

**FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL  
FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING  
Virtual Quarterly Meeting**

Thursday, May 13, 2021  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. It's 9:00 o'clock, it's 9:00 o'clock. We need to start. Chris Littlewood, if you could -- if you could type in the number in the chat box, not on the Zoom chat box, but on the CART StreamText part, that would be helpful. Okay. Good morning, everybody. Welcome to the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing quarterly meeting. Today is May 13, 2021. It is 9:00. And my name is Debbe Hagner, I represent HLAA Florida State. I would like to do a roll call, please. Chris Littlewood, go ahead.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Chris, go ahead and identify yourself.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris Littlewood, I represent the Association of Late-Deafened Adults. I live in Seminole, Florida and I work for St. Pete College.

[Signing, no interpreting]

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

>> SEAN ISAAC: Chris, I am still trying to connect on the phone.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Me? Okay. Good morning council and everyone, this is Glenna Ashton, and I am representing the Florida Association of the Deaf statewide organization, and I live in Boca Raton, and I'm a retired teacher. And I'm very happily retired.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, great. Anybody else on the phone? Please identify yourself.

>> MARY HODGES: Good morning, this is Mary Hodges with the Department of Elder Affairs.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Good morning, Mary. Anybody else on the phone?

>> Eloise.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Eloise?

>> Yes.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Good morning.

>> Hi, good morning. I'm, uh... I'm just a [chuckles]... I'm not a member of the Board, I'm, uh... Eloise Schwartz from Hillsborough County, I'm the chapter leader for the Sun City Center chapter and I'm coming on as a guest. I have public comments for your meeting this afternoon.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Great, wonderful. Okay. Gina? Do you want to identify yourself?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina says that she's representing FRID and she lives in Jacksonville, Florida.

>> OPERATOR: Chris Littlewood has joined the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anybody else on the phone?

[No response]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Um... I want to welcome everybody. Thank you for introducing yourselves.

A little bit of housekeeping. I suggest that you have on gallery view instead of speaker view, but it's up to you.

The way you do that is go to the upper right-hand corner in the Zoom box, in the Zoom, there is a way to, under view, you can change it to gallery view or speaker view.

The interpreters will be spotlighted when they're signing, so you have to switch over to speaker view to see the interpreters bigger.

I want to thank the interpreters: Chris, Christopher, who is here. Raise your hand, Chris. Spotlight yourself. Chris? Okay.

And then Ryan, please wave. Okay. And Carrie, we have Carrie Moore. Thank you for coming.

And we also have, um... Sean. Would you like to introduce yourself?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Yes, good morning, everybody. My name is Sean Isaac, I work with the Florida Department of Health. I've been with the department for about 17 years. I'm the Public Health Dental Program administrator and I'm sort of sitting in; I was appointed by Shay to help facilitate this meeting, because, as many of you know, I

guess everybody probably knows, Tiffany Baylor resigned from the Department of Health and found another position. So she's doing well. And she wanted me to tell you that she wishes you all well.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Um... anybody else on the phone?

[No response].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. We're going to move on for the minutes. Has everybody had a chance to read the minutes?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: [Signing, no interpreting].

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody had a chance to read the minutes and any comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody?

So, I guess what I -- not everyone had a chance to read the minutes, so I suggest that maybe we hold it for a few more minutes to, um... Gina said that she has not had a chance to read; doing it now. Okay, great, Gina.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. We'll move on and then we'll come back to it. So, do we have someone to approve the agenda?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anyone want to approve the agenda?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Chris.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I would like to make a motion to approve the agenda.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right, great, thank you. Okay. Now we're going to turn it over to Sean to talk about the action items and what's happening with the council.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris. Sorry to interrupt. I believe we need a second, a second on that motion.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Oh, I'm sorry, yes, you're right. Do we have a second for the agenda?

Gina, Gina seconds the motion to accept the agenda. Thank you. Sorry.

Yes, go ahead, yes.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: [Signing, no interpreting].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All in favor of the agenda, the approval? Okay, good, all passed.

Okay. All right. Sean, all yours.

>> SEAN ISAAC: [Chuckles] okay. Thank you. Can you hear me?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Very, very low. As long as the interpreter can hear you, I'm fine.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I'll try to speak up a little bit. Is that a little bit better?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. Like I said, Tiffany Baylor, um, moved on; she resigned from her position. That position was advertised in People First. That position can only be advertised in People First.

So any other applications that were sent to anybody else or posted on Facebook, um, they cannot be considered.

Um, we did have several applications. The position has closed on People First and so those applications are being reviewed now by Anna Simmons who is the program administrator for the internal child health program (sp).

She did not have any updates beyond that at this point, but she just wanted me to pass on to you all that those positions -- or that applications are being considered now, okay?

Yes, so, this is a time of transition at the Department, as you might have well noticed.

Shay Chapman still is with our program, still is with our division, I should say, but she has and is expected to be promoted to the division level as a division assistant.

So, she's still involved, but she did ask me to kind of help facilitate this meeting.

The bureau chief position has also been advertised. That position has also closed and they're looking at that now.

So, a lot of transition going on here

>> [Background chatter]. She can send me the Zoom so I can't get in. I'm listening, but I'm not on the Zoom

[Note from CART Captioner]: Please have people mute themselves on the telephone line. Thank you.

>> SEAN ISAAC: As a remainder, please mute yourselves.

>> [Background chatter]. I can't. I am not on the Zoom.

>> I was sent the link, but I can't mute myself on the telephone line.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Can you please identify yourself?

