

Steve Sisolak  
Governor

Richard Whitley, MS  
Director



# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES DIVISION  
*Helping people. It's who we are and what we do.*



Dena Schmidt  
Administrator

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## Meeting Minutes

<i>Name of Organization:</i>	Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing
<i>Date and Time of Meeting:</i>	Thursday, March 10, 2022 9:00AM
<i>Place of Meeting:</i>	Virtual: Zoom <a href="#">Zoom Meeting Link</a> Meeting ID: 895 4377 7808 Passcode: 843749  Audio Only Option 1-669-900-6833 (San Jose)  CART will be accessible by following this link: <a href="#">Caption Link</a>  Meeting Materials can be found here: <a href="#">Home (nv.gov)</a>

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**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.

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

### 1. Roll Call & Opening Statement: Eric Wilcox, Chair

- Members: Jeffrey Beardsley, Maureen Fradianni, Eli Schwartz, Shawna Goldhammer, Eric Wilcox, Susan Beckett, Laura Fink
- Guests: Lisa Torres, Jeff Duncan, Michelle Cordova, TS, Salvatore Fiorentino, LT, Lance Ledet, David Kelsey, Jenn Montoya, Felicia, Ace Patrick, Jeff Jaech, Beth Jones, Letty Calderon, Jewel Eldridge, Jack, Felicia Rutledge, Dr. Christina Hopewell Albert, 17074987089, Adrienne Navarro, Alexandra Profant, K. Thomas, Lora Turner, Betty Hammond, Becky Van Auken (Captioner), Bronwynn Shew (Interpreter), Stephanie Arciniega (Interpreter)
- Staff: Cheyenne Pasquale (Interim Director), Obioma Officer (Executive Director), Lorraine Belt-Dolan
- Welcome Obioma as our new Executive Director and allow her to introduce herself. Hello everyone, yes, my name is Obioma, my name sign is the pinky on the chin, I

wanted to say good morning. I'm looking forward to just getting going and seeing how the process goes today.

2. **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.)

- David Kelsey – shared concerns about the community, there have been members of the community that have come to me for help with law work, understanding paperwork and other helps, the community is looking for a center or a place to meet again.
- Jenn Montoya – Present 2 things there was a government conference and there were 3 meetings, and no interpreters present at the conference. ADSD has been in works for 2 years and wants to know how we can get more interpreters in the government meetings; we need the Deaf commission to advocate for accessibility. Recently the Superbowl had a deaf performance and you had to download it separately instead of being able to see it on TV and it only worked on an iPad. As a deaf community they must wait till the event is over and download it to another device.
- We just wanted to remind everyone that matters brought forth under public comment cannot have action or discuss them at the meeting, but we are listening and taking notes to discuss between meetings and possibly add to upcoming meeting agendas.
- Lance Ledet – let everyone know there is a new device that is coming out it's an LED mask that connects to your Bluetooth and works on speech to text app on your phone and the LED screen flashes across the mask to let people know what you are saying
- We hope to have the final development build done on Friday, it will eliminate the % that shows up when buffering and adding a brightness control.  
<https://pushinteractions.com/>  
Sincerely,  
Brian Kendall  
ArticuLED Technologies  
Saskatoon SK Canada  
Office: 306-500-7347 Cell: 306--717-2764www.articuled.com
- Here is the direct link to the Mask with LED Speech-to-Text.  
<https://mailchi.mp/a7d0e181b8dc/new-speech-to-led-transcribing-sign-15922819?e=5ab226eb80>
- Ace Patrick – Chair of the SILC and wanted to say congratulations to Obioma Officer as the new executive director. And the SILC looks forward to the continued partnership. The SILC website is NVSILC.com, and they are having a transitions workgroup this afternoon, you can find all the information on the website.
- Letty Calderon works for Nevada Hands and Voices and she's the leadership coordinator and just moved from Florida.
- Cheyenne has an anonymous comment that she read – I'm a member of the Deaf, Deaf-Blind hard of hearing community in Nevada and I'm curious as to what the status is regarding NVAD. Before COVID I attended the town hall at DCN Where NVAD was present. During the town hall I expressed interest in joining NVAD but have not heard form the NVAD board regarding the membership process and reached out to NVAD regional representatives with little response and no action.

