

Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
176th Quarterly Commission Meeting
January 20, 2023
Via Zoom

MEMBERS PRESENT: Amy Hatzel, Jeannie Taylor, Thomas Evans, Barbie Harris, Nancy Perry, Michelle Niehaus, Edie Ryan, Alexander Ansley, Gerry Gordon-Brown, Melissa Kelly, Nancy Perry, Beth Brinley, Marva Johnson, Eddie Runyon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Dodie Karr, Alexander Ainsley, George Tunstall

STAFF PRESENT: Virginia Moore, Jayna Oakley

COMMUNICATION FACILITATORS: Rachel Rodgers, Theresa Lott, Tracy Lundergan

Board Chair Ms. Hatzel (the Chair) called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m. Mr. Evans called the roll and confirmed that a quorum was present. Ms. Moore introduced Ms. Brinley, who has joined the Education and Labor Cabinet. She served as Policy and Budget Analyst for KCDHH at one time. The Chair then asked members to review the minutes from the 175th meeting.

Ms. TAYLOR MOVED (MR. EVANS) TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE 175TH EXECUTIVE BOARD COMMISSION MEETING. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Chair then asked members to review the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held on September 9.

Ms. TAYLOR MOVED (Ms. PERRY) TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE DECEMBER 10TH EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REPORTS

Executive Board Report:

The Chair reported that the Kentucky Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (KYRID) has elected new officers. Interpreter Marva Johnson will serve as President and will assume the office in April when Ms. Hatzel has completed her term. She will also serve on the KCDHH Commission Board as the KYRID representative.

Ms. Hatzel also reported that Ms. Moore's evaluation will be this year, as well as Board elections. Ms. Hatzel explained that it was also time for a review and update of bylaws

and asked members to put changes, thoughts, etc. in an email and send to her. She said it was suggested to her that some type of Advisory or Emeritus Board be added to preserve knowledge and information from those serving through the years. Ms. Hatzel also asked members to review their terms as some of those may expire this year.

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.

Agency Report:

Ms. Moore began by explaining to Ms. Brinley that KCDHH monitors its progress on the strategic plan through a checklist, which enables specific areas of focus while being flexible for unforeseen matters, like the eastern Kentucky flood and western Kentucky tornado.

She also reported that Ms. Lott filled one of the available interpreter positions at KCDHH. She added that she is still looking for an administrative specialist for the Telecommunications Access Program (TAP) and an administrative secretary. Ms. Moore said that Human Resources (HR) is giving her more flexibility in hiring procedures and she hopes to fill these positions soon.

Ms. Moore announced that KCDHH would be co-host of the Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program Association (TEDPA) and National Association of Relay State Administrators (NARSA) Conference, which will be in Louisville sometime in September/October.

Ms. Moore also said she had an opportunity for a 15-minute meeting with the Governor and his Budget Director. They discussed hearing screenings and an avenue for parents to secure hearing screenings for their children. She said the Governor asked that a place be secured to do these screenings in every county and district. Ms. Moore said she had discussed using health departments with Secretary Eric Freeland and that discussion will continue.

Ms. Moore also discussed language acquisition with the Governor, informing him that Kentucky is 51st in the graduation and employment of deaf individuals. The Governor asked Ms. Moore to develop a budget for the full language assessment of children. Ms. Moore is currently researching other models and will work on the development of the requested budget, as well as a committee to advise him.

Ms. Moore also told the Board she had been working on interpreter regulations. She explained that Kentucky requires interpreters to be certified and that in order to be certified, interpreters must also be licensed by a national body. Ms. Moore said the regulations are out dated and a committee is currently reviewing the regulations. She also added that the regulations do not address the issue of interpreting agencies not using certified, licensed interpreters and there is no one monitoring the problem. She explained that KCDHH is mandated to oversee interpreting in the state of Kentucky. Ms. Moore said she will research to see if the mandate can be utilized to remedy the issue. Ms. Johnson

added that, currently, the responsibility has been put back on the individuals seeking interpreters, which is a system not built for people using English as a second language. Ms. Moore hopes the Commission will be able to apply pressure to encourage agencies to use certified, licensed interpreters.

Ms. Moore concluded her report with discussion of the Kentucky School for the Deaf's 200th Gala in April. She said there will also be a surprise guest.

THE AGENCY REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.

Finance Report:

Ms. Moore reminded members that at the end of the last fiscal year, the TAP program had money left over for the first time due to lower demand from the pandemic (approximately \$200,000 out of \$1.2 million), but these funds were rolled over to the 2022-23 fiscal year. Delays in the supply chain are due primarily to the availability of iPhone processors from China, causing a backlog. Presently, the backlog has started to be fulfilled. However, she added that China has a new outbreak, which may shut down production again, causing delays once again in equipment.

