



Louisiana Commission for the Deaf
SFY 23 Regular Commission Meeting
Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2022
9:00 am- 1:00 pm

- I. **Call to Order** – Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair, Isch at 9:05am
- A. Invocation/**Silent Prayer**
 - B. Pledge of Allegiance – Dr Heather Laine
 - C. Roll Call – Introduction of new board members: Sajata Varner, Office of Behavioral Health; Marissa Ramos, Professional working with deaf persons; Cammy Gaspar, Parent of a deaf child; Megan Wimberly, DeafBlind Representative; Dr. Natalie Delgado, Deaf Representative; Denise Crochet, La Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf; Bambi Polotzola, Governor’s Office of Disability Affairs.

Commissioners Present: Dr Ashley Argrave, Melissa Bayham, Brad Wellons, Jay Isch, Dr. Heather Laine, Davondra Brown, Dr. Natalie Delgado, Denise Crochet, Marissa Ramos, Cammy Gaspar, Sajata Varner, Bambi Polotzola, Megan Wimberly

Commissioners Not Present: Dr. Ernest Garrett, Jimmy Challis Gore, Senator Sharon Hewitt, Candice LeBlanc, House Representative Scott McKnight

LCD Staff: Jana Broussard, Shane Bates, Vanessa Magnon, Victoria Reguiera, Charlotte Parker, Brittany Welch

Interpreters: Sylvie Sullivan, Lissa Gill, Malachi Mooney

Captionist: Provided by Gulf Coast Stenography

- II. Approval of Agenda-
- A. Motion by Dr Argrave, second by Dr Laine to add the Creation of a DeafBlind Advisory Council- none opposed
 - B. Motion to by Megan Wimberly, second by Dr Delgado to add Discussion on Alternative SSP Program Funding- none opposed
- III. Approval of Minutes
- A. Minutes for April and May meeting- Motion to accept by Dr Laine, second by Davondra Brown- none opposed
- IV. Public Comments- None
- V. Reports
- A. Louisiana School for the Deaf/Special School District- Dr Heather Laine
 - 1. School started three weeks ago. Football game on Friday against Florida.



Invitation for all to attend

- B. Megan Wimberly- DeafBlind representative- Helen Keller has opened a new vocational support position in Louisiana to support jobs for DeafBlind individuals
- C. Jana Broussard- LCD Interim Executive Director- Welcome all new board members, all of which went through a 1:1 orientation recently; LCD staff focus has been largely on fiscal year closeout; LCD is now almost fully staffed; Request for Information was released seeking new Regional Service Center for Region 9. LCD will make an announcement soon regarding new contractor for that region; Reminder LCD is in the midst of an organizational assessment with Innivee Strategies to support the transition into a search for Executive Director.
- D. Shane Bates- LCD Program Manager- Budget Report-
Quarterly Report: FY 22 close out; Review of how we are funded through telecommunication tax, also receive 1million dollars from one parish; Revenues: \$3,358,701 average 3.4-3.5. Down about 3%; we spent 98% of the budget. This is average from the past 3-4 years. Our balance is about 5million. This number fluctuates.
Budget Presentation: program amount budget 2.7 million, we spent about 2.65 FY22
Legislative Update: Senate Bill 98- passed (Hewitt) updated the statutes for LCD after 40 years. Now Act 128.
Contractual Services: Hearing aids: about 1.7 million on hearing aids last year; 2AXEND: continues to finalize Best Practice for Effective Communication in Health Care Settings- should be ready soon; RFP Reminder: Affiliated Blind Louisiana for SSP services
Technology contracts: Interpreting Database Registry
Contract Renewals: Working on adding district 9 North shore once contractor is identified.
New Contracts for this year: Innivee Strategies: supporting our director search; Leadership cohort will build leadership in the Deaf community
Human Resources: New LCD Staff
Victoria Reguria: all social media, newsletter
Brittany Welch- operations, administrative team
Charlotte Parker: contracts monitor
Open position: Statewide Interpreter Policy and Program Manager

VI. Old Business

- A. Formalize Special Session Topics
 1. One-time hearing aid program budget increase approval- Motion- Dr. Argrave, second by Wellons. Ratified by Dr Argrave and Dr Laine. None opposed
 2. Approve FY23 Budget- Motion- Gore, second Davondra Brown. Ratified by Davondra Brown and Dr Argrave. None opposed
 3. Barriers Related to Deaf Leadership: Motion to request advisory opinion for potential conflicts of interest for leaders in the Deaf community. Motion by Bambi Polotzola, second by Dr Delgado. Board chose to ensure minutes were clear with regards to discussion prior to final vote to accept.
 4. To approve contract with Innivee Strategies for LCD sponsored Leadership Development cohort. Motion by Jimmy Gore, second by Davondra Brown. Ratified by Davondra Brown and Dr Laine. None opposed



