



DHHCAN Meeting

June 3, 2020

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held online using the Zoom video-conferencing platform.

ROLL CALL

Voting Members	Organizational Partners	Others
Zainab Alkebsi, NAD	Caroline Pezzarossi, ADARA	Lynn Dey, Interpreter
Eric Kaika, TDI	Neal Tucker, RID	Natalie Ennis, CART Captioner
Marcia Zisman, GUAA	Barbara Raimondo, CEASD	Barbara Hemstreet, Interpreter
Art Roehrig, AADB	Eileen McCartin, NVRC	Jan Nishimura, Interpreter
Lise Hamlin, HLAA	Jessica Kennedy, CSD	Jayne Tubergen, Interpreter
Barbara Martin, ALDA	Kelby Brick, NASADHH	
Mark Hill, CPADO	Eric Raff, NASADHH	
Al Sonnenstrahl, DSA		

Communication protocols were shared.

Meeting called to order: 12:03p.

Quorum: Met

Chair's Report

- Updates on the NAD's and other organizations' response to the coronavirus pandemic can be found under the Civil Rights Protection and Enforcement and Employment policy reports.
- DHHCAN will not meet in July and August, following our traditional summer break. We can continue communicating via email.

Vice-Chair's Report

No report

Secretary's Report

- The minutes of the January 8, 2020 meeting were approved as read.
- The minutes of the May 6, 2020 meeting were approved as read.

Treasurer's Report

- The balance as of May 29th was \$27,320.76.

POLICY REPORTS

CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

- The coalition of organizations (NAD, TDI, HLAA, and others) and subject matter experts that have collaborated on various guidelines addressing recommendations related to the pandemic released guidelines for telework for Deaf/HH employees who are now working from home and how to make meetings accessible in the different video platforms being used. A feature matrix was developed indicating which accessibility features are available which will help Deaf/HH employees and their employers figure which platforms(s) best meet their needs. Three documents were released: guidelines for employers, guidelines for consumers/employees, and the matrix which not only applies to telework but any context involving video-conferencing. ASL videos of these guidelines were also distributed and can be found on the NAD website (nad.org/coronavirus) as well as the websites of several other organizations.
- The next set of guidelines to be developed relate to masking for different contexts (in the office, public places, etc). Included are recommendations for using clear masks or face shields for communication purposes as well as the provision of other accommodations. The document will be released soon and covers different situations where masking is necessary.
- All 50 state governors have provided ASL interpreters during their press conferences related to the pandemic. The interpreter for Governor Cuomo of NY, however, is only visible on the internet feed and not on the television feed which posed difficulties for those without internet access. Disability Rights of New York (DRNY) filed a federal lawsuit on behalf of 3 plaintiffs against Governor Cuomo requesting that the court immediately order the governor to make the ASL interpreters at his live televised press briefings visible on the television feed. Since lawsuits can take a long time and due to the emergency nature of the situation, they requested a preliminary injunction asking the

judge to order Cuomo to provide television access to the interpreter in addition to the online feed. The court agreed and there is now television access. However, a new issue has arisen. Using a picture in picture approach makes the interpreter too small on the screen. So advocacy on this issue continues.

- Kelby brought up the lack of an ASL interpreter at White House (WH) briefings on the pandemic. Although letters have been sent to the WH about this, there have been no results. Zainab encourages organizations to continue contacting the WH. Since Title II of the ADA does not apply to the WH and the WH has never been sued under the Rehabilitation Act (citing separation of powers and the right to sue), there are no precedents to rely on when filing a lawsuit. Kelby mentioned it is a Constitutional issue and encouraged everyone to look at other available strategies. Zainab welcomed creative ideas.
- Another issue of concern that Kelby brought up is the televised interpreter standard since Cuomo's office is using the picture in picture approach. We do not want standards previously established in Maryland and other states to be lowered. The NAD is already talking with DRNY about visibility standards.

EDUCATION

- Between June 21-24, all organizations involved in advocating for the Cogswell Macy Act will be sending out information to their members and asking them to contact their representatives seeking support of the bill.

