



**Virginia Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**  
**1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 203**  
**Henrico, VA 23229-5012**

**Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**  
**May 1, 2019**

**Members Present:**

Traci D. Branch  
Shantell D. Lewis, Au.D.  
Timothy R. Patterson  
Susanne B. Wilbur, LCSW  
Carrie N. H. Humphrey, NIC  
Kathi A. Mestayer  
Colin H. Wells  
Jason M. Zuccari

**Members Absent:**

Roy B. Martin, IV

**Staff Present:**

Eric H. Raff, Director  
Rhonda S. Jeter, Business Manager  
Christine C. Ruderson, Technology Assistance Program Manager  
Karen Brimm, Community Services Manager  
Elaine Ziehl, Virginia Quality Assurance Screening Coordinator

**ASL Interpreters / CART Provider:**

Laurie Malheiros  
Bernadette C. Mayhall  
Rhonda D. Tuck, Cavalier Reporting

1 **I. NETWORKING – COFFEE & REFRESHMENTS**

2 On Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at 9:30 a.m., the members of the Advisory Board of the Virginia  
3 Department for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (VDDHH) convened in the conference room at the  
4 VDDHH Central Office, 1602 Rolling Hills Drive, Suite 203, Henrico, VA 23229-5012.  
5

6 **II. CALL TO ORDER**

7 At 10:00 a.m., Chairperson Traci D. Branch called the meeting to order. All members and staff  
8 were welcomed and introduced themselves.  
9

10

11 Director Raff announced that Ms. Hutcheson was unable to join the meeting, but Elaine Ziehl  
12 would be present to provide the report on interpreting services. He recommended that Advisory  
13 Board members having their terms expire this summer contact the Secretary of the  
14 Commonwealth's office to notify the Secretary of their desire to continue to the Board.

15  
16 Chairperson Branch requested the record show that the board had at least five members present  
17 and the quorum was established.

18  
19 No corrections or revisions were requested to the Advisory Board membership roster.

20  
21 No corrections or revisions were requested to the meeting agenda. The motion to accept the  
22 agenda as written was made by Ms. Humphrey, seconded by Mr. Zuccari and unanimously  
23 passed.

24  
25 No corrections or revisions were requested to the meeting minutes from February 6, 2019. The  
26 motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Ms. Humphrey, seconded by Ms.  
27 Mestayer and unanimously passed.

28

29 **III. STRATEGIC PLAN**

30 Director Raff presented specific background on the agency's Strategic Plan. The last update to  
31 the Plan was submitted for the years 2016-2018. VDDHH will submit the next Strategic Plan  
32 with major changes to the Department of Planning and Budget (DPB) by June 30, 2019. The  
33 guidelines from DPB to update the plan is arduous.

34  
35 The discussion of the Strategic Plan followed with the details as they appeared:

36  
37 Strategic priorities, mission, vision and goals - Members provided feedback about the wording of  
38 the VDDHH mission statement and scope of services and programs, with the emphasis on  
39 providing clarity and consistency to its consumers, partners and stakeholders.

40  
41 The TAP and Outreach will be considered as separate. The definitions of Outreach and TAP  
42 have changed. The emphasis of Outreach renamed Community Services is more information  
43 related specifically to VDDHH. The focus was information & referral, education, training, etc.  
44 The Plan provides a good opportunity to consistently clarify the programs and services provided  
45 by the agency. Community services replaces what was previously referred to as Outreach.

46  
47 Board members reviewed the VDDHH brochure which provides a clear explanation about what  
48 VDDHH offers. Discussion ensued about using terminology in VDDHH publications that is  
49 inclusive, neutral and balanced.

50  
51 The members moved on to reviewing the long-term goals of VDDHH as delineated in the  
52 Strategic Plan. The major discussion regarded a broader inclusiveness of individuals who have  
53 speech disabilities because that would fall under "promoting accessible communication." Ms.  
54 Ruderson elaborated about assistive devices and support groups available to this population.  
55 Director Raff stated that in the Code of Virginia does not address all that VDDHH does in  
56 serving individuals with speech disabilities.

