

Joe Lombardo  
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

---

## **Nevada Commission for Persons that are Deaf and Hard of Hearing: Legislative Subcommittee**

### **APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

**Date and Time of Meeting:**           **Wednesday, January 17, 2024  
2:30 PM**

**Location of Meeting:**                   **ZOOM**

### **AGENDA**

1. **Roll Call and Opening Statement:**

Eli Schwartz, Chair

Members: Eli Schwartz, Beth Jones, Susan Beckett, Julie Gwin, Betty Hammond

Guests: Perry Smith, Jennifer Cunningham, Rebecca Ortiz, Linda Anderson, Andrew Pregosin, Kristy Fritzler, Eric Wilcox, Alexis Griffith

Accommodations: Elizabeth Anthony, Interpreter; Kelly Bunting, Interpreter; Becky Van Auken, Captioner

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

2. **Public Comment:**

- No Public Comment

3. **For Possible Action:** Approval of Minutes of the September 19, 2023, meeting.

- Beth Jones motioned to approve the minutes from the last meeting, Susan Beckett seconded the motion carried.

4. **For Possible Action:** Nominations, Elections, and/or reappointment of subcommittee members.

- Betty Hammond is retired from the state, and she oversaw the Deaf Services statewide what Jenn Montoya does now, and she is now a freelance interpreter and is concerned about the stories she's hearing in the community. She would like to be an activist for change.
- Julie Gwin is a registered nurse and is currently the interim COO of a healthcare center in Reno, Northern Nevada and has been hard of

hearing for about five years now. She uses bilateral hearing aids and just found out about the commission six months ago. She currently sits on the legislative advocacy committee of the Nevada primary care association, which works on healthcare in Nevada and was previously worked for a lobby group on capitol hill.

- Beth Jones motioned to expand the legislative subcommittee to 7 members and to add Betty Hammond and Julie Gwin to the subcommittee, Susan Beckett seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Welcome to both Betty Hammond and Julie Gwin.

5. **Presentation and Discussion:** Presentation by Early Hearing Detection Intervention Agency (EHDI) on Cytomegalovirus commonly known as CMV.

- Perry Smith, Program Coordinator, Early Hearing Detection, and Intervention Program gave a presentation on Cytomegalovirus commonly known as CMV.
- CMV is one of eight human herpes viruses.
- There's a statement put out by the CDC, and it states: Congenital cytomegalovirus or CMV is a very common viral infection and the leading non-genetic cause of hearing loss that infants are born with in the United States. There's a huge association between congenital CMV and hearing loss in newborns.
- It is estimated that over 70% of people have CMV and it doesn't affect them but if a pregnant woman contracts CMV while expecting then the baby has a larger chance of being affected and the effects can be extremely severe. Mental disability, hearing loss, vision loss, growth problems, lung problems, bleeding, liver problems and so forth the list is quite long. The other thing that has been noticed is that the infant may pass the newborn hearing screen but is at an increased risk of acquiring hearing loss as they go through life.
- The National CMV Foundation has applied at the national level to have CMV testing added to the regular newborn infant screening panel. Several other states have added legislation to require this screening. It would not require another blood draw but rather be a part of the screening process already done.

6. **For Possible Action:** Commission Directive Topic(s): For Discussion and approval to bring to the Commission for final approval if needed.

Eli Schwartz, Chair

- a) Discussion and approval of recommendations for Deaf Day at the Legislature 2025.

- We have started planning for 2025 and tentatively have the date as April 2025 but may need to move to March 2025 due to staffing, and we cannot finalize a date until we have access to the legislative calendar, to put in our request.
- We're in discussions with the DD council about funds they may be able to give us, and we have already started fundraising for the event with the funds being housed by the Las Vegas Deaf Seniors and they will give quarterly reports on those funds.
- We would like to be able to provide transportation to the legislature and are working with some Deaf run organizations including Blue Hawk Branding who will be assisting us with finding a hotel, with finding catering options and travel options as well.
- We have talked about having T-shirts but may rethink that and switch to lanyards as it is a business environment, but we would like something to show that we are there as a group.

b) Discussion and Approval of Recommendations for new Bill Draft Requests (BDR's) needed in the next legislative session. Review panel discussion and initiatives from Engagement Conference.

- Eli read from page 27 and 28 of the Engagement Conference Book under the topic panel session information which had concerns raised by many of the groups here in Nevada. These are not necessarily things that they are advocating be taken to the legislature but are their concerns the community that they represent are focused on. The link to that book is here: <https://www.nevadaddcouncil.org/nvdhhcommissionengagementconference2023/>

c) Discussion and Approval of Recommendations from Las Vegas Deaf Seniors (LVDS) and Eli's list of possible Bill Draft Requests (BDR's).

- BDR's that we would like to dive deeper into include a school for the Deaf, increasing funding for the commission, reclassifying the Executive Director position to be more in line with other state employees, and possible funding for a Deaf Center.

7. **For Possible Action:** Approval of Agenda Items for Next meeting, March 26, 2024

- Deep Dive into Eli's list of possible Bill Draft Requests and current laws

8. **Public Comment:**

- Eric Wilcox, chair of the education subcommittee and parent of a deaf child, commented briefly on three things that came as part of the discussion. The entirety of those comments can be found in the meeting materials.
- Susan Beckett, The ASLU has sued the Clark County detention center and Las Vegas metropolitan police department. To read the entire comment please see the meeting materials.

9. **Adjournment: 3:57 PM**

---

## **Accommodation Requests and Meeting Materials:**

### **NOTE:**

- 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))

## **AGENDA POSTED AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:**

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 <https://notice.nv.gov>