



# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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



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## Approved Meeting Minutes

<i>Name of Organization:</i>	Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: General Commission Meeting
<i>Date and Time of Meeting:</i>	Thursday, September 8, 2022 9:00AM
<i>Place of Meeting:</i>	Virtual: Zoom Interpreters for this meeting: <a href="#">Jamie Jaramillo, Nicole Dunn</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: Sandra LaPalm, Maureen Fradianni, Eli Schwartz, Shawna Goldhammer, Eric Wilcox, Susan Beckett, Laura Fink, Jaime Vitale

Staff: Obioma Officer, Executive Director; Lisa Torres, Community Engagement Manager; Lorraine Belt-Dolan, Administrative Assistant III

Accommodations: Jamie Jaramillo, Interpreter; Nicole Dunn, Interpreter; Becky Van Auken, Captioner

Guests: Beth Jones, Heather Lafferty, Adrienne Navarro, Andrea Julerat-Olvera, Deanna Smith, Gujuan Caver, LT, Michelle Albrecht Cordova, Tim Smalley, Angela Moein, Kalen Beck, Jennifer Pierce, Jeff Jaech, Jack.

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 administrative assistant with written comments.)

- Eric reminded everyone that the commission voted last meeting that everyone is free to use the mode of communication that they are most comfortable with and that trying to force them to use another language is bullying and we don't allow that at the commission meetings. Please be respectful in your communication.
- Laura Thompson let us know that she is a VR counselor, and they will be giving a presentation to the commission on November 10<sup>th</sup>.

- Eric read emailed comments received by the commission: First was a thank you to the commissioners and Tracy May Brown at the Town Hall. Second, they would like to see the telephone surcharges and phase out the equipment that ALS users aren't using such as TTY, TTD as they are obsolete. They would like to see if the State of Nevada would consider mobile apps such as ASL anywhere. It is hard to find a public telephone where TDD is installed, at the airport we asked at the counter, and they had no idea what I was talking about and after showing them the icon they phoned a supervisor who had no idea either where to find it. This is a violation of ADA. There are also many signs that do not have open caption for the deaf. Three, education its critical that Deaf children have full inclusion of full access to the child's first language or communication mode. It is suggested that we have regional program for Deaf children and all Deaf children should go to one school where there are specialized teachers for the Deaf. Having full access to their communication modes the children can socialize, participate in activities, learning modules et cetera. Four, we need flashers on traffic lights for first responders, checking with Tucson Arizona where they have a system in place and doing something similar. Five, Nevada Care Connection needs to reach out to the deaf community as many people still do not the know much about the organization and their website is not at all deaf friendly. Six, Nevada Senior Services the State of Nevada needs to consider establishing a Deaf unit inside the skilled nursing homes in several cities, so they can socialize, communicate, and participate in activities to have stimulation of their minds and bodies. Seven, we need to consider having a one stop center for Deaf and hard of hearing people, maybe in collaboration with many departments in the state, like Aging and disability services and DETR. These comments were submitted by Sean Mulholland and Shelly Freed of the Las Vegas Deaf Seniors.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Public comment – Having issues with interpreter at the doctor's office in Reno and they say they don't provide them, pointed out that is an ADA violation they still don't provide they say that we must bring our own. How can I when I don't know where to find them. They went on to say they live in a small town and their primary doctor provides an interpreter via iPad and they don't understand how the bigger cities do not provide interpreters at doctor's offices. Lori Jones of Fernley, Nevada.

### 3. Approval of Minutes of the July 14, 2022, meeting: (For Possible Action)

Eric Wilcox, Chair

- Eli Schwartz made a motion to approve the minutes, Laura Fink seconded, motion carried.

