



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

*Quarterly Board Meeting
Thursday, December 14, 2023
3:00pm*

*The meeting was held remotely via Zoom and the public could view the meeting
livestream on YouTube with interpreting and captioning at
www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXvDvcbFRNM*

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair John Hooper called the meeting to order at 3:01pm. Trevor Brennan, Community Engagement Specialist, called roll call.

Present: Mr. John Hooper
Dr. Jennifer Herbold
Dr. Meena Mann
Ms. Casey Stone-Romero

Absent:

Quorum was met.

Seven 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, Community Advocacy Specialist Susana Santillan, and Trevor Brennan. Jessica Eubank interpreted the meeting along with Rhonda Hall, ChandraDevi Anania, and Amy Bourque. Partners Interpreting LLC. provided CART transcription. Assistant Attorney General Delilah Tenorio, and Auditor Thad Porch were also present.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Hooper noted that the Agenda needed a motion to amend the agenda to include setting the dates for the calendar year 2024 NMCDHH Board Meetings. Ms. Tenorio and Ms. Herbold discussed with Commissioners the need to amend Agenda Item III: Discussion on Development of Annual Review Process for the Executive Director. The amended Agenda Item was to read Discussion and Approval of the Draft for the Annual Review Process and Goals for the Executive Director. The Amended Agenda will be posted on the Commission Website.

24.1

Commissioner Herbold made a motion to approve the agenda as amended.
Commissioner Mann seconded.
Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes
Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2023 MINUTES

Chair Hooper asked if there were any changes to the minutes from September 14, 2023.

24.2

Commissioner Herbold made a motion to approve the minutes as written.

Commissioner Mann seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes
Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

IV. DISCUSSION OF RETURN TO IN-PERSON MEETINGS

Assistant Attorney General Tenorio and Executive Director Gomme led the commissioners in a discussion regarding returning to in-person Board meetings. This item was tabled for further discussion at the September 14, 2023 board meeting. Ms. Tenorio shared that most boards and commissions are continuing to meet in a virtual or hybrid format at this time, which is acceptable as long as the format continues to provide access to the public, such as through the Commission's YouTube live stream, and that all Commissioners can be clearly heard through all media formats without interruption.

Executive Director Gomme shared that the Commission is in a better position to attempt a hybrid meeting with an in-person component, and has done research and communicated with other boards and commissions regarding their experiences. Other boards and commissions confirm that there are technological and accessibility challenges in hosting hybrid in-person meetings, some issues that are not present in virtual only meetings. A virtual component also allows for participation from members of the board when they are sick. Members of the community have reported that they do watch the Commission live stream as it occurs. Challenges also remain with interpreter availability to support in-person meetings on an ongoing basis.

After discussion, Commissioners agreed to continue with virtual meetings, with at least one in-person hybrid meeting per year, perhaps during the annual 4th quarter meeting, to allow for increased community interaction.

24.3

Commissioner Herbold made a motion that the Commission continue to meet virtually on-going, with an in-person hybrid meeting to be held during the Commission FY24 4th Quarter Board Meeting in June 2024.

Commissioner Mann seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes
Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

V. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT FOR THE ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS AND GOALS FOR THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Assistant Attorney General Tenorio and Commissioners discussed that members of the board and the Executive Director had met and created a draft for the Executive Director Performance Review Procedures, which was then shared with the board and on the live stream. This review process will include goals for the Executive Director, an evaluation committee that will include board commissioners, staff members, and the Director of Human Resources, as well as input from the community via an anonymous survey. During the 4th Quarter meeting, the board will enter a closed executive session to discuss the performance review with the Executive Director, and then return to open session to vote on whether to approve the performance review.

Executive Director Gomme shared his goals for Fiscal Year 2024 which include: discussion and development of a communication facilitator position for the Support Service Provider (SSP) Program to be added to the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the SSP program with additional service requirements under consideration which includes the second goal of addressing concerns of the Senior Citizen Community which would take a look at options being considered in Arizona following discussions on the Older Americans Act reauthorization plans, and the third goal of increased Commission involvement with the hearing loss community.

24.4

Commissioner Herbold made a motion to approve the annual review process for the Executive Director, and the goals set forth for FY24.

Commissioner Mann seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

VI. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MEETING DATES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024.

