

**Georgia Commission for the Deaf or Hard of Hearing**  
**Thursday, April 29, 2021**  
**1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**  
**Virtual - Zoom**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Ms. Jennifer Clark, Dr. Chip Goldsmith, Dr. Jiovanne Hughart, Ms. Kelly Jenkins, Dr. Beth Lytle, Dr. Amy Lederberg, Mr. Jimmy Peterson, Ms. Ellen Rolader, Ms. Dana Tarter, Ms. Deshonda Washington, and Mr. Comer Yates

**Members Absent:** Dr. Stacey Tucci

**Guests:** Dr. Brandt Culpepper, Yann Baguet, Debbie Brillling, Ibrahim Dabo

**Interpreters:** Dean Evans, Chip Penland

**I. Call to Order and Welcome**

Kelly Jenkins call to order of her first meeting as chairperson of the Commission.

Introduction of Ibrahim Dabo who was attending as a guest of the meeting. He began experiencing hearing loss in 2013 and since then began learning about hearing loss and is wanting to be more involved with advocacy and being able to be involved with a group that is working towards helping people with hearing loss in terms of education and advocacy.

Recognition of Comer Yates who served as former Commission Chair. A gift of recognition was presented to him and Mr. Yates shared a few words.

He has agreed to stay on as an ex-officio position for the Commission.

**II. Vote on meeting minutes**

Motion to approve: Chip Goldsmith  
all in favor

No opposed

Minutes will be posted on the GaCDHH webpage

**III. GaCDHH Logo**

Yann Baguet, who is a graphic designer at the Department of Human Services, presented the logo for the Commission.

He provided 3 options of the commission logo.

1. Circle with gold dome
2. Circle with gold dome and blue ridge mtns
3. Tree logo

Mr. Baguet will send logos to Commissioner Jenkins to share with the rest of the Commission members.

Commissioner Jenkins will continue to receive feedback from other Commission members offline, will send to Mr. Baguet any changes to the logo, if needed, and will decide on a logo based on the feedback.

#### **IV. Vlogs**

Commissioner Ellen Rolader presented on updates regarding accessibility for some of the public health information/services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community.

As a result of the Town Hall meetings in November 2020, many Deaf and Hard of Hearing persons are not able to access government or public information particularly concerning transportation, housing, and COVID-19.

For example, when they are trying to apply for SSI or Social Security, they would have a 20-page application that they would have to read and understand before they can sign anything.

So, one solution that participants agreed on was to have videos or Vlogs as well as closed captioning for any Georgia government related written documents/press releases/conferences that are in spoken or written in English.

Some of the topics that were discussed were: COVID-19, SS Applications, Driver's license protocols, obtaining food stamps, housing, transportation, Medicaid/Health Insurance.

A meeting was held with the North Carolina Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/dsdhh>)

In the meeting, it was learned that:

- A person was hired as media production manager to oversee all the vlogs created (Deaf with a background in media production)
- Free YouTube account
- Software licenses to be able to get the CC on the videos
- Hire media technicians from Temporary Solutions
- Use Deaf signers of various ethnic backgrounds
- Use staff interpreters or hire outside interpreters to voice interpreter during the creation of the vlogs (Interpreters should match the ethnic backgrounds of the Deaf signers – Deaf male signers need male interpreters voicing, black Deaf signers need black interpreters voicing)
- Vlogs are posted on their commission website
- Vlog links are sent to various agencies to post on their website (They can't get credit for it and/or make any changes) and the link would send them directly to the Vlog site.

Commissioner Rolader then contacted Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) about the ASL Vlogs regarding COVID-19 on their website.

-After communicating with GA DHS, the National Association for the Deaf (NAD) contacted CDC here in GA and requested that the CDC provide VLogs for the Deaf Community re: the pandemic on their

website.

-Brandt Culpepper, Georgia's EHDI Coordinator, received a memo from Marcus Gaffney who works with the CDC and EHDI asking her to be sure these vlogs were placed on the DHS website. She sent this info to the DHS communications department and Eugene Rhee was the one that got them posted.

Commissioner Jimmy Peterson shared information that he obtained from a National Association of State Agencies for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (NASADHH) participant from Virginia connecting him to Marc Mancher from Deloitte who helped set up the Virginia Commission for the Deaf of Hard of Hearing ASL Call Center. This call center is related to COVID-19 vaccinations and he will share the information he receives from this meeting with Mr. Mancher.

There are also many blogs that had been made by the Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD) that share lots of information.

But just as the DHS has a communications department, each one of these agencies has a communications department and they should include various things so that we not only have spoken language but sign language, braille, large print. It needs to be accessible to all.