HEALTH CARE

No report.

HOUSING

No report.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION SERVICES, AND VIDEO PROGRAMMING

*Telecommunication Relay Services and Speech-to-Speech Services for Individuals with Hearing and Speech Disabilities • CG Docket No. 03-123; Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program • CG Docket No. 10-51; Implementation of the Twenty-First Century Communication and Video Accessibility Act of 2010, Section 105, Relay Services for the DeafBlind • CG Docket No. 10-210 May 11 **Executive Summary***

TDI, AADB, NAD, HLAA, ALDA, CPADO, ADARA, DSA, and the DHH-RERC submitted reply comments to our April 2, 2020 petition for emergency waiver and declaratory ruling (COVID-19 Relay petition). The petition requests a temporary waiver of the VRS User Registration Database, and that necessary software for DeafBlind users to access the relay system should be reimbursed from the TRS Fund. In our reply comments, we stressed the need for urgent action as the lack of access to real-time communication services for the DeafBlind is escalating into a humanitarian crisis, citing different newspaper articles and distancing behaviors

causing limited access to support persons and tactile interpreters. Also explained was how software allows VRS to be accessible to DeafBlind, and use of images. Elaborated on why software should be a TRS reimbursement rather than a NDBEDP program service — which has income limitations.

Closed Captioning of Internet Protocol-Delivered Video Programming • MB Docket No. 11-154;

May 11 **Executive Summary**

TDI, CPADO, and GU-TAP filed an ex-parte through TDI's legal counsel, Georgetown Law Institute for Public Representation, in regards to our meeting with the FCC regarding Pluto's extended request for captioning their platform provides captioning. We continued our steadfast opposition to providing Pluto with an extended waiver. Pluto had five years to become in compliance, additionally their waiver request is not an economic burden, nor reasonable under the good cause standard.

TRANSPORTATION

No report.

EMPLOYMENT

A. CSD Works first ever Virtual Career Expo – May 2

- Recently hosted a successful virtual career expo in ATX. We had a strong number of D/HH participants. Over 120 calls to meet and greet with employers. Employers reported a positive experience. We're now looking to the future.

B. Webinars – to influence success working remotely

- RIT/NTID, CSD, Gallaudet, NAD collaborated for a webinar in May on best practices for working remotely.
- CSD Works is working on a monthly webinar addressing how to effectively work remotely with D/HH employees. First webinar targeting the end of June.

C. CSD continues direct support with virtual Job Club

- Job Club focuses on job readiness for D/HH employees

D. COVID-19 Update – what we're hearing in the community

- COVID-19 caused lots of job loss in the D/HH community.
- COVID-19 heightens barriers for our community in the workplace.

OLD BUSINESS

At last month's meeting, NASADHH agreed to follow up with governors' offices in all of the states that recognize SSPs as a category but have not reclassified them as essential.

Kelby reported that he and Eric Raff reviewed this issue with Sherri Collins, chair of NASADHH and recommended to the NASADHH board that they send out a formal survey collecting information on which states recognize SSPs as a profession/as an essential function and how many have systems to pay SSPs. Sherri said that they will be happy to review collected information to see what can be done.

Art pointed out that the Helen Keller National Center has researched states that have SSP programs and will provide this information to Kelby. Mark pointed out that SSPs also work with Deaf people with other disabilities as well.

Mark (sec) moved that DHHCAN commends the Congressional Deaf Caucus for their advocacy in sending a letter to the White House urging the provision of ASL interpreters on both internet and TV feeds during White House press briefings. (Formal Resolution)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Eric Raff shared that the last week of June is DeafBlind Awareness week. The Governor of Virginia will issue a proclamation acknowledging DeafBlind Awareness week. Zainab encouraged all organizations to show support.

The next DHHCAN meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 2nd. We will be kept updated on whether the meeting will be virtual/remote or in person.

Everyone is encouraged to have a healthy and safe summer and to maintain communication via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:37 p.m.