



# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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



## DRAFT 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>	Wednesday, November 16, 2022 9:30AM
<i>Place of Meeting:</i>	Virtual: Zoom Interpreters for this meeting: <a href="#">Jamie Jaramillo, Emily Beech</a> Meeting Materials can be found here: <a href="#">Home (nv.gov)</a>

**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, Eric Wilcox, Susan Beckett, Ryan Feldman, Jaime Vitale

Staff: Obioma Officer, Executive Director; Lorraine Belt-Dolan, Administrative Assistant III

Accommodations: Jaime Jaramillo, Interpreter; Emily Beech, Interpreter; Becky Van Auken, Captions

Guests: Laura Thompson; "LT", Lora Turner, Jamie Ahumada, Kimberly Palma-Ortega, Andy Firth, Steven Cohen, Adrienne Navarro, Emily Camacho, Marisol Rivas, Hilda Borja-Velasco, Beth Jones, Sarah Weimer, Jenn Montoya, Dawn Lyons, Andrea Juillerat-Olvera, Benjamin Soukup, Jay Cafferata, Jeff Duncan, Allen Gilbert, Tim Smalley

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.)

- Jenn Montoya with Communication Access Program, the analysis from the Town Hall was focused on the problems with the problems with interpreters and we recently had three meetings about the new NAC for the interpreters and had no commission participation and we would like to explain these changes to the commission.

3. Approval of Minutes of the September 8, 2022, meeting: (For Possible Action)  
Eric Wilcox, Chair

- Eli Schwartz made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2022, meeting and Jaime Vitale seconded, motion carried.

4. Presentation, CAS and TDD Surcharge Clarification and Funding Distribution:

Adrienne Navarro, Social Services Chief II

Jennifer Montoya, Interim CAS Program Manager

- Adrienne Navarro gave a presentation on the CAS and TDD surcharge in Nevada, it went over the history of the surcharge and where we are now.
- Currently the country is in transition and over the next 3-5 years, the Federal Communications Commission will stop requiring states to provide and line relay services. All relay users will need to be transitioned to internet relay services. The State has hired Andy Firth as the state relay administrator to oversee the transition from landlines to internet relay services.
- What we need to evaluate is what funding sources might be available for the other services that individuals who are Deaf, hard of hearing, speech impaired need and that the commission identifies as that need. Under CAS and the TDD surcharge we provide multiple services but not all services that have been identified as needed and with the TDD surcharge changing we need to look at other funding sources.
- We need to evaluate what the intent of the surcharge is and while the legislature would have to amend the current statutes that state what the surcharge supports, we as an advocacy body need to be thinking about other funding sources and where those could come from.
- It was clarified that the issue is not that we are running out of money, it is that there are changes happening in the relay services and the intent of the TDD surcharge from the federal level and whether Nevada needs to reevaluate how services for the Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired are funded. To change the funding sources, we would need a budget build, a BDR and to request from the legislature. Also, if it is decided that what's currently being funded doesn't fit the scope of the TDD surcharge then the NAC would have to be changed by the legislature as well.

5. Presentation, Nevada Care Connection (NVCC) Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services:

Jamie Ahumada, No Wrong Door Coordinator

- Nevada Care Connection resource centers provide assistance to individuals with disabilities, family caregivers, veterans, and any families regardless of income, age who want to access services for long term services and supports within the community or in public programs.
- The majority of the services are provided by three community partners, Access to Healthcare Network covers 13 counties in Northern Nevada, Lyon County human services covers Lyon County and Jewish Family Services Agency covers Southern Nevada. All of which can be found on the website where you could obtain services or get connected to the local resource center.
- The resource navigators help with application assistance, predetermination of public program eligibility, get caregivers connected to supportive services and provide case management to individuals with cognitive or memory issues and the Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired communities.
- Currently the website is all in English, but they are working with the CAS team to be able to videos in ASL to provide information. They are also looking at reconfiguring the website to make it more user friendly and accessible.
- The turn-around time on a referral is seven to ten business days and they try to make contact three times before letting them know that they can put in another request when they are ready.
- The Southern Nevada partner is currently expanding and hiring more navigators and case managers currently. Currently there are no Deaf or hard of hearing staff

in either the North or South, but they encourage them to hire someone fluent in ASL. Currently they use interpreters to communicate with Deaf individuals.

- They are seeing an increase in the number of Deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired community members that are reaching out for services, last month they served about 40-47 individuals from that community.
- As far as reaching out to the Deaf and hard of hearing community, the partners so out, send flyers, attend community events, attend town halls, and try to get to the underserved communities of each county through events like that. All three of the resource centers are open to walk-in clients as well.

6. Just a reminder that the Commission does not provide direct services and if you reach out to the commission, we will refer you back to the community partners as they provide those direct services. Presentation, Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation – Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DETR-BVR)- Deaf/Hard of Hearing Team:

Araceli Pyper, Rehab Tech II  
Laura Fink, Rehabilitation Counselor II  
Laura Thompson, Rehabilitation Counselor III  
Lora Turner, Rehabilitation Supervisor  
Michelle Albrecht, Rehab Tech II

- We are the vocational rehab Deaf and hard of hearing and Deaf-Blind team and transition team, which has recently expanded to five members and with Lora Turner being named supervisor there is an opening for a Deaf and hard of hearing youth counselor and they will be recruiting for this position soon.
- The vocational rehabilitation program helps support people with disabilities to obtain employment through training, counseling, and other support methods. We want to reduce barriers for people with disabilities who want to be in the workforce, so they have equitable access to quality work and having the ability to sustain that work and not having to depend on the system, but to empower themselves to live their own independent life.
- Not everyone who applies for VR services will qualify, you must have documentation and VR can help you get that documentation of disability, and that the disability is a barrier to employment, and they have 60 days to determine eligibility and extensions can be granted. There also might be a cost for services dependent on your financial situation and again documentation of finances is required.
- There is money earmarked for students ages 14 to 22, the federal government calls that PreETS services, or pre-employment transition services. This is divided into five categories, self-advocacy, job readiness, counseling for college opportunities, work-based learning, and career exploration.
- VR will be holding a Deaf and hard of hearing camp that will be statewide, it will include transportation to camp and all the expenses, it will be no cost to the families of those attending. That will come out of the PreETS funding.

