB203 hearing aid program focus: Coordinating volunteers, filling out of forms, Lance Ledet is working on the wording; figuring out how families throughout the State can be provided for due to the limitations of the budget at this time.
- DCN recognizes an increase in homeless population among Deaf and Hard of Hearing community members, and absence of resources, access to language; challenges of finding shelter, nutrition, and other assistive services that are required for that population. Training in place for the North and the South representatives, to improve access. Efforts are being made to the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community to teach them to improve access as well.
- Unemployment Insurance Workshops are offered, but some people registered do not show up. The question, is this due to lack of knowledge or experience with this type of technology/conferencing platform, such as ZOOM? One-on-one meetings seem more effective.
- New position openings, and new hires announced.

5. Update and Presentation-Relay Nevada, on Sprints Transition:

Ken Arcia, Sprint Accessibility, Customer relations Mgr.

- Sprint accessibility in the process of changing to T-Mobile accessibility. Changing from yellow for Sprint to magenta for T-Mobile.
- Relay Nevada met requirement to provide a total of 62 outreach presentations for fiscal year 2019, 2020 (Actual presentations: 85). Most presentations were made through webinars, some in person at retirement homes and senior assisted living facilities, outreach events; when Covid-19 began, had to switch to webinars only.
- Budget amount was \$83,333.33, to be used by 6/30/20, approval was given to carry over the remaining \$20,000 unspent funds (due to Covid-19 and Sprint/T-Mobile Merger).

- Continued posting on Facebook and boosting of posts to educate public about Relay Nevada.
- TV advertising for Relay Nevada has been completed in Reno.
- Two outreach contractors, one for Reno and one for Las Vegas. The one in Vegas has resigned, when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted will begin looking for a replacement.
- The transition from Hamilton to Sprint should have already occurred if anyone has unresolved issues reach out for assistance.
- Due to Covid-19 and more people working from home, there have been record setting numbers for minutes used for relay calls, i.e. CapTel and regular TRS; occasional delays experienced, where users will see a message: Please hold for the next available operator.

6. Report and Discussion from Nevada Hands and Voices:

Eric Wilcox, Member of the Commission

- Guide by Your Side program: Parent guides that have Deaf/Hard of Hearing children paired with newly diagnosed families to help them through the process. Due to Covid-19, one on one interactions have been reduced and moved to virtual platforms successfully. Four Guides currently, in the process of interviewing for the Fifth Guide, hire tentatively by September '20. Plans to increase and expand services in Northern Nevada and rural areas.
- Educational Advocacy program: Initial training due to Covid-19. Plan to have six trained and certified Educational Advocates by September 20 to support families throughout the State of Nevada for any educational advocacy needs.
- The Educational Advocacy program has a new Program Coordinator Candance Emerson.
- The current manager of programs, Diana Miller is no longer with Nevada Hands and Voices, once a new person is in the position emails and contact information will be updated.
- Works
- Nevada Hands and Voices has a hearing aid loaner program that provides temporary hearing aids to families for children from birth to three years of age.
- The loaner hearing aids, BAHA devices help families that are waiting for insurance and/or cochlear implants (loans are typically for six months to a year, maybe longer for those waiting for implants).
- Typically serve children birth to 21, early childhood biggest need. Partners with the Nevada Early Intervention Services to receive direct referrals of any child with a confirmed hearing loss in Nevada, mostly through the newborn hearing screening. Guides receive contact information of mostly newly diagnosed families, and present unbiased education to families of their choices: communication and device options and provide referrals to Nevada Early Intervention Services.