57

58 The Board recessed from 11:15 to 11:25 a.m.

59

60 **STRATEGIC PLAN (CONTINUED)**

61 During the recess, Director Raff reviewed the Code of Virginia, which briefly mentions serving  
62 individuals with speech impairments under department duties and within the context of TAP and  
63 Relay. Board member proceeded to review and provide input about the goals on the current Plan:

64

- 65 1. Clarifying the “culture of preparedness” goal to include the more comprehensive  
66 “emergency management” or to move this under the state agency goal as an objective.
- 67 2. ISP and CART goal: Members discussed the goal in regard to quality, availability and  
68 utilization.
- 69 3. Accessibility, loop systems and captioning: VDDHH could consider adding another goal  
70 related to communication access for hard of hearing individuals, and expanding on the  
71 vision for Community Services under a separate objective.
- 72 4. Using consistent terminology, e.g., difficulty speaking or speech disability.

73

74 Rhonda Jeter announced that the Secretary of the Commonwealth’s office had been previously  
75 informed by email in February that four Advisory Board members desired reappointment by the  
76 governor. She will follow up on this.

77

78 **WORKING LUNCH: Board Member Reports**

79

80 Carrie Humphrey: The Virginia Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (VRID) will have a mini-  
81 conference at Reynolds Community College (RCC) on June 22 with an emphasis on mentorship.  
82 Members of the deaf community can attend at no charge. RCC is working with VCU on a  
83 pathway to a Bachelors Degree in interdisciplinary studies for interpreting students.

84

85 RCC is in contact with the Virginia School for the Deaf and Blind and the Department of  
86 Education to set up a training for language proficiency in ASL. They are looking at getting the  
87 Sign Communication Proficiency Interview to Virginia, at a cost of \$15,000 to provide training  
88 for interviewers. RCC is working on expanding training to include Support Service Providers  
89 and interveners for individuals to work with deafblind people.

90

91 The Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) Region 2 Conference will be held July 16–19,  
92 2020 in Richmond. RID would like to offer a series of workshops geared to deaf interpreter  
93 training. RID has established CASLI, a limited liability corporation, to conduct national testing  
94 and is looking for local and regional centers. Ms. Humphrey inquired into the possibility of  
95 VDDHH becoming a testing site or proctor.

96

97 Director Raff stated that he has already discussed VDDHH being a testing site with Ms. Ziehl  
98 and Ms. Hutcheson, and VDDHH is interested.

99

100 Ms. Mestayer: She will be attending the Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA)  
101 Conference in Rochester and helping to present a workshop on jury duty for individuals with  
102 hearing loss. She is involved with HAT, a joint program between HLAA and Gallaudet that  
103 trains people to provide presentations about hearing assistive technology. Ms. Mestayer is in  
104 talks with William & Mary and advocating the installation of loop systems in new buildings and

105 renovations wherever possible. The Governor of Maryland signed legislation requiring loops in  
106 public assembly areas in any new buildings or refurbishes using state funds, and she has shared  
107 that information with William & Mary.

108  
109 Dr. Lewis: She is collaborating with Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles on an ongoing  
110 project to improve services to the deaf and hard of hearing regarding promotion, exams, license  
111 plates with HI lettering, effective communication with customer service, and driver's licensing.  
112 She brought to DMV's attention that its website includes some videos that are not captioned. Dr.  
113 Lewis proposed that DMV have promotions about deaf and hard of hearing services one month  
114 out of the year, starting with one branch with the eventual goal of making it statewide. Drivers  
115 can request a code on the back of their driver's licenses so police officers will know they are deaf  
116 or hard of hearing. There is also a contact form to use in cases of emergencies that will alert  
117 police officers. Many people, however, are not aware of these.

118  
119 Ms. Ruderson recommended to consider the promotion for two months in the year (May and  
120 September) and have displays for people to look at while waiting in DMV lines.

121  
122 **VI. PUBLIC COMMENT**

123 No public comment was offered.

124  
125 **V. STAFF REPORTS**

126 Technology Assistance Program: Ms. Ruderson, Technology Assistance Program Manager,  
127 shared that her department was on their way to Williamsburg to set up an exhibit at the Triad  
128 conference. TAP had a successful booth on April 30 at a conference for disabled voters. They  
129 attended the Shaw Convention, trainings with board of elections, and have reached out to  
130 community sponsored housing centers. Ms. Ruderson and Brittany Howard have worked with  
131 Director Raff to establish a new contract for TAP specialists. Overall, it has been a busy time for  
132 TAP.

