



MEETING MINUTES

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

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

Place of Meeting: ZOOM

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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:

Eli Schwartz, Chair

Commission Members:

Eli Schwartz, Maureen Fradianni, Eric Wilcox, Susan Beckett, Laura Fink, Catherine Nielsen, Jeff Beardsley, Mike Eifert.

Excused:

Daina Loeffler

Guest:

Tina Dortch

Staff:

Khianti Thomas, Cheyenne Pasquale, Jennifer Montoya, Adrienne Navarro, Carole Hanley, Salvatore Fiorentino

Interpreters and CART:

Becky Van Auken- Captioner

Dawn Duran - Interpreter
Jamie Jamillo - Interpreter

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.)

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Catherine Nielsen shared that the NGDDC 5-year state plan is now available for public comment.

2. **Approval of the July 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes: (For Possible Action)**

Eli Schwartz, Chair

Eric Wilcox moved to approve the minutes; Laura Fink seconded. Minutes were approved by majority vote.

3. **Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Director and Chair reports: (for Possible Action)**

Khianti Thomas, Executive Director and Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Nevada Department of Health and Human Services recently launched a new contact digital tracing app for COVID-the app is called COVID trace.
- Deaf Awareness month- Khianti will be collaborating with DCN to highlight CDI/ DI and Deaf Owned businesses throughout the month
- COVID-19 communication card has been sent to the governor's office and awaiting approval to be published with the State seal.
- Annual report has been drafted and available for public comment. Eric motioned to approve the report pending the edits, Susan Beckett seconded.
- Senator spearman wanted to be sure we were aware of two things. SR 1- ensure public health crisis magnified by COVID-19. And AB4, which is regarding election procedure for absentee ballots and other mail ballots
- Legislative subcommittee on healthcare did not provide us with a BDR
- Will Jensen sent an email that they will resume the SB203 subcommittee
- Eli has been invited to participate in SILC's legislative subcommittee

4. **Report and Discussion from Nevada Office of Minority Health and Equity (NOMHE):**

Tina Dortch (MPA), Program Manager

- Tina shared information regarding NOMHE including but not limited to the history, strategic partner contracts, and the primary functions of NOHME.
- Discussed the purpose of developing the DHH Alliance per Senator Spearman's request to focus on SB203 and realized this could be a conduit to the commission.
- Question raised: Does the state track data on disparities in health outcomes? There is currently another work group that was initiated to promote the collection of stratified data for these outcomes

5. **Report and Discussion from the Communication Access Services Program:**

Salvatore Fiorentino, CAS Program Manager

- Relay Nevada had 119,444 calls made through Relay Nevada. There was a spike in numbers from March- May due to COVID 19. This was the highest number of calls compared to the last three fiscal years.
- TRS minutes has increased to 11,000 minutes in March, normally it is roughly 8,000. CapTel had a large spike as well
- Sprint and T-Mobile merged, Sprint should be doing TV commercials this month and they will be aired in Northern and Southern Nevada. The commercials started in August and will continue through October. They will be emphasizing internet based CapTel
- In addition to these commercials news stations are going to be interviewing different customers of the service utilizing CapTel. This advertising will result in more inquiries to Relay Nevada, CapTel and Deaf Centers of Nevada.
- During fiscal year 2020 4,430 eligible consumers who were served at DCN. This number is a major increase in consumers served, mostly due to the increase of service delivery including ASL classes. Those classes typically serve one to 400 individuals each month. These total numbers also include DCN's other core services, which include the telecommunication equipment, assistive technology, the hearing aid program, language acquisition, and access to services.
- During fiscal year 2020, there were 17 mentees who were being served, in the first quarter they started with 12, and it grew to 17 by the fourth quarter. There has been a significant decrease in those interpreting hours during the fourth quarter, and obviously the reason for that reduction in hours of providing interpreting services is related to COVID-19. By the fourth quarter they were down to only 38 hours provided.
- 222 total interpreters registered with the state of Nevada, they project for FY 21 there will be a large increase. The CAS program has also provided multiple workshops which had led to the increase as well

6. **Discussion, Recommendations and Approval of COVID-19 Activities (For Possible Action)**

Khianti Thomas, Executive Director

- Updates were shared in Eli's report.

