



DHHCAN Meeting

December 2, 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	Neal Tucker, RID	Jan Nishimura, Interpreter
Eric Kaika, TDI	Eric Raff, NASADHH	Jayne Tubergen, Interpreter
Marcia Zisman, GUAA	Barbara Raimondo, CEASD	Natalie Ennis, CART Captioner
Lise Hamlin, HLAA	Davin Searls, CSD	Dawn Watts, Interpreter
Mark Hill, CPADO	Caroline Pezzarossi, ADARA	Brittany Watts, Interpreter
Al Sonnenstrahl, DSA	Eilleen McCartin, NVRC	Elaine Navratil, DSA
Art Roehrig, AADB		Michele Mulligan, CPADO
		Mary Beth Morgan, Interpreter/Observer
		Bernard Hurwitz, RIT

Communication protocols were shared. Attendees introduced themselves.

Meeting called to order: 12:01p.

Quorum: Met

Chair's Report

- DHHCAN has been in contact with the Biden transition team to ensure accessibility and commend them for providing captions and interpreting up to now. We also wanted to ensure that we have the opportunity to nominate Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals for consideration as presidential appointees in the Biden/Harris administration. We have provided names to the transition team, if anyone has additional names be sure to submit to Zainab as soon as possible.
- We will be voting on the updated DHHCAN by-laws today.
- We are seeing a rise in the number of COVID-19 cases due to Thanksgiving holiday travel and gatherings. With the upcoming holidays, she wishes everyone a safe season.

Vice-Chair's Report

- The board noticed a few errors related to member organizations on the DHHCAN website. Eric volunteered to bring them to our webmaster, Tayler Mayer's attention. Tayler requested that this type of communication either come directly from the DHHCAN Chair or the Chair inform Tayler that Eric is authorized to contact him.

Secretary's Report

- We need to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2020 meeting. Art (sec) moved to accept the minutes of the November 4th meeting. PASSED

Treasurer's Report

- The balance as of November 30th was \$28,179.26.
- Four organizations have not paid their dues: DSA, TDI, CSD, and GUAA. Representatives of these organizations were asked to follow up on this.
- If all organizations pay their dues, we'll have around \$4,000 income. DHHCAN's expenses for accessibility are about \$1,000 for each meeting, so we'll be in the red every year unless we can recruit more members. Elaine, Al and Zainab met recently to discuss creating an outreach plan which will hopefully help.
- Al will send out a list of current member organizations.

POLICY REPORTS

CIVIL RIGHTS PROTECTION AND ENFORCEMENT

- There's a recent bill that was introduced in Congress related to web access. Several years ago, H.R.620 - ADA Education and Reform Act of 2017, which we fought hard against was intended to weaken the ADA. This new bill is quite similar in that it has a nice-sounding yet misleading title. It appears to be advocating for web access but in reality it would weaken the status quo. The NAD is monitoring this bill although it is not expected to progress with a new Congress soon coming in. It is very concerning that bills of this nature continue to be proposed.
- The NAD recently learned that Gallaudet University will be phasing out the Counseling Department. NAD is currently drafting a letter to Gallaudet to share concerns about this development and its impact on availability of mental health services within the Deaf

community. Other organizations are encouraged to share their concerns as well and may contact Zainab to provide the NAD's letter to use as a template.

EDUCATION

- The Biden Plan For Full Participation and Equality for People with Disabilities addresses the language and communication needs in education of deaf and hard of hearing students. Some of its priorities are:
 - having health insurance cover language services for young deaf children
 - ensuring that resources to support deaf and hard of hearing children are available, including access to language-rich environments
 - identifying developmental milestones for deaf and hard of hearing children
 - making sure that early intervention supports language learning for parents of young deaf and hard of hearing children.

We will be following up to make sure these are implemented.

<https://joebiden.com/disabilities/#>

EMPLOYMENT

- The Deaf Employment Summit webinar will take place tomorrow from 1:00 to 2:00p EST. It's a free event and everyone is welcome to attend.

HEALTH CARE

No report.