Ms. Moore mentioned that she plans to use some of the general fund for outreach.

THE FINANCE REPORT WAS ACCEPTED AS READ.

Emergency Management Study Group:

Ms. Harris reported that she held a meeting with Ms. Dana Miramontes, Louisville Metro Department for Public Health, Ms. Amy Potts, Louisville Behavioral Health, Disaster Response, and KCDHH staff members Ms. Jessica Smith and Mr. Blake Noland. Attendees discussed their roles with their respective agencies and discussion was held on weather alert systems for deaf and hard of hearing and deafblind individuals. Ms. Harris said she had called the emergency office in Danville and asked if they had a system in place that would reach everyone. They told her they did not. As a result, Ms. Harris explained that she told the study group she felt they needed to begin work on developing a system for the entire state. She said they also discussed emergency kit contents, other potential stakeholders to add to the group, regional workshops, collecting resources, and research.

Ms. Moore also added that she met with Kentucky Emergency Management Director Colonel Jeremy Slinker and he indicated he will add KCDHH to the Boone Center Emergency Center when it is activated. She added that she has met with KYRID to see if any other interpreters want to be added to the list when an emergency is activated. She said that Colonel Slinker is seeking funding for weather alert kits that will be 100% accessible to deaf and hard of hearing individuals. These kits will be part of the study group's responsibility to disburse them.

Ms. Niehaus summarized the study groups tasks as two-fold: 1.) preparation and preparedness and 2.) disaster response.

Ms. Moore said she would meet with Ms. Harris regarding study group members roles and specific ways they can be involved.

BOARD OPEN FORUM

Ms. Hatzel asked Ms. Johnson to introduce herself. Ms. Johnson told the Board she was elected KYRID President in October 2022 and has been working in Kentucky for 10 years. She is also the Chair of the Kentucky Board of Interpreters (KBI). She explained that she has been a certified interpreter since 2008, has three grown children, a granddaughter, and two bearded dragons. She thanked the Board for giving her time to speak.

Ms. Hatzel opened the floor for discussion while Ms. Moore was delayed before giving her Agency Report. Ms. Taylor told members that the Governor had recently been in Bowling Green for a groundbreaking of a new Veteran's Administration (VA) home. She asked if anyone else on the Board was doing outreach with these VA homes. Mr. Evans said there was numerous telehealth opportunities for veterans to connect with the hospitals in Lexington and Cincinnati that could serve as outreach. Ms. Taylor suggested there may be other opportunities to educate veterans. Ms. Ryan suggested sending information/pamphlets to this new VA home. Ms. Brinley said she believed KCDHH has a wonderful opportunity to connect with the veteran's staff through the Kentucky Career Center to give them resources and professional development opportunities.

Ms. Niehaus discussed attending an Actor's Theater workshop on storytelling in Louisville. The workshop explained discussed progressive hearing loss and family hearing loss. She said they integrated closed captions into the visuals and screens on stage. She encouraged everyone to attend as it runs through January 28.

Ms. Gordon-Brown informed the Board that her book she co-authored, "Celebrations of Families: Stories of Parents with Disabilities," is being converted into a talking book for those who are legally blind.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Ms. Hatzel noted that hearing screening legislation and language acquisition would remain under "Unfinished Business" as meetings continue regarding these topics.

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Hatzel reported she had an amendment to the agenda under "New Business" to discuss and open the bylaws. She explained she needed a vote to open the bylaws to review them. Ms. Hatzel said she would establish a timeline and send an email to receive feedback from members on changes they make to the bylaws. She also told the Board to let her know if any one wanted to serve on a committee to review the bylaws.

Ms. TAYLOR MOVED (Ms. PERRY) MOVED THAT THE BYLAWS BE OPENED FOR REVIEW, REVISIONS, AND ADDITIONS. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Ms. Hatzel told the Board she would be sending Ms. Moore's evaluation to them the first week in February.
- Ms. Hatzel will also be sending out information regarding officer information for the Board the first week in February.
- Ms. Hatzel informed the Board that new study group proposals will be due in April.
- Ms. Ryan reported that she was appointed to the Kentucky Licensure Board for Interpreters by the Governor.
- Ms. Hatzel reported that the next Executive Board meeting will be March 3, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. and the 177th Quarterly Commission meeting will be April 21, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Locations for each are TBD.

Ms. RYAN MOVED (MR. EVANS) TO ADJOURN. The meeting was adjourned at 3:22 pm.