

Nebraska Sign Language Interpreter Review Board Meeting

Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Nebraska Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
4600 Valley Rd, Classroom 4B, Lincoln, NE

DRAFT 2/26/26

NCDHH staff present:

- Kim Davis, Interim Executive Director
- Cindy Woldt, Administrative Technician
- Kendall Couture, Communications and Marketing Specialist

Interpreters present:

- Sharon Sinkler and Arthur Trexler

Members of the public present:

- Karen Weverka and Norm Weverka
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A. Welcome

The meeting of the Nebraska Interpreter Review Board was called to order by Chairperson Meghann Cassidy at 1:03 PM.

B. Notice of Open Meetings Act

Chairperson Meghann Cassidy announced the notice of the meeting was duly given, posted, published, and tendered in compliance with the Open Meetings Act, and all board members received notice simultaneously by email. The agenda has been kept current and available at the Commission's office and on their website. The materials generally used by the board for this meeting were available in a public folder in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, {Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-1412 (8)}. A copy of the Open Meetings Act was available for the duration of the meeting.

C. Roll Call

For the record, board members Vonda Apking, Meghann Cassidy, Kim Davis, Margie Propp, Tami Richardson-Nelson, and Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell were present.

Shawn Shannon and Briana Stradinger were absent.

D. Review of Agenda

Chairperson Meghann Cassidy reviewed the agenda with the board members.

E. Acceptance of Agenda

Ms. Margie Propp moved to accept the agenda. Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell seconded. With no further discussion, the motion passed, with two members absent.

F. Acceptance of Minutes

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Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson moved to approve the minutes. Ms. Margie Propp seconded. With no further discussion, the motion passed, with two members absent.

G. Chairperson Updates

1. NCDHH Interpreter Roundtable

The Board reviewed the minutes from the recent NCDHH Interpreter Roundtable. Members expressed concern that progress may have stalled following the resignation of former Executive Director Kyle Miers.

Discussion included interpreter workforce shortages, noting that the University of Nebraska Omaha graduates an average of four interpreters per year, which may not be sufficient to address upcoming retirements. Roundtable participants included courts, healthcare systems, and educational institutions, many of whom expressed willingness to collaborate with UNO on mentorship, shadowing opportunities, and expanded fieldwork access.

The Board expressed the importance of IRB representation at future roundtables. It was also noted that the Olmstead State Plan includes collecting census data on interpreter numbers.

2. Proposed Plans for IRB

a. Review of Title 96 Rules & Regulations

The Board discussed initiating a review of Title 96 Rules and Regulations and relevant state statutes governing the IRB, with particular focus on clarifying voting procedures and member role responsibilities.

Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson moved to establish a subcommittee for the purpose of reviewing and proposing potential updates to the Rules and Regulations. Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell seconded. The motion passed, with two members absent and Ms. Kim Davis abstaining.

Subcommittee members identified were Vonda Apking, Norm Weverka, and Shawn Shannon (pending confirmation). Chairperson Meghann Cassidy volunteered to serve as a non-voting participant.

Ms. Kim Davis stated she would confirm that the IRB has the authority to establish such a subcommittee and clarify procedural requirements.

b. Top Priorities for Incoming Executive Director

The Board agreed to use Roundtable minutes to identify top priorities for the incoming Executive Director by the next meeting.

Additional discussion included:

- Clarifying the interpreter complaint process and ensuring Board members feel prepared to review complaints.
- Exploring use of the secure IRB portal on the NCDHH website to review licensure materials in advance.
- Considering development of an ASL video explaining the complaint process.
- Recognizing that NCDHH currently does not have staff credentials to conduct complaint investigations internally.

A previously discussed concept of creating a complaint-specific subcommittee was revisited. After discussion, the Board determined the idea was moot at this time.

H. NCDHH Updates

Presented by Kim Davis, Interim Executive Director.

1. Agency Updates

Ms. Davis confirmed the resignation of Kyle Miers as Executive Director and stated the full Commission Board would meet on March 13 to discuss next steps in the search process.

The Board briefly discussed whether the Commission would again use Innivee Strategies as a consultant; Ms. Davis clarified that decision rests with the full Board.

2. Licensure Numbers

The Board reviewed current interpreter licensure and Video Remote Interpreter (VRI) provider numbers. It was noted that Nebraska has entered a new two-year renewal period.

Discussion included careful wording regarding reliance on out-of-state interpreters, particularly in border cities such as Council Bluffs, Iowa.

The Board also discussed the possibility of transferring licensure responsibilities to the State. Members expressed that such a change would require statutory revisions and could alter or eliminate the IRB's role. After discussion, the Board determined the issue was moot and affirmed that complaints remain under IRB authority.

3. Survey of Nebraska Licensed Interpreters & VRI Businesses

The Board acknowledged the survey, with responses due March 1, 2026.

4. VRI License Reinstatement – Closed Session

Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson moved to enter closed session at 2:19 PM. Ms. Margie Propp seconded. The motion passed, with two members absent.

The Board returned to open session at 2:38 PM.

Ms. Margie Propp moved to table the matter discussed in closed session until additional information is available. Ms. Vonda Apking seconded. The motion passed, with two members absent.

I. Public Comments

Mr. Norm Weverka provided public comment regarding two topics:

1. Confidentiality of Complaint Information

Mr. Weverka expressed concern about complaint details being presented to the full Commission Board in open meetings, stating that complaint specifics should remain confidential within the IRB. He emphasized his respect for the IRB's authority and expressed that final decisions should not be revisited by the full Board.

2. Interpreter Shortage and CEU Costs

Mr. Weverka raised concerns about interpreter shortages and the financial burden of continuing education units (CEUs), particularly for Deaf Interpreters. He suggested the IRB consider recommending prioritization of affordable or free CEU opportunities.

Ms. Margie Propp suggested adding confidentiality concerns to the list of priorities for the incoming Executive Director.

J. Old Business

No old business was discussed.

K. New Business

1. Nebraska Supreme Court CEU Requirement

The Board discussed the Nebraska Supreme Court's requirement of 20 annual CEUs for court interpreters, compared to the IRB's requirement of 24 CEUs over two years. The Board agreed to seek clarification from the Judicial Branch regarding alignment of requirements. Chairperson Meghann Cassidy will initiate contact.

2. Shawn Shannon IRB Reappointment

Mr. Shannon's appointment has expired, and he has expressed interest in reappointment. The matter will be presented to the full Commission Board for consideration at the March 13 meeting.

The Board discussed term limits. Ms. Davis clarified that members serve three-year terms, with a maximum of two terms. Chairperson Cassidy requested full clarification of current term statuses by the next meeting.

3. 2026 Next Meeting Date

The next IRB meeting will be held virtually via Zoom on Friday, May 22, 2026, from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM.

L. Announcements

No announcements.

M. Adjourn

Ms. Tami Richardson-Nelson moved to adjourn the meeting at 3:05 PM. Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell seconded. With no further discussion, the motion passed, with two members absent.