5. Motion to change August meeting time from 9:00am-12:00pm to 9:00am-1:00pm. Motion by Lynne Gomez, second by Dr Argrave. Ratified by Dr Laine and Dr Delgado. None opposed

B. Barriers Related to Deaf Leadership and Provision of Services Update

1. Interim Director Broussard shared that the letter must originate from the board members themselves as to not create any conflict of interest with LCD Program staff. Members volunteer include Denise Crochet, Dr Delgado, Jay Isch. Motion to create a committee to draft a letter by Dr Laine and second by Dr Delgado. None opposed.

C. Interpreter Registry and Assessment Update

1. Interim Director Broussard- Innivee strategies has been doing state to state comparisons and their own research. Next steps: engage and collaborate with the stakeholders here in Louisiana. 6 different focus groups will be facilitated by Innivee. Please be on the lookout and help recruit participants.

VII. New Business

A. SB98- Now Act 128 Update and Rulemaking Process

1. Shane Bates, LCD Program Manager, shared timeline for rule making required by new statute revisions.
 - a. Phase I (July 1, 2022- October 31, 2022) Review first section of rule revisions
 - b. Phase II (November 1, 2022- January 31, 2023) Review second section of rule revisions
 - c. Phase III (February 1, 2023- March 31, 2023) Final complete draft to be submitted to the state and a Notice of Intent issued
2. Motion to create an adhoc committee to review revisions. Motion by Dr Laine, second by Megan Wimberly. Discussion to create second adhoc for interpreter related rule revisions. None opposed
 - a. Motion to create a second adhoc committee for interpreter related rule revisions by Bambi Polotzola and second by Denise Crochet. None opposed

B. FY23 Strategic Focus Report

1. Interim Director Broussard- LCD is undergoing an organization assessment being conducted by Innivee Strategies in preparation for the search of the LCD's next Executive Director. Search is planned to begin in January 2023. Interpreter Assessment continues as it relates to the Strategic Priority of establishing standards for interpreters working in Louisiana. Significant interpreter training is necessary to support this work. LCD has met regularly with the Department of Education to consider how best to support interpreters working in educational settings. Work as it relates to Telecommunications Equipment Distribution Program is next on agenda to discuss

C. Telecommunications Priority- TEDPA Report

1. Victoria Reguiera, LCD Marketing and Communications Officer- Telecommunication Conference was a success. LCD staff in attendance included Ms. Reguiera and Ms. Vanessa Magnon. Staff learned there is a big shift in technology coming as analog devices and services are being discontinued in light of broadband access. GUMBO- provides broadband internet to all people with disabilities and low



income households. Nationwide distribution programs are typically one of the following: owner, loaner, or voucher. LCD currently functions as a loaner program however this has caused multiple processing issues that seem to be unnecessary. LCD is researching the possibility of switching to an owner program. Research also continues on new and improved equipment. Goal is to have all in place by beginning of next fiscal year.

D. DeafBlind Advisory Committee: Added by Motion

1. Interim Director Broussard- this topic was asked to be introduced by a stakeholder in order to provide continuous input and recommendations to the LCD board as it related to the needs of DeafBlind individuals. To meet twice per calendar year. Motion was created to establish a DeafBlind Advisory Committee by Marissa Ramos and second by Dr Laine. None opposed. Jay Isch nominated DeafBlind Representative Commissioner Megan Wimberly to chair the committee, which she accepted. Marissa Ramos volunteered to be a member of the committee.

E. Alternate Funding for Support Service Provider Program: Added by Motion

1. Commissioner Wimberly- There are three options LCD should consider for supporting DeafBlind individuals without using SSP services.
 - a. Vocational Rehab support for DeafBlind looking for jobs to not have to use their personal SSP hours
 - b. Medicaid Reimbursement for medical appointments
 - c. LA Relay Administration funds for telecommunication needs such as phone calls to set up appointments, etc. for DeafBlind who currently use their personal SSP hours
2. Motion for LCD to start researching these opportunities to save DeafBlind SSP hours and funding by Marissa Ramos and second by Megan Wimberly. Davondra Brown mentioned checking with Medicaid to see if any research has already been done. None opposed

VIII. Announcements: None

IX. Adjourn: 1:07pm

Draft of minutes prepared 10/20/2022.

Minutes corrected on _____.

Jana Broussard

10/20/22

Ashley J Argrave

08/26/2022

Recorder

Date

Secretary

Date