



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

*Quarterly Board Meeting
Thursday, March 5, 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://www.youtube.com/live/A0oIOvf-EG0>

DRAFT – These minutes will be subject to possible revision and approval by the commissioners at the next Board meeting on June 4, 2026.

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Chair John Hooper called the meeting to order at 3:01pm. Renee Bregar, Administrative Operations Specialist, called roll call.

Present: Mr. John Hooper - Chair
Mr. Joseph Lopez, III
Dr. Norm Dawson
Dr. Jennifer Herbold
Dr. Stephon L. Scott (absent)
Mr. Ryan Means
Ms. Tiffany Gallegos (joined at approx. 3:13pm)

Quorum was met.

Seven staff members from NMCDHH were present: Executive Director, Nathan Gomme; Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Deborah Romero; Director of Community Advocacy, Corina Gutiérrez; Director of Community Engagement, Amy Bourque; Communication Development Specialist, Jessica Eubank; Community Engagement Specialist, Trevor Brennan; Administrative Operations Specialist, Renee Bregar. Jessica Eubank, Rhonda Hall, Isabella Krooth and Jamie Jaramillo interpreted. Partners Interpreting LLC provided CART transcription. Mr. Christopher Harrington, from the New Mexico Department of Justice (NMDOJ), was also present.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

26.7

Commissioner Dawson made a motion to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Means seconded.
Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Commissioner Dawson – Yes
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Absent

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

III. APPROVAL of December 4, 2025 MINUTES

Director Gomme made note of a mistake in the minutes from the December meeting prior to any discussion by the board. The commissioner who made the motion to return from the executive session and the name of the commissioner who seconded the motion, are entered as “XXX”. Mr. Brennan will investigate toward correction.

26.8

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

Commissioner Lopez seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Commissioner Dawson – Yes
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Absent

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

IV. Potential Date Change for June Meeting

Commissioner Hooper mentioned that he will be the recipient of an advocacy impact award at the national Hearing Loss Association of America conference in Louisville, Kentucky and will not be able to participate in the June meeting as scheduled. He proposed keeping the current date. Then, whomever is elected vice chair can run the meeting, or the date can be changed.

Commissioners discussed options.

26.9

Commissioner Herbold made a motion to change the June meeting date to the 4th.

Commissioner Means seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Commissioner Dawson – Yes
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

V. Board Elections

Mr. Gomme asked for nominations for chairman of the board.

Commissioner Herbold nominated Commissioner Hooper.

Commissioner Hooper accepted.

26.10

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

Commissioner Hooper - Abstain
Commissioner Dawson – Yes
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Commissioner Lopez – Yes
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed with 5 Yes,

Commissioner Hooper asked for nominations for vice chairman of the board.
Commissioner Hooper nominated Commissioner Means.
Commissioner Dawson seconded.
Commissioner Means declined the nomination.
Commissioner Hooper nominated Commissioner Lopez.
Commissioner Lopez asked for clarification and then accepted the nomination.

26.11

Commissioner Hooper nominated Commissioner Lopez.
Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Commissioner Dawson – Yes
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Commissioner Lopez – Abstain
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

Commissioner Hooper asked for nominations for secretary.
Mr. Gomme and Mr. Brennan explained there are not really duties associated with the secretary position but that it is required by statute,

26.12

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

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Commissioner Dawson – Abstain
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Commissioner Lopez – Yes
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

VI. 2026 OMA Resolution

Commissioner Hooper explained that the Open Meetings Act (OMA) resolution is the same as last year, but with dates changed to this year.

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to adopt the OMA resolution, as written.

26.13

Commissioner Lopez made a motion to adopt the OMA resolution.

Commissioner Herbold seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes

Commissioner Dawson – Yes

Commissioner Scott - Absent

Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Commissioner Lopez – Yes

Commissioner Herbold – Yes

Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

VII. Executive Director Report

Director Gomme discussed the FCC posts regarding a notice of proposed rulemaking and calls for comment which happened in January. He mentioned the sparse population in the state which still relies upon TTY services so sunsetting the service would have to align with broadband expansion and that should align with the FCC timeline. The comment submissions reviewed from other organizations are in agreement with timelines similar to this as well. There are two more notices of proposed rulemaking. Mr. Gomme expressed several concerns and has worked with other states and national organizations in preparation for comments when the time comes. He invited any who would like to be involved in the conversation with the FCC around these issues to let him know.

Then, Mr. Gomme discussed some legislative issues beginning with House Bill 2, which impacts budget. It was recommended that the agency request a flat budget and it did; it is the same as last year. However, depending upon what changes may come from the FCC, the budget requirement could change. Interest in the captioning bill for next year was mentioned. Funding for the Office of Accessibility through the department of Health did not pass. A bill for the Office of Special Education did pass.

Mr. Gomme then discussed Auracast, investigation for which included Commissioner Hooper and Commissioner Dawson. Auracast is a blue-tooth-based system which is very popular in the Hard-of-Hearing community. This led to lively discussion among the commissioners as to how the tool can benefit the hearing loss community.

VIII. Department Report

Commissioner Dawson went on to describe some of his experience within the City of Albuquerque (COA) related to communication access and closed captioning. Director Gomme invited Ms. Gutiérrez, the Director of the Department of Community Advocacy, to join the conversation. Ms. Gutiérrez joined the COA accessibility committee in November.

Ms. Gutiérrez commented that Vancro is working with an immigration law center and provided a workshop for the hearing loss community about how to handle interacting with ICE agents. Information about the workshop will be shared with board members after the meeting.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Hooper asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

26.14

Commissioner Means made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Commissioner Lopez seconded.

Ms. Bregar took a roll call vote:

Commissioner Hooper - Yes
Commissioner Dawson – Yes
Commissioner Scott - Absent
Commissioner Gallegos – Yes

Commissioner Lopez - Yes
Commissioner Herbold – Yes
Commissioner Means - Yes

Motion passed

The meeting was adjourned at 4:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee F. Bregar

Renee Bregar
Administrative Operations Specialist