



**Louisiana Commission for the Deaf
SFY 22 Regular Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes of January 28, 2022
9:00 am- 12:00 pm**

- I. Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson, Jay Isch 9:06am
- A. Invocation/Silent Prayer- LCD Director, Jana Broussard
 - B. Pledge of Allegiance – Commissioner, Walker Estes
 - C. Roll Call – Commissioner & Secretary, Dr. Ashley Argrave

Commissioners Present: A quorum of Commissioners was present: Jimmy Gore, Dr. Ashley Argrave, Dr. Lee Mendoza, Mallory Brown, Melissa Bayham, Dr. Heather Laine, Kevin Monk, Jay Isch, Walker Estes proxy for Dawn Melendez, Candice Leblanc

Commissioners Not Present: Chairperson Ernest Garret, Senator Sharon Hewitt, Iva Tullier, Representative Scott McKnight, Bradley Wellons

LCD Staff: Jana Broussard, Vanessa Magnon, Shane Bates

Interpreters: Alvina Malcolm, Sylvie Sullivan, Donovan Williams, Lissa Gill

Captionist: Provided by CC Group, Carmen Cromartie

Lisa Potter Memorial Video Presented

- II. Approval of Agenda (Gore, Mendoza)**
- III. Approval of Minutes (Brown, Gore)**
- IV. Public Comments: no public comments**
- V. Reports**

- A. Director’s Report: LCD Interim Director: Jana Broussard: planning on a quarterly report. Shared a powerpoint that included internal project timelines. LCD is also looking for a Communication Officer currently writing the job description, duties, etc. Lighthouse of LA will cover Region 9 as CCG Foundation has closed. Current RFP for SSP services and training is still ongoing. Shane Bates (LCD Program Manager): Quarterly Operations Report includes

Revenue, operating expenses, detailed budget, and EOY balance. LCD has also been working on Capital accessibility. Lighthouse has been working with Legislative staff and has been advising how to make the capital more accessible. Health Equity services: we are looking for health equity in medical settings. Starting in February, we will begin renegotiating contracts for the next fiscal year.

B. Officer Reports

1. Chair: not present
2. Vice chair: Jay Isch, Now director for Deaf Focus under LAD, LAAD just celebrated 50 years
3. Secretary: Dr. Argrave, no report at this time

C. Relay Administration Board Report: J. Broussard- no report

D. Legislator Report: not present

E. Commissioner Reports:

1. Jimmy Gore: LAD acquired Deaf Focus including an interpreting agency. Case management services are still needed and we need to figure out how we meet those needs.
2. Walker Estes: LRID. Dawn Melendez has resigned due to her relocation and we are thankful for her work accomplished. Nov. 4, 2021 LRID held a town hall with LCD and it is available on our website. Spring conference is **March 31- April 2 virtual**
3. Dr. Ashley Argrave; Health advocacy and hearing aids for Deaf and hard of hearing community

F. State Agency Reports:

1. La. Workforce- Melissa Bayham, working on making their website more accessible; Vocational Rehab- Kevin Monk, effective next their max rate for interpreters \$45 to \$55/hr.
2. La. Dept. of Health- Dr. Lee Mendoza: still seeing new cases of COVID, 45,000 reinfections, 15,000 deaths, free covid testing and vaccinations in Louisiana, encourages vaccines.
3. La. School for the Deaf- Dr. Heather Laine, LSD performance grade moved from F to D, school was labeled as excellent grade school for Preschool, December hosted the Cajun Tournament, currently athletics has suspended due to COVID, April 2; Family Fun Weekend and will need volunteers and assistance. Still planning to meet in person.
4. La. Dept. of Ed.- Ernest Garrett, III: not present
5. Dept. Child and Family Services- Candice LeBlanc, no report
6. EHDI: Jana Broussard: no significant updates from the last meeting

BREAK 10:21-10:35

VI. Public Comment

- A. Amy Shamburger DBSG, Deafblind support group meets once a month and she has heard from many DB during those meeting. She has heard from DB people who aren't able to attend because there are not enough SSP hours. One solution could be that more than 2 DB persons can ride together with appropriate rules in place to keep everyone safe. Louisiana has a SSP shortage and she feel that we need to have a brainstorming session possibly partnering with Uber and Lyft because they are affordable and cause less strain on SSP shortage.
- B. Jackie Broussard: Add to Amy's comment. Suggestion that DB have relatives who also have vision loss and are required to ride separately. For example, 3 members of same family had to all ride separately to the Christmas party. This puts strain on the already shortage of SSP. Suggestion/recommendation is that DB persons are allowed to ride together.
- C. Danielle Pierce: asking for more unilateral or asymmetrical HL are recognized at the state level to have more access to education. Daughter has had a wonderful experience connecting with Deaf and hard of hearing community. She has many ideas on connecting parents who have unilateral HL children with Deaf and hard of hearing resources and community.