>> This is Eloise. You didn't send me the link, so I can't -- I can't, um -- unless I -- I

leave the meeting, I can't Zoom or I can't do anything, so...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Eloise, the Zoom is for the council members only.

[Talking over one another].

>> Okay, well then I...

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): This is Lisa, the Captioner. Please mute your line on the telephone, Eloise. That's what she's talking about.

>> Okay. Um... I don't know if I can do that...

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Can somebody maybe explain to her how to mute on her phone?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Glenna (sic), do you have an office phone or a cell phone?

>> I have an iPhone and it's hooked up on my hearing aids.

>> SEAN ISAAC: So on your iPhone, you should be able to find on the home screen a microphone and you should be able to tap it.

[Pause].

>> Eloise: Okay... um...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, go ahead, Sean. Sorry for the interruption.

>> SEAN ISAAC: No, that's okay.

Um... and by the way, there are 18 applicants for Tiffany's position. I want to pass that on as well.

I am not deaf or hard of hearing, so I have a lot to learn, so please be patient with me during this time. If I make a mistake, um... I'm not too sensitive, please point it out and I'll try to do better, okay?

I am honored to be a part of this and to try to assist you all as best I can.

And I wanted you to know that I did get an e-mail from Cecil and Cecil stated that he was, um, going to be leaving the Council or has left the Council and he's going to be retiring and that was why.

So, there will need to be, I guess, a decision made on how to report the budget in the future or who's going to do that in the future.

And I think those are all the updates I currently have.

Did anybody have any questions?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Chris, go ahead, Chris. Chris?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris speaking. Can you all hear me? I'm going to voice. Okay.

Question: First of all, Sean, welcome and thank you so much for all you've done. I've heard great things and we're happy to have you as part of the team.

It is okay that you already have the correct attitude, even if you make a mistake, you're going to correct it and move on. And I'll tell you first that I'm not perfect myself, so that's no problem at all. I respect that and we wish you the best. Thank you very much.

I do have a couple of quick questions about the positions that are available and the transition that we are in at this time.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Okay. You said that we have 17 position applicants.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Eighteen.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: And you said they were being reviewed. But my question is, are the finalists or a short list, is that being presented to the Council before a final decision is made?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you for the question. I have not talked with Shay about that; I can discuss that with her and let everybody know after this call. Is that okay?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Okay. Also, thank you. My follow-up question is there are applicants that are deaf and hard of hearing that are on the list? That you're aware of?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Again, I'm sorry --

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Are any hard of hearing themselves?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I have not had a chance to review the list myself, but I will ask that question of Anna and get back with you with that information.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Okay. Realizing people may not always self-identify, but it would be good to know if we had applicants that are deaf or hard of hearing. Certainly in a situation where we want to provide employment to people that are deaf or hard of hearing equally, we certainly want to consider any applicants that are deaf or hard of hearing for a council that serves a population that is deaf and hard of hearing.

The other thing that I wanted to ask, and I promise this is the last one, but when you sent out the e-mail that explained who you are introducing yourself, there was a little bit of confusion, because it almost sounded like to me in the e-mail that you were replacing Tiffany. And that Shay had moved on and I was a little unclear on what exactly was happening.

So I was glad to hear that clarification.

If you could explain a little bit more about that.

And also a timeline for the position and how that's going to work.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Chris, thank you for the questions, keep them coming because they are very helpful.

I'm sorry for the miscommunication. I think I used the word "appointed" and maybe I shouldn't have.

I was asked to facilitate this meeting. There was no timeline given to me [chuckles]. Sometimes we work with the Department and if there's a need, we just kind of meet it and keep moving until you're asked to meet another need.

So I wish I could give you a little bit more information about how long I'll be with you all in facilitating this meeting.

I just can't today.

But you're correct, I'm not replacing Tiffany Baylor. The Department still has that position and expects to fill it.

And like I said, I'll talk with Shay and Anna and find out if there are any Deaf candidates and will the Council have a chance to make their inputs known with those applicants.

So thank you for the question.

Hopefully that answers everything. Did I miss anything?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Okay. Thank you. And I hope that you stay and that you're involved with the Council for a long time. So thank you.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Chris, I appreciate that. Anyone else?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead, Glenna.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: You're okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So as far as the application, did you say the position -- the applicants that responded, but is the position closed?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Yes, the position did close. I don't have a date on that, but it did close, I was able to confirm that. And they had 18 applicants.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, I don't know how that position, that posting ended up on Facebook, but Debbe and I redirected people to DOH, since that is the official posting. Just to give you a little backstory there.

I did see it on Facebook and I didn't recognize any deaf or hard-of-hearing people that might be interested. That doesn't mean there aren't any.

But I did see one name that I thought might be a good applicant.

As far as the... marketing report, any update on that? Pardon me, the biennial report.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay, yes --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I believe we received a copy of that. Have those already been copied and disseminated to the legislators throughout the state? That has been distributed and released?

>> SEAN ISAAC: So I did not know there was a biennial report until about two weeks ago [chuckles]. And so that has been sent to the council members. I don't believe it's been distributed to all the legislators. So that will be something that we will do once this call is over.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So it has been distributed. I don't know how, but perhaps there's a particular individual who is responsible for making sure that those get distributed more widely? Because I know right now, there's a special council meeting to talk about a bill related to gambling and we're really hoping that it gets in the hands of those people as well. I guess that's yet to be seen.