Commissioners held a brief discussion regarding the Board meeting dates for calendar year 2024. After discussion, the following dates were selected: March 7, June 6, September 5, and December 5, 2023.

24.5

Commissioner Stone Romero made a motion approve the meeting dates as discussed.

Commissioner Herbold seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

Assistant Attorney General Tenorio left the meeting at 4:01.

VII. REPORTS

a. Auditor's Report

Thad Porch presented the annual auditor's report. There were no material errors. NMCDHH was given an unmodified opinion, which is the best opinion possible.

Chair Hooper thanked Mr. Porch for his report and commended Ms. Romero for another great audit.

b. Executive Director Report

Executive Director Gomme discussed Vancro's performance as the SSP vendor, and the upcoming RFP for the SSP service for a period of at least five years. Vancro has opened an office inside the Pah! Hiland Apartment Complex, has been able to increase the pool of available SSPs, and are currently looking to hire more. There has also been an increase in demand for services. The Commission is evaluating the anticipated cost for services and needs for funding in future fiscal years.

During the legislative session, there are no anticipated changes to revenue collection. The captioning bill that Commissioner Hooper and Executive Director Gomme have been working on is on the agenda for the upcoming session. The Legislative Building in Santa Fe (known as the Roundhouse) has added large screens to several meeting rooms. These allow for virtual interpreters to be seen by all members of the room, with captions, and have implemented a looped FM system. This increased access is a result of the work of a coalition of several state agencies including the Commission.

The Commission has filled three of five vacant positions in the agency, and another position will be filled in January. Mr. Brennan has been promoted within the agency, creating a vacancy for the front desk position, which the Commission hopes to hire for in the third quarter.

Executive Director Gomme has attended 10 community events in FY24, and is already scheduled to attend several more in the third quarter.

c. Department Reports Q & A

Community Advocacy

Ms. Gutiérrez shared that Jason Siergey, Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program (TEDP) Specialist, had resigned from the agency. Sean Sinderholm has been hired as the Technology Coordinator for the agency, and will oversee TEDP. An additional Community Advocacy Specialist will begin working in the Las Cruces office in January 2024.

Ms. Gutiérrez briefly discussed the Commission's involvement with Presbyterian Healthcare and plans to host an event in Santa Fe. More information about this systemic work can be found in the FY24 Q2 Board Report.

Community Engagement

Ms. Dignan discussed the transition of Mr. Brennan into the Community Engagement Specialist position in her department. Ms. Dignan also discussed the ongoing interpreter shortage throughout the state of New Mexico and on a national level which continues to have a significant impact on the ability to fill assignments. Due to this shortage Ms. Eubank has had to interpret many assignments alone that would normally be done as part of a team, and Ms. Dignan has also had to do an increased amount of interpreting work.

Ms. Dignan thanked the members of the Commission staff who had been involved with the hiring process to fill the vacant positions within the agency.

Administrative Services

Ms. Romero shared that the Commission has expended 26% of the annual budget as of December 2023, which is as projected. There continues to be a decline in revenue collection. This fiscal year the

Commission did receive additional general funds that helped the Commission to fill its vacant positions. The Administrative Services Department was able to hire Ms. Dinise Rodriguez for the Financial Services Specialist position and Ms. Vairea Rice for the Business Operations Specialist Position. Both Ms. Rodriguez and Ms. Rice have brought wonderful ideas and enthusiasm to their work with the Commission.

Ms. Romero thanked Mr. Brennan for his service to her department and his commitment to the Commission. Mr. Brennan commented that it was an honor to work under Ms. Romero.

d. Report from Susana Santillan, Community Advocacy Specialist

Ms. Santillan discussed her work in southern New Mexico, which includes: advocacy for members of the hearing loss community at a systemic and individual level, assisting community members with TEDP applications, attending community meetings, hosting booths at local events, and serving on local committees that provide services to the community. Ms. Santillan also assists all Spanish language members of the community who contact the Commission across the entire state.

Ms. Gutiérrez and Executive Director Gomme both commended Ms. Santillan on her dedication and work in southern New Mexico and with the Spanish language community.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

24.6

Commissioner Mann made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Herbold seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trevor M. Brennan

Trevor Brennan
Community Engagement Specialist