3. **Approval of Minutes of the January 13, 2022, meeting:** (For Possible Action)  
Eric Wilcox, Chair

- Laura Fink made comment that page 4 under bullet No. 5 the last sentence it says: They were not excluding the Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired from service before but are not receiving new funding for that specific service. The sentence should read: They were not excluding the Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired from service before but are now receiving new funding for that specific service.
- Changing the not to now will correct the minutes
- Susan Beckett made a motion to approve the minutes with that correction, Eli Schwartz seconded, and motion carried.

4. Review, Discuss and Approval of Recommendations from the Director & Chair Reports (For Possible Action):

Eric Wilcox, Chair

Cheyenne Pasquale, Interim Executive Director

Obioma Officer, Incoming Executive Director

- Eric made public comment at the Interim legislative committee on education meeting, mostly regarding workforce and the needs for new and growing workforce in teaches of the Deaf, interpreters, and other support roles in school districts for deaf and hard of hearing.
- Welcome to Obioma Officer as the new Executive Director and we are doing lots of training and Cheyenne will continue as interim director while Obioma continues her training.
- In addition to Eric's public comment, Eli Schwarz made public comments to the interim committee on government affairs about accessibility in government. Both public comments will be posted with the directors report online.
- In two weeks on March 24<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am, is the interim committee on Health and Human Services.
- On the budget for the commission through January we have spent \$5,925 and that leaves us \$18,744 remaining for commission activities through June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
- We have received requests from two hospitals for the communication access cards and she recommends that we give Obioma the go ahead to make updates to the cards and get them printed and sent out.
- We have one opening on the commission for a parent of a deaf of hard of hearing child. Eric Wilcox has volunteered to move into that position as that has been a challenging position to fill and would leave his position as – open to be filled.
- The governor would have to approve that change and we do not know how long that might take. It is suggested that we vote and make it a request of the entire commission made by the director to the governor's office, with one request.
- Laura Fink made the motion to move Eric Wilcox to the seat for parent of a deaf or hard of hearing child and open his current seat up to a new member. Susan Beckett seconded, and motion carried.
- There was discussion on application renewals and getting those in early and open seats and how the governor appoints people.
- Eli Schwartz made a motion for Obioma to update the communication cards and healthcare rights brochures and Laura Fink seconded and motion passed.
- In 2020 the commission voted to publish a healthcare rights brochure to express the communication rights of patients and the communication cards were for persons to use to identify symptoms and communicate in a healthcare situation.

- Cheyenne was asked by the department of Business and Industry training to do a training in communication access and will be meeting with them and Sal from the Communication Access Services to see how they can help them get that training.
- Laura mentioned that DETR has some trainings and resources that could be used.
- Revisit the 2022 meeting schedule. As the commission has decided to continue meeting every other month it will only allow the subcommittees to meet 2 times each, this year.
- Eric commented that we need to look at focusing our work to the subcommittees.
- We've added a new portion to the directors' report that address community issues that have been reported to the commission. The first issue is accessibility of unemployment services, the recommendation is that we write a letter and invite the unemployment insurance division to an employment subcommittee for further discussion. This issue was discussed at the accessibility subcommittee as well and Susan has drafted a letter that she'll talk about during agenda item No 8. The second issue that was brought up is the commission and community engagement. It's twofold, how do we get the community engaging with the commission and then how does the commission engage with the community. There are two recommendations that will be discussed in later agenda items, No. 7, and No. 9.
- Eli asked if we had a large sum of money left at the end of the year would we lose the money for future years. Cheyenne let us know that we have the same budget for 2023 and we will have justification for why we didn't spend the money as we have not been traveling.

5. Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations related to the Communication Access Services (CAS) Program updates: (For Possible Action)

Salvatore Fiorentino, CAS Program Director, Aging and Disability Services Division

Jennifer Montoya, CAS Interpreter Program Supervisor, Aging and Disability Services Division

- Relay NV is now working on their yearly report, and it will be done at the end of March and will be shared at the next commission meeting.
- There is a Come Together weekend coming up where they will have a booth and presentation.
- Relay NV will also continue to provide webinars about Relay NV and is slowly adding in person events as well.
- UNR has telecommunication equipment and has been discussing an event in MAY
- Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) has started their ASL classes on February 22<sup>nd</sup> and their six-week class will be provided through a learning management system where customers have access to log in online any time to watch the instructional ASL videos and then will have the opportunity to meet live with an ASL mentor virtually.
- The team from ADSD that oversees Nevada Care Connection is working with a marketing firm to improve the representation of the Deaf and hard of hearing individuals on their website. Including Asl videos to better explain Nevada Care Connections, services provided, resources and case management, they hope to have this running by Summer of 2022.
- In the CAS interpreting mentor program, they added 3 new mentees last month eliminating the waitlist. They have also been hosting monthly interpreting workshops, January was crossword puzzles and February the workshop focused on the Education interpreting performance skills and of the 36 different interpreting skills for that they focused on 11 of those skills. There will be 3 more workshops that will continue to focus on those skills.

- The CAS team was selected to present two workshops at the Conference of Interpreter Trainers 2022 national conference.
- The CAS team is still updating the Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 656A draft to align with the Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 656A. As soon as the NAC is approved the registry database will be updated.

## 6. Presentation from CAS Subawards for Language Acquisition

### Communication Services for the Deaf

- Dr. Christina Hopewell Albert director for CSD
- CSD's program is 12 modules total, taken 2 a week for 6 weeks. These are all on the virtual platform learning Management system, for Canvas (LMS), very user friendly. There is also a weekly podcast on video that describes a Deaf signer's experience using American Sign Language. It also includes weekly mentorship support for ASL via a virtual conference platform with built in scheduling tool.
- Currently they have 22 account users and 30 participants, with 7 mentors that meet with various participants.
- There are different assessments, as this is a pilot program they are collecting and analyzing as much data as possible, both quantitative and qualitative information.
- One of the challenges that they have is reporting the data on the ADSD data reporting platform as it does not integrate with Apple or MAC users well, their other challenge has been the intake interview as they provide interpreters for those meetings and people don't show up and the money set aside for the interpreter is wasted.
- The third challenge is mentor recruitment itself, as it takes time to become well acquainted with the models and the time it takes to mentor during the course as well.
- They are hoping to have two courses in the spring, two in the summer and two in the fall and are implementing a website to help with the registration process and hiring a program coordinator who can focus solely on this program to support the participants as well as the mentors.
- Language first will be working with them to develop a future webinar series and they would like to join with NV Hands and Voices for outreach purposes.
- Eric asked if they were running this program in other states and the answer was this is the first sample and eventually, they would like to offer it in different states.
- Beth Jones, Executive Director, and Guide by your side coordinator for Nevada Hands and Voices.
- We provide support to families with children, Deaf and hard of hearing, birth to 21, and we've always had a parent guide program and now we have Deaf and hard of hearing guides that compliment our work with the parent guide program.
- What they do provide is, Deaf and Hard of Hearing guides that share with children and their families their unique life experiences, the use of technology (if any), how they navigate social situations, and how they develop their personal identity, things like that.
- They do not provide ASL or spoken language instruction.
- A few highlights of the program since they began in July have been filling 3 of their 4 positions. Of these 3 guides we wanted to ensure representation of diversity, and we have individuals that identify as Deaf, hard of hearing, use multiple communication modes, multiple device use, cultural diversity as well as two

different locations in the state. 2 of the guides are in Southern Nevada and one in Northern Nevada. Support can be provided both virtually and in-person. There are also 7 parent guides, and they have all been able to train together. Trainings include things like the Deaf and hard of hearing guides working with parents, their roles, and supporting families without bias. The guides can serve as a role model and give the families more exposure to deaf and hard of hearing adults.

