

**FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL
FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING**
Quarterly Meeting
Tallahassee, Florida
Friday, February 9, 2018
8:00 a.m.

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>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are we ready with the phones? Is there anybody on the phone? Anybody on the chat or phone?

>> CINDY SIMON: There's at least three of us on the phone.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, good. Cindy and who else?

[No response].

>> CINDY SIMON: I think Darlene is on. Oh, it just got quiet. And I think --

>> JULIE CHURCH: Julie's on.

>> CINDY SIMON: -- Julie is on the CART.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, great. We'll go ahead and start. Good morning, this is February 9th, this the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, we'll have a roll call. We'll start with the people on the phone first.

>> JULIE CHURCH: Hi, I'm Julie Church from Dunedin, Florida.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: Cindy Simon from South Florida representing audiologists.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Darlene.

>> DARLENE LAIBL-CROWE: Hi, this is Darlene, I am on the Council as an individual that is deaf-blind and I represent the Florida Deaf-Blind Association.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina Halliburton, representing the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, I live in Jacksonville. And good morning.

>> DEBRA KNOX: This is Debra Knox, I am representing A.G. Bell Florida. I live in Oviedo.

>> DONNA DRAKE: Good morning, this is Donna Drake, I represent FAD, the Florida Association of the Deaf, and I live in St. Augustine.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Good morning, this is Glenna Ashton, I represent the Florida Association of the Deaf from Boca Raton.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Good morning, my name is Debbe Hagner, I live in Port Richey, Florida, and I represent HLAA.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Good morning, this is Chris Littlewood, I represent the Association of Late-Deafened Adults and work for St. Petersburg College.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: Good morning, everyone, this is Cecil Bradley representing the Florida Department of Education and I work for the Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation and live in Tallahassee.

>> JOHN JACKSON: Good morning, this is John Jackson, I represent the Department of Children and Families and I live in Tallahassee, Florida.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: Good morning, this is Megan Callahan representing the Florida Department of Health.

>> SHAYLA KELLY: Good morning, this is Shayla Kelly representing the Florida Department of Health and I live in Tallahassee, Florida.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And we have our wonderful team with Lisa Johnston on CART; Adam, Tamara, Rebekah, Diane, and Patrick. And we also have a visitor, Olivia who is Debra's daughter and she is taking ASL now, so....

>> ALL: Yay!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Do we have any leftover thing to discuss from yesterday before we move on for today?
I know there are some things that people said they wanted to discuss this morning; do you all remember?

[No response].

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina, I was wondering, can we all, since we're all face-to-face agree on the next EMO conference so we can get the letters together earlier? Last time we had to postpone it because people were busy. Can we kind of pick a date before we leave today?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sure.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I am proposing Friday, March 9th. No? Okay. Well, rather than hold up the meeting, everybody just send your blackout dates, send your blackout, the dates that you're not available, and then I'll come up with a date and send it to Megan and we'll get that done.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: How about March 1st?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: That's fine with me.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I can do March 1st.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: March 1st is a Thursday. No? Okay. Like I said, rather than hold up --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: March 2nd?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: That's a Friday, March 2nd. That's fine. No? Okay.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan, if everyone could send me -- if we're wanting to do March, if everyone can just send me blackout dates, like Gina was saying, in March, that will make it easier and we can decide from there. If you'll get that to me by, let's say, 4:00 p.m. Thursday, next Thursday, which would be the 15th, we can get that scheduled.

>> DEBRA KNOX: This is Debra, if I could make a suggestion? Because for me it's not, like, usually it's not, like, a whole day, I have certain time blocks that would be available.

But one idea I know I use at the office is I send a Doodle poll with certain dates and times and everyone can respond to availability and we can find a date and time when people are available. That way you're working the other way. Just a suggestion.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: And also, it might be a good idea to push it back a little bit so that you can put your suggestions in the OneDrive first, and that way when we have the conference, we could just have the finished product, instead of going back and forth. Because we had a lot of comments yesterday.

And so if you have suggestions as to where you want to send it, we talked about sending the letter to the hotels about the accessibility issues.

So if you have accessibility issues, you should put that in the OneDrive and we can just do a whole blast as to what would make it better.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. I'm a little bit confused, because I don't want -- or personally I don't want to see the whole Council reviewing and reviewing and reviewing the letters and they get delayed sent.

But I absolutely trust your judgment, Gina, and your expertise to get the letters out. If they don't include every little nitpicky thing we want, that's okay. I think it's more

important to get information out.

[Karen Goldberg enters the room].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I know for me personally, it's very busy, I have a lot of teaching and traveling and I don't know how available I'm going to be and I don't want to hold the letter going out because you're waiting for me to review it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Karen Goldberg has arrived and she is here. Also for the Biennial Committee, the Executive Committee is me, Debra, Megan, we are meeting monthly on video call to start planning the report.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan. Am I correct in thinking that the biennial report consists of more than just three of us, right? We established a --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, also Cindy and Julie have said that they would help with editing it, that's kind of them, but we still have to sort out the process first before we have something to show them. Cindy and Julie said they would help with the editing part. Unless they want to get involved from the start.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Has anyone had any further thoughts about yesterday's discussion from Reverend Mark and public comment? Because he's the new guy in town, I sorta want to investigate and find out more about him. You know, he said a few things and I'm, like.... hmm.... I would want to learn more about him first.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: This is Cecil. A brief comment about Mark. I saw him at the Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness in South Carolina, I believe it was two or three years ago, I did a presentation about prisons. He was representing the HEARD organization and they, as a group, they travel around and work with Deaf prisoners and making sure they're not being neglected and the like. There are a lot of sad scenes.

I know there was one full ward that has Deaf prisoners, it's a full ward, it's a big prison in Texas.

In Florida, remember the Felix Garcia situation, I believe he was transferred over to Virginia.

But then there was a swap that actually happened as well that one from that area came down to Florida.

But he's very, very involved with the HEARD organization and I've seen his name and he's been on my radar for the past couple of years.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you.

>> DONNA DRAKE: This is Donna. Maybe I should -- you know, there are people in the Panhandle area, there are interpreters, there are some who are professors and

teachers, leaders, that would be able to help and maybe we can put some of those people in touch with him, because what he was saying, it makes it sound like there's no one there, the way we're kind of talking about it, but there are people there already leading in the area in that community and we can put those people in touch with him and help him out.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: This is Cecil again, I think it was maybe three or four years ago, we had a visit in the northwest area and it was very encouraging and positive.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Cindy says easy to -- easier to check along the way than do a massive work at the end. I'm happy to do whatever you want.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you, Cindy.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan. I also wanted to add, I just looked through the council members and saw that Debra and Mary are also on the Biennial Report Committee, is that correct? Are you okay?

