

Nebraska Sign Language Interpreter Review Board Meeting

Final, approved September 6, 2024

Thursday, June 6, 2024

Zoom

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85664997144?pwd=OWIXLPLczQGYCL6d5enmV5YGpMIT52.1>

A. Welcome

The meeting of the Nebraska Interpreter Review Board was called to order by Chairperson Meghann Cassidy at 2:04 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 are on the table in a public folder that is available to the general public for this meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act, {Neb. Rev. Stat. 84-1412 (8)}. A copy of the Open Meetings Act is available with the public folder for the duration of the meeting in accordance with the Open Meetings Act.

C. Roll Call

For the record, board members Meghann Cassidy, Tami Richardson-Nelson, Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell, and Briana Stradinger were present. NCDHH Management Kim Davis and Admin Specialist Gina Petersen were also present. Board Member Margie Propp showed up at 2:58 PM

Interpreters: Ben Sparks and Roxanne Petersen

Minutes: Gina Petersen

D. Review of Agenda

Chairperson Meghann Cassidy reviewed the agenda with the Board Members.

E. Acceptance of Agenda

Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell moved to accept the agenda as written, seconded by Ms. Briana Stradinger. With no further discussion, the motion carried with all voting ayes.

F. Acceptance of Minutes

There were no changes suggested. Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell made the motion to approve, seconded by Mrs. Tami Richardson-Nelson. With no further discussion, the motion carried with all voting ayes.

G. Chairperson Updates (Meghann Cassidy, Chairperson)

a. Board meeting results – Task Force Establishment

- **Next steps?**

- Chairperson Meghann Cassidy shared with the group that the NCDHH full board accepted the IRB's recommendation to set up a task force to address the interpreter shortage throughout Nebraska. Full Board Chairperson Frances Beurivage has asked for clarification on what exactly the task force would address, noting that there have been some complaints regarding unlicensed interpreters.

Chairperson Cassidy opened up discussion to the group, asking for first steps in establishing a taskforce. Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell suggested looking at information that is already there from previous taskforces and the community forum, as well as taking a look at what has and hasn't worked in the past and potentially getting other programs involved like the UNO Interpreting Program. Chairperson Cassidy asked if access to previous information could be made available, to which Ms. Kim Davis responded that she could try and track it down. Ms. Davis also suggested looking at previous meeting minutes as well, for both the IRB and the Full Board meetings.

Chairperson Cassidy suggested tabling the discussion of taskforce establishment until more information is tracked down.

Mrs. Tami Richardson-Nelson brought up the idea of consulting the recent findings from the community forum and relating it to the data that is found from previous taskforces.

Chairperson Cassidy asked the group who should be involved in the taskforce, to which Mrs. Tami Richardson-Nelson responded that she likes the idea of UNO getting involved. There is also the case of who in the IRB would serve on the taskforce, to which Chairperson Cassidy volunteered. Mrs. Richardson-Nelson suggested possible getting a deaf/blind representative to serve as well.

Discussion on diversity of chosen representatives

Chairperson Cassidy asked the group who will contact each party. Chairperson Cassidy offered to reach out to the UNO interpreting Program and Allies for Sign as well as neRID. Chairperson Cassidy suggest that Ms. Gina Petersen reach out to the Deaf Interpreters

of Nebraska. Ms. Richardson-Nelson offered to reach out to Nancy Flearl from the Nebraska Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Ms. Gina Petersen asked the group if a script or letter should be developed for distribution to the parties that will be offered a position. Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell agreed that a script could work, but first the history and data should be gathered so that participants have something to work with.

Chairperson Cassidy proposed that in between now and the next meeting the old information can be found and a letter requesting representatives to join the taskforce can be developed via email. Ms. Kim Davis suggested that the letter come from the chairperson, to which Chairperson Cassidy agreed.

Ms. Kim Davis suggested recruiting Friends of the Blind if Nancy Flearl is not available to represent the deaf/blind community.

Discussion on potential deaf/blind representatives

Chairperson Cassidy stated that she will develop a draft letter template and next meeting a timeline can be decided.

Chairperson Cassidy mentioned that Full Board Chair Frances Beurivage is concerned with the interpreter complaint process as has asked to know the procedures. Ms. Gina Petersen explained using examples that when a complaint shows up it is first acknowledged and an initial investigation begins, after which the complaint is usually dropped. However, if the complaint is not dropped it then is moved up to the IRB. In the past when Ms. Sharon Sinkler was in the interpreter program coordinator role, an outside investigator was made available to be used for such claims.

Discussion on interpreter complaints

Chairperson Cassidy suggested Ms. Stradinger develop a resource to share on how to file a complaint, provided in ASL and English. Ms. Stradinger stated that she could take it on, but needed to find someone to champion the idea. Ms. Davis suggested looking at what is already provided on the NCDHH website and see what could be changed or improved. MS. Steinhauer-Campbell

suggested staying in communication by keeping up an email chain, which she would begin.

Mrs. Tami Richardson-Nelson suggested reaching out to Ms. Vonda Apking, who may know what can and can't be done in regards to spreading information about the complaint process.

Ms. Cassidy asked if there were any more comments or suggestions regarding the task force or Chairperson Beurivage's concerns regarding the complaint process, to which Ms. Gina Petersen mentioned that if Full Board Chairperson Beurivage needs a written report of the complaint procedure outline, NCDHH has a draft document.

H. NCDHH Updates – Kim Davis

a. Agency Updates

Ms. Kim Davis reminded the group that Ms. Gina Petersen is now the licensing specialist for NCDHH, and asked her to provide an update on the licensing front.

Ms. Gina Petersen shared with the group that Nebraska VRI business licenses are due June 30th, 2024. Currently Nebraska has about fifteen VRI business licenses to renew, and so far no new applications have come in. Ms. Petersen mentioned her goal to maintain updated contact information for the VRI businesses, since two years in between renewals is a long time without contact.

Ms. Petersen briefly discussed the aforementioned interpreter complaints that came in, explaining that both were ultimately found baseless.

Ms. Kim Davis introduced NCDHH's new Behavioral Health Coordinator, Ms. Sakura Yodogawa-Campbell. Ms. Yodogawa-Campbell expressed her appreciation for being in this new role and explained that she has been an advocate in the Deaf/HOH community for over thirty-five years and has worked with many of the IRB members in the past for training and advocacy. In this role Ms. Yodogawa-Campbell stated that she gets to put all her experience and skills into one neat little package.

Ms. Kim Davis mentioned that the Full Commission board is in search of a new executive director and is in contact with Innivee Strategies to get that done. Ms. Davis and co-manager Kelsey Cruz are taking the lead in the meantime to keep the agency running smoothly.

I. Public Comments

J. Old Business

K. New Business

- a. Next Meeting Dates: September 6th (Omaha OAD) 1:00 – 3:00 PM, December 6th (Lincoln) 1:00 to 3:00 PM

L. Announcements

- a. Mrs. Tami Richardson-Nelson announced that ASL Game night will be hosted tomorrow evening, June 7, 2024, and is hosted the first Friday of every month. There will be no game night in July due to the Fourth of July happening right around then. Mrs. Richardson Nelson mentioned that she wants to encourage the Commission to get more involved in these game nights one or two times a year, as well as pulling in some interpreters, as oftentimes students are there to learn. Chairperson Cassidy mentioned reaching out to Pam Duncan to get more populations involved, and possibly NAD as well.

M. Adjourn

- a. Mrs. Tami Richardson-Nelson made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:04 PM, seconded by Ms. Vicki Steinhauer-Campbell. With no further discussion, the motion carried with all voting ayes.