>> SEAN ISAAC: So just to be clear, the biennial report was distributed to the council members. The Department will have to distribute it to the legislators as well. And I'm looking for feedback from this Council as to how to do that more broadly and effectively.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, I was under the assumption that there would be a large package with copies of this report that would then go to someone who's responsible for getting those to general assembly, legislators, you know, both in the House and in the Senate offices.

I mean, that's been my understanding, that there is someone that is delegated that responsibility and I don't know who that is.

I'm just wanting to ensure that every House representative and every senator at least gets a copy of that. That's really why I'm asking.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Forgive me for my lack of knowledge on this topic. Um... I'm not sure who's delegated or designated to send that out.

It probably was Tiffany and I'm looking for some help on this one.

If you all don't know and, Debbe, you don't know, I'll have to go back and ask Anna and Shay for clarification and let you all know.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Do you know how many was made? How many copies were made?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I do know. There were at least 500 copies made.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, great.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We just want to get those copies distributed, again, to everyone in the House, in the Senate, Governor's Office. We'd like to get those shared widely. Get them in the hands of the right people. And then any that are left over, each council member should receive maybe a few to have on hand; maybe 15 copies or so. And then I would be happy to share them within organizations in my area and in our community.



>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay, great. Thank you for that. So what I'm hearing is make sure to distribute that to all the legislators and then to each council member, send about 15.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Correct.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Will do. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Correct.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other comments?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Chris, I think he has his hand up.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Oh, I'm sorry, okay, all right, go ahead, Chris.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Thank you. This is Chris. And also there needs to be a lot of -- other -- a PDF of the report, needs to go on the website for FCCDHH as soon as possible.

My concern is already the session for Legislature is complete; they've already adjourned.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Chris, thank you for that comment. And, again, my apologies, my serious apologies on anything that the Department was supposed to do. My apologies. Like I said, this was a recent post for me, and so I'm just now learning about some of these duties and responsibilities.

Anything you can let me know that the Department was responsible for, please let me know and I'll take care of that asap, okay?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Thank you.  
Just to help get them out fast. Thank you.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sure.

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

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Chris, I don't think it's necessarily too late, there are still many staff, assistants to the legislators that are still working in the offices and they can get those. And certainly distribute them to the right people and hopefully they'll get their eyes on that report as well.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. I would like -- has anyone had a chance to read the minutes? Go back to reading the minutes? Anybody want to approve the minutes itself?

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna, I move to accept the minutes as written.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Can I have someone second the motion?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody want to second the motion that the minute as read are filed?

>> MARY HODGES: This is Mary Hodges, I second the motion.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, great. Thank you, Mary.  
Okay. We're moving on. Anything else you wanted to add, Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I think the only other thing is that if there are any other suggestions for the Council how the Department can be helpful, please let me know. While I am new, I am passionate about this topic. I have a lot of interest. My mom is actually hard of hearing, my dad is hard of hearing. But I don't know what that means. And all I know is that's a personal thing, it's a challenging thing. So, please, I appreciate you helping me and educating me. Debbe has already gone through the -- [chuckles] -- gone through trying to explain some things with me, trying to explain the different councils and organizations that are involved in this movement throughout the state. So, my goal is not to slow down your momentum, but to pick it up and to help you. I will say this one thing that you already probably know, is that the next council meeting is suggested to be face-to-face. The Governor's executive order sort of has ended when it comes to allowing councils and organizations and boards to meet, I guess virtually, and so now it's time to meet face-to-face again by I guess by rules and by bylaws, so...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, I see you had your hand up a minute ago?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The Governor's appointment to the Council, I know that has been an issue. And there are many vacancies still on the council. We only have seven; we should have nine council members. And any idea where we are with the Governor's appointments? I don't know if you have any insight, information, or someone you could ask. But any help that you could give in moving that along with the Governor's appointments, specifically to this Council, would be helpful.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Glenna. This is Sean. And yes, I have been communicated that that has been an issue. My supervisors are telling me that one of the things they're trying to do is to get boards meeting face-to-face again and, um... I think that this will be more of a priority now that the COVID-19 pandemic is passing. I don't have any specific knowledge when it comes to appointments for this Board. But that's certainly an issue that I will be talking to my supervisors about it.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Chris, go ahead, Chris.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris speaking. On that same subject, Glenna, thank you for posing the question. Pretty much every council member's term has expired, including my own, which has actually expired in 2018. My concern is if I were to stop this, no one would be put in to replace me.

So as support for the State and support for the Council, I continue to serve and do the best I can to provide information as probably one of the [chuckles] senior members or longest-serving people, other than Cindy, who I don't know if she's on the line today or not, I missed that. I hope she's able to join us.

But the point is, I realize the Governor has many, many councils for the state of Florida, but I'm curious what other councils' appointments have been made, because I do not know of any appointments that have been made for this council for several years and that's very concerning.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I understand your concern. I appreciate you voicing that to me. I was not aware of the history until Debbe explained that issue to me.

I can only salute you all in what you're doing and, you know, from my position, I appreciate you all going the extra duty to do what you're doing, knowing that there have been issues with the appointments.

So, all I can do is express my gratitude for what you're doing and how you're serving the state of Florida. And let you know that this will be one of the top things that I'll bring back to Leadership to see if they can try to move on.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Chris, go ahead.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris again. Just to clarify, my question is what you can find out what councils have been receiving new appointments in the last couple years, so maybe we can model after that and find out what they're doing to keep things moving along.

I really want to see what we can do to get some new people appointed to the council, to this council.