Eugene Rhee shared about budgeting for Vlogs as it may be supported by the DHS budget for the Commission however, the Commission will need to provide detailed, concrete information in terms of how the Vlogs are going to be done, i.e. how many, topics, where they will be housed, production. Once these details are confirmed, this will be presented to the DHS leadership requesting that Vlogs be added to the annual budget (at least for interpreter costs). Production costs may not be part of the budget and if so, the Commission will need to find ways to cover the production costs.

If there are any questions regarding this or if anyone would like to be involved they should contact either Commissioner Rolader or Commissioner Peterson.

## **V. Cobb Co Policy Dept / traffic stop protocol**

Commissioner Jennifer Clark reported on an update regarding traffic stop protocol for Deaf persons.

As a result of the November Town Hall meeting regarding transportation, it was brought up about what it looks like for a traffic stop by a police officer for a Deaf or Hard of Hearing person.

Commissioner Clark spoke with a Cobb County police officer and asked for guidance or assistance on who to speak with about this issue. It turns out that the police officer's son has moderate hearing loss so the police officer was willing to share information she knew.

Regarding driver's licenses, there is nothing on the driver's license that can indicate a person with hearing loss according to the Department of Driver Services (DDS); only for vision.

Commissioner Clark will research further concerning this.

Regarding the license plate of a car, the officer said that will not work because there will be no way to determine who is driving the car.

One suggestion from the officer is having a card you can give to the police officer indicating the hearing loss.

Commissioner Clark is wanting to create a bridge between the police department and the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community and making sure that DHH persons needs are met.

The officer said that there is a Manual for the Cobb County Police Department so Commissioner Clark

will obtain the manual and see what the manual says and find out if there is step by step information and how it can apply to the DHH community.

Commissioner Clark suggested possibly inviting a police officer to the Commission meeting to discuss procedures to help the DHH community.

Commissioner Jimmy Peterson suggested that possibly inviting someone from DDS who makes decisions and ask them about the license. Commissioner Peterson used to live in Alabama and on his driver's license, it identified him as a person with hearing loss.

Commissioner Ellen Rolader commented that it would be a good discussion to have regarding identification of a DHH person in case of an emergency especially in regards to first responders.

For the driver's license, maybe it could be something voluntary, like organ donation, for those that want to indicate DHH?

Ms. Debbie Brillling commented about putting this information on the driver's license and that some people may be reluctant unless they know that they will not be responsible should they be in an accident whether if they were at fault or not. It would be the same as some people not indicating that they wear glasses for fear of being possibly responsible if driving without glasses. Want to make sure that there is not liability or backlash for disclosing this information.

Commissioner Rolader will provide information regarding first responders to Commissioner Clark.

## **VII. Workgroup Stakeholder group chair assignments**

Commissioner Kelly Jenkins is looking to formalize the work of the Commission and is looking to possibly raise funds and to create a committee structure that will enable everyone to participate as well as engaging stakeholders.

Commissioner Jenkins shared a Powerpoint presentation regarding Committee Appointments and Term Limits

### **Commission Commitments:**

Commission members should adhere to the following commitments upon appointment:

-Minimum attendance of 3 out of the 4 quarterly Commission Meetings (either remote or in person – extenuating circumstances apply)

-Commissioners should be a member of 1 (preferably 2) of the Committees as defined by our DHH Human Rights Strategy

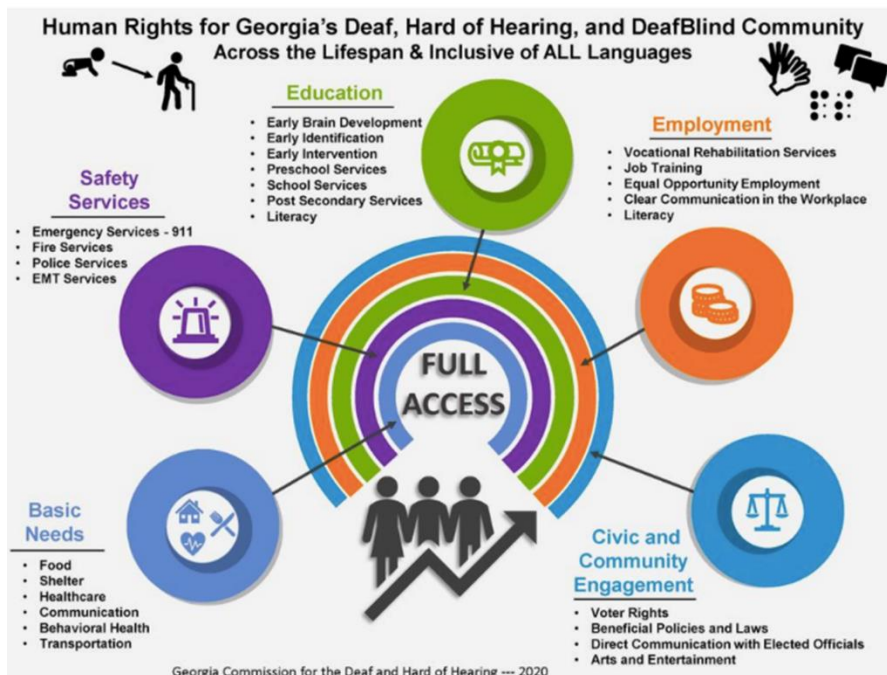
Commissioners can be in as many committees as desired.