>> DEBRA KNOX: That's fine.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: [Laughs]. I think when we established this, it was last May, so I just wanted to remind everyone.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> DONNA DRAKE: This is Donna. Is it possible for you to send out maybe a list again of who's on which committee? I know we kind of get confused on who's on which committees. Is it possible to have that list sent out?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Maybe you can add that as a permanent thing with the package so we can keep reminding ourselves if it's in here.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It's on tab two.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is it?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh!

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan, on tab two is the council members and underneath their names has which committee they're on. So I can make a separate list of names to make it easier if you would like.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Just remind us to look there.

[Laughter].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Is there anything more you need to know for February 2019?

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: [Shakes head].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We're done? Okay.

Do any of the other committees want to say anything more from yesterday or any new thoughts you had?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbe. I was wondering, do we have to make a motion to accept the resignation of.... the person who.... no?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No.

When I go home, I plan to work on contacting -- and I know I'm not allowed to contact the appointment officer, but Megan can check and see what happened with the application that they lost before, she said she applied again, the CART person, I don't know if she applied at all or not, and maybe Lisa, you can suggest some names? Or we can contact Gayl and see if she can suggest some names. And the parent, the one I'm thinking of, I'll ask her.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan. I did send those names over to the Governor's Office and I spoke with them. And right now they are busy doing appointments for, like, the Medical Board and those types of boards, and then they're coming back, because now those appointments are coming up where they have to fill those.

So, after that, they're coming back to the Council's.

So, they.... [Sighs].... they can't tell me, really, the applications that they received and who they have received, but just know that -- I mean, they are taking the applications; it might just take a little longer for them to get back.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: They'll get to it whenever they get to it [laughs].

They're appointing a board that has some power and we don't have any power.... Okay.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris, with regard to the Web Committee, I just wanted to say, once again, and I said this in the meeting when we changed chairs to Debbe and Darlene, that I'll still be as involved as I possibly can.

So, Megan, just make sure you keep me on that list with the Web Committee.

And the way I look at it is the most important thing is when there's a committee meeting, sending out an e-mail to all council members, which I think you've been doing, so just if my calendar is free and the EMO Committee is meeting, I will join the meeting, even if I'm not on that. So I think it's good for everybody to know about that.

The other question I had was about TASA. As you know, I resigned from TASA and we all appointed Debbe as the new person.

I believe you already did a letter --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Twice, I sent him an e-mail --

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Was it sent to Curtis Williams?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Huh?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Curtis Williams?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Twice, I sent an e-mail twice.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Maybe, Megan, you can follow-up with him and something is being done to put Debbe in place. If you would like, I would also appreciate if I could share this story of one of the last visits I had with the Public Service Commission. I think Debbe's going to have her hands full, because in my opinion, PSC is not always very committed to making sure that things are completely accessible and the things that's being done for the deaf and hard of hearing is just what "they have to do."

Providing captions for the meeting has been a bear, in the fact that they're not providing a Certified CART Provider. At the regular meetings, they were having somebody that worked for the PSC that is also a stenographer providing captions. It was slow, very, very hard to follow.

Of course, they also had interpreters, so I was always somewhat satisfied, because I can follow the interpreters with the captions and everything like that.

However, there was some issues with them changing the surcharge for FTRI and I wrote a letter and made a petition to the PSC and it was going to be on the agenda.

This was right before Hurricane Irma. They sent me a letter with less than a week's notice and I went up there on my own dime, time, and steam, right before Hurricane Irma and when I got there, they told me that they would have accommodations in place, that they would have captions at the PSC meeting. This is a full PSC meeting, not the TASA meeting, and I'm sitting there and instead of interpreters being very close like they are now, they were about, I don't know, at least 50 feet from where I was sitting. So not being able to see their face and everything, it was really impossible for me to keep up with the interpreter. And they had no captions on at all.

Then about an hour into the -- well, I don't know, it could have been ten minutes -- but it seemed like an hour when you're sitting there twiddling your thumbs and not understanding what's going on.

[Laughter].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: A few other people are saying, they're calling you, Chris, go up front, say what you want to say. So as I'm walking up front, they turn on the captions.

[Laughter].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: So, instead of saying what I wanted to say about the petition to the FTRI, and it's in the notes, I'm not going to talk all about that here and now, but instead -- I told them how upset I was that the meeting wasn't accessible.

And one of the commissioners, of course, apologized and they kept it on throughout the meeting.

But it's not like this was the first time that it happened.

So, I just think that that should be on our radar as far as the Public Service Commission that provides telecommunication services for the state of Florida be accessible in their meetings.

We do have a FAD rep, a Council rep on the TASA committee.

I do think -- they say they want more people, but I've given them names and everything to contact for more members of the TASA committee and they don't seem to follow-up on that.

So, the only thing I can say at this point is Megan, it would be appreciated if you would continue to follow-up with Curtis and the PSC to officially get Debbe appointed.

Because as I understand, the Commission has to appoint her before she can attend the meetings. Or she has to get some documentation or something for them to pay for her travel to go to the TASA meetings.

And they're twice a year meetings. And that's it.

So just keep that all in mind.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan. Chris, if you wouldn't mind just sending me Curtis's contact information? And I will be sure to contact him and see kind of where they are in the process.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Okay, I will send the e-mail again, but -- I'll send it right now.

[Laughter].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you, Chris. All of these problems come up when they're supposed to be providing telecommunication and accessibility.

>> CINDY SIMON: This is Cindy and I would ask you all think about the future PSAs and send Megan your recommendations, whether it be what I had down on that sheet or something else.

I did make note of what Cecil said and so I already have that down.

But we can start thinking of other things when I know what everybody would like.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> CINDY SIMON: I would also like to remind everyone that we do have that area on the website, so, for example, if HLAA comes up with something, you know, that's a sheet, tips for communication, whether it be the person with hearing loss or the person communicating to the individual with hearing loss, please forward those to Megan to put on there.

If FAD came up with a sheet like that for communication, please put it there, so we have an ongoing flow of people-need tips and we can use that for -- to let other organizations

know how to communicate as well.

And then my last thought, maybe to do it jointly with the EMO Committee, I would like to see us create a video that can go on the website and be used as a communication training for staff in nursing homes and rehab facilities.

These individuals speak softly, they speak while they're walking out of the room, and the individuals in these facilities have no clue what they're saying.

So, if we're gonna educate, maybe we can have something. And then have a letter to follow-up with whatever organization handles all these facilities to pass on to all of them.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: This is Cecil. If I remember correctly, the Council had produced a DVD or purchased a DVD and book for healthcare training purposes to show how communication approaches should be handled. So that has already been established about 10-15 years ago. I don't know if it's lost, however, but if we can find it and download it and put it on the website. But I don't know if it's already there. Is it already?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I believe it's on the website, just the DVD only. The manual belongs to that organization, it doesn't belong to us. I believe the DVD is already on the website. I remember we talked about this before.