And if you can find out more information on who is receiving appointments for their council, we want to model after that; I think that's important.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. So let me -- let's clarify. You want to make sure to find out who has been appointed to all the different councils or just what councils have been receiving appointments?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Maybe call the Appointments Office and ask them what councils have had new appointments in 2020 or 2021. It would be good to know who else is getting appointments. Or if the Governor is not making appointments to any of the councils in the state.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. Gina said that I am thankful to get back together in person meetings, in the chat box.

Okay. Any other comments or questions?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Because -- yeah, go ahead, Chris.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Debbe, this is Chris. You stepped on Sean's answer for that. I just want to get clarification and hopefully Sean, with great appreciation, is able to contact the Governor's Appointments Office and find out who has received appointments of other councils.

Because I know there are many, many councils in the state of Florida.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Yes, I heard your question and I will reach out to the -- what you describe as the Appointments Office and ask that question. Thank you.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Thank you, sir.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other comments? Questions?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. It's not even 10:00 o'clock yet for a break. So, um, what we could do is take a break now, five minutes, ten minutes, and come back, and then have more discussion.

But we don't have Michael to speak until 10:20.

So anybody have any questions? Any concerns? Anything? Or do you want to break?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I believe that both Sean and Dottie, I'm not sure if Dottie is here today. Is she?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sean, do you know if Dottie is here today?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I believe what happened on that, and my apologies, initially she was designated to speak on behalf of Tiffany and when I communicated with her, she did not have any additional information to add other than what I am speaking to you all about. So she will not be speaking today; she does not have any additional information at this time.

I will say that she was instrumental in providing the notes, the minutes, so I want to thank her on the record. And that's basically it for Dottie.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I would just recommend that we go ahead with committee report, since we've moved already this far down the agenda. Unless you think we need a break?

My reason is we could have a longer lunch.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Any comments?

[Pause].

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay with going on with the committee updates?

Okay. On committee updates, we have the Web Committee, which is Debbie Hagner. One of the things that I noticed that we have to do... somewhere... we need to change Tiffany's position -- or name and add your name, Sean, on the website itself under FCCDHH Membership Committee.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean, we will do that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And we need to add the PDF for the biennial report. Um... and what else --

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean, I will do that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: -- anyone else have any comments to add for the website?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sorry, Debbie --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Perhaps after we get a new person in that position, that would be a good time to start doing that sort of cleanup of the website. Just making sure that things are up-to-date, things like that. Because right now I think what's most important is getting that PDF of the biennial report online and then we can work on sort of the cleanup efforts and making adjustments as needed. Hopefully by that time, we'll have somebody who's very knowledgeable about, you know, administering a website.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. We have -- next we have the education, medical, outreach, Technology Committee, which is Gina and Cindy Simon. Gina, do you have anything you want to say about that?

[Pause].

[Buzz sound].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina said: We do not have an update. Life took over and we were not able to meet this quarter.

Okay. All right. The next thing we have is the Legislative Committee. Glenna, go ahead.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So back in the beginning of this current legislative session that just ended, we looked over the bills, of which there were many, and wanted to check in

again on two specific bills that we found.

Perhaps we'll find more as time goes on, but there were two that we identified.

One was related to hearing aids for children. I believe this is the third time that this bill has been put forward.

Once again, it died in committee, the Appropriations Committee to be specific.

Another bill was related to allowing the sale of hearing aids through the mail. That one also died in committee.

Which is interesting, that both of them died on the last day of April, April 30th.

They lasted much longer in this session than they have in previous sessions before being -- not moving forward with the process.

But we did not see anything else yet related to deaf and hard-of-hearing issues.

Those were the only two.

But during the current session, I will say that there weren't that many meaningful bills that passed, to be honest.

You know, that's a particular issue... anyway, that's what we've seen thus far and we will try once again next year, that will be beginning February 20th of 2021. We will be meeting with the Governor and hopefully we will be able to view the other bills showing up next year that are relevant.

One thing that I do want to go back to, for the EMOT Committee, Gina, I know that we've been working on for sometime a letter that could go out, some kind of template that we could be -- we could use as needed to send to hospitals, legislators, what have you.

Are we continuing on that letter? Gina, are you aware of that? Is there an update?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina said she must step out and will be back in two minutes. Gina, are you back?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, all right, then...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Well, once she comes back, we will repeat the question that you asked and ask her to answer that question.

By the way, what happened to John Jackson? And Cindy Simon? Did they say were they're not here? Or... Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sorry. Um... I believe Cindy did make plans of attending a little bit later, but had some personal conflicts.

I don't recall hearing from Mr. Jackson. He did receive an invite, but I don't recall hearing from him.

[Background noise].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Maybe next time when you don't hear from them, to call them?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I will. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right, great.

All right. Cecil is not here to give us the Budget Committee. Did Cecil leave any

messages for you, Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. He did reach out via e-mail and respond only to give me the information that, like I said, he was retiring. He did not give me any budget-specific information.

[Background noise].

>> SEAN ISAAC: I will say that we have provided the budget update in the package and so hopefully you do have that information.

[Background noise].

>> SEAN ISAAC: And then the budget detail was sent in the e-mail, I'm sorry, it did not make it in the packet itself.

[Background noise].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Do you want to take the time to bring up the -- go back into your e-mail and check and bring up the budget and see what -- if anybody has any comments on it?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna. Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Since we did not spend any money for in-person council meetings, like travel or hotel accommodations or AV services, do we keep those funds for the fiscal year? Or... you know, especially considering that we may be having an in-person meeting coming up soon in August. Or did we lose those funds? Because I'm seeing some entries in parenthesis here in red which are adjustments. So, do we still have that same budget or have we lost those funds for not using them?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Debbe, is that a question for me or for you?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No, Glenna is asking you if we're going to lose all that money, um... lose that money.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That question was for Sean.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: If we will keep that this year.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Thank you for the question. Again, I'm still learning about this process.