- The guides have also been able to be at events and provide one-on-one support. They have hosted or presented at multiple monthly online webinars, and they talk about things like transition and raising a self-advocate and being a self-advocate, this help families that choose to get support in a group method. They have also been able to be at 4 out of 5 in person events since December.
- They have been able to renew connection the Las Vegas Clark County library district and are providing monthly ASL interpreted family story time in Las Vegas. The guides have been present for that to meet with families and answer questions.
- Due to COVID many trainings and conferences have gone virtual but on the plus side they're able to send all their guides to multiple trainings and conferences and all three of them will be attending the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention conference starting next week. Very happy about getting more support in helping families ages birth to three.
- They are scheduled to provide tables or booths at several upcoming community events.
- One of the challenges that they have experienced is they didn't ask for very many hours for these new guides and they are seeing a need that is greater than the hours they have now.
- Internally they have never had deaf or hard of hearing staff and they are learning how to make sure there is full access amongst themselves as well as communication with the families their supporting.
- COVID has been a problem as people have to reschedule both families and guides due to illness.
- Shawna asked for more information on the story time including a flyer to share with the school community, it is currently once a month at the west Charleston library on the second Saturday from 11 to noon. It's like a typical story time with an ASL interpreter and they've had a variety of age ranges attend. It is a safe space for families that are deaf and hard of hearing to have exposure to ASL, and to other Deaf and hard of hearing kids, families as well as Deaf adults. Space can be limited and last month they had a lot of interpreting students that came, we just want to make sure we reserve space for family members. They would like to expand as the attendance grows.

7. Review and Discussion of the Work of the Commission, Target Populations, and Community Engagement:

Cheyenne Pasquale, Interim Executive Director  
Obioma Officer, Incoming Executive Director

- One thing we need to think about is we are an advocacy body, and we are charged with advocating for what I call systems change. We're making Nevada a more accessible place for all individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired. We want to make sure as we move forward, we are inclusive of all the different populations.
- One partner that hasn't been formally partnered with the commission but could help is the State of Nevada speech language pathology, audiology, hearing air supply board the link to their website is here: <https://www.nvspeechhearing.org/>

- Town halls, should we have separate meetings for the Deaf community, the hard of hearing community, and the speech impaired community or have all-inclusive meetings.
- Eli feels we should not isolate but have all inclusive meetings, while Eric agrees we need to reach out more to the speech impaired community. If we find there are more departments or agencies, we could partner with.
- Discussion of reaching out to the media to have interviews to let the community know we are here. We have a great opportunity to do this with the announcement of our new director.
- There was suggestion of making informational flyers geared towards the three different groups Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired. It was also discussed that we could word it as do you have communication issues and it was thought that maybe stating accessibility issues would be more appropriate and catch more attention as people might say I don't have communication issues, but I don't know how to access certain services I need.
- We would like to engage with more community partners as well. One suggestion was the Nevada Black Deaf Advocates.
- There was lively discussion about inclusion and making all persons with hearing difficulties and speech impairment feel included in the commission. Also, that we work in conjunction with other organizations to make sure the pieces fit together, and we are not all duplicating the same work, in things like town halls.

8. Review, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from the Accessibility Subcommittee (For Possible Action)  
Susan Beckett, Chair of Accessibility Subcommittee

- The Accessibility Subcommittee met on January 19, 2022, and the report was submitted as part of the meeting materials for this meeting.
- The first action item is DETR unemployment and access for Deaf and hard of hearing individuals. The accessibility subcommittee drafted a letter and would like to read the proposed letter to the commission for approval. The letter can be found in the meeting materials here: [Home \(nv.gov\)](https://www.nv.gov)
- Eli Schwartz made a motion to approve the letter and have the chair sign it, Laura Fink seconded the motion, motion carried, the letter will be sent.
- It was asked if Susan could clarify the calling through the que with interpreters and Susan explained that there is one number to call for unemployment and you wait on hold for a long time and if you are an ASL user you must have your interpreter wait with you till it is your turn.
- There was some confusion and discussion, questions about inmates and access to phones, there had been a public comment about ACLU suing the Clark County Detention Center for not supplying Deaf inmates with interpreters, however as a public comment we cannot take it up for action during the meeting and did not have many answers.
- Eric asked if we were sure that unemployment was not ADA compliant and while we do not feel it is adequate could they come back as say well what we're doing is ADA compliant so that's all we're going to do. The answer was that Laura Fink was the ADA resource until a year ago when that access was abruptly stopped, and it is believed that they are not compliant with ADA accommodations.
- The second challenge is the legislative interim session committees and the constant challenge in accessibility of meetings. The legislature does have a new Web page that describes their current effort to ensure accessibility.