7. State Fiscal Year 2021 Updates/Discussion and Approval of Priorities: (for Possible Action)

Cheyenne Pasquale, Commission Director

- Objections and Goals that were put in place in 2019 were maintained

- Healthcare Subcommittee: The Massachusetts Covid-19 communication card approved for changes in May's meeting will soon be ready for distribution.
- Catherine Nielson was asked to develop a pamphlet for hospitals or educational materials to increase sensitivity to help the target population access their rights.
- Jeff Beardsley will take the lead in developing a pamphlet for hospitals to encourage recruitment and retention of American Sign Language (ASL) certified interpreters.
- Training Effort for the Healthcare Subcommittee will be discussed in September's meeting.
- Outreach Subcommittee: Items were put on hold due to Covid-19 pandemic. The Subcommittee will meet to develop a feasible plan for the next fiscal year that will incorporate social distancing measures along with partnering with different organizations and groups.
- DCN is willing to hold another workshop on the legislative processes. Nevada Hands and Voices also has a training on the legislative process. April 26th, 2021 has been designated as Deaf Day in Carson City for people to meet with their Legislator.
- The Education Subcommittee: Sent an email to Will Jensen requesting that the SB203 Subcommittee reconvene.
- 1.3.3 Daina Loeffler and Eric Wilcox will work with the Department of Education.
- 1.3.4 Eric Wilcox will work with Laura Fink from Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Employment Subcommittee: Due to Covid-19 everything is centered more around unemployment and how to support people that have been laid off.
- 1.4.1 the request for a 5% pay increase for ASL proficient state employees. This recommendation will remain for future review but, it will be noted on the State Plan that it may not be feasible to obtain due to the current economic situation.
- Resource Subcommittee: This is a long-term goal; ADSD Leadership will be going forward with the website with a planned project to upgrade the website platform that should be more user friendly. This is a six to eight-month project. It will be a part of the Nevada Care Connection website. [Link](#)
- Khianti Thomas has officially accepted the Executive Director position and will start on July 27th, 2020.

8. Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing Legislative Subcommittee: (for Possible Action)

Eli Schwartz, Subcommittee Chair

- A letter was sent to Will Jensen requesting that the Senate Bill (SB) 203 Subcommittee resume meetings.

- A request is being sent to Senator Spearman to file a Bill Draft Request (BDR) submitted for SB203 so the Affordable Insurance language can be clarified. A recommendation to refine the process for families that have no access to insurance or cannot afford the premium/ co-pay.
- Would like the program to pay for hearing aid related costs (ear mold and batteries) or assist with paying the co-pay through insurance that will pay for Hearing Aids and related costs.
- Eric Wilcox Motioned to approve the language as stated in the report, Laura Fink Seconded, Motion approved by a major vote.

9. **Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Nevada Commission for Persons Who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education Subcommittee: (for Possible Action)**

Eric Wilcox, Subcommittee Chair

- SB203 subcommittee tasked with establishing language acquisition benchmarks for LEAD-K in Nevada. Working with the Department of Education (DOE) to get certified educational interpreters in the classroom; CAS program has been evaluating and mentoring interpreters towards this goal, request for status update.
- Daina Loeffler is looking into a way that the Commission can get the Communication plan that the Deaf Commission approved last year into the hands of all the educational advocates so it can be utilize in IEPs for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in the schools.

10. **Review, Discuss and Approval Tentative Agenda Items for September 9th, 2020 meeting: (For Possible Action)**

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Subcommittee Reports
- Director Report
- Covid-19 Report
- CAS Update
- Tina Dortch
- Discussion regarding accessibility of face shields

11. **Public Comment:** (No action may be taken upon a matter raised under public comment period unless the matter itself has been specifically included on an agenda as an action item. Comments will be limited to five minutes per person. Persons making comment will be asked to begin by stating their name for the record and to spell their last name and provide the secretary with written comments.)

- Tim Smalley recommended that a formal document be developed to hand out to businesses that are not complying with the hard of hearing rights to access. Business do not understand the difference in language when it comes to face shields verses face mask and are requiring full face mask instead of the accessible shields for speech.

- The CAS State interpreters were recognized as heroes of the day on June 4th, 2020 for their dedication and hard work.
- Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services are still closed but have opened new technology that enables a person the ability to apply electronically online and do remote intake and service development.
- Interpreters are still being hidden during the Governors public announcement broadcast on ABC.
- Eli Schwartz is working with Jay Caferetta and Tina Dortch on sensitivity trainings with Metro police department.
- Tim Smalley suggested and shared a handbook that could be customized as a visual language translator to communicate with officers.

12. Adjournment: 11:40am

Note: We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who are disabled and wish to attend the meeting. If special arrangements for the meeting are necessary, please notify the Carole Hanley in writing at 3320 W. Sahara Ave, Suite 100 Las Vegas, Nevada 89102, email clhanley@adsd.nv.gov or call at (702) 468-9765 as soon as possible.

Notice of this meeting was posted in the following N/A. Notice of this meeting was faxed, e-mailed, or hand delivered for posting to the following Carson City and Las Vegas, Nevada, locations N/A Notice of this meeting was posted on the Internet through the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division website at adsd.nv.gov. and Nevada Public Notices website at www.notice.nv.gov. Supporting public material provided to Commission members for this meeting may be requested from Carole Hanley, Commission Secretary, ADSD at (702) 486-9765 and is/will be available at the meeting locations and ADSD website at adsd.nv.gov.