133  
134 Executive report: Director Raff reported that the State Interagency Task Force (SIT) will host a  
135 Town Hall meeting on June 29, 2019 in Richmond at the Department of Aging and  
136 Rehabilitative Services, and he encouraged board members to attend. Other locations are  
137 scheduled throughout the state as well. VDDHH hired Karen Brimm as Community Services  
138 Manager, who began in April. Director Raff has convened a work group of various  
139 representatives to discuss support services providers (SSP) for individuals who are deafblind.  
140 The next meeting of the SSP work group will be in May; the meeting was postponed in April due  
141 to the weather. The long term goal is to establish an SSP program in Virginia, as some other  
142 states have done.

143  
144 Virginia Relay: Director Raff reported that some changes in the Virginia Relay contract removed  
145 Devaney Associates as the third-party subcontractor that handled public relations and marketing;  
146 Hamilton will take over those tasks and it will be cost-saving. VDDHH recruited for the Virginia  
147 Relay Manager position with interviews to be held in May, and hopes to have the manager in  
148 place this summer.

149  
150 Interpreter Services Program (ISP): Elaine Ziehl presented the Interpreter Service Program (ISP)  
151 Manager report for Ms. Hutcheson. On March 14, Ms. Hutcheson and Ms. Ruderson met with

152 Supreme Court staff regarding assistive technology requests from the courts and explored the  
153 possibility of the Supreme Court purchasing the technology or setting up a loaner program with  
154 VDDHH. The Supreme Court and ISP also discussed private interpreter coordinator agencies  
155 and the procedure for preauthorization for overnight accommodations for court interpreters and  
156 overcap payments. ISP has a statewide training for court clerks on their agenda slated for  
157 September.

158  
159 ISP is receiving many requests from out-of-state interpreters to add their information to the  
160 interpreter directory. VDDHH decided not to include them into the directory as they are working  
161 for video remote interpreter (VRI) industry and the directory is intended for community  
162 interpreting. ISP continues to work with the General Assembly for the 2020 session. The ISP  
163 'agreement' which replaces the 'contract' will launch June 1. Ms. Hutcheson provided a  
164 presentation about the ISP at Liberty University on March 21 to interpreter training program  
165 students.

166  
167 Virginia Quality Assurance Screening: Elaine Ziehl reported that results and diagnostics  
168 continue to go out to candidates well within the 90 working day timeframe. Scores are improving  
169 for candidates who use diagnostics. Data from candidates taking the Educational Interpreting  
170 Performance Assessment (EIPA), both written and performance, are now uploaded directly to  
171 Boys Town National Research Hospital in Nebraska which allows for faster results and a  
172 smoother process. Regarding the QAS, we are redoing the interactive interpreting piece based on  
173 feedback from raters and the new version will be standardized.

174  
175 Community Services Program: Karen Brimm shared that since coming on board as the  
176 Community Services Manager, she has been learning the new position and actively introducing  
177 herself to partners of VDDHH Community Services program. During the third quarter,  
178 Community Services provided ADA consultations and training for state agencies and other  
179 organizations, including ongoing training with criminal justice academies, 911 dispatchers and  
180 emergency management. Community Services conducted outreach to community groups,  
181 including partnering with the Virginia Board for People with Disabilities on their grant funded "I  
182 Can Accessibility Project" at VCU to create an ASL and captioned version of the brochure  
183 "Understanding Protective Orders in Richmond, VA."

184  
185 **VI. NEW BUSINESS AND FUTURE MEETING AGENDA**

186 Director Raff suggested inviting Ken McCabe, budget analyst with the Department of Planning  
187 and Budget (DPB) assigned to VDDHH, to present at the next Advisory Board meeting  
188 regarding the 2020-2022 budget process. The biennium budget will be submitted in September.

189  
190 Ms. Metstayer inquired about the FCC comment period about whether automated speech  
191 recognition software should be allowed for captioned phones.

192  
193 Members were asked to provide feedback on both the catering and seating arrangements.

194  
195 **VII. ADJOURNMENT**

196 There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Ms.  
197 Humphrey, seconded by Ms. Wilbur, to adjourn the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

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