- Suggestions are to look at the information and determine if there are any recommendations that we need to make to the legislature. As this is ongoing and they are making changes do we want the director to review periodically and bring it back to the commission if there is an issue or do we want to if an issue is found grant the permission to automatically send a letter?
- For clarification we are talking not about the instructions on the agendas to request an interpreter but are talking about the new website for the interim sessions, which is different than the legislative sessions and that it may not be accessible.
- Eli mentioned he had a hard time getting in the que to be able to make public comment at the session he attended, it was difficult for him as a person who is hard of hearing and an ASL user may have an even harder time.
- Last issue, all state contract for ASWL and CART services have expired and that mean that right now no state agency can request interpreter services, the action that was suggested and the recommendation we'd like to make is that there needs to be a change there cannot be a drop in accommodations ever.
- The question was asked if there had been an update since the January meeting and the answer was that in March there is to be a meeting to review the contracts for ASL and CART and to possibly sign the contracts but until that is done there is no service.
- The state purchasing division is who make the decision and it was felt that a letter to them asking how this transpired and for them to clarify how they are going to ensure it doesn't happen again and asking for a clause in the contract that states it will be in effect until a new one is signed so there is no drop-in service, would be beneficial.
- Eli Schwartz made a motion that the Director and Chair write a letter to the state purchasing division and have it signed by the chair. Laura Fink and Jeff Beardsley seconded, and the motion carried.

9. Review, Discussion and Approval of Proposed Bylaw Changes: (For Possible Action)  
Cheyenne Pasquale, Interim Executive Director

- This item was tabled until the May meeting.

10. Review, Discuss and Approval of Tentative Agenda Items for May 12, 2022, meeting: (For Possible Action)  
Eric Wilcox, Chair

- Please send your agenda topic to Obioma to be included for consideration on the agenda for the May meeting.

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.)

- My name is Alexandra Profant and I'd like to comment on behalf of my family and myself that we have been having many issues with getting a phone line in rural Nevada that with our hearing and/or vision impairments we can utilize. This has been a long and frustrating experience; I would also like to say that having access to the meanings of acronyms and what they stand for and physical mailing address and telephone numbers for community resources is needed and governmental access that is not all on the computer as not everyone is computer literate.
- This is Betty Hammond for the record, I've been getting a lot of questions about how the structure works with the commission and the office of ADSD and the programs. I was wondering as a public person if the department could do a slide



show, something very visual, to explain the relationship between the commission and the services that are provided.

- Laura Turner, good morning, I'm a transition counselor for vocational rehabilitation and I just wanted to remind everyone that we are available to provide transition services for students statewide ages 14 and up this year our referrals have been significantly lower from all our school districts statewide. And our community partners we've probably only been able to help ten students this school year statewide so that's a big concern because we have so many resources and we're fully staffed. We want to encourage everyone to reach out to the families or students you're working with and really encourage them to apply for VR services.

Adjournment: 12:05 pm

Eric Wilcox, Chair

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Notice of this meeting was posted at the following Aging and Disability Services Office at 3208 Goni Road, Building I, Suite 181, Carson City, NV. 89706. Notice of this meeting was posted on the Internet through the Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division website at [www.adsd.nv.gov](http://www.adsd.nv.gov) and Nevada Public Notices website at [www.notice.nv.gov](http://www.notice.nv.gov)

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