>> DONNA DRAKE: It's on our council website?

>> CECIL BRADLEY: What about law enforcement?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I think the one was put on the website already, yeah. Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. Do we want to make sure that it was updated? You said it was ten years ago. So we might want to see if there are updated versions.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: When we talked about this at whatever meeting before, I looked, I watched them, and they were still pretty good, because it was basic.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: Yes, I agree.

>> CINDY SIMON: This is Cindy, and that video, which I do show to my classes, is really when you go into the hospital to communicate. And it does not do a great job on the basics of telling staff, "Look at them when you speak to them. Speak slower." It was geared more toward.... um.... a more profound hearing loss, where they can't follow anything.

What I'm talking about is for the everyday hearing loss people, who don't identify themselves as having hearing loss and they are in areas that already confuse them.

This is a staff training when they're in and out of the room. Not in an emergency situation, telling the doctor to make sure, you know, not to use family to get the point

across of life-saving surgery.

So, it's two different concepts, two different purposes, and I think two very different approaches.

And the other, they had to get an interpreter in this, most of them would not know sign language. They certainly wouldn't even be able to read CART.

But this is just communication, how to look at them, speak slower, don't turn your back, ensure understanding.

And I think it would be helpful across the board in rehab facilities and assistive living facilities.

And maybe get the Council name out to a broader range as well.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Glenna. I would wonder, like we said yesterday, we have materials out there already so we don't have to reinvent the wheel, and I imagine we can look and find something on YouTube or something. There has to be something out there that we can look for.

I know in Minnesota, they did a lot on health-related things geared towards the signing Deaf and I would imagine they might have other things too.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: This is Cecil. I would like to reinforce what you just mentioned. I have seen several YouTubes and also on Google that have awesome, short versions of communication and how to interact, very simple. I've seen them and it's important we look first before we create a new one. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Darlene said also, with the background noise can interfere with the ability to comprehend what's being said. It's helpful if the doctor who has patients with hearing loss and combined with the vision loss to take the time to clearly understand the communication needs.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: There has to be stuff out there already. I mean, I'm sure a lot of our councils and committees and organizations and advocacies have all created materials; it's just a matter of looking and finding them. Chris?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. Yes, exactly. A lot of that information, we don't need to reinvent the wheel, we can just pull those pieces, put them on our website, however we want to use them.

The course I teach for effective communication for public safety, we bring in a lot of different sources. I use Marlee Matlin's video, another video from Spokane, Washington that talks about information that talks about breaking down communication barriers and using effective communication properly for people that are deaf and hard of hearing and I think that's very important to use the different resources that don't cost us anything.

Because we don't have a big bag of money.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbe. I suggest that we all do our homework and check and then give the link or something to Megan. And then we'll compile the list

and then we'll -- and then we can make comments on whether we like it or not like it and then....

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That leads to the comment that came up, we thought up a lot of things yesterday and today that really can be "homework" for us and there are a lot of things we really can do when we go home, searching for information, writing things, contacting legislators.

Really, we touched on a lot of things that we really can take action and do something, and I'm hoping that when you all go home, you will follow-up.

That's key with any organization. We have lots of discussion and we need to follow-up and that's key to really getting something done. So I hope that you all go home and follow-up on all of these ideas and suggestions and actually getting things done.

And when you get the CART, read it through to see, and pull out the to-do things for yourself to do.

Even though we are busy with a lot of things and we don't have a full-time position, there are a lot of things we could do.

I'm sure during the course of the day or the evening, we're all on computers a lot anyway, and you can take a few minutes to search for things, a few minutes to e-mail the legislators, things like that. All of these things would just take a few minutes, so to do something.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbe, I have some questions about the actions, your action list. We have -- we were supposed to try and get ahold of Sharon, the lawyer?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, she couldn't come.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Is it possible --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: She is ill with cancer.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Ooh....

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So she couldn't come. And then we tried to get somebody, they weren't available, and then like I said yesterday, we tried to get the person who was in charge of the deaf and hard of hearing, and she didn't respond two days ago or three days ago, and the next meeting, she would be willing to come if we let her know now so she can get approval. But May she may be able to come if we contact her.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: There is another action on the list that you were supposed to write a letter to Governor Scott about the Council. Was there any response to that letter?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I -- well, they don't do letters, you have to do an online application/form to request, and I sent that and they sent it back and said sorry, nobody is available to come.
No surprise....

[Pause].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: When you think about writing letters, I often think of my -- one of my favorite movies, "Shawshank Redemption," where the guy in the movie wrote a letter to the Prison Board everyday for several years to get books for the prison library and after a while they sent him a letter and a check and said "Please stop writing to us."

[Laughter].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: There is something to that. If we don't get the response we want the first time, that's okay, don't stop writing letters. Send it repeatedly, even if it's the exact same letter with a different date on it, that would be great. We might get somebody not Governor Scott but somebody from his office might join us for a meeting; that would be awesome. Glen I'll keep filling out the form for every meeting that we're going to have.

>> DONNA DRAKE: This is Donna. Let's make a letter, get it ready, and we'll have one ready for 12 months and just mail it and send it in. Ready and locked and loaded!

[Laughter].

>> DONNA DRAKE: Let's make 12 copies.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm writing it down!

[Pause].

>> DEBRA KNOX: This is Debra. Actually what might be a good idea is if we had some templates created for certain types of letters and then all we have to do is drop in the actual current information.

So if we draft an EMO letter, like, at the end of every one of our meetings, if we have a template, then we can customize, but we have it already kind of in place and it makes that process a lot faster.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Each of the committees creates their own template letter that addresses the issue, like the EMO, the Legislative, you know, Technology, so each committee could come up with a letter and that way we have a variety of letters to do.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: That would certainly save Gina a lot of time, like the stuff that explains who we are as a council and that explains -- I'm sorry, my mic was off. This is Chris speaking again.

I was just going to say that that would certainly help the EMO Committee out and Gina out with making sure that all the stuff that we say about who we are with the Council

stays the same and the only thing you have to change for each letter that goes out is what we learn from people that came to public comment and that should make it a lot faster.

That's a great idea.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Gina and then Debra.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Yeah, this is Gina. Chris, I had just told Megan I was going to take your suggestion [chuckles], and I had just said I was going to use the template that we already have, add the new information, and send it to her and send it to everybody, and hopefully that will work. I agree, we need to shorten that time.

>> DEBRA KNOX: I also think that any letters that we send as a result of the public comments from the EMO Committee, and you may have done this, I don't know, I think they should go to the Governor's Office.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: To add to your mailing list [laughs].

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Oh, yes!

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Darlene said amen to Chris.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So the Family Café, June 15-17 and you're going to work on -- Megan, you're going to work on filling out the form next week in the office and sending that in. And then let us know once you get a response about it. And then we have Karen, Gina, Debra, me, who else was interested in going? And Chris? We really only need two people, right?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Well.... this is Chris with the mic on again.