I can say this, if the funds for this Council is like other budgets in the state program, the funding goes away at the end of the state fiscal year. But there's this thing called recurring funding and so you should be able to get that money starting July 1 of the next fiscal year.

So, that's my understanding as to how this is going to work.

But I'm just not familiar with this specific budget and I just need to ask the question just

to make sure that that's the case.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, most of the funding comes from DOH, so we do appreciate the continued support of the Council. In years' past, we did get some funding from the Legislature but that has ceased, so pretty much all of our funding comes from the Department of Health, so we're very grateful for that.

There's just a concern concerning when the fiscal year ends in July and our next in-person meeting would be in August. So would there be funds made available for the new fiscal year?

Our council meetings, when they take place in person, tend to be much more expensive because we have to factor in communication access that requires a team of interpreters, but then you also have the additional of AV equipment on-site, having CART, which tends to be more expensive when it's on-site because it's happening not virtually.

And all of the council members themselves traveling in. So that was my concern moving forward.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I understand your concern. Yeah, the funding should be recurring, meaning that you should have access to that funding next year. And like I said, I talked to Shay this morning and she encouraged me to tell you all to go ahead and plan for an in-person meeting. And that tells me that the funding will be there next year.

[Pause].

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

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, great. Thank you.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Debbe, this is Sean --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Questions?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Debbe, this is Sean.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Oh.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I want to ask, does the Council know where they're going to meet? Or do they decide that in a different setting or time?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Well, we will need to decide at sometime today where we would



like to meet, and then your staff will make the arrangements for the hotel and everything and make sure that we have the -- for the rental car and all that stuff.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So it's up to the Council where they want. Usually what we do is we pick a place where we haven't been to in a while where we know that there are some Deaf communities and it would be something different to go there and be there. So, last time, the last time we met, we were in... Chris? Where was the last time we met? On the East Coast? It's been so long!

>> I honestly forget!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, Glenna? Yeah?

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, that was in February of 2020 in Tallahassee, we did the Rally on Tally.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So I know we've been to Pensacola. I know we've been to Tampa. Um... let's see... we did Sarasota once. We did Ft. Myers -- or the Miami area once, right? Um...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: West Palm Beach was another location. Perhaps Kissimmee? Ocala?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Ocala. The Villages?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We could do perhaps Kissimmee. I thought we've been to The Villages.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No, we can try to meet at The Villages or by The Villages.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Right, or Kissimmee. I know that Kissimmee is more centrally located, so that could be helpful.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Gina is back. So, Gina, Glenna has a question for you. So Glenna, could you ask your question for Gina?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, sure. Hi, Gina! This is Glenna speaking. In regards to the EMOT Committee, I remember there was work being done on a distribution letter, information about issues that we're currently facing and there was talk of making a template letter that could be sent out as needed. Do you know if that letter has been completed? If it's in progress? Where we are standing on that template letter?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina, did you get that message?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina? Are you there?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Well, we'll try again later [laughs].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All righty.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina, please let us know that you're back. Okay. Um... it's almost 10:00 o'clock. What we can do is take a 15-minute break now and then, um, and then we'll resume at exactly 10:25. Gina just mentioned on the chat: As I recall, Mary was the only person on the committee who responded to Tiffany. At the last discussion, we were to cross-roads as to how we were going to proceed. She said: Debbe, you have to give me more time to type! Sorry, I apologize.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Okay.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I would like to make a suggestion to the EMOT Committee that this letter include opening for public comment, something that we can send out to try and get more public involvement. But the creation of some kind of a template that is just very general in nature, having a paragraph explaining what it is, what does FCCDHH does, and then perhaps a paragraph that can address the specific issue at hand. And then the third paragraph can explain how to meet that specific issue, what could be done. And then include some contact information for FCCDHH or other organizations. And we could also just sort of keep that first paragraph and adjust the wording as necessary of what would be the current issue at hand. And this would be a way to respond more easily as questions come in to the Council and can be sent out even to a wide list of people as needed. But some kind of a generalized sort of form letter that can be customized for the needs of whatever questions or issues that we're facing. You know, and come up, like, getting interpreters for COVID announcements or trying to get more access on television when interpreters are not being shown during press conferences. The third issue that had come up was... masks, the impact that was having. So... with that kind of a letter, we would need to sort of build a framework and maintain a list of organizations that people could contact and then we would be able to send out that letter. I think having something like that on hand would be very helpful and helping us to create a database of organizations and points of contact.

[Background noise].

Okay. Someone is coming in. Okay. That's what I was going to say.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Debbe mentioned us taking a break.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, real quick, real quick. Gina said: The opening comments is a great idea. We need to get the community involved. One other through the -- was the highlight an organization on each quarter. Another issue is to discuss how to distribute. Your thoughts? Okay. So we'll take a 15-minute break and then we'll come back and discuss that later. But at 10:20, we will start the presentation, okay? So see you back at 10:15.

