



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

*Thursday, June 7, 2018
NMCDHH Conference Room
505 Marquette Ave. NW, Suite 1550
Albuquerque, NM 87102
3:00 p.m.*

I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Vice-Chair Rosemary Gallegos called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and proceeded with roll call.

Present:	Rosemary Gallegos, Vice-Chair Josh Pando	Don Johnson Johnny Robertson
Absent:	Austin Welborn, Chair	Concha Dunwell

Quorum was met.

Nine staff members from NMCDHH were present: Executive Director Nathan Gomme, Lisa Dignan, Deborah Romero, Cheryl Padilla, Lori Neubauer, Roger Robb, Corina Gutiérrez, Louise Chavez-Rasgado and Andrea Ginn. Five interpreters were present, Andrea Ginn, Rachelle Clifford, Jessica Eubank, Cameron Flores and Dana Murrah. Ten members of the community were in the audience.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

18.12

Commissioner Johnny Robertson made a motion to approve the agenda.
Commissioner Don Johnson seconded.
Motion passed unanimously

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 8, 2018 MINUTES

18.13

Commissioner Josh Pando made a motion to approve the minutes as presented.
Commissioner Robertson seconded.
Motion passed unanimously.

IV. REPORTS

a. Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Nathan Gomme informed the commissioners that CDHH had a busy third quarter. The budget was passed by the legislature and they approved the money from the general fund to maintain the Deaf-Blind services through the next fiscal year. Commissioner Robertson joined in on some of the discussions about the importance of Deaf-Blind services and some of that senators were very appreciative of that.

This fiscal year, even with the language changes for the relay tax, CDHH's revenue is still declining. There will be a discussion with the Taxation and Revenue Department regarding our concerns. There are many things happening on the federal level that impact parts of what the Commission is doing, so some guidelines for the future of that funding may be changing. This is not New Mexico specific; this is a national issue. Executive Director Gomme said that we are lucky that the bill requiring the language change for TRS (Telecommunications Relay Services), passed here. Other states are not as prepared. The FCC announced that there will be changes to IPCTS (Internet Protocol Captioned Telephone Service), which is used for captioned telephones like Clear Captions and Hamilton CapTel. IPCTS base cost has been increasing over time. Looking at the total of TRS, which includes video phones, captioned phones, relay services, etc., IPCTS accounts for 80% of the minutes paid. Executive Director Gomme added that in 2016, the cost for relay services was \$400 billion dollars. The FCC would like to address some issues, including overuse of captioned phone services and the fluctuations in rates. There is the need to have additional technology like virtual captioning. There is also the problem of unregulated services and too much money being spent on one service. These captioned phones are being handed out for free with the number of people using them on the rise.

The FCC wants to involve the states more in this discussion, which is good. Last year Executive Director Gomme had the opportunity to be involved in NASRA (National Association for State Relay Administration) and TEDPA (Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program Association). One of his goals there was to address the FCC with more regularity and have the states be more involved in the process. So instead of a questionable process of verification of IPCTS phones for the deaf and hard of hearing, they will probably go through a state program very similar to our telecommunication equipment program. The Commission needs to find out what is causing such a growth and see how much fraudulent use we have here in New Mexico.

Executive Director Gomme then addressed the positive results of Deaf-Blind services in the third quarter as well as some responses and reports on Mental Health Services. He said it is not really a surprise that there are problems in the rural areas of New Mexico where there is a lack of exposure to sign language and interpreting services. He explained that mental health could mean going to therapy for things like stress, anxiety, and depression all the way to going to an on-site treatment center or a residential treatment facility. The question is how to provide adequate training. The Commission has a contractor, Susan Turner, LCSW, who the Commission has been consulting with to find out how we can work towards resolving this issue.