[Laughter].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I was just going to say, two or three probably is a good idea.

I think -- personally I think it's an opportunity for us to -- there are a ton of workshops there and thousands of people in the state of Florida that have disabilities, deaf, hard of hearing, and otherwise. Really a small percentage of people that are deaf or hard of hearing. I hope that changes, because it's such an awesome conference and I certainly want to get the word out about it, I hope everybody does here too.

What I was going to say, you know, if we're going to have two or three, I'm certainly interested in going, because I would love to go.

But because I went the last time, I don't want to, you know, step in and prevent somebody else from the Council that might want to go. I would give somebody else a turn too.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: But also you were saying there is a whole group of interpreters available there? Are they going to be the same -- do they do the same thing every year? Do they do the same thing every year, they have a whole group of interpreters? Why doesn't the Deaf community know about this?

>> DONNA DRAKE: Not many people know about it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So we need to go back and inform HLAA and ALDA and FAD and FRID and everybody to, hey, let's go! Let's show up.

>> DONNA DRAKE: Maybe we need to see if there's any flyers related to that and then we can post it on the FAD website also.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, in bold letters "Interpreters available."

>> CECIL BRADLEY: This is Cecil, I would like to briefly mention, in the past, VR was a giant sponsor of the Family Café, if I remember correctly, and they were the ones who provided the interpreters for that event.

But we need to keep your eyes on the interpreters there at times at the Family Café because sometimes it's not organized as well.

But they are a sponsor of that, providing the fees for the interpreters.

The transitional part of the school related to transition, but I also did present at Family Café I believe five, six, seven years ago, and really it is an awesome event.

So two to three people would be really great.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. We need to communicate with the coordinator of Family Café. I want to make sure that the interpreters are utilized correctly.

There was some situations when we went where it was different if you had a booth or if you were actually a participant in the conference.

And a lot of times the interpreters were not being utilized because people didn't know they were there.

And I do remember there being a big sign with VR, that they paid or helped bring the interpreters there and we just want to make sure that we know if we're going to get people that are deaf or hard of hearing that are going to use an interpreter, they need to be aware that we're going to come.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Megan, did you have something?

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: [Shakes head].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: You were going to say something before about the Family Café.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: [Shakes head].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Debra?

>> DEBRA KNOX: If I'm not mistaken, and we can look at this, I think with the -- if we are getting a table or a booth in the exhibit hall, it includes one registration, but anybody who has a disability or I think it said something, is at no cost to attend. So that's another thing, too, that anybody could attend in addition.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. As I recall, it didn't cost us anything for a booth, so providing us a registration, if it doesn't cost anything....

The only thing is we probably needed to be more prepared to stand in line and fill out the full registration. All we did was go to the line for people that had a booth or that were vendors. We didn't registration as full participants.

That was the first time we'd ever been there. Both Debbe and I were, like, wow! This is so cool! It was huge! It was one of the biggest conferences I had ever been to in the state of Florida.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. I was planning on stopping by the Family Café Headquarters today before I leave town just to get more information. They may have more information there, and then find out about presentations and who's doing them and just kind of find out what the workshops are all about. I also will ask about the interpreter situation and how we register. Is that an okay thing to do? For a booth? Is that fine with you guys? I'll change my shirt. I'll have to put a nicer shirt on.

[Laughter].

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Before I go over there.... so I don't look like I just walked in off the street from a baseball game.

[Laughter].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Do you know do they tend to stay at the same hotel? What hotel was it?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Actually because we made the plans late, we stayed at a different hotel that was, like, across the street. The hotel where the conference was at was already full. So we need to move early. There are other hotels right near there that we were able to stay, but it would be even better if we could stay at the hotel where the conference is too.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The conference is in the Orange Convention Center?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I'm not sure.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No, the conference itself --

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris, I'm not sure where the conference is this year. It was at the Orange Convention Center last time and because it's so big, I would think it

is.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Yeah, I think it's the Hyatt, isn't it?

>> DEBRA KNOX: That's attached.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And there are several people enthused about going and I'm a little worried about the travel budget and we might not have enough money to cover. The travel budget, do we have enough money? Do we have enough for two or three people? That's all? Okay.
So other people would have to maybe get their organizations to sponsor them to go.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's in June, so that's after the May meeting. Okay.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbe. I think we need a chance to ask and go around what each organization has been doing or what's happening with their organization?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, yes. Thank you. We're going to do the updates and announcements or whatever from whoever you represent. Anything from DCF? Anything?
What's Allison doing now? Is she still under DCF? Or did she move over to Civil Rights or something?

>> JOHN JACKSON: DCF has its own Office of Civil Rights, like many agencies do. Some agencies might put it under the Inspector General, other agencies put it under HR, but she's still with that office.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So she has the same position still?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Correct. And then she's still located in Tampa.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> CECIL BRADLEY: So this is Cecil. With VR, there was, like I mentioned, there was a federal law that passed maybe three or four years ago that focuses more on work and jobs. We're doing more partnership with workforce, more partnerships with employers, more focus on jobs in general.
So, we're moving a little bit. We're having some changes to our policies, our best practices, our trainings, and all that.
It's been very time consuming, but we are moving along quite well.

We're excited about the changes that are coming. It's putting more emphasis on the consumers and, you know, giving them knowledge from the beginning, because a lot of times they don't know, you know, what VR is and so it's more explaining what are our responsibilities and what their responsibilities are; not just sitting and waiting for people to do things for them, and so we're taking a more active role in that.

And, you know, we have to make sure that there are jobs available in the fields before

we provide the trainings for the people.

So, we had our director -- we got a new director last year from the assistant director from the Blind Services and the changes have been very positive.

The other thing is we work on planning -- we're planning to expand our interpreters and we will be adding five more, four -- two temporary, two contract, that we will be putting into a new agency that we're contracting with, so that's something that we're working on as well.

We want to be able to have more staff, because it allows for better interaction with other counselors, with the staff.

So, we still hire vendor interpreters and we're spending \$1.3 million on interpreting costs last year. So we're trying to get that down a little bit. Having a staff would probably help. But we're also wanting to make sure there are accommodations there.

So we do have quite a number of vendors that we work with, so we're keeping an eye on that.

That's it.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. I have two announcements, I guess. First professionally with St. Petersburg College, I think I started to mention this yesterday, but we've managed to obtain a grant through the Florida Attorney General's Office and the Office of Victims of Crimes and part of that grant is for me to teach the effective strategies for communication for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, and teaching that course with a target audience of all people that are working in the public safety field; police officers, firefighters, healthcare workers, social workers, things like that.

We've already taught the first one in St. Pete on campus. We had 32 participants. We have three more classes already scheduled. The first one is Boynton Beach, that's March 14-15. Then we're going to Brevard County, which is March 27-28. And then in April we're going to Miami and that's April 26-27.