VII. Old Business

- A. Letter to Board of Regents- ASL Studies Program- Update by Jana Broussard: BRCC reached out to establish an ASL Studies program. The Board of Regents officially approved this program. They are currently looking for part time and full time instructors. The job is posted under "American Sign Language" under state jobs.
- B. Ethics Board Request- Update by Shane Bates: working with the Ethics board so that DeafBlind persons can become a Board member/commissioners due to ethical conflicts if they also received services. In September we sent a letter and we met November 5, 2021. We did receive notification a commission would be able to allow services and serve on the board. However, this person would not be allowed to be included in business transactions related to services received.
- C. LightHouse, La- Capitol Accessibility- Update by Jazmyne Lamar: Director of Deaf Services at Lighthouse LA, LHLA has been working with Legislatures on how to make the capital more accessible. They did an accessibility audit to do an assessment for making the capital more accessible including best practices, infrastructure, requesting accommodations, and technology. We interviewed 5 states and we developed 5 key recommendations. (there is a full report available)
 - 1. Caption all legislative content available to the public and streaming. Due to interpreter shortage, cost, and overlapping we recc. AI even though it is less accurate than personal captioning. Recc. open captions and then made into a transcript.
 - 2. Written procedure and process for ASL interpreters as well as space appropriate for interpreters and tactile interpreters. Dedicated camera for the ASL interpreter.
 - 3. Develop training guidelines and a chair on conducting accessibility, including specialized training on the needs of the DHH community as well as using AI captioning. Training should be lead by person who works in that area.
 - 4. Assistive Listening Devices: enhance technology and accessibility
 - 5. Training on legislative process as outreach to the community (ASL interpreted and

captioned) on how bills are passed and made available. Implementing a system to solicit feedback at the end of a legislative session to ensure quality assurance.

MOTION: To accept these recommendations: (Argrave,Estes) none opposed, motion carries

- D. Legislative Revisions Package- Update Jay Isch, current legislation is outdated. We will add 1. DB person and 2. Office of Behavioral Health and remove 1.parent of Deaf child. More oversight of interpreters and Mcknight and Hewitt will support these bills.

VII. New Business

- A. Ex Director Succession Planning- Follow up from prior motion 2019: Jay Isch: LCD board postponed the search for a Director during 2019 due to the timing and place that LCD was in. The result was the development of a new mission, values, and strategic plan. We have been working with Innivee Strategies and adding new staff under our Interim Director. During the trainings over the last year, the role of the director needs to be redefined. We need to support leadership and specifically for the DDBHH community. We will take the rest of the year to determine what that Director position looks like.

Comments:

- 1. Comm.Mendoza: is there another model that has a Director that is not a civil servant
- 2. Jana: We are still doing research on what that role looks like.
- 3. Shane: there are different ways directors can be set up. We are unique because we are a commission under a government department. As an unclassified civil service option, one positive aspect is that this director would be able to lobby for legislation. We could also have that Director as a contract employee if needed.

MOTION: redefine role of director of LCD (Gore ,Brown)

- 1 **Amendment** that commission set up a group to work to redefine the role of the director (Argrave, ???) 10 voted yes, none opposed, motion carried.

B. Board Orientation Presentation :Jana Broussard: provided a powerpoint to sum up the Board's governance training. This includes individual commissioner expectations. There is also a full report available.

C. Election of Officers : Jay Isch: We need to reconfirm Vice Chair and Secretary Roles for the next 2 years.

MOTION: to confirm Vice Chair and Secretary: (Gore, Laine) none opposed, motion carries

- 1. LRID: Walker Estes proxy for Dawn Melendez until new director of LRID is confirmed
- D. Replacement of LDH Representative: Jay Isch: We want to thank Dr. Lee Mendoza for his 10 years of service as his term is coming to an end. He will be replaced with Davondra Brown. New Commissioner Brown introduced herself.

VIII Announcements:

1. Jay Isch: Thanks to Paula and Melodie for building and leading Deaf Focus. He learned alot from them.
2. Jana Broussard: Big thank you to Dr. Mendoza.

VIII. Date, Time, and Place of Next Commission Meeting

– April 29, 2022 9:00am-12:00pm (Location TBD)

MOTION: adjourn (DID NOT HAVE A MOTION)

IX.Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 12:07 p.m.

Draft of minutes prepared 4/14/22.

Minutes corrected on _____.

Ashley J Argrave

4/14/2022

Ashley J Argrave

4/14/22 Recorder

Date

Secretary

Date