### 4. Presentation, Desert Regional Center (DRC) Services and Commission Partnership:

Angela Moein, Health Program Manager

- The agency is a large developmental services agency with three different locations, Desert Reginal center is in Las Vegas, the other two are up North, Sierra Regional and Rural Regional.
- Eligibility: must be a US citizen or have documentation of U.S. permanent residency and have residency in Nevada. With an intellectual disability or a related condition that manifests itself before the age of 18 for intellectual disability and before age 22 for a related condition.
- Services: They have family support and respite services, Family Preservation Program, FPP, jobs and day training, and supported living. There is a community-based waiver and an intermittent care facility.
- They have a person-centered plan and approach. The goal is to help the person live and thrive in the most non-restrictive setting possible, so they can achieve their own goals and aspirations.
- Family support is a program that provides financial assistance so the loved one can remain in the home if that's their choice. Typically, families will purchase respite for help in the home or a social recreational activity outside of the home, and we also provide or augment if they need groceries, or clothing, things of that nature.

- Family Preservation Program, FPP, this is a monthly assistance program to help offset necessary expenses for individuals with severe intellectual disabilities. Assistance could include an emphasis on medical services and supports in various therapies.
- Jobs and day training, our goal is to try to help people, individuals that we serve to reach their highest potential in all life areas. Again, it's person centered, and it's also to the degree the person seems to express an interest in some incidents too, the type of work setting that they are motivated in. The ideal goal is supported employed.
  - Supportive employment would be a setting where the individual that we work with could achieve competitive employment through ongoing supports from us and our job training providers. We have a variety of settings. Some of which are different business entities, where individuals are working primarily independent and then we have small enclave settings where we might work with six or more individuals and somebody on site routinely or periodically, depending on the setting, to help that individual.
  - The opposite end of the spectrum is our day habilitation programs like the opportunity village program. This is a program where there's a lot higher level of oversight and training for the individuals to help that person acquire and retain adequate skills so that they can move forward in the least restrictive setting.
- Next is supported living arrangement and we have three primary service models
  - Intermittent supported living arrangement, SLA is the most independent arrangement. This is typically a roommate situation with limited staff oversight.
  - Then there is the 24-hour setting which is different because there is awake staff in the home 24-hours a day, with typically 2 -4 people living in the home. These people need to build a higher level of skills.
  - Home host or shared living modes, which is one or two individuals may move into a family home where that family home provider is certified and works with a provider agency and lives in a private family home setting.
- They also provide a waiver service, and it encompasses most people that are receiving a residential service or work-related service. They must be Medicaid eligible and that service, the federal government contributes more than 50% of the cost associated with that service.
- At Desert Regional center only, we do have the Intermittent care facility or ICF. The ICF has up to 48 individuals that may reside there at any given time who are 18 years or older who have medical and /or behavioral needs and require very intensive supports. It's not the goal that the individuals that live there stay forever, we hope to transition most individuals back into the community setting. The nice thing about the ICF setting is that it has a full range of professional services on the campus that in the community you would have to go out and access.
- The question was asked what kinds of services do they have for the Deaf or Deaf-Blind or speech impaired person, how are they accommodated?
  - Currently they do not have a formalized process, but they have interpreters, special devices of communication for the telephone, communications boards that they talk about. They try to be engaged with the current and best use of technology. They really do rely on the family of the person to help guide them.
  - Regarding relying on family, so many times the families are exhausted and do not know where to find the resources they need, and they are being asked to come in and teach sign language to the staff and the inappropriateness of that request. If we could find the resources for the families and the adults who have transitioned that would be a better solution.

- It was asked if we could put together a list, of resources and recommendations and some of the training opportunities to developmental services not just at DRC but the sister agencies as well then, they could start to bridge the gap in services.
  - It was suggested that they follow up with the accessibility subcommittee to sort out the exact information needed.
5. Presentation, Diversity Equity Inclusion Access, and Functional Needs Program (DEI/AFN) Initiatives and Commission Partnership:  
Heather Lafferty, Disabilities and Preparedness Specialist