And we're still working on a venue and set up for the Jacksonville area. We're trying to go to areas that have the largest amount of people that are deaf or hard of hearing living in that area.

So hopefully we'll be able to do that. And at least teach those five classes and that should all happen in the first half of this calendar year, so we're very excited about doing that.

I'll get more information and send the individual training announcements to Megan. I sent her the one for the St. Pete class, I know she sent that around to everybody. But I'll be sending the training announcements for these other classes out as well.

The other thing from ALDA Suncoast standpoint, next Tuesday is our elections for our new board. I am stepping down as president of ALDA Suncoast. I will always be very involved in ALDA Suncoast, for the last 20 years, it's been something that's been very, very important to me. I've just always believed in new blood sometimes and also I've got a very, very busy year, as you've just heard, with a lot of the things I'm working on.

I'm also doing a lot of other R&D stuff and grant work, and so I just want to make sure

that we have somebody that's able to focus on ALDA Suncoast as well. So you'll probably hear some new names, hopefully, that's going to be on the board. Hopefully I will continue to be on the board as past president. I say "hopefully," because I still have to be re-elected to participate on the board in the way our bylaws are written for Suncoast, you get elected to the board and then the board decides who's going to be the officers, who's going to be the president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.

And there are five board positions and then I will hold the officer position as past president if that's the decision of the membership.
So, I'll keep everybody posted on that.

The ALDA National Conference is in Portland this year, so not quite as close and not affecting Florida as much, but our conference, as everybody heard last time, was outstanding when it was here in Florida in the fall last year.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We will continue with announcements, that reminds me, if anybody has their appointment that's done in 2018 and you are eligible to continue for another term, you need to reapply now.
Who's done in 2018?

[Hands raised].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So you finished two terms and you're done?

>> DONNA DRAKE: This July.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, Donna. You're done?

[Telephone beep].

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I'm finishing my second term as of the end of June this year for the Council and I'm undecided if I'm going to reapply or not.

Just like ALDA Suncoast, this Council is very important to me, but I'm also a big fan of new blood and there was a time when I was the new guy on this Council and now I look around and you guys are all doing an outstanding job of continuing things.
So I haven't decided yet.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I'll let everybody know.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are you planning to reapply again?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So if you're going to reapply, it's best to do it now to have it in the office so we're ready.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Oh. HLAAGulf Coast had their Healthy Hearing Expo last

weekend and we had a lot of people attend and it was a huge success, compared to last year, which was 104, and we also had for the first time in the country, we had the opportunity to have your hearing tested for free and we had 97 people showed up for a hearing screening, so that was a huge increase from last year, with 32.

Many and many of them, I would say about 75% of them never heard of HLAA, so that was good. We had the opportunity to try the different companies that were there. Some of them got to walk away with a free phone that the FTRI provided. It was wonderful. So, we're interested to do it again next year.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Did they come from just the local area? The Tampa area?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen, I wanted to add to some of the activities that HLAA has been involved in.

Last year, we also had the Make Hearing Loss Visible Expo in Orlando and that was very well attended. We had workshops and we had some booths -- I'm sorry, did you have a question, Cecil? I'm trying to read Cecil through the interpreter. No, he did not, okay. He was just straightening his....

[Laughter].

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I was noticing his facial expression looked like a question. So, we have a lot of other activities coming up.

And this year we're planning the make hearing loss visible again for next year 2019 and we're trying to decide where it ought to be. We're thinking maybe Tampa itself. I'm going to try to see if we can get USF to help sponsor and provide some accommodations, because that's a big expense, is where you have the expo.

There's an upcoming Hearing Loss Expo in Lakeland next month, March 3rd -- I'm sorry, I'm still learning my computer, so I have to get back to the page.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: March 3rd is correct.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. And let's see, what else, on the Hearing Loss Association's website, there's different links and resources and they're also saying there's an ability to do some advertising for free for your agency. So, if anybody gets a chance to take a look at the website for HLAA, I think it's really wonderful.

There's the HLAA National Convention is going to be happening this year in Minnesota, in Minneapolis, actually, in early June, which I was planning on attending, it will be my first time going to the HLAA conference.

They're always looking for stories for people to write about their experiences with hearing loss and if you have a story that you want to write, it will be published on the HLAA website.

Okay. So the actual -- the website is hla-fl.org, because I was always looking HLAA. But it's hla-fl.org. It's a wonderful website so just take a look at it, lots of activities are planned coming up and meeting.

I think Debbe can correct me if I'm wrong, but I think the HLAA Tampa no longer has a president?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, I'm temporarily the president.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: You're temporarily president for that. Okay. And I know they had a meeting on Wednesday night?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes, we do.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: How was that? I was here.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It was good. It was small.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I plan to come to the next few. Okay. Any questions? Okay.

>> JOHN JACKSON: I've got a couple quick things, related to Karen, if you can take it upon yourself and review all the stories and if any of the stories deal with people, individuals with hearing loss having difficulties in dealing with state agencies, you should really peel those out and supply those to the Council.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay.

>> JOHN JACKSON: Again, if you'll recall, the Council, one of our biggest duties is to assist and advise state agencies.

And one of the problems that we have, it's hard, it's one thing for us to set up a meeting at a state agency and say hey, we want to talk to you about deaf and hard-of-hearing issues, I mean, every state agency should be receptive to something like that, but, I mean, in all honesty, the reality of things is that if you have some specific issues as opposed to just general issues, there's a better chance you're gonna get the attention of that state agency.

And so as a Council, where we, other than personal experiences, whether we would get that kind of information is where we have been falling off. And I don't believe it's any fault of the Council necessarily, or at least not totally the Council's fault, and that is people showing up for public comment. That is where we would get our meat.

Certainly in the early days of the Council since I was on the receiving end of many of those complaints being that I represent DCF, I can tell you that we did have more people show up and so many of the times, it would seem like 2/3 of the time it was a state agency they were complaining about, and of that 2/3 were probably 3/4 was my agency.

But that's what the Council is for. And that's why my agency has a seat on this Council.

And so one thing I was going to put -- it all just came together, so I apologize, I probably should have brought this up earlier this morning, but when Karen started talking about this, it's kind of a brief thought I had last night.

In the past, I don't know, you guys want to take a guess or we could -- Megan could probably figure it out, but in the past two years, I'm thinking that as far as people that showed up for public comments at our meetings, I could probably count all if not on both hands but both hands and one foot, the total number of people that came up and provided comments.

It is what it is and we know that and that's something we've always discussed and we want to keep working on if we can.

But it seems to me that even if -- this morning I'm hearing that the numbers are a little bit less than what I thought of yesterday when it came up, but I'm wondering if Family Café is not a golden opportunity for this Council.