Another issue is the quality of interpreters and the recruitment of interpreters for mental health work. CDHH would like to see more interpreters go to the Mental Health Interpreter Training (MHIT) program in Alabama, Director of Community Engagement, Lisa Dignan, and Communication Development Specialist, Andrea Ginn, have been working with MHIT and are trying to find people who are willing to invest in this including interpreter referral agencies. Executive Director Gomme mentioned there are only three or four interpreters in New Mexico that have Qualified Mental Health Interpreter (QMHI) certification. They are all in Albuquerque, so Albuquerque is doing well in comparison to rural areas. He added that even if an interpreter from a rural area did get training, mental health professionals in rural New Mexico don't know how to work with deaf patients and address language disfluency yet. The Commission has been working with Susan Turner for six or seven years and that training is still not widespread throughout the state. This is a national problem, but CDHH is truly one of the first to address this. One of the possibilities is to have Ms. Turner provide training that is video-based to help train providers who live in rural areas.

Executive Director Gomme also talked about his recent trip to Washington, D.C. While he was there he talked with people about interpreter referral agency certification. He stated that he couldn't elaborate on the topic, because it hasn't been announced from NAD yet, but they did work on improving what interpreting agencies are doing, levels of transparency, and expectations that the deaf community has of interpreting referral agencies. This is not to penalize agencies, but to accredit them and say that these are good national level referral agencies that follow best practices, are transparent, and have all their documentation in order. We would like to see more hiring of deaf staff, more conversation about best practices and standards, and more input from both hearing and deaf consumers.

b. Department Reports

i. Community Advocacy

Corina Gutiérrez, Director of Community Advocacy, stated that her department is continuing to work several cases and adding new cases. In Albuquerque, there is only one Community Advocate, Cheryl Padilla, and two staff in Las Cruces. All are working diligently. Roger Robb works with System Advocacy which includes working with law enforcement, medical providers, MVD, 911 centers, driving schools, etc.

In the Telecommunication Equipment Distribution Program some equipment has been discontinued. Those products will be removed from the booklet and application, and they are looking at products to replace them. They will update the booklet and application accordingly.

The iPad program is still popular and TEDP continues to send out five iPads a month. Those who are new to the program are getting their iPads without a long wait. Individuals who have had an iPad can apply for a new one after three years, but those are currently on a waiting list as CDHH wants consumers who have not had an iPad to receive one first.

Ms. Gutiérrez asked Mr. Robb to provide an update on the work with the Albuquerque Police Department. Mr. Robb said they had a meeting with Interim Police Chief Geier and he was very supportive of our letter of understanding that CDHH had proposed. However, he had a few changes that he wanted to incorporate into a memo of understanding (MOU). CDHH agreed to those changes, sent them to the Commission's lawyer for review, and resubmitted to APD. Currently we are waiting for APD's lawyer to look it over and hopefully get it signed soon. Executive Director Gomme explained that the MOU has three parts: development of the placards, training for the police officers, and training for the deaf and hard of hearing community. The Commission wants the police to have the opportunity to use and understand the placards and know when it's the right time or the wrong time to use them. Also training the community is important and the community needs to understand it's not a "get out of jail free" card when they show the officer their placard. The whole point of the placard is to assist in communication during a routine traffic stop.

Mr. Robb also met with a couple people from Presbyterian Healthcare regarding interpreter issues. During the discussion, it was mentioned that we were working on a two-year strategic plan with law enforcement and Presbyterian wants CDHH to do a two-year strategic plan for their healthcare providers. They want to focus on using interpreters, how deaf people should be approached at the front desk, how to communicate effectively with their provider, etc. They need to learn when to get an on-site interpreter and when to use VRI. Mr. Robb said that they are considering developing a vlog that focuses on emergency room staff and what to do when a deaf patient comes in, such as using VRI to get triage information to see where they are hurt or what their symptoms are until an on-site interpreter arrives.

ii. Community Engagement

Lisa Dignan, Director of Community Engagement, said everything for third quarter was in the Board Report, and so she would report on what was happening so far in the fourth quarter.

The New Mexico Mentoring Program was moving along very nicely. All the mentor/mentee pairs successfully completed the Spring 2018 session, and she was currently accepting applications for the Fall 2018 session that will begin in August.

Currently Ms. Dignan is getting all the contracts ready for FY19. As Executive Director Gomme stated earlier, the budget is a challenge so one of the ways we are trying to control costs is working with direct contract interpreters. This is more affordable than having to go through agencies. This is more work on our part to do the coordination, but we are fortunate to have a qualified and committed group of individuals contracting with CDHH. All interpreting contracts are in place for FY19 except for new apprentices. We have a good collection of applications for apprentices and will do interviews on Monday and Tuesday.

