

# West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

## Minutes

August 2, 2024

WVCDHH Office

100 Dee Drive, Charleston, West Virginia

Commission Members Present:	Commission Members Absent:	Commission Staff Present:	Public Visitors:	Interpreters:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Paul See</li><li>• John Burdette</li><li>• Nancy Gillispie</li><li>• Gloria Hollen</li><li>• Roy Forman</li><li>• Mary Anne Clendenin</li><li>• Cyndi Shaver</li><li>• Angela Wilson</li><li>• Julie Shoeman</li><li>• Rachel Hatfield</li><li>• Kristian Ball (Proxy for M. Golden)</li><li>• Dawn Embry-King</li><li>• Rae Bates</li><li>• Christine Firkins</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clayton Burch</li><li>• Regina Woodcock</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sarah Lowther</li><li>• Erik Essington</li><li>• Gwen Bryant</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Earl Hollen</li><li>• Crystal Law</li><li>• Erin Fulton</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jennifer Casto</li><li>• Julie Turley</li></ul>

### Call to Order

- Paul See called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

### Reading of Mission Statement and Introductions

- Paul See read the Mission Statement.

### Public Comments

- No Public Comments

### Minutes

The minutes from the May 3, 2024 meeting were reviewed. John Burdette made the motion to approve the minutes. Gloria Hollen seconded. Minutes were approved.

## **Staff Reports**

Erik Essington, Sarah Lowther, and Gwen Bryant shared information from the written board report.

- The term for the Otolaryngologist/ENT position on the board expired in June 2020. Applications can be submitted to fill this position.
- On May 6, 2024, Christine Firkins was appointed as the Parent of a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child representative on the Board. The term expires on June 30, 2025.
- The term for the Teacher of the Deaf position on the board, held by Cyndi Shaver, expired on June 30, 2024. Cyndi has reapplied to continue serving on the Board. We have also received two new applications for the position. All applications have been submitted to the Cabinet Secretary's office for review.
- Gwen is drafting a Family and Youth page for the WVCDHH website to outline support and resources available in West Virginia. She is also creating a monthly newsletter.
- The WVCDHH website and social media are updated on a regular basis.
- On the WVCDHH Facebook page, we have gained 58 followers since May 2024 for a total of 2,815. There have been 30 posts made. Audience statistics - Men - 17.20% / Women - 82.80%.
- The Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) is setting new guidelines for who is allowed to take the VQAS. Effective May 10, 2024, to be eligible to register for and take a VQAS Written or Performance Assessment, a candidate must be able to provide documentation verifying that they live, work, OR attend an interpreter training program in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The policy allows a transition period for outside candidates to phase out of the VQAS by December 31, 2027. After this transition period, we will no longer utilize the VQAS. Instead, we will implement the Board for Evaluation of Interpreters (BEI) certification program.
- WVCDHH collaborated with the Charleston Dirty Birds baseball team to have a Deaf/HH night on Friday, June 21, 2024.
- WVCDHH is hosting a Family Day at Pipestem Resort State Park on Saturday, August 24, 2024. Families can come to the park, gather with other families, and enjoy activities on the lake.
- Deaf Awareness Day 2025 will be held on Wednesday, March 19, 2025.
- WVCDHH is collaborating with University of Charleston's School of Arts and Sciences to develop an ASL Studies Minor program launching in Spring 2025.
- WVCDHH would like to sponsor, organize, and provide more workshops for interpreters and the Deaf/Hard of Hearing community throughout the state soon.

## **Committee/Task Force Reports**

- Executive Committee: No report.
- Nominating Committee: No report.

## **Board Member Reports**

- Gloria Hollen
  - PJ Mattiacci from FEMA has been invited to present at the WVAD Conference in 2025. They are waiting to hear back from him about this.
  - She thinks using the BEI is a great idea. Interpreters should be involved in a taskforce for input on implementing the BEI.
  - WVAD is having a picnic on August 3, 2024. They are also planning for the upcoming conference in 2025.

- Mary Anne Clendenin
  - WVDE Technical Assistance Center (TAC) had an interpreter retreat recently that provided training to interpreters in attendance.
  - There will be a family event in partnership with WV Hands and Voices on September 30, 2024, at Pipestem.
  - The TAC has hired Kurt Metz as a psychologist and Rachel Lanham as a transition coordinator.
  - EIPA tests are given through WVSDDB with no proctor fees. ASL classes and Lunch and Learn sessions are also still provided.
- Dawn Embrey-King
  - She shared about the work of the Advisory Council for the Education of Exceptional Children. The Council has four meetings per year across the state to learn about the unmet needs of children with exceptionalities.
  - Deaf/HH education could be highlighted at one of the meetings, and they would like to have someone speak at the virtual resource fair in January.
  - There is an online forum to share suggestions, concerns, and needs.
  - The Council is seeking three members, one of which needs to be an individual with a disability.
- John Burdette
  - Legislation in MD, DC, NY, and Hawaii have passed for open captioning in movie theaters. He hopes that legislation in WV will pass in 2025.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

- November 8, 2024 – Beckley, WV
- March 20, 2025 – Charleston, WV

### **Adjournment**

Rachel Hatfield made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Angela Wilson seconded. The motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 12:15 p.m.