

November 5, 2021

REMOTE MEETING OF THE ILLINOIS DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING COMMISSION

A quarterly meeting of the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission (IDHHC) was held remotely on Friday, November 5, 2021.

Call to Order

Chairperson Dennis O'Brien called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM.

Commissioners Present

Amy Blough	No	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Yes	Michael Dubowe	Yes	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Yes	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Yes	Kevin Smith	Yes		

Public

Remote Live Broadcast

Special Presentation

Eric Kaika, CEO of TDI presented on TDI, as a national nonprofit organization that shapes the nation's public policies in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to advance the interests of the 48 million Americans who are, deaf, hard of hearing, late-deafened, deafblind, and deaf with mobility issues.

Approval Meeting Minutes

Susan Dramin-Weiss moved to approve the minutes as read for the March 13, 2020, Quarterly Meeting; seconded by Lori Krakora Motion passed.

Amy Blough	Not Present	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Abstain	Michael Dubowe	Abstain	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Abstain	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Abstain	Kevin Smith	Abstain		

Susan Dramin-Weiss moved to approve the minutes as read for the May 21, 2021, Quarterly Meeting; seconded by Michael Dubowe. Motion passed.

Amy Blough	Not Present	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Abstain	Michael Dubowe	Yes	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Abstain	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Abstain	Kevin Smith	Yes		

Break

David Frazier moved to have a 10-minute break (from 2:10pm to 2:20pm); seconded by Lori Krakora. Motion passed.

Amy Blough	Not Present	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Yes	Michael Dubowe	Yes	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Yes	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Yes	Kevin Smith	Yes		

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Dennis O'Brien began the report by requesting a moment of silent for the Commission employee Janet S. Lambert who passed away in August 2021.

- Chairperson O'Brien summarized Janet Lambert's years of invaluable contribution to the agency. Her works and knowledge will be missed by the agency and the communities. The Commission appreciates everything Janet has done as Interpreter Coordinator and Assistant Director roles within the agency.
- Chairperson O'Brien acknowledged Commissioner Susan Dramin-Weiss, who is serving on an expired term, has moved out of state and today is her last meeting as a Commissioner. The Commission thanked her for years of service on the Commission.
- Chairperson O'Brien recognized it's been one year anniversary of the Director's on the job. The Chairperson also recognized the challenges the Director faced to navigate through due to the pandemic and regardless, identifies maintain the role as a Director during the difficult times.
- Chairperson O'Brien stated that the new 5-Year Strategic Plan hasn't been developed. The topic is added in the Open Discussion part of the Agenda for the Commissioners to discuss after the Director provided his report.
- Chairperson O'Brien stated because the new 5 year strategic plan hasn't been developed, Commissioners are encouraged to pay attention to the Director's reports that may reflect the action for contributions towards the development of the new 5-Year Strategic Plan.

Director's Report

Commission Director Benro Ogunyipe provided an agency report for the period from May 2021 to November 2021.

- The Director began the report by sharing the news of the loss of colleague Janet S. Lambert. Janet had been a valued member of the Commission for more than 20 years. Janet joined the agency in November 2000 as the Interpreter for the Director, then promoted to serve as an Assistant Director, and had been serving as the agency's Interpreter Coordinator for a few years.
- The Director reported the Commission is in the **General Compliance Examination** and **Cybersecurity Compliance Examination** period for 2 Years (ended June 30, 2021) by the Illinois Auditor General. It will be concluded this fall and the compliance report will be released later this year or early next year.
- The Director reported that the Commission currently has eleven (11) Commissioners. The Governor Office has filled all vacancy seats and is now moving towards replacing expired terms. Congratulations to the recent appointed Commissioners: Jean Draths, appointed on 9/10/21; and Dr. John Jun, appointed on 9/27/21. Commissioner Michael Dubowe, who was

originally appointed on 5/17/21, had his expiration term corrected and extended to 11/14/23. Five (5) Commissioners are currently serving on expired terms. Commissioner David Frazier is eligible for reappointment which will be for the term ending November 14, 2024. Four (4) Commissioners will continue serving on expired terms until Governor's Office makes new appointments: Amy Blough; Susan Dramin-Weiss Joseph Culpepper, and Lori Krakora. The Director added that the Commission continues to encourage the public, who are interested in serving on the Commission to apply at this website, www.appointments.illinois.gov