And, you know, when we talk about public comments coming to the Council, obviously it's not just people showing up at meetings. If anyone e-mails Megan, e-mails the Council, you know, we're going to discuss it. And certainly we should. And certainly if the complaint's about, you know, problems with accessibility or anything else with a state agency.

So we don't have to just act on the public comments that come to us. And so what I got thinking about, and maybe it's not practical, because I've never been to Family Café and I know Chris and Debbe have been, but if we're going to add a booth, I would add this bright fourth grade level of an idea, that we basically put up a sign that says "survey" and below the sign, below survey, it says Florida law requires the FCCDHH to advise agencies on, however we want to word it, it doesn't have to be worded exactly like a statute, but the point we're trying to get across to the people out there is that, you know, we take information about problems with state agencies and the deaf and hard-of-hearing community and our job is to advise and/or and maybe approach those agencies and say hey, we're not here to complain, we're here to see if we can help you keep this from happening again.

And then underneath that, basically say have you had an interaction with a Florida state agency that you would like to tell us about? Or that you're concerned about? And hand out a pad of paper or some other way to make sure that it gets communicated and let those people tell us about it.

Even if it's not related specifically to deaf and hard of hearing, if it's about another disability, there is nothing that stops this Council from referring that information to an appropriate council, et cetera.

But the idea that we could get some people to, you know, express some things that they have not been showing up, because I think we all believe there are probably some people out there with the stories.

We need those stories.

So we -- like do an experiment. Maybe it would fall flat on our face or it won't be that

successful. I don't know. But it seems like we've got an opportunity there to get some public input, to have it on record, because once it's given to us, it's a permanent part of the record and it's a public record that we can get out to anybody, politicians, the Governor's Office, whoever. Or to agencies when we're trying to use that as a reason to set up a meeting with them.

So, I just wanted to throw that out there and see what the people thought.

The idea of the big sign, I mean, that's just the idea, but the overall idea is to try to collect information at Family Café about, really without saying it like that, necessarily, but about poor interactions between our community that we represent and the agencies of this state who are supposed to represent everyone in this state.

So, you know, as far as variations on the sign, survey, what it says, that's fine. But as far as trying to use that as a chance to get some information and input, I mean, what does everyone think about that?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you, that's good.

Megan, the form that you use for public comments, maybe we can use the same one or redact it to put Family Café, so that way we have names and contact information in short summaries, like what we use for the Family Café, that way we would have a collection and something like that.

>> JOHN JACKSON: I thought about using our forms, but the only thing is making the record in the future, I wouldn't want any confusion in the fact that maybe that form was filled out by someone who showed up at a meeting when it was actually Family Café. I want to make sure we can tell the difference because we owe that to members of the council in the future that I don't want them to think they're getting more action, you know, during our years on the Council with people showing up as opposed to, you know --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: She can do an adaptive form and put on there Family Café 2018 and we can do that.

>> MEGAN CALLAHAN: This is Megan, I always put the meeting dates on the top of the form, so I'll just put Family Café on the top of the form and that way you'll know. Sorry, Chris.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Chris?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris speaking. Public comments have kind of been a point of frustration for me the last couple years, because the numbers of people that have been showing up have been dwindling significantly. Everything that you're suggesting for the Family Café is an outstanding idea.

I've been a little remiss on this one myself, but in the past for council meetings, I always blast out to everybody that I know that the council meeting is happening. And if you can't attend personally, feel free to call in and give a comment.

I think it's everybody here's responsibility to let everybody know that we're meeting. Everybody in our organization. Every other people on our list that we have as contacts,

I think that's very, very important.

When I signed on with the Council about eight years ago, one of our first meetings was in Miami and it was standing-room only at that meeting. There were a lot of people!

I understand in Miami, it's a big deaf and hard-of-hearing population, but you have to get the word out that the meeting is there.

This particular meeting, we didn't get the announcement to share with the public until just less than a week before the actual meeting. That's not soon enough. We need more time to share. We need that CART link, we need the location, and we have to be able to get that announcement out, so we have to get that more than a week ahead of time; it's very important that we do that, to get people here.

Also one of the first thing I noticed yesterday, and I should have said something sooner, is there was no sign to this meeting room out where the public could come to this room. If people don't know this room is here, they're not going to be able to find this and they're not going to be able to find the meeting. That's something that we absolutely have to get.

When we're in a hotel and we're in, you know, the sunrise conference room that's down the hall, to the left, up the stairs, to the right, and we have to have signs so the public can find us.

We have to get the word out to people to bring them in and that's important to do that.

I think it's the program office's responsibility to some extent and it's our responsibility. I think it's very, very important.

All right. I'm stepping off my soapbox now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I have to leave to catch a plane. I want to -- you will take care of FAD news? Okay. So I'm leaving. And Debbe will take over. Okay.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. This is Gina, I have to jump the line because I have to take her to the airport. I just want to say to the president of FRID has made it easy to use communication system, as you guys send announcements for your different events, I can shoot them to them and they're going to put it on all of the communication outlets for FRID.

And the last thing, Chris, let me know what you need to get your training in Jacksonville, I'll help you.

Okay, bye!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you, thank you, Glenna. Okay. We'll have John, go ahead.

>> JOHN JACKSON: I'm going to jump back on Chris's soapbox because I'm right there with him. And I just wanted the Council to think of something else that maybe we can think of further at the next meeting, because obviously we don't have time today, we've had people come in and give us presentations on how to run meetings, how to

run an organization, how to best figure out your goals and everything else.

Have we thought about getting someone in here, and even if it requires paying some money, getting someone in here who is actually an expert in outreach, advertising, et cetera?

Because the thing is, we know our community, but the truth is, maybe we don't know as well as we think to have to properly target people that we're trying to target.

And, you know, it could be regionally effective. When you're talking about the northwest, every agency feels the same way, the Panhandle of Florida feels different, but maybe someone who can understand enough about outreach to be able to give us some really good ideas of why your outreach in northwest is different in Miami and different in Orlando.

I guess what I'm getting at is maybe we should, you know, open up to the idea of getting some expertise in here to tell us how to do outreach, given our situation.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Cecil?

>> CECIL BRADLEY: This is Cecil. I've been thinking about what we've been discussing here. We are working so hard trying to reach out to people.

My idea is that we could go one step further and we need to come up with a satisfaction survey. After they all us for help or they show up and give some testimony, we have their contact information, so it means we could follow-up with them and find out, are they satisfied with the Council's actions? Did we actually accomplish and help them solve their problem? Is there another issue that they're not happy about? We need some feedback from them.

As an example, Chris made a good point, the hotel is not accessible. Or maybe we're not finding and sharing the right information. It could lead to something. Because apparently we have not asked them yet for feedback. We're doing and doing, but we're not getting any feedback. So that would be my suggestion, is a satisfaction survey.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Hold on. Donna?

