

West Virginia Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Minutes

May 1, 2026

WVCDHH

100 Dee Drive

Charleston, WV 25311

Commission Members Present:	Commission Members Absent:	Commission Staff Present:	Public Visitors:	Interpreters:
• John Burdette • Nancy Gillispie • Gloria Hollen • Roy Forman • Meegan Wolfe • Angela Wilson • Mary Anne Clendenin • Crystal Law • Dawn Embry-King • Shakita Micek • Justin Davis • Jennifer Casto (proctor for C. Burch)	• Regina Woodcock	• Paul See • Sarah Lowther	• Paula Forman • Jimmy Harrison • Veronda Harrison	• Alyce Almond • Joel Duggan

Call to Order

- Gloria Hollen called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Reading of Mission Statement and Introductions

- Crystal Law read the Mission Statement.

Minutes

The minutes from the February 26, 2026 meeting were reviewed. Crystal Law made the motion to approve the minutes. John Burdette seconded. Minutes were approved.

Public Comments

- Veronda Harrison
 - This is her first time attending a board meeting
 - She is very impressed with the executive director's report.
 - She also expressed interest in applying for a vacant board position.

Staff Reports

Sarah Lowther and Paul See shared information from the written board report.

- Four board terms are set to expire in June 2026. All four positions are designated for the deaf and hard of hearing community. One of the four positions, formerly held by Paul, is now vacant, and the other three, held by John, Gloria, and Roy, are recommended by WVAD and are eligible for renewal.
 - The audiologist position and the parent position expired in June 2025.
 - Paperwork to reappoint Nancy Gillispie for the audiologist position and appoint Christina Payne for the parent position have been submitted.
- Deaf Awareness Day 2027 will be held on Friday, February 19, 2027, with inclusion of vendors specializing in technology for the deaf, hard of hearing, and deaf-blind communities.
- The agency contract for interpreters is set to expire in July of this year. The contract process will be initiated in June with the goal of securing more interpreter choices for the upcoming year.
- Newsletters have been scaled back from a monthly schedule to quarterly publications to share relevant information with the community. The first newsletter was created for Spring 2026. The next newsletter will be for Summer 2026.
- With the Virginia Quality Assurance Screening (VQAS) policy changes, WV interpreters will no longer be able to utilize the screening as a qualification. The Interpreter Task Force (ITF) has been reestablished to create a state level assessment to support interpreters.
- We promote the use of and regularly update Facebook to communicate with members of the community. Posts provide information on upcoming events, trainings, job opportunities, and other important information.
 - Since February 2026, we have gained 45 followers for a total of 3,262.
 - There have been 186 posts made.
 - The highest post views were 9,425 with 6,866 viewers
- Accessible Smoke Alarm Project (ASAP) - due to the age of the remaining inventory of smoke alarms and the amount of space required to store them, it was determined that donating the alarms to other agencies to distribute would reach more people who are in need. This also eliminated the ASAP requirements, such as owning a home.
 - Nearly all alarms were donated to the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the Metro Area Agency on Aging.
- A task force was created for the development of informative brochures for parents and families of deaf/hard of hearing newborns and children because limited information is provided after the initial screening in the hospital. The goal is to provide parents with in-depth information, options, and resources using a short brochure.
- Planning for future events will be put on hold for the remainder of the current fiscal year to review the budget.

Board Member Reports

- Angela Wilson
 - She asked about the necessary number of board members for a quorum.
 - The board also confirmed that virtual attendees count toward the quorum.
- Gloria Hollen
 - She has been researching options and contacting organizations, such as the Division of Rehabilitation and Workforce West Virginia, to assist a deaf individual who is homeless and jobless.

- She is also continuing to look for solutions for employment and interpreter access, especially concerning senior citizens and their needs for live assistance.
- John Burdette
 - He expressed satisfaction with the initial discussion at the first ITF meeting regarding testing processes.
 - He attended the West Virginia Speech Hearing Language Conference as a vendor for West Virginia Relay and networked with other vendors. He also shared that CaptionCall, a vendor at the conference, is seeking installers in both Charleston and Martinsburg.
 - He provided an update on two pieces of legislation: the open captioning bill for theaters and the communication accessibility in hospitals bill. Both were unsuccessful.
- Jennifer Casto
 - She shared updates from the WVDE and WVSDB highlighting the Career Academy for Post-graduates (CAP program) and the expansion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs on campus.
 - The Deaf and Hard of Hearing Advisory Committee met to review progress related to House Bill 4414, which included sharing updates on a database set forth by the WVDE and providing recommendations for data improvement.
 - Upcoming events include the final episode of 'Hands Up West Virginia' at the Deaf Social in Romney on May 17, 2026, a Deaf and Hard of Hearing Family Weekend from June 12-14, 2026 (reaching maximum attendance), and various summer camps.
 - The Educational Interpreter Summit, a conference for educational interpreters, is scheduled for July 22-23, 2026 in Charleston, with registration opening on June 1, 2026.

Future Meeting Dates

- August 7, 2026 – Charleston, WV
- November 5, 2026 – Romney, WV
- February 18, 2027 – Charleston, WV
- May 7, 2027 – Moorefield, WV

Adjournment

Gloria Hollen made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Roy Forman seconded. The motion was approved. The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.