[Break].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. It's 10:15. I would like to start. I would like to invite Mike -- I don't know how to pronounce your name. So would the interpreters please say their name?  
Monica (sic), how do you say Michael's last name?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Monica (sic)? And Colleen.  
Okay. Do we have... we need one more, we need Colleen on spotlight. And one of the interpreters removed....  
All right. Um... I would like to turn it over to Michael, I guess, who is going to start his presentation. So welcome, Michael.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Whoever -- whoever -- yeah, go ahead.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: This is Monique, it looks like Michael is pretty busy today. I can start.  
Hello, everyone, my name is Monique Rousell, I'm the Deaf Service Program coordinator for the Centers for Independent Living in Jacksonville, Florida.  
And Michael here and also Colleen is joining us, a deaf program coordinator.  
And Michael is the coordinator at --

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: At the Tampa office.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: That's right, the office in the Tampa Bay Area. And Colleen is located in Ocala, in the Ocala area.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I just texted Colleen on Zoom now, so hopefully she will be joining us any moment.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: We're just going to have a short presentation about the Center for Independent Living and what we do.

Michael, do you want to start?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Sure, I'll be happy to. Are the interpreters ready? Fantastic. And if at any point you need clarification, let me know. Hello, Chris, nice to see you again.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Yes, I forgot to turn my camera back on, but I'm back on video.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Hi, I'm Michael. Good to see you as well. Oh, and I see someone else is saying hi to me. Is that Glenna? Oh, anyway....

The Center for Independent Living or CIL as it's known for short is a statewide organization in Florida.

It's separated by counties. So, for example, I cover my area here in Tampa or in Hillsborough County. That is the extent of my office.

And there are other CILs that in some cases cover two, three, five, sometimes seven counties, which is a lot of work for one CIL.

I feel very fortunate that my domain is just one county.

But regardless, our mission for CIL is to empower people with other abilities -- disabilities -- who is voicing for me, by the way? Oh, I see it's Chris. Okay. Our mission is to empower our consumers to become independent. That is our main goal.

And we can cover five main cores. So, for example, one of those cores is information and referral, meaning for information and referral, we might receive calls about where someone should go for a specific service, like COVID testing, or vaccinations.

So we field calls and refer people to the proper resources.

Questions about interpreter availability, disaster preparedness, where shelters are, things like that are the kinds of questions that we receive for information and referral. Often we get calls about where a deaf-friendly physician is and so we try to share as much information as possible.

The second core is independent living skills training. So, for example, all CILs provide training of one sort or another. But the programs differ.

So, at our office, we offer what's called U.S. citizenship training to prepare people for passing the citizenship exam, to become official Americans.

We also have some drivers' education classes. Also workshops and presentations about the ADA.

And I know that many other CIL offices offer similar workshops. Workshops on how do you budget properly? Or even focusing at education efforts on youth in transition, from school to adulthood.

So, we start at the middle school and high school level, educating students who are deaf and hard of hearing and others.

[Background noise].

And we often focus efforts on teaching people about -- hold on a second, it looks like we have Colleen joining us. There she is! Hi, Colleen.

But again, youth in transition, for that, things like that focus on ADA and planning before graduation on the different kinds of referral services, like vocational rehabilitation that they will need to use after high school and after graduation.

We also help people look for apartments. And any of the other issues that come up in terms of transitioning out of school.

We also provide job readiness and preparedness, like interview skills training, how to fill out a résumé or an application, things like that.

Again, focused on our youth in transition age group.

Another of our cores is the peer mentor program. So, for example, I, being a Deaf person, can work with our deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers, because we have a great deal in common.

So I might teach them things like, you know, we'll go over some bad experiences that we've had in the past where interpreting services weren't provided and what's involved in filing a complaint when that happens.

So that's part of our peer mentorship program.

We also do a great deal of advocacy in many areas.

An example of that advocacy would be when some kind of office, like an HR office or a doctor's office, refuses to provide interpreting services.

All of these issues that require a bit of advocacy. Perhaps an apartment complex refuses to provide a lighted alarm system. So we would get in touch with that landlord and give them information and encourage them to follow suit.

That is something that we do a lot of in our office.

I feel like there's one more core that I've missed...

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: Transition services.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: Peer support, transition.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Okay.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: That should be all of them.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: It looks like I hit on all of them.

I believe I touched on all of the cores that we follow.

But, again, the main issue is empowering our consumers to live independently.

We try to teach them how to call a business or an office for themselves using a video phone through VRS. Back in the old days trying to communicate with TTY and written English was very difficult and now we can communicate with an interpreter over a video phone and we try to empower or deaf users to advocate for themselves and use that. Would any of my colleagues like to add anything to this intro?

>> INTERPRETER: [On mute].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Carrie, I believe you're on mute right now.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: I would like to show a map with 15 independent living places. I live in Ocala, Florida, and I've worked for the Center for Independent Living for 24 years.

And basically the five cores are what we follow, as what Michael already presented on. And that's who I am.

Monique, would you like to add?

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: Hello, good morning. Again, my name is Monique, I'll be assisting with the presentation today. I'm from Jacksonville. And I'll have a brief presentation about the Center for Independent Living and the counties that we cover.

We have over 500 centers all over the country. And here in Florida, we have 17 centers statewide.

And CDC found a couple of years ago that the Centers for Independent Living has helped over 17,000 people with different types of services that people need to successfully live independently in their communities.

We are a non-profit organization. But we receive our funding from different sources. We receive it from the state and federal level, grants, and so forth.

And we just want to emphasize that 51% of our staff and our board members have disabilities themselves. And that's really impressive! And we just really want to emphasize that.

Because, you know, the staff really puts -- positions the staff in a good position to help those who are disabled. Because they can understand the needs, the struggle, the challenges that the community is going through to help them become successful in their community.

If they're at home and at school and with their families, and even at work.