- The Director reported that as of September 7, 2021, all Commission staff have returned to work in the office full time. Appointments required for visitors. Signage on the office doors and common areas require face covering and social distancing in accordance with the CMS guidelines for state facilities.
- The Director reported that the Commission is working with CMS and building management to lease additional space adjacent to the office. The additional space allows Commission to conduct IL BEI Interpreter Testing (current conference room limits to 6 persons space under the social distancing rule). The testing is currently backlogged after a year and half suspension. The additional space is also necessary to host expanded space for in-person public meetings for 11 Commissioners (and Licensure Board), 2-4 ASL interpreters, staff, and public (visitors) when the Commission and Licensure Board returns to hosts public meetings.
- The Director reported agency headcount and the Commission experiences staffing shortage impacting agency operational needs. In the interim, Legal Counsel staff is assigned majority of the Interpreter Coordinator roles and responsibilities temporarily. Other staff are assigned with various duties of the vacant Interpreter Coordinator position until the position is filled. The Commission currently has two vacancies, the Interpreter Coordinator and Administrative Assistant I. The Commission is working with the Central Management Services (CMS) on a new state electronic HR system before the positions can be posted for interested candidates to submit their applications. Due to various factors including CMS state electronic HR system, the Commission anticipates vacant positions would be posted followed by the interviewing and hiring process in early next year.
- The Director provided the Commission Budget report: expenditure report of the FY21 budget, status on the current FY22 budget, and for the upcoming FY23 budget, the Commission is currently working with the Governor's Office of Management and Budget (GOMB) on reviewing and submitting budget requests for the Fiscal Year 2023.
- The director reported the Commission completed the grant application for the FY2022 Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) / Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) Discretionary Grants at \$80,000. On October 19, 2021, Grant was approved. As usual, the Grant will be used to host the professional development training and workshops for educational and all sign language interpreters. The Commission and ISBE continue to solidify partnership and commitment with the Special Education Grant to provide professional development opportunities as well as administering BEI testing for educational interpreters.
- The Director reported that the Commission is currently finalizing the FY21 annual report for the fiscal year period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. t three fiscal years. As statutorily mandated, the FY21 Annual Report will be released to the public on the IDHHC website, posted under the Report page before the end of the calendar year. Electronic copies will be sent in email to all Commissioners and Licensure Board members.
- The Director reported that the Commission took an action towards creating the social media account, specifically a Facebook page, following the guidelines from the Secretary of

State's Guide for Social Media Policy & Management. The Commission completed three out of five tasks prior to completing the creation of an agency Facebook page.

- The Director reported that as of October 2021, the Commission has reopened the IL BEI Interpreter Testing after a year and half suspension due to the pandemic. Both the written Test of English Proficiency (TEP) and BEI Performance on Basic, Advanced, or Master level certifications are being offered.
- The Director reported that the Illinois Short-Term Interpreter Conditional (Orange) License, which the Commission filed an emergency rulemaking with the Secretary of State in May 2021 with Licensure Board approval, was expired on October 8, 2021 after the emergency rules were effective for 150 days. The Commission will bring the discussion to the Licensure Board on the directions of the Illinois Short-Term Interpreter Conditional (Orange) License past the expiration date of emergency rules.
- The Director reported that the Commission is currently finalizing the FY21 annual report for the fiscal year period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. t three fiscal years. As statutorily mandated, the FY21 Annual Report will be released to the public on the IDHHC website, posted under the Report page before the end of the calendar year. Electronic copies will be sent in email to all Commissioners and Licensure Board members.
- The Director reported that the Commission again cancelled its Annual Interpreter Conference due to the ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. During the summer 2021, the Commission sponsored and offered alternative options for professional interpreter development opportunities. The Commission also sponsored two week-long Basic Interpreter Institutes and an Advanced Interpreter Institute. A total of 109 participants, for which 41 of them were RID certified interpreters, attended the 2021 Professional Interpreter Development Opportunities. This summer events provide an opportunity for continuing education hours to be earned as part of the Interpreters for the Deaf Licensure Act. This summer event drew both community-based interpreter, educational interpreters and students currently enrolled in Interpreter Training/Preparation Programs.
- The Director reported that the Licensure Board now has 7 full members. In June 2021, a new Board member, Kimberly Berger of Murphysboro, IL was appointed. The FY22 meeting dates for the Licensure Board have been posted on the IDHHC website: November 19, 2021; January 14, 2022; and April 8, 2022.
- The Director reported on the Commission's Collaboration, Partnership, and Technical Support with the following entities: Secretary of State, Illinois State Board of Education, DHS Division of Rehabilitation Services, DHS Division of Mental Health (DMH) & Dept of Children and Family Services (DCFS), Illinois Law Enforcement Agencies, National Association of State Agencies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, and Louisiana Lighthouse on Accessibility at Louisiana State Legislature.
- The Director stated he provided additional reports to the Commissioners: State Government Meetings; Staff Professional Development/Trainings; Outreach/Presentations; Community and Stakeholders Meetings; Commission Reports; and Legislative Bills and Resolutions.

