



# Arizona Commission

for the deaf and the hard of hearing

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acdhh.org

**Minutes of the meeting of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and  
the Hard of Hearing, Board Meeting.  
Meeting held June 9, 2022 at 4:30pm.  
Meeting was held remotely via Zoom due to COVID-19.**

### **Call to Order & Roll Call**

Commissioner Jantz called the meeting to order at **4:36 PM**

Commissioners present via Zoom: PV Jantz, Missy Keast, Fred Williams, Debbie Venkatesh, Sarah Benton, Andrew Cohen, Catherine Sienko, Melanie O'Rourke, Jennifer Scarboro, Barbara Brimhall (arrived at 4:41 PM)

Commissioners absent: Susan Webster

Staff Present: Sherri Collins, Carlos Castillo, Betty McEntire, Carmen Green Smith, Victoria Vaughn, Nikki Soukup, Chyla Dalton-Nava

Also present: AAG Nick Bacon

### **Approval of Minutes**

**Commissioner Scarboro Moved to approve the minutes from the February 17, 2022, March 31, 2022 and May 19, 2022 meetings; Commissioner Keast seconded, the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Chair's Report/Summary of Events**

Commissioner Jantz updated the board on the addition of a new Assistant Attorney General, Nick Bacon. Commissioner Jantz also introduced the Board's newest commissioner, Debbie Venkatesh, who is serving as the Board's Audiologist representative. He then went on to recognize Betty McEntire, as she is leaving the agency soon, and expressed appreciation for her work. He also introduced Nikki Soukup, who will be taking over Betty's role as Director of Public Policy and Community Engagement.

### **Executive Director's Update**

Sherri Collins updated the Board with the recent personnel changes we have had, namely the recent promotion of Victoria Vaughn to the Licensing and Compliance Specialist role, and the recent addition of Ricky Gonsowski to the Technical Operations Analyst role. The agency is currently looking to fill the modified role of Communications Access Specialist, and the job is currently open. The office will be open to the public beginning July 1st, 2022. The staff will continue working a hybrid schedule, but will coordinate schedules to ensure coverage in the office.

### **Annual Report**

**Commissioner Jantz moved to approve the Annual report; Commissioners Cohen and Sienko seconded, the motion passed unanimously.**

### **Public Policy/ Legislative Update**

Betty McEntire gave the legislative update, and reports that the legislature has still not yet passed a budget. Betty has been in contact with several senior policy staff members at the Capitol, and it seems like the previous requests for FTE will still be approved, although until the budget is finalized, we do not yet have confirmation. Betty continued by updating the board on the recent bill, SB1651 which is related to transferring ownership of data demographic reporting on severe mental illness issues from DHS, to AHCCCS. This is an opportunity for ACDHH to ask AHCCCS to report their data and demographics as to how many Deaf, Hard of Hearing, or DeafBlind individuals they serve- as well as how many are requesting ADA accommodations. We will also be able to investigate how many ADA requests are being fulfilled, and if there are complaints related to ADA accommodations. The chairs of the Health and Human Services Committee are supporting this.

### **Interpreter Licensing Committee Update**

Commissioner Benton updated the board on recent meetings of the ILC. They have met in January, March, and May, and have reviewed and approved a total of 49 licenses.

### **Youth and Family Update**

Betty McEntire explained the Commission's initiative to engage with the youth in our community, especially when it comes to outreach. Part of that outreach will be working with Audiologists, Speech Pathologists, Newborn Screening, and ASDB. We also have a Youth Ambassador program which will be developed over the next two to three years. Nikki Soukup updated the board on the progress of the SB1092 Task force- they will be having a public forum on Saturday, June 18th to present the draft report to the public.

### **DeafBlind Statute Update**

Betty McEntire followed up on the possibility of adding a DeafBlind commissioner to the board. There are a few issues to consider, such as-the current statute currently caps the

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number of Board representatives that are allowed, and changing this would require the Governor to change the statute. The board also has the option of continuing to use one of the Deaf representatives as a DeafBlind representative. Nikki will work on a draft for a resolution to present to the board at a future meeting.

### **Future Meetings- In Person/Virtual**

**Commissioner Keast moves that the August 18th Board meeting be held in person; Commissioner Jantz seconded the motion, the motion carries with Commissioner Scarboro opposed.**

### **Public Comments**

Helen Young presented her comments on the complaint filed against her.

### **Interpreter Complaint/ Inquiries**

Victoria Vaughn explained the complaint against the interpreter Cayla Pennick. The summary of the complaint is that Ms. Alexandria Brewington, an unlicensed educational interpreter at ASDB filed a complaint against Ms. Cayla Pennick, a General licensed interpreter for unprofessional conduct, interaction with students at Arizona School for the Deaf and the Blind campus. During the investigation it was determined that information in the complaint form that was filled out for both parties with their responses to the investigative questions does not sufficiently substantiate the allegations alleged by the complainant. This case is based on two persons statements against one another without any witnesses aside from the students or evidence of these allegations. This complaint has also been addressed by ASDB, as they have jurisdiction over the ASDB interpreter. **Commissioner Benton moved that the board accept ACDHH staff's recommendation to dismiss the complaint. Commissioner Keast seconded, and the board voted by roll call, with Commissioner Scarboro abstaining, the motion passed.**

### **Helen Young**

**Commissioner Jantz moved that the Board go into executive session to get legal counsel regarding Helen Young; Commissioner Sienko seconded, the motion carried unanimously. The board took a break at 6:13 PM, and then went into Executive session at 6:23 PM.**

The Board returned from executive session at 7:17 PM.

The board continued their discussion in open session. The group discussed Ms. Young's penalty of \$1,100 and completion of five hours of ethics training. **Commissioner Jantz moves that the Board provide ACDHH staff with permission to extend the deadline for the settlement, and enter into a settlement for \$1000 for one complaint, and \$100 for the second complaint. This settlement must be entered and signed 30**

**days from June 10th, 2022.; Commissioner Sienko seconded the motion, the motion passed with Commissioner Cohen abstaining.**

### **Future Agenda Items**

Commissioner Jantz discussed adding the following to the August Board Meeting agenda: concerns related to AHCCCS systems, the resolution on DeafBlind board members, and discussion on recent ASDB board meetings.

### **Officer Elections**

There are currently three positions up for election: The Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary. Chair Jantz explained that if the current officers wanted to move on, a motion for a formal election would need to be passed. **Commissioner Keast moved to keep the three current officers for another year. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Commissioner Keast moves to withdraw her motion, Commissioner Williams seconded the motion. Commissioner Keast moves to keep current officers until November, and then vote for new officers in November. There was no second to this motion. Commissioner Keast moved to table the Officer Elections discussion until the August meeting.**

### **Adjournment**

**Commissioner Keast moved to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Williams and Sienko Seconded, the motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:39 PM.**

Dated this 14th day of June 2022 by PV Jantz, Committee Chair

The undersigned certifies that a copy of the attached notice was duly posted this 15th day of June, 2022 at 5:00 pm by Chyla Dalton-Nava.