



**STATE OF NEW MEXICO
COMMISSION FOR DEAF & HARD OF HEARING**

*Quarterly Board Meeting
Thursday, June 9, 2022.
3:00pm*

*The meeting was held remotely via Zoom and the public could view the meeting
livestream on YouTube with interpreting and captioning at
https://youtu.be/T_y2PKb0cBY*

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair Concha Dunwell called the meeting to order at 3:04pm. Trevor Brennan, Administrative Operations Specialist, called roll call.

Present: Mrs. Concha Dunwell
Dr. Jennifer Herbold
Dr. Ronald Stern
Mr. John Hooper
Ms. Casey Stone Romero
Mr. Francis Vigil

Absent: None

Quorum was met.

Six staff members from NMCDHH were present via Zoom: Executive Director Nathan Gomme, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Deborah Romero, Director of Community Advocacy Corina Gutiérrez, Director of Community Engagement Lisa Dignan, Community Engagement Specialist Jessica Eubank, and Trevor Brennan. Jessica Eubank interpreted the meeting along with Andrea Ginn and Gabriella Cravens. Assistant Attorney General Delilah Tenorio was also present (arrived at 3:28pm). Caryn Broome from Partners Interpreting LLC. provided CART transcription.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Executive Director Gomme announced that an error was found in the draft minutes for the March 10, 2002 meeting. The CART provider, "Partners Interpreting", was incorrectly identified as "Peoples Interpreting", therefore the minutes would need to be accepted with the revision, and any other possible suggested changes during discussion.

Chair Concha Dunwell asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

22.8

Commissioner Stern made a motion to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Hooper seconded.
Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Dunwell – Yes
Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Commissioner Stern – Yes
Commissioner Vigil – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

III. **APPROVAL OF March 10, 2022 MINUTES**

Chair Dunwell asked if there were any additional changes to the minutes from December 9, 2021. There were no further comments or changes.

Chair Dunwell asked for a motion to approve the minutes as revised with the correction as mentioned by Executive Director Gomme.

22.9

Commissioner Stern made the motion to accept the minutes as corrected.

Commissioner Vigil seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Dunwell – Yes

Commissioner Stern – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Commissioner Vigil – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

IV. **REPORTS**

a. Executive Director Report

Executive Director Gomme shared that, as mentioned in the 3rd quarter report, he had met with the Legislature about the budget during the legislative session, and had several meetings with Roundhouse staff about communication access and their new system for accessing the building. Executive Director Gomme also had meetings with the community regarding COVID-19 misinformation, worked on issues relating to cybersecurity, and worked with the National Association for the Deaf (NAD) on several matters.

The Commission was involved in, and the planning of, the American Deafness and Rehabilitation Association (ADARA) conference held in Albuquerque, along with the New Mexico School for the Deaf (NMSD), and the Community Outreach Program for the Deaf (COPD), and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), as well as other local and national community organizations. The conference was a great success, and also allowed for participants to identify some of the ongoing issues facing the state, such as access to mental health services, and how other states are addressing those issues. The Commission is working with COPD to explore options for expanding access for those services here in NM.

On April 9th, the Commission and the University of New Mexico Hospital (UNMH) hosted a Town Hall meeting to discuss issues relating to medical communication access, with separate sectional meetings for the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind communities. The commission had been working with UNMH during the third quarter to prepare for this Town Hall.

The Commission continues to work with different organizations to continue work on Broadband access and expansion across the state, and especially in rural areas. Executive Director Gomme was invited to participate in a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion group under the Department of Information Technology (DoIT), and has addressed and noted issues such as a lack of access. Any Broadband Equipment Distribution programs that are being developed to share internet access equipment with the community

must also have a way to share information about their programs and equipment with their target community. In other news related to Broadband access, Zoom is adding a Relay Caption Call feature, and T-Mobile is no longer providing Captioned Telephone Service (CTS).

The Commission is having conversations with DVR regarding the recently passed legislation that allows for no-cost tuition at UNM and other local universities, and how this impacts residents with a hearing loss that may want to attend universities with a large Deaf population and Deaf friendly learning environment, such as Gallaudet, California State University Northridge (CSUN), Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), etc.

NAD is exploring the possibility of providing interpreter agency accreditation again, and is currently hosting focus groups and exploring possible criterion for accreditation. There is also the question of who would be responsible for said accreditation on a day to day basis.

Executive Director Gomme and Commissioners discussed the recent wildfires and their air quality impact in New Mexico, how emergency alert notifications have been communicated to the community, and how to access to information regarding fires and weather information such as air quality. Commission staff are waiting for the approval of a script to make a vlog regarding the "Ready, Set, Go" emergency alert system. The Commission offers home smoke alarms through the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP), and the iPads available through the TEDP program are capable of downloading a weather application that will soon be added in an update.

Commissioner Herbold commented on the work that NMSD has been doing to provide Broadband access to students and the challenges that they have faced such as data caps and cost. The need for students with hearing loss to have video for learning sessions, means that data caps are quickly reached. Executive Director Gomme has had conversations with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) about the subject of data caps, and is aware of conversations that are happening between schools and libraries in rural areas with 5G providers and companies like StarLink. Executive Director Gomme has also presented to the State Education Network (SEN) about the critical need for video access at high speeds for students with hearing loss. The Commission is working on sharing more information with the community regarding the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) and Executive Director Gomme will be attending a presentation by the FCC on the in July. Broadband access will continue to be a critical issue for the Commission going forward.

Commissioner Stern asked if the Commission was able to fill the open Board position for Southern New Mexico. Executive Director Gomme did send forward some names for consideration, unfortunately the Legislature ran out of time to confirm the appointments for many different state Boards. Commissioner Stern also asked what the state mandated raises for all employees, without an increase in general funding meant for the Commission in regard to filling vacant staffing positions. Executive Director Gomme shared that the Commission still plans to move forward with hiring some positions due to urgent need, however which positions exactly is still under consideration.

Commissioners Hooper and Vigil had a discussion with Commissioner Gomme regarding the ongoing challenges with communication access within the Tribal communities with hearing loss, and the importance of the dissemination of information in accessible ways. Addressing communication barriers with Tribal communities is an ongoing, complex discussion.

b. Department Reports Q & A

There were no questions regarding the department reports. Chair Dunwell thanked the Commission staff for their ongoing hard work and dedication.

Executive Director Gomme reiterated that he would like to find an interested person to serve on the Board from Southern New Mexico and proceed with a Board Training with the Attorney Generals Office.

There were no further questions or comments.

V. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

22.10

Commissioner Herbold made a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Vigil seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Dunwell – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Stern – Yes

Commissioner Vigil – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trevor M. Brennan

Trevor Brennan
Administrative Operations Specialist