HOUSING

No report.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS, INFORMATION SERVICES, AND VIDEO PROGRAMMING

- There were three filings to report. The first was an ex parte that was previously shared with us on carriers not having RTT access on their platforms. There was a meeting encouraging the FCC to take enforcement measures on the deadlines making it clear that lapses are unacceptable. FCC still has yet to make a decision.
- The second filing was with ClearCaptions, who provides captioned telephone service. ClearCaptions requested a petition to use ASR within their captioned telephone services. There were many questions on the application process and quality of ASR. ClearCaptions does not offer a toggle allowing the caller to request a live captioner.
- The FCC has talked about prison inmates making phone calls. Inmates have to use prepaid phone cards whose costs became horrendous. We felt this was the time to address Deaf inmates having access. Most Deaf inmates are still using TTYs for communication which is unacceptable. They should have access to video communication since TTYs are becoming obsolete. Additionally, Deaf inmates should not be charged for making calls. A filing has been drafted to ensure that modern equipment is provided and that TTYs alone should not be depended on. Al pointed out that the ADA requires direct access for prisoners. Zainab added that Helping Educate to Advance the Rights of Deaf

Communities (HEARD) has been brought in for this effort. The FCC sent out a new request for comments on this issue.

- Since Zoom and similar platforms do not use Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN), TRS providers are unsure if Zoom calls are reimbursable. This is also an issue for caption services as well as Remote Conference Captioning (RCC) which is increasingly being used due to the pandemic. HLAA contacted Eliot Greenwald, Deputy Chief of the Disability Rights Office at the FCC about this. Greenwald shared that the FCC is in the process of writing public notice on this issue that will be released after January 20th. Eric will be consulting with TDI's attorneys to lead in the writing of a response and starting the discussion with vendors and consumers and share experiences.
- Zainab shared that New Mexico's court system is using VRS to accommodate Deaf consumers. This is concerning since VRS interpreters may not be certified to interpret judicial cases. It may be possible to work together on a filing to request FCC to not allow VRS to be used for virtual courtroom proceedings. NAD and TDI will figure out the best strategy on submitting a filing to the FCC.

TRANSPORTATION

- A meeting between consumer advocates and the Department of Transportation (DOT) and air carriers took place on Nov. 30th. Findings and recommendations were submitted to DOT for final review. The recommendations (i.e. special service requests, storing traveler profiles, wheelchair damage issues, bulkhead seating recommendations) will actually be best practices rather than mandates.
- The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) has numerous committees including travel for people with disabilities; however, they historically have not provided interpreting for their meetings. Since CCD has new leadership in place, NAD has once again reached out to them and is optimistic.
- Several members of another group, Air Carriers Access Act Working Group, created their own transportation advocacy work group which continues to meet monthly.
- DOT released the final rules about service animals on planes. Zainab shared that these rules have been 4 years in the making and apparently they listened to what the air carriers wanted and not consumer groups.
- Eileen shared that she recently travelled to Colorado with her daughter and wrote an article about her experience.
[\(https://nvrc.org/challenges-of-traveling-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-when-you-have-a-hearing-loss/\)](https://nvrc.org/challenges-of-traveling-during-the-covid-19-pandemic-when-you-have-a-hearing-loss/)
- The issue of Deaf pilots was brought up and whether we should revisit the issue with the new administration. This can be discussed off-line with David Bahar.

OLD BUSINESS

- Mark (sec) moved that we discuss the proposed bylaw changes.
 - There was a question on Section 13 (Membership), removal of an organization and who will vote (all voting members will vote, not just the Board). There was another question on Section 14 (Compensation to Members) and the phrase about not being compensated. There is a conflict of interest statement in another section

of the bylaws. We may want to consider a new practice of asking members to complete a potential conflict of interest statement.

- The individuals who worked on the bylaw changes will discuss this proposal off-line and share with the rest of us. Afterwards we will vote via email.

Zainab wished everyone a wonderful and safe holiday season. If anyone has an announcement, feel free to share through email.

The next DHHCAN meeting will take place on Wednesday, January 6th. We'll have a guest speaker, Star Grieser of CASLI who will update us on the interpreting certification process.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.