- Heather Lafferty and I am the diversity, equity, inclusion and access and functional needs coordinator for the division of the emergency management, which is a brand-new position to the state.
- There were gaps in the communications and services during COVID especially in the emergency arena. Leadership at the division of emergency management recognized those gaps and hired Heather.
- Access and functional needs refer to individuals with or without disabilities who may need additional assistance because of any condition that may limit their ability to act in an emergency. This group includes people with disabilities, ethnic minority groups, indigenous populations, people with limited English proficiency, children, aging populations, single working parents, pregnant persons, prisoners, households without access to transportation, and people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.
- They have four big goals with their strategic plan.
  - Goal one is to create a systemic process to embed equity with DEM, starting with Heather's position.
  - Goal two is to identify our access and functional needs populations and understanding who we serve and what their needs are.
  - Goal three is achieve complete buy in and engagement from our external stakeholders.
  - Goal Four is making sure that all information disseminated by us during an emergency is inclusive and accessible.
- We want to make sure as we are planning and developing these things with our communities, not just for them. It's a big job and going to take lots of checklists and policies and procedures.
- What they have done is developed a framework with a memory tool called CMIST where they can break this down and say during a disaster all people need these certain things. They will be teaching this framework to emergency managers throughout the state.
- C is for Communication, which is key in a disaster and that looks like amplification systems, interpreters, audio instructions, captions, communication cards, large print and items translated into Spanish, Tagalong, and the ways we communicate in Nevada.
- M is for maintain, as in maintain people's health during a disaster at a shelter, this includes things like accessible bathrooms and showers, having medical equipment and supplies, and Medications that might be lost or need refrigeration, until we can get everyone independently living again.
- I is for Independence – having durable medical equipment, eating, or writing aids, if you have a personal assistant making sure you're connected to them in the shelter, that there are reaches, and people are not separated from their mobility

devices, walkers and wheelchairs that they will need in the shelter. And that there is a plan to keep people and their service animals together.

- S is for support, safety, and self-determination and this is making sure we're taking these things into consideration, your support person is allowed to stay in the shelter with you, written instructions, extra time to evacuate if needed.
- T is for transportation, for this we need communication in all forms, lift equipped vehicles and vehicles that can transport heavy equipment. The biggest part of this is making sure that our first responders know and have been trained not to separate anyone from their mobility devices, those are needed when evacuating.
- They are working on developing this program, recruiting, and training team members who would be comprised of people with disabilities and lived experience and people who serve these communities ready to respond in a disaster and can go into these shelters and do environmental accessibility assessments.
- To start they have developed the disability information and alert network where they have partnered with local and regional disability service agencies that already support and deal with people with disabilities daily and already have the capacity and contact information for their communities, before during and after a disaster. IN a disaster the emergency operation center would activate and get on a call with the disability information alert network and all the stakeholders, which the commission would be a part of, and they send all the information out to the community and give feedback back to the disaster emergency operation center all the way through the recovery process.
- We're working on establishing a partnership and seeing how to go forward and the best way to incorporate voices and lived experiences from our communities into the planning process. The biggest goal right now is outlining the best way to collaborate and making some of these goals actionable.
- It seems to be a comprehensive plan in terms of preparation ahead as well as elements to act on during a disaster but what is the formal process of passing along a complaint. We as a commission received a complaint about the governor's press conference rescinding the emergency orders for COVID, did not have any interpreting at it. Heather would be a good place to start and can bring this up as she meets with other state agencies, and we can have these feedback sessions and bring concerns and work on them together in a more collaborative effort.
- Our main concern is the safety of the Deaf community and how they would be able to be alerted if there's some issue out there whether they are at home or school or so forth. Is there anything that you help us prepare that? Yes, one of the ways we could do that is through training and checklist, preparedness items, so we are more specific than the past where we have told people be prepared, pack a bag. That bag looks different for different types of people, and we need to be aware of that.
- Heather's contact information: [HeatherLafferty@dem.nv.gov](mailto:HeatherLafferty@dem.nv.gov)
- This is something our Accessibility Subcommittee could work with the team related to our target population.

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

Eric Wilcox, Chair  
Obioma Officer, Executive Director

- The director's report is in the meeting materials and there was a budget update, we still have a significant balance as there has been little travel, we did spend some on the town halls. We want to thank the Black Deaf Advocates for organizing

a successful social event in conjunction with the town halls. We also want everyone to know that we have successfully established an interpreter subcommittee and have empaneled some of the seats on that subcommittee. Meeting about our expectations for rules of engagement during our meetings and other events that our commissioners are involved in, that was covered in the beginning of the meeting.

