

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Special Full Commission Board Meeting

Held at – 4600 Valley Road, Room 4B, Lincoln, NE
May 11, 2026, Meeting Minutes (2:00 p.m.)

Approved 6/12/2026

A. Welcome

Chairperson John Culver called the special meeting of the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NCDHH) Full Commission Board to order on Monday, May 11, 2026, at 2:03 p.m. The meeting was held in person at the NCDHH office in Lincoln, Nebraska.

B. Notice of Open Meeting

Mr. Culver announced that notice of the meeting was duly given, posted, published, and tendered in compliance with the Open Meetings Act. All board members received notice simultaneously by email. The agenda was kept current at the NCDHH office and on the Commission's website. A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for the duration of the meeting.

C. Roll Call

Board members present:

- Ms. Candice Arteaga
- Mr. Roy Christensen
- Dr. Kay Crabtree
- Mr. John Culver, Chairperson
- Mr. Richard McCowin
- Ms. Julie Mruz
- Ms. Diane Schutt, Secretary

Board members absent:

- None

A quorum was established.

NCDHH staff present:

- None

Others present:

- Elise Wiedenfeld (Nebraska Department of Administrative Services)
- Theresa Bruns (Nebraska Department of Administrative Services)
- Laverne McCowin

Sign Language Interpreters: Sharon Sinkler and Arthur Trexler

CART services provided by Don Rombach

D. Review of Agenda

The agenda was reviewed by the board.

E. Acceptance of Agenda

Ms. Arteaga moved to accept the agenda as presented. Mr. McCowin seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Arteaga – Yes

Christensen – Yes

Crabtree – Yes

Culver – Yes

McCowin – Yes

Mruz – Yes

Schutt – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

F. Chairperson of the Board's Report

Executive Director Search – Discussion of Candidates and Selection Considerations

The board discussed the Executive Director search process and candidate selection considerations.

Closed Session:

Mr. Christensen moved to enter closed session to discuss personnel matters related to the Executive Director search. Dr. Crabtree seconded the motion.

The board entered closed session at 2:06 p.m. to discuss personnel matters related to the Executive Director search. Members of the public exited the meeting room during the closed session.

Following discussion, the board returned to open session at approximately 2:47 p.m. Mr. Culver stated that no decisions were made during closed session.

Action on Executive Director Selection

Following return to open session, Mr. Christensen moved to recommend Bryce Hendricks for appointment as the next Executive Director of the Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. Ms. Arteaga seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Arteaga – Yes

Christensen – Yes

Crabtree – Yes

Culver – Yes

McCowin – Yes

Mruz – Yes

Schutt – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

The board noted that final hiring procedures and processing would continue through State Human Resources.

Compensation for Executive Director

Mr. McCowin moved to recommend a starting salary of \$85,000 for Bryce Hendricks based on the candidate's experience and education. Ms. Arteaga seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Arteaga – Yes

Christensen – Yes

Crabtree – Yes

Culver – Yes

McCowin – Yes

Mruz – Yes

Schutt – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

Onboarding Expectations (30/60/90 Days)

The board discussed onboarding expectations and possible start date considerations for the incoming Executive Director. Discussion included a potential June 1, 2026 start date, the timing of the new fiscal year, and the board's desire to provide support to agency staff as soon as possible. Board members also discussed the importance of allowing the incoming Executive Director time to become familiar with the agency prior to the June 12, 2026 Full Commission Board Meeting.

Additional discussion occurred regarding board committees and future committee assignments. Mr. Culver noted that committee structure and assignments would be determined in collaboration with the incoming Executive Director and in accordance with board bylaws.

G. Public Comment

Public comment was opened.

No public comments were offered.

Public comment was closed.

H. Adjourn

Mr. Christensen moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Arteaga seconded the motion.

Roll call vote:

Arteaga – Yes

Christensen – Yes

Crabtree – Yes

Culver – Yes

McCowin – Yes

Mruz – Yes

Schutt – Yes

Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:53 p.m.