Ms. Dignan explained to the commissioners and audience that all State employees must be evaluated and all evaluations must be completed by a specific date. An internal date was set for CDHH employees which was earlier than what the State requires. Miss Dignan wanted to thank the managers and Nathan, because every evaluation has been finished and entered into the SHARE system.

Ms. Dignan wanted to highlight what Ms. Ginn, Communication Development Specialist, had been doing. As Executive Director Gomme stated earlier, there are just a few QMHI certified interpreters. Ms. Ginn is one of the interpreters that holds that certification. She is also now a provisionally accepted supervisor for other people who will go through the QMHI program. She is finishing up the process and spent another week in Alabama to get the supervisor certification. This will allow Ms. Ginn to do a lot of the work that Executive Director Gomme was talking about earlier; to improve the availability of mental health services here in New Mexico.

Ms. Ginn also led the Culture and Art Accessibility Project (CAAP). She led performing arts workshops and seven interpreters completed the workshops through the program and interpreted a total of eight performances at Albuquerque Little Theatre. We are continuing to increase access for deaf and hard of hearing individuals in the Albuquerque area for cultural events, theatre, and performing arts.

Ms. Dignan mentioned that Richard Bailey, Community Engagement Specialist, was currently on his way back from Austin where he attended the National Deaf Center for Postsecondary Outcomes Summit. Mr. Bailey has been involved with that organization since it was called "Pepnet." The National Deaf Center (NDC) paid for his trip because of his ongoing involvement.

Mr. Bailey continues to do a lot of transition work. He recently did a presentation at the Parents Reaching Out Leadership Conference in conjunction with DVR and NMSD.

iii. **Administrative Services**

Deborah Romero, Director of Administrative Services and CFO, wanted to update the status of the budget since the third quarter. To date, CDHH has spent 65% of the budget and brought in \$1.5 million from TRS. She projects that a little over two million of the budget will be spent for FY18, and there is sufficient funding to cover that. The Commission will close the fiscal year out successfully. She added that all deadlines were met and her staff have been working hard to get in all invoices and payments by year end.

For FY19, Ms. Romero said that CDHH has a healthy budget amount, although we are not sure about our revenue as it continues to decline. The FY19 budget is \$3.2 million, and as for revenue, she projected that the Commission will bring in close to what was brought in for FY18 which was \$1.8 million in TRS and \$300,000 from the general fund for the Deaf-Blind contract. She stated that although we will have to carefully monitor our spending, it is not anything different than what the managers and staff are used to. All the managers are aware that we will closely monitor our spending week to week.

V. ACTION ITEMS

a. Reschedule September Board Meeting

Executive Director Gomme explained that rescheduling the September board meeting was on the agenda since he would be attending the NASRA/TEDPA conferences at that time. When the board meeting dates were originally set, he was not aware that the September 13th would conflict with the conferences. Vice-Chair Gallegos asked if he had a date in mind and Executive Director Gomme suggested Thursday, September 20th.

18.14

Commissioner Robertson made a motion to move the next board meeting to September 20, 2018 at the usual time, 3:00 p.m.

Commissioner Pando seconded.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Commissioner Josh Pando introduced himself as the new designee for the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. He is one of the Field Operations Directors. He oversees the Lomas office in downtown Albuquerque and Area 4 which is Roswell, Carlsbad, and Hobbs. Mr. Pando has worked in state government for quite some time and was at the Risk Management Division for 15 years. He also worked for the disabled and elderly Medicaid waiver which is now Centennial Care. Acting Executive Director Adrian Apodaca asked him if he would be on this board and he is excited to be here.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

18.15

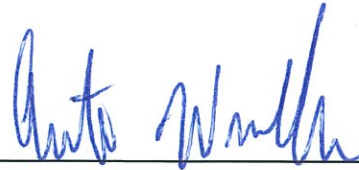
Commissioner Robertson made a motion to adjourn.
Commissioner Pando seconded.
The motion passed unanimously.

Vice-Chair Gallegos adjourned the meeting at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lori G. Neubauer
Administrative Operations Specialist



Austin Welborn, Board Chair