

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
187th Quarterly Commission Meeting
October 25th, 2025
Kentucky Transportation Cabinet

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mona McCubbin, Leslie Tindall (proxy for Secretary Link), Sarah Roof, Trish Ison, Amy Hatzel (Emeritus), Anthony Adkins, Rhonda Bodner, Jeannie Taylor (Emeritus), John Perry, Thomas Evans, Anthony Adkins (proxy for Michelle Niehaus)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Marva Johnson, Gerry Gordon-Brown, Jason Smith

STAFF PRESENT: Rachel Morgan, Blake Campbell, Justin Stanley, Sam Kapsal

COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS: Tracy Lundergan, Zack Hodge, Shannon Grider

VISITORS: Eight participants from the Emerging Leaders Program via the Education and Labor Cabinet

Ms. McCubbin called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm.

Ms. McCubbin asked the Commissioners to review the previous meeting's minutes and to suggest any changes.

MS. TAYLOR MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS COMMISSION MEETING AS READ. MS. ROOF SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED WITHOUT DISCUSSION.

MS. TAYLOR MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING AS READ. MS. KELLY SECONDED. THE MOTION CARRIED WITHOUT DISCUSSION.

Reports

Chair's Report

Ms. McCubbin began by recognizing several long-serving commissioners concluding their terms. The Commission expressed deep appreciation for Ms. Perry (KAD), who served for nine years; Ms. Taylor, who has served since 2013 and held leadership roles including three terms as Chair, and was appointed as Emeritus; and Ms. Hatzel, who served 13 years, holding leadership roles for most of that time, and had previously served two years as Emeritus. Thomas Evans, a former Secretary and Chair, was officially reappointed to the Commission. Ms. McCubbin also announced two new

commissioners who will be joining at the next meeting: Erin Rhoden representing KAD, and Bonnie Covey representing HLAA.

THE CHAIR'S REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.

Agency Report

Ms. Dowd then presented the Agency Report. She began by reporting that KCDHH staff met with Kentucky Emergency Management (KYEM) to address long delivery times and equipment troubleshooting issues.

KCDHH is now an official CASLI testing site as of mid-September. The plan is for KCDHH to also be approved as a SLPI and EIPA testing site to help bolster the number of educational interpreters.

KCDHH is currently collaborating with a master's student in public health to assess the communication policies and services for deaf and hard of hearing people with an objective of identifying gaps in service. The data will then be used to create a tool kit for healthcare providers. Once the student's project ends, the Community Impact Council will continue with the work.

Ms. Dowd and other staff attended an accessible tour at Maker's Mark distillery, which is working to make its entire facility fully accessible. Ms. Dowd was also able to give a brief interview to KET, who was at Maker's Mark to film a spotlight.

Turning to the TAP, Ms. Dowd noted that the artificial larynx has been reinstated to the list of available equipment after several years. A surge in requests is expected once its availability is publicized.

A Language Acquisition Subcommittee has been formed at Kentucky Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) in response to a federal requirement to track language acquisition outcomes. Ms. Dowd anticipates that this will be challenging as Kentucky EHDI does not collaborate or share relevant data. The subcommittee seeks to develop a method to gather the required data and report on language acquisition for three-year-olds by the end of the five-year grant period.

Ms. Dowd also reported that KCDHH staff met with representatives from the Helen Keller National Center and the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation's (OVR) Deaf-Blind services to establish a working relationship and plan regular meetings.

Ms. Dowd emphasized the importance of seeing hearing loss as a public health issue and expressed her intention to educate the public, noting that more people have hearing loss than Parkinson's, Alzheimer's, epilepsy, and diabetes combined. The ultimate goal is to move forward with a polished product and partner with media (e.g.,

KET) to convince decision-makers of the importance of widespread hearing screenings and intervention across primary care and pediatric settings.

THE AGENCY REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.

Old Business/New Business/Open Forum

Ms. McCubbin began by reporting that the question of Commission restructuring was being tabled due to a shift in national priorities.

Ms. McCubbin also noted that a draft of a new method for Commissioners to submit feedback and data from their constituent groups has been created and will be shared by the next meeting.

Announcements

- Upcoming meeting dates in 2026 (to be held quarterly on the third Friday) are: January 23 (via Zoom), April 24, July 24, and October 23.
- Some Commissioners must be resubmitted by their constituent organizations to continue to serve, or else new submissions will be necessary. This includes Mr. Perry (AARP), Ms. Harris (KAD), and the chair for parents of children with hearing loss currently held by Ms. Roof. Resubmissions or new submissions are due by June 1.
- Nominations for emeritus members will be taken in January.

MS. ISON MOVED TO ADJOURN. MS. KELLY SECONDED. The meeting was adjourned at 2:33 pm.