### **Committee Roles and Responsibilities:**

Committees should appoint a chair and meet a minimum of 7 times each calendar year between the quarterly meetings per the following schedule:

-July 29,2021 – Quarterly Meeting

- 2 committee meetings (August, September)
  - October 14, 2021 – Quarterly Meeting
    - 1 committee meeting (November or December)
  - January TBD – Quarterly Meeting
    - 2 committee meetings (February, March)
  - April TBD – Quarterly Meeting
    - 2 committee meetings (May, June)
- Committees can decide exactly when the meetings will take place. However, if an interpreter is needed for these meetings, it will need to be requested.
- Committee will identify 2-3 initiatives which align with the DHH Human Rights Strategy (possible initiatives identified in the Townhall summary document)
- Committee shall engage Stakeholders to participate and individuals within the community as appropriate. Since the Commissioners have term limits and will not be in a committee or in the Commission for the long term, it will be important to engage the community so that future Commissioners can be identified. As a reminder, all meetings are open to the public and need as many people as possible helping to reach the goals of the Commission.
- Chair will give 10-15 minute report at each Commission meeting



The purpose of this strategy is to remind and to communicate the vision of the Commission. The desire is to create a dashboard of sorts that synthesizes the work of the Commission, to identify points and places where escalation is needed and to be able to effectively report to the Governor and to the General Assembly.

### **Three Committees to Choose From:**

Basic Needs / Safety Services

\*Ellen Rolader, Jimmy Peterson

Education

\*Deshonda Washington, Jennifer Clark, Amy Lederberg, Ellen Rolader, Beth Lytle

Employment/Civic and Community Engagement

- Jimmy Peterson, Dana Tarter

At Large

\*Kelly Jenkins, Stacey Tucci, Comer Yates, Eugene Rhee

Commissioner Jenkins' focus will be on trying to build relationships with elected officials within the legislature to assist with the causes of the Commission.

### **Committee Appointments:**

-Commission members should indicate the committees they are interested in participating in by May 6th

-After this date appointments will be made

Request was made to Commissioners to respond by May 6, 2021 to indicate which committee each Commissioner is to participate in.

### **VIII. GCDHH Terms limits**

#### **Term Limits:**

-Several individuals are coming up on term limits

-If you have documentation please send email with your initial date of appointment

-Members of the community have expressed an interest in applying for Commission appointments

-You will be contacted within the week with regards to your respective term limits and your desire to continue on the Commission with regards to term limits and going forward Commitment expectations

Commissioner Clark, on a side note, mentioned the voice tech industry, which is a new industry, and keeping an eye on this type of technology as it impacts the DHH community and the ASL user.

In terms of legislation regarding the term limits of each Commissioner: each Commissioner shall serve a three-year term and no member shall serve more than two consecutive terms.

Commissioner Jenkins conducted a poll on the Zoom platform to the Commissioners about how the meetings, moving forward will be conducted whether in-person or virtual. Since the cost of the interpreters differ for in-person versus virtual, it will need to be determined how the meetings will be conducted.

Once results have been received, it will be determined how the meetings will take place.

### **IX. Viewing Party**

There has been an increase in the entertainment industry regarding the topic of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing or DeafBlind

There is a short film (25 minutes) called Feeling Through, that was nominated at the Academy Awards. It is about a deaf blind man and a man who became homeless and the interaction between the two of them and how they communicate with each other.

Commissioner Jenkins proposed having some sort of online viewing party for the community to show the film and watch together and then to communicate to those in the party about the Commission's work, have a panel to answer questions from the community.

There is a survey being done in Minnesota about the needs of the DeafBlind population and Commissioner Jenkins reached out to the company that is facilitating the survey and they will share the results of the survey in July.

Regarding the DeafBlind community, it should be asked of Commissioner Dana Tarter what she believes the DeafBlind community needs and it should lead with her to give that guidance.

The results of the poll determined a split between virtual meetings and a hybrid format (virtual and in-person) of the meetings

A discussion took place about the challenges of the hybrid format:

- How will the interpreter work? Will the interpreter be virtual or in-person with a camera on the interpreter for those needing an interpreter virtually?
- Those that are virtual may not be able to see everyone in the in-person meeting and vice versa.
- Will a big screen be needed to see all the virtual participants?
- For those who come to the in-person meeting to each bring their own laptop so that the virtual participants can see each of the in-person participants.

Another suggestion was to have all formal meetings virtual and then have one or two in-person informal meetings to socialize and see each other face to face.

**Meeting adjourned: 2:45pm**