Do you folks, council members, or others have any questions?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I would like to add a quick comment. We do have biweekly meetings on Zoom where all of our Deaf Service providers, service providers for the deaf and hard-of-hearing consumers gather together and we'll have presentations, workshops, etc., demonstrations, even anniversary celebrations.

Topics like hurricane preparedness; as you know, we're coming into hurricane season very shortly.

And also other topics like how to properly use a sign language interpreter, how to advocate for one's self.

So we cover very many workshops in these biweekly meetings on Zoom.

And that's really a wonderful service provided by our team. And I have to give kudos to the team all over the state for doing so.

I did have a question that I would like to ask. If we were interested in posting flyers, would we be able to send those to you to be posted on your Facebook page or your website? Would the Council be willing to do that?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbe. Yes, you can post on -- on the FCCDHH Facebook page, yes, you're allowed.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Fantastic.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Also, it would be nice, it would be nice that we learn to collaborate, because I give six Zoom meetings a month related to hearing loss for HLAA.

Yesterday, we had 62 people show up about balancing, how to prevent yourself from falling.

So it would be good that we should -- it would be nice to have more people participate in the Zoom meetings a month.

So, we need to work together.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: That sounds wonderful.

So, would we e-mail that to you? Or to Gina to post that? Or post them directly ourselves?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We can provide you with all the council meetings (sic) e-mails, but if you want us to post it for the FCCDHH, you have to send it to Sean, Sean, um... and he will distribute it to the Council.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: That sounds great.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: That's wonderful.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No, no, you have a whole -- you have a whole hour, so...

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Good. I was afraid I was talking a bit too much! Okay. I'm sure all of you feel similarly that there is a great deal of frustration out in the world since COVID started. Offices are closing, people are transitioning to work from home. People are fielding calls.

And we've gotten many calls from people who are having a difficult time finding that balance. They want to know where to go for COVID testing.

And so we decided to set up a special workshop presented on Zoom. Now, this one was piloted in Hillsborough County, we haven't done it throughout the state just yet. Just based on the number of calls that had me pulling my hair out on the same topic, on COVID! And just a lot of misinformation and misunderstandings that's out there on the topic truly is frightening.

You see it on the news and you're trying to follow what's going on with no interpreters, and it's just absolutely crazy, the miscommunication and confusion out there about what you can and can't do and how social distancing works.

And I've really been surprised that a lot of members of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community are as aware as they are about the guidelines related to these things.

So that is why we set up this Zoom workshop, just to put everyone on an even playing field.

If you go to an event for a vaccination, knowing that interpret services should be provided, so how to get those interpreting services.

And at my most recent workshop, we're going to be doing this again soon, about what happens after you get your vaccination. Do you need to continue wearing masks?

And we feel this is very important to get out into the community.

So, for the consumers here, especially in Hillsborough County, it really seems like there's a huge gap in information. And that's what we're trying to address. It's truly awful.

But I do feel like it's getting better. We're seeing an improvement.

And I can see other CILs who are coordinating information about vaccinations, even in their own centers and referring people to where to get those vaccination services, along with interpreters.

But I will be in touch with Sean. I know that he is with the Department of Health, is that correct?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Okay, great. So if he knows all about what's going on in terms of interpreters, having them stationed at these vaccination sites all day.

Like, for example, we have a dog track here where we have been fielding a lot of calls about people going to that location for the testing and the vaccinations and some of them are just not seeing postings for interpreting services.

So, again, it comes down to getting the information into the right hands. But I'm sure you understand the frustration that we've been dealing with and that we're looking forward to things hopefully getting better in the future.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: Colleen, did you have anything you wanted to add?

>> COLLEEN METCALF: This is Colleen. Yes, I work at the CIL in Ocala and we work closely with the Gainesville Headquarters for Centers for Independent Living, and we serve 16 counties, just showing you that map again, that red-coded area is a very large attachment area for the CIL that I work at.

And we try to get the information out to those outlying counties. Like Michael said, it has been a challenge.

Go ahead.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: This is Monique speaking. Each CIL has their own county that they're responsible for. Ocala has the most at 16 in their jurisdiction, which is quite impressive.

And I just want to emphasize that we really are focusing on those with disabilities. And the three of us representing, we work closely with the Deaf community and Deaf consumers.

I would like to explain a little bit about how we help those Deaf consumers and clients. We help them find employment. If they need to make a résumé, we can help with those, we provide those services.

We also partner with VR, vocational rehabilitation, with those types of services.

We have various workshops and differing events that -- for those Deaf -- members of the Deaf community, who might be a little more isolated, to be able to get some more social interaction, to get together.

And we provide different technological devices that those ones might need. If they live in their own place, they might need a flasher, a fire alarm with a visual flasher. They might need a monitor with a baby crying -- a baby crying monitor.

They might need assistance, a doorbell flasher -- yes, exactly, a doorbell flasher or a phone flasher.

They might need assistance with getting a video phone.

So we help with all those services and we guide them and provide resources where they can get video phones and other technological equipment that can really benefit them and their family.

We also help them find homes, if they need housing.

And when a person comes in or calls in on a video phone -- that's usually how they contact us, is through a video phone -- we let them know that we are here to help them with whatever they need in that regard.

And so it also becomes like case management in a way, because it's a one-on-one service that we provide and it's very individualized and tailored to meet their needs.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael. And do keep in mind that at all of our CILs, we provide what's necessary. They work to fit the needs of their local communities.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I have a question. This is Debbe. I have a question. Um... how different is CIL versus the Deaf Services Center? How different is that?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Excellent question! Excellent question!



You know, it's interesting, I do remember when there were many Deaf Service Centers in the state of Florida once upon a time.

