



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

*Quarterly Board Meeting
Thursday, September 3, 2026
3:00pm*

The meeting was virtual on Zoom and the public could view the meeting livestream on YouTube with interpreting and captioning at <https://youtube.com/live/EoLfvCPAILo>

DRAFT – These minutes will be subject to possible revision and approval by the commissioners at the next Board meeting on December 3, 2026.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair John Hooper called the meeting to order at 3:02pm. Renee Bregar, Administrative Operations Specialist, conducted roll call.

Present: Mr. John Hooper – Chair
Mr. Joseph Lopez, III
Mr. Ryan Means
Mr. Scott Mohan – NMSD Designee
Dr. Stephon L. Scott
Ms. Tiffany Gallegos

Absent: Dr. Norm Dawson

Quorum was met.

Seven staff members from NMCDHH were present: Executive Director, Nathan Gomme; Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Deborah Romero; Community Education Specialist, Roger Robb; Communication Development Specialist, Jessica Eubank; Community Engagement Specialist, Trevor Brennan; Business Operations Specialist, Renee Bregar. Jessica Eubank, Rhonda Hall, Isabella Krooth and Dr. Barbara Shaffer interpreted. Partners Interpreting LLC provided CART transcription. Mr. Eduardo Ugarte, from the New Mexico Department of Justice (NMDNJ), was present, as well as the Rolka Loubé team: Mr. David Kennerly, Mr. Labros Pilalis and Mr. Jim Skjeveland.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

26.15

Commissioner Means made a motion to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Lopez seconded.
Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Designee Mohan – Yes
Commissioner Means – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Scott - Yes
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Motion passed.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Due to lack of quorum in the June 4, 2026 meeting, there were 2 sets of meeting minutes to be approved for March 5, 2026 and June 4, 2006.

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to approve the March 5, 2026 minutes.

26.16

Commissioner Lopez made a motion to approve the minutes.
Commissioner Means seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Designee Mohan – Yes
Commissioner Means – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Scott - Yes
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Motion passed.

Ms. Bregar stated that she had made an error in the minutes as related to the GASB – Governmental Accounting Standards Board – acronym which was incorrectly typed “gatsby” and needs to be corrected.

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to approve the June 4, 2026 minutes, as amended.

26.17

Commissioner Means made a motion to approve the minutes, as amended.
Commissioner Lopez seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Designee Mohan – Yes
Commissioner Means – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Scott - Yes
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Motion passed.

IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S EVALUATION

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to close the meeting and enter into Executive Session.

26.18

Commissioner Lopez made a motion to close the meeting and enter into Executive Session.
Commissioner Means seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Designee Mohan – Yes
Commissioner Means – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Scott - Yes
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Motion passed.

When Executive Session completed, Chair Hooper asked for a motion to return to regular/open session.

26.19

Commissioner Means made a motion to return to regular/open session.
Commissioner Lopez seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Designee Mohan – Yes
Commissioner Means – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Scott - Yes
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Motion passed.

V. PRESENTATION BY ROLKA LOUBE

The Rolka Loube team discussed their audit of the telephone carriers' contribution to the Telecommunications Relay Services (TRS) fund in New Mexico in calendar 2024. They discussed challenges in the audit with limited access to data, because information on tax returns is confidential, per the New Mexico Tax and Revenue Department (NMTRD) which limited the number of carriers they identified; the ambiguity of the language in the statute, which does not support enforcement and allowed some carriers to classify the TRS revenue as “miscellaneous” and then not report it. More than half of the carriers audited were not in compliance, resulting in a substantial amount of unreported revenue, .33% that during the 2024 timeline would have been provided to the agency. Rolka Loube suggested a flat-rate surcharge based on the connections rather than a percentage of the gross receipts for the TRS revenue, which still exists even after the most recent statute change during the last legislative session albeit at a different percentage rate which is still continuously declining. The board members asked questions for clarification and asked what the plan is for the future.

Executive Director Gomme explained that how the funds were collected in 2024 is different than how they are collected now. He mentioned, currently, 988, the suicide prevention hotline, receives 80% of the TRS funds collected, while NMCDHH gets 20%. It was also explained there is not currently a mechanism in place to allow collection of the unreported funds from the past. The Rolka Loube team stated their willingness to work with NMCDHH and the NMTRD to address and correct the TRS reporting and compliance going forward.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Gomme mentioned that Human Resources (HR) transitioned to the State Personnel Office (SPO) HR Services and, thus, improved. There had been discussion with HR Services about future training for staff around restorative services, similar to restorative justice, to develop trust within the

hearing loss community. Executive Director Gomme is working with HR Services for the provision of interpreters for their services, including the training; first, to allow communication access for staff with hearing loss; secondly, so our staff interpreter can participate as a staff member, rather than having to interpret.

Executive Director Gomme stated that the Commission is also working with other disability groups to try to create partnerships and support each other in the future.

Executive Director Gomme recently completed an interview on UNM radio, which included a portion about text and 911 as related to access for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. He mentioned that the radio station used music as the queue to close the interview, but he did not hear the music and kept talking; a good example of a hearing person not being aware of how a person with hearing loss would know the interview was closing.

Executive Director Gomme mentioned the current vacant director position and the reassignment of its staff to supervisors for other department members, until the position is filled.

Executive Director Gomme also mentioned there has been an increase in cost for technology and the concern as related to budget in obtaining that technology. There is an anticipated 24% increase in cost, but the providers are not due to release new pricing until September 9

VII. DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Chair Hooper complimented staff for the removal of communication barriers.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

26.20

Commissioner Means made a motion to adjourn.
Commissioner Scott and Commissioner Lopez seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Designee Mohan – Yes
Commissioner Means – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Scott - Yes
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:36pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee F. Bregar

Renee Bregar
Sr. Business Operations Specialist