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

Eric Wilcox, Chair  
Susan Beckett, Vice Chair  
Obioma Officer, Executive Director

- We've had two reappointments for another term, Susan Beckett our vice-chair, and Laura Fink and we have two seats that are available, one that's reserved for a member from the Nevada Association of the Deaf and the other for the Educator in NV that was left empty when Shawna Goldhammer termed out in October.

- While it's not appropriate for the Commission to advocate for a particular person to fill a seat it is appropriate to let the Governor's office know that seat is important, and we would like to see it filled as soon as possible since there is an applicant for the NVAD seat. Susan Beckett made a motion for Eric to write a letter to the Governor's office, Maureen Fradianni seconded the motion, the motion carried.
  - Looking at the information from our Townhalls the common themes that came up were the need for interpreters and a way to educate and grow more interpreters. Other issues that came up were having access to mental health providers who use sign and have direct communication with the clients, and education of our Deaf and hard of hearing students. Please see the charts in the meeting materials for more information.
  - Parties interested in becoming partners with us or are new partners to us are, the 988 team, we meet with them frequently. Camp SignShine is back in business in conjunction with DETR and their camp it is going to be one camp all together. Caption call would like to become a partner, GTC or global technology communications which are a part of ASL anywhere and received grant monies to provide free minutes to those who live in the state of Nevada to use ASL Anywhere. Also, the Nevada minority health and equity coalition reached out for a campaign they were filming, and we were involved in that, so you might see Obioma on TV.
  - Free minutes for ASL anywhere are available from several partners including NVCC, and DETR or reach out to ASL anywhere directly.
  - If you want to become a partner with the commission there is a form that gives some information and networking system, that is available in the meeting materials.
8. Report, Discussion and Approval of Nevada Commission for Persons who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing Meeting Calendar 2022-2023: (For Possible Action)  
Obioma Officer, Executive Director
- There was one concern that if we change the general meetings to once a quarter would the three-hour time framework, and it was decided that if needed we would extend the meetings.
  - Susan Beckett made a motion to approve the calendar as proposed, Eli Schwarz seconded, motion carried.
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  
Jaime Vitale, Chair of Interpreter Subcommittee  
Eli Schwartz, Chair of Legislative Subcommittee  
Eric Wilcox, Chair of Education Subcommittee  
Obioma Officer, Executive Director
- Susan Beckett, the accessibility subcommittee has not met since the last meeting and will have their next meeting on December 13, 2022.
  - Laura Fink was not present, so Obioma gave the report, they had no recommendations at this time and their next meeting is on December 15, 2022.
  - Jaime Vitale, the interpreter subcommittee, had no recommendations at this time, the next meeting will be Friday, November 18, 2022.

- Eric Wilcox, the education subcommittee request to open a dialogue with the Department of Education and collect some data from the schools. Eric will be following up with the subcommittee members to refine what that information would be exactly. Those actions would be forthcoming, but nothing is needed from the commission at this time.
- Obioma Officer, gave the report for the Legislative Subcommittee report as Eli was not present, the recommendation for any additional support for assistive technology needs to be focused on aiding the current AT BDR modification request with Steven Cohen the UNR representative. We would like to get approval for Deaf Day at the legislature set for April 10<sup>th</sup>. And lastly there has been discussion whether we should change the composition of the commission board, we need a seat for an interpreter representative and there was talk of combining the two parent seats into one to make that happen would like to put in a BDR for that, with the commission's approval.
- Eric brought up for clarity the difference between the two seats, Eric's seat is for a parent of a Deaf or Hard of hearing child and Ryan's seat is specifically for a Deaf or hard of hearing child receiving Early Intervention Services.
- The rationale for changing a seat rather than adding a seat or multiple seats as the subcommittee had discussed adding seats to total 13 -15 members but there may be a fiscal cost involved with that increase and while we could ask for a BDR with that increase, we didn't want to raise red flags of a possible cost increase and not get it approved. Combing the two seats would allow us to add diversity while not increasing costs. We could try adding one seat for a total of 12 and state in the BDR there would be no fiscal impact by adding one seat. This is only the first step we would still like to add more seats for more Deaf and hard of hearing representation.
- Jaime Vitale made a motion to pursue a BDR to add a seat for an interpreter, Eli Schwartz and Susan Beckett seconded and the motion passed.

10. Review, Discuss and Approval of Tentative Agenda Items for February 8, 2023, meeting (tentative date):

Eric Wilcox, Chair

- Email your items to Eric or Obioma for the next 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.)

- Sarah Weimer, I want to share that I'm working with the American Society for Deaf Children to hopefully hold an ASL weekend immersive ASL class/workshop in Las Vegas, tentatively February 25-26, 2023. It would be all day Saturday and Sunday. So please keep an eye out for that.

12. Adjournment: 12:45 PJM

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, ASD at [lorrainebelt@adsd.nv.gov](mailto:lorrainebelt@adsd.nv.gov) and is/will be available at the meeting locations and ASD 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))

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