>> DONNA DRAKE: This is Donna. I have asked my Deaf friends why are they not coming to the meeting? And they said oh, it's all a bunch of hearing people, I'm not gonna take the time. And I'm, like, no! I'm Deaf. I'm on the Board. We can help!

And I think yes, we should have more announcements, maybe do something like a vlog like except just a written world because it shows that perspective only, so I think somebody doing some vlogging and signing, maybe people would really realize that we are available and that we are accessible and that we do use sign language to communicate here.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Then we have on chat, hold on, let me catch up with chat.

Cindy: If in Miami, I suggest we stay where we are. It's easy public access on public

transportation.

And Darlene said: Is the meeting ending? I would like to make an announcement. Go ahead, Darlene.

>> DARLENE LAIBL-CROWE: Hi. I agree with John, Cecil, Chris. We definitely need to do a different strategy and the testimony thing would be excellent, you know, to let people know who is on the Board and who can -- who they can relate to.

And the Florida Deaf-Blind Association will be having their state meeting on February 17th in Tampa at the Tampa Lighthouse For the Blind, on the day before, on Friday the 16th, they will be hosting a mini SSP workshop at the University of South Florida and there are several interpreters involved in it, and it's booked solid, so we don't have any open spaces there.

And our grant writers that we have that are working on Sunday is actually an advocate through national organizations such as American Association for the Deaf-Blind and others and they also are very much involved with the National Support Service Providers Association, all across the country, to establish a database to help those who are deaf-blind to travel and to get resources throughout all the states.

So, we are excited about the grant writers. And that way, we can get funding, and hopefully get the SSP program, which is a Florida support service providers program, out.

In March, the FDBA will be having their annual booth at an event in St. Augustine March 16-18, and in May, personally I will be graduating with my class with my master's degree.

Thank you. Have a good day.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hey, congratulations!

[Applause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Chris and then....

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I think Karen's been waiting a long time. You're doing an awesome job by keeping order, but I think it was Karen's turn first. Go ahead, Karen.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Thank you. This is Karen. There was a couple things I wanted to respond to. Just like Cecil was saying, we ought to find out for people doing the job that we need, I think we need to go back to our agencies and make sure that we're doing the job that we need to do to represent them on the Florida Coordinating Council.

I don't know -- I know that at the HLAA board meeting, we talk about what's going on with the Council and a question does come up that I ask them is how can I best represent HLAA Florida on the Council?

It seemed to me that there's a disconnect, like, they don't really know what's going on with the Council and where does HLAA fit in, and I wonder if other agencies are also

wondering that as well.

But we, as a Council, should be the Coordinating Council to bring all of these different agencies together and then kind of service that bridge when we go back to our home agencies, I guess you could say. That's the one thing.

I would like to know that maybe we could come up with an idea on how are we meeting their needs.

The other is in response to Donna was saying that would like to get more people to come out, I was a little bit dismayed to hear that some people in the Deaf community thinks the Council is just made up of a bunch of hearing and it doesn't take into account there are so many variations and the level of hearing loss and how it impacts people. And how we can correct that and educate the community about that.

The Deaf community, the deaf-blind community, the hearing loss community, and the hearing community, we should all be able to come together on this issue.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay.

>> DONNA DRAKE: There is a lot of miscommunication out there or misinformation out there.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Chris?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris speaking. I continue to have a lot of thoughts on the same subject as far as bringing people into our council meeting.

I'm going to respond to what everybody else said. John first. As far as bringing outreach people in to help us draw and maybe give a presentation on what we can do, one of the things that I found that works well for our very small group for ALDA Suncoast is when we have a good speaker or a good presentation, that's when everybody comes in.

If we found a way to get a very famous or very popular presentation, then people are going to come. We could have the presentation first and then public comment right after. That would work awesome.

One example that I had, I have a friend and colleague, Karen Putz, who is also an author and she writes inspirational novels and is working on a passion, and so we had her come to a meeting.

We generally only have ten or 15 people show up for a meeting and I think that particular meeting was about three times normal size.

So we got to talk to a lot of people about well, what we're doing and everything and, of course, I mentioned the Council. But we have to regularly do that.

And I think more than just doing outreach, it's important to have presentations that do

the outreach for us and bring people in, and then we can share information about what we're doing.

The other thing I was thinking about that is we talked about the budget and the needs to spend the money that we have, and if there's any money in the budget to pay somebody to come and give a presentation, that would definitely help in getting people to come to our meetings; I think that's very important.

The last thing I will say is Donna mentioned about the Council being a hearing council. That's something I've heard myself. And it is something that concerns me that people feel that way.

I worry about what Cecil said as far as doing a satisfaction survey, because there have been times where I've asked people about the Council and they either say, I didn't know there still was a Council or they think we're doing a bad job.

And a lot of times it's because we don't have the resources to do a lot of what we would like to do.

What I would say, I think it's an outstanding idea to do the vlog in American Sign Language. What I would say is that we go to the state and ask them to help us do a vlog, it's going to take 12-18 months for them to even put it on their punchlist.

So what I would suggest is, Donna, as the native signer on the Council, or maybe Glenna as the Chair and a native signer on the Council, if you do a fast little video yourself and share it with Megan and we work on getting that posted to the YouTube channel, I think that would work a lot better and I would love to see that happen. I think that would be awesome.

And I think it would help get the draw of people that are American Sign Language users as their first language.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. We have a couple things on chat. We have Cindy saying congratulations, Darlene. And Cindy, you have your hand up? Go ahead.

>> CINDY SIMON: Yes, I want to make a comment to something Chris said and I want to -- that goes back to something that was said yesterday when people were saying "That's a lot of money for a small group" on one of the grant programs.

When you talk to people with hearing loss, they and including some of the professionals think that the Council is primarily for those who are culturally Deaf and so I think we hear it from both ways and we need to educate both groups.

>> DONNA DRAKE: That's the opposite. So you're having the opposite experience of what we are experiencing for the Deaf culture.

>> CINDY SIMON: When I came on the Council, I was told oh, you're going into a group and you'll never get anywhere because they only favor those that are Deaf. So, I just thought that if we're going to say that, there's just as much perception the other way.

And the truth is, there's a lot of people with hearing loss and they don't even understand that there's assistance they can get from the Council as well.
So, I just wanted to bring that in.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Thank you, Cindy. I want to remind people to do the evaluation, it's in the tab ten, so please take the time and fill it out and send that to Megan.

And you have your -- we have a short time, so if you two can do your public announcements real fast, and then we'll wrap up.
Huh? Darlene, do you have your hand up? Can you hold for a second? Let Donna talk, please?

>> DARLENE LAIBL-CROWE: Yeah. Are you ready for me to talk?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, go ahead, Darlene.