7. **Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Deaf Commission Outreach Subcommittee: (For Possible Action)**

Khianti Thomas, Executive Director

- Catherine Nielsen accepted the role of being the Chair for the outreach subcommittee
- The Commission PowerPoint presentation was approved pending a few edits.
- The following recommendations prioritized by the outreach subcommittee have been approved by the majority:
 - Partner with NGCDD to promote Partners in Policymaking class to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. The Deaf Commission could help support accommodations or supplies needed for the

class. (side note: this would cover several activities that are assigned to the outreach subcommittee).

- Prioritize Deaf and Hard of Hearing cultural awareness training to mental health providers, working with partners such as Deaf Centers of Nevada and the State Licensing Board. Offer workshops through Zoom or other virtual methods.
- Conduct Legislative Overview training and awareness to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, including parents of children prior to the beginning of the Legislative session.
(starts...beginning of February, promote Advocacy day at Legislature).

8. Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Deaf Commission Education Subcommittee: (For Possible Action)

Eric Wilcox, Co-Chair

- The subcommittee has met twice in the last couple of months, and focused on revisiting and reviewing the four strategic objectives related to education that were in the state Strategic Plan for the Deaf and hard of hearing.
- Standards for educational interpreters were discussed, extensive input was shared from Jenn Montoya on the efforts to evaluate the standards of educational interpreter across the state. The results of that were efforts to mentor and raise the standards, as well as the efforts to amend the code in the state to raise the standards. This is currently in progress.
- Discussion of implementation of the communication plan for IEPs or individual's education plans for Deaf and hard of hearing children in the school system with the help of Daina Loeffler
- Nevada Hands & Voices is rolled out their advocacy program and completed four Saturdays of training that were open to the public.
- Extensive discussion in the last meeting about older children transitioning out of the school district and into higher education or employment. More information can be found in the meeting notes.

9. Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Deaf Commission Legislative Subcommittee: (For Possible Action)

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- High level discussion regarding the 911 to text option
- Discussion whether we should define American Sign Language being ASL, as a protected language. More research will need to be done to see if there is a possibility to work with insurance companies to determine who will cover the costs associated with professional support interpreters. Eric agreed to head the workgroup to do the research.
- Discussion of the Deaf School
- Motion was made by Eric for Khianti and Eli to make edits to the hearing loop letter and send it to state and city officials to inquire what they are doing to be compliant with the ADA. The motion was seconded by Laura Fink, all majority was in favor
- Recommendation to allow Khianti as the ED to discuss alliances with other advocacy groups to create a letter to educate legislators and others on the use of appropriate language. Specifically removing the word "hearing

impaired” from the NRS and changing it to “Deaf and Hard of Hearing”. Jeff motioned to approve, and Eric seconded.

- Recommendation to modify the language in SB203 to state the following: “if have no insurance, no access to insurance, or unable to pay premium/co-pay the program pays for hearing aids and related costs such as ear molds and batteries, and/or consistent with paying the premium and co-pay for insurance that will pay for the hearing aid and related costs.” Eric made a motion to approve that the commission sends a letter to Senator Spearman requesting that we seek a change in the language as aforementioned. Susan Beckett seconded the motion

10. **Review, Discuss and Approval Tentative Agenda Items for November 12th, 2020 meeting:** (For Possible Action)

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Next meeting date has been changed to Nov 10th, 2020
- Emergency preparedness
- Report from all 3 subcommittee’s
- Report from DCN
- Discussion regarding mentoring from the CAS Program
- Report from Relay Services
- Discussion regarding unemployment
- Report from NV Hands & Voices

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.)

Eli Schwartz, Chair Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Khianti and Eli will be presenting about the Commission to DCN
- Cheyenne made a few changes to the slides per public comments

12. **Adjournment:**

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- Meeting adjourned at 11:06 am

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 Khianti Thomas in writing at 3320 W. Sahara Ave, Suite 100 Las Vegas, Nevada 89102, email KThomas@adsd.nv.gov or call at (702) 486-3368 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 Khianti Thomas, Director, ADSD at (702) 486-3368 and is/will be available at the meeting locations and ADSD website at adsd.nv.gov.