- Susan had a question about the budget and wanted to make sure it would still cover travel and in person meetings as they learned during the townhalls that in person contact is very important and people struggle with Zoom. She feels that townhalls and traveling are very important to the commission and the community.
- The commission is looking to change the meeting date and time from Thursday mornings in response to feedback from the community, the proposed 2023 schedule will be presented at the November meeting, we need to do further investigations regarding staffing.
- Commissioner community engagements, our executive director will aid in an engagement plan and there is a brief overview, the community engagement plan is to include but not limited to commissioner participation.
- What are our expectations of the commissioners themselves, we need to have an explanation and definition of roles, including the executive director's role. Would like to also see participation from our subcommittees, as commissioners it's a big ask but they need to know what is going on.
- Susan has a request that we update the terms from 2 terms to 3 terms as she felt she spent her first term trying to figure out what she was doing and feels many commissioners may have the same experience, and we would like to build on the momentum that we are gaining currently.
- We are still waiting for the Governor to appoint the remaining seat on the commission the seat for NVAD.
- There will be trainings for the commissioners held on Wednesday and Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> from 8:30 am – 12:30 pm each day. This will answer the what questions. They will be recorded if you cannot make it.
- At our recent townhalls we had about 50 people at the Las Vegas townhall, 5 from Elko and 1 community member in Reno. We need to look at how to get the information out in the community. We were told that people are moving here, and many do not know how to find services. Maybe looking at how to have better outreach for those people specifically. We would like the commissioners who attended the townhalls to submit feedback via email to the executive director.
- We have a new process for networking, if people want to partner with the commission, we have three options for them. First is our resource list, second thing is to collaborate and sponsor events, the third thing is to partner and have active partnerships. We want to see an active method of partnering so we go to events, support you, you join us at our events, you help us with certain things, you're reaching out to the community, you're giving us information, we need that documentation. It's an exchange, working together if you're in our network, then we're in your network. We want people to reach out and contact us, via email is good.
- Upcoming meeting updates, we are scheduled to have our next General meeting on November 10 at 9 am but the Executive Director has a training conflict that day and would like to propose November 16<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am for the General meeting. Laura Fink and Jaime Vitale have conflict's that day but it looks like we would be able to have quorum so we could meet then. The interpreting subcommittee will have it's first meeting on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, at 2:00 pm, the second meeting will be

November 18<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 pm tentatively. Our education subcommittee will meet on October 4<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm, The legislative subcommittee will meet on October 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. The accessibility subcommittee will meet on December 13<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am and the employment subcommittee will meet on September 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am and again on December 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am.

- Shawna Goldhammer made a motion to hold the meeting on November 16<sup>th</sup>, at 9:30 am, Susan Beckett seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

7. Report, Discussion and Approval of Support and Assistance related to the DMV BDR sponsored by Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod: (For Possible Action)  
Susan Beckett, Community Member

- Susan Beckett speaking as a community member, the BDR is 165 it is put on by Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod and it specifically makes changes to the DMV, adding the letters D-Deaf, HH-Hard of Hearing and SI-Speech Impaired added to the front of your auto registration and it gives a heads up to the officer pulling you over or to first responders in a n accident. This is in response to the community's request and that it not be put on the drivers license as that could make a person feel vulnerable. Asking that the commission give support by letting Susan speak on behalf of the commission and involving the Legislative subcommittee.
- Eli asked if this was going to be voluntary and it is in draft form right now and he suggested adding CI – for Cochlear Implants. Susan clarified that once you are listed as Deaf or Hard of Hearing the EMT's would automatically check for cochlear implants, and that we would ask that it be voluntary.
- Jaime stated that he had this on his drivers license in New York and is fully in support of the idea.
- Tim Smalley stated in chat that he was in support of the BDR and wants to make sure it is voluntary.
- Laura Fink asked if there is verification process to add it to the registration and Susan answered that there will be medical verification requirements.
- A question was asked in the chat what about a teen driver whom the car was not registered to, could the parents add that, and we will check into this.
- Maureen asked if there was a requirement that deaf people wear hearing aides when driving and Susan responded that there is no such requirement.
- Susan Beckett made a motion that she be able to speak on this as a commission member and that the commission supports the BDR. Eli Schwarz seconded the motion, and motion carried.

