



**Louisiana Commission for the Deaf  
SFY 2015 Regular Commission Meeting  
Meeting Minutes of May 15, 2015**

**I. Call To Order** -Meeting was called to order at 10:10 AM by John. K. Davis, Secretary.

**A. Silent Prayer** – John K. Davis

**B. Pledge of Allegiance** – J. Vincent

**C. Roll Call** – Jairus Methvin – A quorum of Commissioners was not present.

**D. Announcements/Comments/Persons Requesting to Address the Board** – none

**Commissioners present:**

Dr. Moises Arriaga	John K. Davis	Deanna Hardy	Nancy Hicks
Alvina Malcolm	Dr. Lee Mendoza	John Vincent	Naomi DeDual (non-voting)

**Commissioners not present:**

Representative Regina Barrow	Dr. Nancy Benham	Thelma Covello
Senator Yvonne Dorsey-Colomb	Carolyn Jarrels	Gary Montgomery
Ellis Roussel	Secretary Suzy Sonnier	Pauline Wood

**Commission Staff present:**

Jairus Methvin	Ashley Poche
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Interpreters: Shirley Delahoussaye	Dawn Melendez	Rose Ray
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**II Approval of May 15, 2015 Agenda**

**III Approval of November 7, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

**IV Business Requiring Commission Action:**

**A. Old Business:**

1. Text to 911

**B. New Business:**

1. State Fiscal Year 2016 Budget

2. Inspector General Report

**V. Business for Information Purposes/Reports:**

**A. Officer Reports:**

John K. Davis, Secretary – none



**B. LCD Director's Report – N. DeDual:** Shared the purpose, authority and responsibility of LCD staff and board for coordination, facilitation and/or provision of accessibility services. Provided a detailed list of SFY 2015 payments for administration, telecommunication equipment, hearing aids, and payments to contractors for professional services including equipment distribution; hearing aid administration; ASL interpreting services; and SSP services. Provided SFY 2015 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter performance reports of consumers served statewide; provided information of: FCC's Text-to-911 Readiness and Certification Registry; Usher Syndrome Conference on July 11<sup>th</sup> in New Orleans; federal companion bills – House Resolution 1882 and Senate Resolution 315 which propose an amendment to the IRS Code to allow a \$500 tax credit against income tax for purchase of a hearing aid.

**C. Relay Administration Board Report: N. DeDual** – A supervisory writ has been filed by the defendants, RAB and LPSC, with the 1<sup>st</sup> Circuit Court of LA in the class action lawsuit - Stephen Leon vs. LPSC/RAB. The plaintiffs have filed an opposition to the writ. Court decision is pending.

**D. Commissioner Reports:**

**LRID – A. Malcolm** – In March 2015, LRID hosted their Spring workshop at Lafayette Athletic Association for the Deaf clubhouse. The guest speaker was Carol Lazorisak and there were 56 participants. Currently, LRID has 84 members; and they are conducting membership renewals. August 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>, LRID will serve as host state for the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf national conference at the Hyatt Regency in New Orleans. The day before the conference, a community forum will be held to which all are invited. Recently, several RID officers came to New Orleans for a planning session with LRID members. RID is also seeking volunteers for the conference.

**Parent – D. Hardy** – none

**Rep w/ Hearing Loss – Jack Vincent** – I am advocating with state and federal legislators to approve a tax credit for both federal and state taxes, for purchase of hearing aids by middle-income households.

**Professional Rep – Dr. Moises Arriaga** – Advancements in the medical-scientific community continue to be shared which include assistive devices for persons with hearing loss - both high and low tech. For persons with age-related hearing loss, an advanced treatment includes a new experimental procedure of applying a chemical directly into the inner ear. This allows the medication to get directly to the area where it is needed and allow hair cells to regrow. In the European Union, implantation of the cochlear implant (CI) has become their new standard of care for unilateral and sudden hearing loss which provides for sound awareness as well as for language development/communication. The Hybrid Cochlear Implant (HCI) is another medical advancement for persons who don't sufficiently benefit from hearing aids, but who had to wait for their hearing loss to worsen to qualify as a CI candidate. The Hybrid CI provides for both acoustical and electrical stimulation. Lower tech devices including pocket talkers (Such as smart phone app systems) which serve as a directional microphone between digital hearing aids and other electronics including cellular devices. The Cochlear Implant is covered by most insurances and Medicare. Speech rehabilitation is greatly needed by children. Speech therapy is typically available for ages 0-3; but after age three, it's hard to get. LA Commission for the Deaf Meeting Minutes



**E. State Agency Reports:**

**DHH – Dr. L. Mendoza** –Recent changes in personnel at DHH include: Hugh Eley, the longtime Assistant Secretary of the Office of Aging and Adult Services (OAAS) retired; and recently returned as Deputy Secretary. Also at OAAS, Tara LeBlanc from the Budget Office is now the Assistant Secretary of Office of Aging and Adult Services. I am working with DHH staff to identify which of the Bayou Health providers have staff who report they they use American Sign Language in their offices. At enrollment, vendors are asked what languages their providers use, which could be very useful information which could be accessed from our provider search web page.

**LWC – M. Martin for C. Eysink** – Louisiana Workforce Commission puts people to work. LWC works with businesses and customers through Workers Compensation, Unemployment Compensation, and Workforce Development. Louisiana Rehabilitation Services is a part of Workforce Development. In 2010, Louisiana Rehabilitation Services was transferred out of the Department of Social Services to LWC. This was part of a national realignment effort to emphasize the mission of employment development and placement by Vocational Rehabilitation Counselors. LWC met each of its federal performance indicators this year which relate to the quality and quantity of employment outcomes for those consumers served through the year. LRS is a state/federal fund matching program. For example, in SFY 2006 (after Hurricane Katrina), LRS opened all Orders of Selection without any state-funding match (100% federal \$\$); but in more recent years, Louisiana has been unable to secure ~\$19 million in federal funds because there are insufficient state dollars available with which to draw down the federal funds.

**DOE – N. Hicks** – In working with Louisiana Rehabilitation Services to support transition services for students with disabilities, some school districts use the state or local funds to draw down federal funds so to build the infrastructure in the district’s education system. During the past legislative session, two bills were passed which the department is working to implement. Act 833 affects those students who were struggling with those statewide assessments which are required for promotion or graduation. This Act provides for a different way to measure performance for those students. Act 833 allows IEP teams to develop individual performance criteria to assist students with disabilities meet the grade level standards in order to be promoted to the next grade or graduated with a diploma. Also, Act 837 which is the personal identifier Act. This Act mandates that personal identification may not be released (including names, date of birth, Social Security number, and other information) without parent consent and being on a secure server or through password-access. The new law limits and prohibits the collection and sharing of student information. All LA students receive a unique identification number, and any personal identification information is to be omitted or otherwise unavailable without authorized access.

**F. Legislator Reports: None**

**VI Date, Time, Place of Next Commission Meeting – August 28, 2015 – 10 AM – Bienville #118**

**VII Adjournment – J. Vincent/D. Hardy** motioned to adjourn at 10:58 AM. Motion passed Unanimously.

Draft of minutes prepared 05/15/15

[Signature] 9/3/15  
Recorder Date

Minutes corrected on \_\_\_\_\_  
[Signature] 9/3/2015  
Secretary Date

c. LCD master file; LCD Board Members; LCD Staff