>> DARLENE LAIBL-CROWE: Okay, okay. I just wanted to say what Cindy says is true. I hear it from a lot of individuals who have lost their vision and hearing later in life and they don't identify themselves as a deaf-blind individual.

And, you know, I've already shared my own testimony myself, is that I grew up hard of hearing wearing hearing aids, but I never considered myself as deaf, because I thought that as long as I could hear with my hearing aids, I wasn't deaf.
So, I was raised in a hearing culture.

And then in 2010, losing so much of my vision and having to stress out about what type of resources and things like that, I had to finally to reidentify myself as deaf-blind, to fully understand what it is I needed.

It wasn't comfortable, it's still not comfortable, because I have done most of my life in the hearing culture, but a lot of individuals that I have met throughout the state and talked over the phone as well, they do not want to conform to the Deaf culture.

And I tell them, you don't have to, but it doesn't hurt to learn a little bit about what they do and incorporate it in your life.

So, it's -- the hearing culture is prominent throughout the country, throughout society, the world. And that is the way the norm believes.

So, when we have the Deaf culture or even people like me, late-deafened, we were hearing culture, but we're not Deaf culture, we're in the middle culture, so we're kind of in the middle with no culture.

So, this can be very confusing and hard, especially on those who are elderly, because the Center for Disease Control has data that says that 20% of the elderly population over the age of 65 lose their vision and hearing.
And it can be very overwhelming for a late-deafened-blind individual.
So that's what I wanted to say. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you, Darlene.
Okay, Donna.

>> DONNA DRAKE: Before my announcements for my agency, I just want to say, Darlene, you're right. We need to understand how the cultures are and how, you know, they approach, you know, when you grow up, when you go to a doctor and how you communicate, if you're in the hospital, how the communication approaches are then, what do you do if there's not interpreting services offered, you know, there's all of these dead ends that we run into and it's a lot.

So -- and that's, you know, that's what the hearing people, they don't want to bother with hearing people.

So we have to understand where everybody comes from. We have to keep up the fight. We can't give up. We have to continue to progress forward.

It's not easy to bring the two cultures together, for sure, and we don't need to merge, but we do need to understand one another's cultures.
Thank you, Darlene.

Okay. Now this is Donna, I would like to make my announcements for FAD. We just had our November meeting, do you remember last November, I was stuck? But we had our 100th anniversary and it was great! It was such an enjoyable time. It was wonderful and very successful. And I'm glad it's over!

So now we have a new FAD Board. It's very interesting to watch the transition. So, for the last 8-10 years, it's really been almost the same exact people, from the president to the secretary and now watching the change of command, it's -- I think it's -- yeah, every four years, positions have been rotating every term.
But it's just been the same people, at least for the last eight years.

Now, people are starting to get a little tired and a little fatigued, so now we have some new blood coming in and we're really looking forward to that.

So, we're in the middle of a transition period, as people leave and new blood comes in. But I am really looking forward to that.

So, we also decided to do an interpreting -- provide an interpreting bill for next year, so we're looking forward to that as well. So we've got young people coming in and a new bill proposal.
And that's pretty much where we are.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you, Donna -- I mean -- yeah, Donna.

[Laughter].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead.

>> DEBRA KNOX: This is Debra. For A.G. Bell Florida, we just had a monthly -- or

quarterly call the other night before I came here and they were updating what's happening in the Legislature and they were talking about those two auditory oral bills, the one for early intervention and the one for the Department of Education funding.

But they also mentioned the hearing healthcare bill for children for hearing aids that would cover possibly hearing aids for children and basically it looks like it stalled and not going anywhere this year.

But an interesting tidbit that was said, it takes about 3-5 years for a bill to get passed, so it's something that you just have to persevere at to get that accomplished.

Each year, A.G. Bell Florida offers scholarships to families of children who has hearing loss to attend the FLASHA convention, that's the Florida Association of Speech-Language Hearing, and this year, the convention which is normally in May will be in July in Naples and we're looking at offering scholarships again.

And although this is a professional conference for speech language pathologists and audiologists, because there is a listening and spoken language track, this is for families so they can learn more about what they can do with their child in the home.

And then the A.G. Bell National Convention is going to be held in Scottsdale, Arizona, and that will be in June, the end of June, I believe.
That's all I have for today.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you. Okay. Any other announcements?
We do have to wrap up the meeting. Yeah, Chris?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I'm sorry, wonderful job to the Chair and Co-Chair for keeping the meeting go on track, I appreciate that.
I did want to follow-up and make one last comment about the hotel accommodations. Obviously I wasn't thrilled about that, so I just want to say that we need a punchlist as far as what we're going to do to make sure that this doesn't happen in the future.

And Megan, if nothing else, please e-mail me next week so I can help you create a list, a checklist, of things that we need to do in contacting the hotel and making sure that we follow-up with them so that we don't get the kind of responses that we got or that I got personally when I was trying to follow-up on this.

Part of it was -- the thing that was most upsetting, the young lady that was there the evening that I got there, she really tried to help.

The next morning when I -- all I was doing was telling -- was trying to tell the manager or whoever was at the front desk that what happened and it's okay, I'm gonna live with it, so don't move my room, and she was almost nasty to me, saying that the Council was the one that was supposed to provide that, that they told the Council that they weren't going to have that.

And that's not acceptable, for a lot of reasons.

So, we just need to make sure in the future that we prevent that from happening.

And I'm glad to help reach out and do that, because my goal, even though I get on my

soapbox about things like this, is friendly advocacy and I just want to make sure that we improve things for the future for people that may have these problems on their own.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you, countries.

>> CINDY SIMON: Chris? I just want to --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anyone else? Cindy, go ahead.

>> CINDY SIMON: I just wanted to say that we seem to have this problem in Tallahassee. Remember the hotel downtown that time, Chris? So maybe what we need to do is send out a questionnaire to the hotels in advance, telling them what we're gonna need and will they be able to accommodate our people?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. Cindy, I'll just say that yes, it can be a problem in Tallahassee, but Tallahassee is not unique. The problem happens throughout the state.

I travel all over the country and the problem has happened outside of Florida as well. But it happens a lot here in Florida. And that's kind of disappointing to me, since this is where I live.

But the questionnaire that you mentioned, that's part of what I was talking about, about Megan and I creating a punchlist so this doesn't happen again, and we'll certainly work on that, or I hope that we will.

>> CINDY SIMON: Right. I meant that for everywhere. I understand it happens, I'm just laughing, because it just happened in the same area, majorly.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you, Cindy. Maybe we can invite the hotel accommodation to come to the conference and then we can yell at them.

[Laughter].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody would like to make a motion to adjourn the meeting?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Sure.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. John. Anyone seconds?

>> DEBRA KNOX: [Raises hands].

>> CINDY SIMON: Second.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Thank you for coming. See you in May.

>> CINDY SIMON: Bye, everyone!

[Meeting concludes at 9:39 a.m.]

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