8. Review, Discuss and Approval of Deaf Day at the Legislature Budget (For Possible Action):  
Eli Schwartz, Chair of Legislative Subcommittee

- Tentative date of March 1, 2023, which may not work according to Assemblywoman Tracy May-Brown we will keep you updated.
- We would like to propose a breakfast budget of \$500 and Rusty Shaffer had previously stated that he may be able to get the funds so we will contact him to see if that can happen.
- This is so the community can learn about the legislative process and BDR's and how they become law
- Obioma asked if we were working with the DD council and the ARC of Nevada, Eli responded that he is working with Ashley of the ARC and Catherine Nielson at the DD council.

- The ARC and DD council have an event planned for March 1, that they have invited us to be a part of and that is why we set the tentative date for March 1 but there may not have accommodations available at the capitol building.
  - There was a question about interpreters and who provides them, and we will be asking and getting more information.
9. Report, Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from Education, Legislative, Accessibility, and Employment Subcommittees: (For Possible Action)
- Susan Beckett, Chair of Accessibility Subcommittee  
 Laura Fink, Chair of Employment Subcommittee  
 Eli Schwartz, Chair of Legislative Subcommittee  
 Eric Wilcox, Chair of Education Subcommittee  
 Obioma Officer, Executive Director
- Susan Beckett, Accessibility Subcommittee chair, no recent meetings, and no requests of the commission at this time, our report has been submitted to the commission.
  - Laura Fink, Employment Subcommittee chair, the last meeting was June 9<sup>th</sup>, the next meeting is September 16, 2022, and currently we have no recommendations to the commission.
  - Eli Schwartz, Legislative Subcommittee chair, at this time no recommendations to the commission, and our next meeting will be October 6, 2022.
  - Eric Wilcox, Education Subcommittee chair, no recommendations to the commission currently. Our next meeting is October 4, 2022.
10. Review, Discuss and Approval of Tentative Agenda Items for November 16, 2022, meeting:  
 Eric Wilcox, Chair
- No wrong door/NVCC presentation
  - Funding we are going to run out of money in three years on the TDD surcharge and not be able to fund all the things that we currently fund including the commission and Executive director.
  - Shannon Sprout to give us an update on the Language Access Plan
  - Adrienne Navarro volunteered to provide a presentation at the next meeting.
  - The Language Access Plan from ADSD and from some other agencies as well.
  - Laura Fink made a motion to approve 2 agenda items the presentation from Nevada Care Connection and to have Adrienne Navarro present on the TDD surcharge, Eli Schwartz seconded the motion. Motion carried.
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.)
- Kalen Beck one of the state interpreters, there was a question about their services, yes, they do provide services for the legislative body.
  - Adrienne Navarro wanted to add on to the Language Access Plan, every state agency is required to have a Language Access Plan, so the ADSD plan only relates to ADSD, if we would like to learn about the DMV plan, we will have to ask DMV to the meeting, or if we were interested in DETR/VR's plan then we would need to ask them to the meeting. Asking Shannon Sprout will only give us ADSD's plan.
12. Adjournment: 11:54 AM  
 Eric Wilcox, Chair



**Accommodation Requests and Meeting Materials:**

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 Lorraine Belt-Dolan in writing at 3320 W. Sahara, Suite 100, Las Vegas, Nevada 89102, email [lorrainebelt@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:lorrainebelt@adsd.nv.gov) 5 days prior to the meeting.

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)

Supporting public material provided to Commission members for this meeting may be requested from Lorraine Belt-Dolan, Commission Administrative Support, ADSD at [lorrainebelt@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:lorrainebelt@adsd.nv.gov) and is/will be available at the meeting locations and ADSD website at [Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired \(nv.gov\)](http://Nevada Commission for Persons Who Are Deaf Hard of Hearing or Speech Impaired (nv.gov))