



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

*Quarterly Board Meeting
Thursday, March 7, 2024
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=vpVQQsdO7ml*

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair John Hooper called the meeting to order at 2:59pm. 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.

Eight staff members from NMCDHH were present via Zoom: Executive Director Nathan Gomme, Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Deborah Romero, Director of Community Engagement Lisa Dignan, Community Engagement Specialist Jessica Eubank, Community Education Specialist Roger Robb, Technology Coordinator Sean Sinderholm, Community Advocacy Specialist Jennifer Dahlgren, and Trevor Brennan. Jessica Eubank interpreted the meeting along with Rhonda Hall, Jacqueline Trujillo, and Amy Bourque. Francisco Philberto from Partners Interpreting LLC. provided CART transcription.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

24.7

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

Commissioner Mann seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 14, 2023 MINUTES

Chair Hooper asked if there were any changes to the minutes from December 14, 2023. Dr. Herbold asked that it be noted that the next meeting will be a hybrid in-person meeting, held at the Commission office in Albuquerque on June 6, 2024.

24.8

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 Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

IV. ADOPTION OF REVISED OPEN MEETINGS ACT RESOLUTION FOR 2024

Commissioners held a brief discussion regarding the revised Open Meetings Act Resolution for 2024. The only changes from the 2023 resolution were to update the resolution date for 2024.

24.9

Commissioner Mann made a motion to adopt the updated OMA resolution for 2024.

Commissioner Herbold seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

V. REPORTS

a. Executive Director Report

Before Executive Director Gomme began his report. Dr. Herbold noted that the full name of the PAH! Hiland Plaza complex had been misspelled in the quarterly report. A corrected report will be sent to Commissioners and posted on the Commission website after the meeting. Mr. Gomme shared that the Commission does not currently have representation from the New Mexico Department of Justice (the new name for the New Mexico Office of the Attorney General), and we are awaiting the appointment of a new legal representative. This should not impact day-to-day operations of the Commission or the ability to hold board meetings.

Mr. Gomme discussed his 2nd Quarter report, including the conversations had with the legislature regarding the Commission budget for the next fiscal year. The Commission did receive its full requested budget. More information can be found in the full report.

Mr. Gomme discussed the vacant positions on the Commission Board. Mr. Gomme traveled to Las Cruces for a recent New Mexico Association for the Deaf meeting in Las Cruces. There are two interested individuals, including one from Southern New Mexico, and Mr. Gomme is working with the state to attempt to fill the vacation positions as soon as possible.

Mr. Gomme discussed the recent legislative session, attempts to address future funding concerns for the agency, and collaboration with other entities such as the 988 hotline who face similar funding challenges. Mr. Gomme and Chair Hooper both worked to have the previously discussed closed caption bill heard

during this legislative session, but their efforts were unsuccessful. Mr. Gomme and Chair Hooper are already working to have this bill heard again in the January 2025 legislative session. Mr. Gomme and Commissioner Herbold are working to address a bill related to Deaf education. More information about the legislative session can be found in the full quarterly report.

The Support Service Provider program continues to grow with the contractor, Vancro, operating the program. They are addressing community concerns. Mr. Gomme shared that Ms. Corina Gutiérrez has been working closely with Vancro. At the time that the report was sent to the Board, Vancro had almost doubled the number of Support Service Providers and individuals receiving services. Since the report was sent, they have more than doubled the numbers. They have also hired a case manager who is DeafBlind, and interactions with Vancro leadership such as Vice President Cory Brunner continue to be positive and frequent, and they are staying aware of developments that impact our community such as the Older Americans Act. Chair Hooper shared that community feedback he has received regarding Vancro has also been very positive.

Finally, Mr. Gomme shared that Mr. Brennan and Mr. Gomme are working hard on testing for a hybrid Board meeting in June.

b. Department Reports Q & A

Community Engagement

Ms. Dignan discussed the continued impact that the shortage of interpreters across the state is having on both the Commission and the Deaf community. Ms. Dignan applauded Ms. Eubank for going above and beyond to ensure coverage of needs for Commission staff, and sometimes this means Ms. Eubank solo interprets events that would be better served by teaming.

Ms. Eubank is the Region IV representative for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf and was instrumental in organizing and supporting a National RID board meeting held in Albuquerque in March. Ms. Rhonda Hall, New Mexico RID (NMRID) President was also heavily involved in coordinating this meeting and organizing a social for RID leadership to meet local community members.

Ms. Dignan shared that a person has been selected for the vacant front desk position and will be starting with the agency on April 1, 2024. At that time, the Commission will have filled 15 of its 16 positions, the most staff the agency has had in over 5 years.

Community Advocacy

Mr. Robb presented in place of Ms. Gutiérrez. Mr. Robb introduced Mx. Jennifer Dahlgren to the members of the Board. Mx. Dahlgren is a Community Advocacy Specialist in the Las Cruces office with Ms. Susana Santillan and looks forward to working with our community in southern New Mexico.

Mr. Robb shared that the placard project with several local police departments that has long been in the works is nearing completion with the Albuquerque Police Department, and training with officers and implementation of the project should begin soon.

The Commission and Presbyterian Health Services will be holding a 3rd community listening session on March 22, 2024 from 2-4pm in Santa Fe, and Mr. Robb urged members of our community from northern New Mexico to attend. Dr. Herbold shared that the New Mexico School for the Deaf is working with staff to make sure that they can attend. Dr. Herbold also shared that she has had positive experiences with the Presbyterian healthcare system and receiving services.

Finally, Mr. Robb shared that he is working with Mr. Gomme to create mid and end of year review videos, so that the Commission can highlight its work with the community in more accessible formats. These

videos will be posted on the Commission YouTube Channel when they are finished and shared on our social media accounts.

Administrative Services

Ms. Romero discussed the Fiscal Year 2025 budget with the Commissioners, and the current FY24 budget. Revenue as previously discussed is an ongoing concern that she closely monitors.

Ms. Romero is looking forward to her new staff member starting in April and having a full Administrative Services Department.

Chair Hooper commended Ms. Romero on her excellent work and handling of the Commission finances.

c. Report from Executive Director Nathan Gomme, and Sean Sinderholm Technology Coordinator

Mr. Sinderholm briefly introduced himself to the Board. Mr. Sinderholm recently moved to New Mexico from California, and one of his responsibilities includes the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program.

Mr. Gomme and Mr. Sinderholm discussed with the Board the role of a Communication Facilitator in assisting DeafBlind in communication and how other states such as Oregon, Maryland, and Washington have implemented these programs. Mr. Gomme and Mr. Sinderholm are working to see what the requirements would be for establishing a similar program in New Mexico, and the associated costs. More information will be shared with the Board in future meetings.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

24.10

Commissioner Mann made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Herbold seconded.

Mr. Brennan took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Mann – Yes

Commissioner Stone-Romero – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Trevor M. Brennan

Trevor Brennan
Community Engagement Specialist