New Business

Chairperson O'Brien opened the new business. One item in the new business is the 2022 Elections of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson. Commissioner Susan Dramin-Weiss is assigned to run the elections and nominations process.

Election of 2022 Chairperson

Commissioner Dennis O'Brien was nominated and accepted. No other candidates nominated.

Lori Krakora moved to vote Dennis O'Brien by acclamation as the 2022 Commission Chairperson; seconded by Kevin Smith. Motion passed.

Amy Blough	Not Present	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Abstain	Michael Dubowe	Yes	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Yes	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Yes	Kevin Smith	Yes		

Election of 2022 Vice Chairperson

Commissioner Lori Krakora was nominated and accepted. Commissioner Kevin Smith was nominated and declined. No other candidates nominated.

Dennis O'Brien moved to vote Lori Krakora by acclamation as the 2022 Commission Vice Chairperson; seconded by David Frazier. Motion passed.

Amy Blough	Not Present	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Abstain	Michael Dubowe	Yes	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Yes	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Yes	Kevin Smith	Yes		

Public Comment

The Commission has one public comment, a written submission from Rebecca Patton of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services which was read by Chairperson O'Brien for the record:

Hello. DCFS is looking to increase our number of sign fluent/culturally competent foster homes. We do have a need across the state, not only for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children but for all children. For more information, please contact me Rebecca Patton at Rebecca.patton@illinois.gov.

Addendum for the record: DCFS, specifically the Statewide Deaf and Blind Services Coordinator, Rebecca Patton, along with a representative from the Foster Parent Recruitment team are willing to offer a brief presentation at the next commission meeting if approved. Additionally, we would welcome any possibility to share this need via hyperlink to the foster parent interest page.

Open Discussion

- Chairperson O'Brien opened the discussion on 5-Year Strategic Plan. Chairperson O'Brien stated he requested the Director to share the previous two 5-Year Strategic Plan documents to Commissioners as an opportunity to review the previous Commission goals and outcomes. Chairperson provided an overview of the past Commission Strategic Plan, the process, the data collections across the country, the meetings with various communities

statewide, and the plan of action for systemic changes and proposals through legislatives. The Commissioners discussed, with questions and answers by the Chairperson, about the action and process on the next 5-Year Strategic Plan with the intention to implement in 2022.

Adjournment

John Jun moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:03 PM; seconded by Lori Krakora. Motion passed.

Amy Blough	Not Present	Joseph Culpepper	Yes	Susan Dramin-Weiss	Yes
Jean Draths	Yes	Michael Dubowe	Yes	David Frazier	Yes
John Jun	Yes	Lori Krakora	Yes	Dennis O'Brien	Yes
Jennifer Sender	Yes	Kevin Smith	Yes		

(Signature in file)

Chairperson

Date

(Signature in file)

IDHHC Open Meetings Act Designee

Date