When I first moved to the state in 1993, I believe there were 58 Deaf Services Centers throughout the state and now we're down to two.

So, I think what's being recognized is that CIL is, in a way, taking over the role that Deaf Service Centers used to fill, especially with regard to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. I think Monique and Colleen can speak to that.

We work with other consumers as well, over Zoom, but oftentimes that focuses on medical equipment, wheelchairs

>> COLLEEN METCALF: Walkers.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Colleen is adds walkers, exactly, other forms of medical equipment.

But I would say that CIL, it's focusing on other things like budget management and services for the Deaf that they don't get from the state or federal level. That's what we use those grant monies that we receive.

So it's a very different approach from what you've seen in the past.

[Buzzing sound].

The fact that Deaf Service Centers have been reduced to almost nothing compared to where they were in the past, I believe that's what's --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: One thing -- I noticed that you have the Family Center on Deafness, you have the Deaf Service Center, you have the Disability Achievement Center and you have the CIL.

We need to collaborate and work together, because you have FAD, you have HLAA, we have A.G. Bell and we have the Say What Club, we have all of these organizations.

We just need to collaborate and work together as a team, you know, and increase -- and ALDA, we have ALDA, you know, we like to get together.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: Absolutely, partnership.

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Just for your information, I don't know if you're aware, but Gallaudet University partnered with HLAA for peer mentoring. I will be graduating from the peer mentoring on Memorial Weekend this year.

So we have several people that are members of HLAA that are graduates, certified peer mentoring, if you want those names.

But most of those people don't know sign, don't know sign. So I'm the only one that I know of that can speak and sign at the same time, so... I just wanted to let you know.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: Okay. Good to know.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna speaking. I had two questions for you, actually. In regards to Deaf clients, or any clients, really, that you serve, do they have to meet any kind of financial limitation criteria to become a client? Do they have to be low income or anything of that nature?

>> Not at all.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's a question for you -- do you have an exact number how many Deaf clients, not all disabled clients, but Deaf clients? For example, how many ASL users do you have? How many are hard of hearing? How many are more oral deaf? Do you have any specific statistics?

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: No, we don't have any specific statistics for that, no.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: And that's a great question. By county, CIL might know in terms of just their own jurisdiction, like in Tampa or St. Petersburg, Pinellas Park, we have an idea.

I would say in those areas, somewhere around 200,000 people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Because, you know, we have the aging community who are late-deafened, so that's all included in that number.

Parts down even further, we would have to talk to FTRI.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: And this is Colleen, by county, yes, FTRI would have that data specific to deaf and hard of hearing.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. That is one of the biggest challenges that we face, you know, when we speak with people at a government level, they want to know numbers. That's what drives them. They want to know statistics and numbers and counts.

And so some of that information really is missing. There's a gap in that information. And so if we could get some hard numbers, if you could share those with us, we could use that to present that to those who are working at the government level.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael speaking -- oh, Debbe, did you want to say something?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hold on. Chris Littlewood, go ahead.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Thank you. I wanted to share on this particular subject, I've been working with Family Center on Deafness to research and get the statistics and the numbers that we need for people that are deaf or hard of hearing and receiving services in the state of Florida.

And also people that are deaf or hard of hearing that are there, but maybe not receiving services.

The problem is, the numbers that we're working with are so old. The numbers that FTRI are supplying are extrapolated from reports that, like, started in 2014 or even before that.

So, we're working with numbers that are seven to ten years old or older and they really need to be updated.

So, fortunately we've been working with Jay Circuit (sp) and the family on Deaf Centers and working with St. Pete College and working on a survey and asking questions to people that are deaf and hard of hearing in the state of Florida.

And hopefully we can share that information with the Council and also with the CILs around the state.

So you guys can help us get the word out about the survey and then we can hopefully get them updated numbers.

And that will help everybody in the future when we're looking for funding and stuff about what we're doing.

So, we are hoping to put this survey out probably in early fall.

I will tell you, we are working with having all of the questions on the survey. Also be provided in ASL, so that people that are deaf or hard of hearing can respond or understand the questions as well that use ASL first.

So, I will certainly keep the Council and CILs updated on that. Thank you.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: This is Monique speaking. Yes, Chris, please do. That would be very helpful. That's the reason we're here. We want to collaborate with various agencies and organizations so that as a team, we can come together and serve the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, and really, any person with a disability. That really is why we are here! [Chuckles].

So, we definitely want to assist you and assist them. And for that part, Chris, if you could please send out that information, the results of that survey, as soon as possible, and then we can send that to the different coordinators and they can disseminate that to their constituents.

We can post it on social media, the various social media sites that they can disseminate information on.

And just reach out to various people, to get that information out there and getting that data, that hard data. It's so valuable to get that data. We are definitely in agreement with that.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael speaking. Each CIL office actually has their own database that they maintain for their deaf and hard-of-hearing clients.

But we would be happy to share those numbers, if that would be helpful.

And I, Chris, I'm not sure in terms of the Family Center on Deafness, is there a -- do they cover birth to age 22-years-old? If I'm not mistaken? So there really aren't that many adult services that they provide, once they sort of age out of that system, that's usually when they start coming to CIL, especially in Pinellas County.

So that would be just a great sort of transition to offer.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Chris.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Yeah, thank you. That's very true, Michael. But remember, their focus is for children, school-aged children. But it's really important that people understand the number of people that are deaf and hard of hearing all over the state of Florida.

And the collection of people that are in Florida will include all, not only children.

So, you know we all use those numbers for research for funding. And that's important.

So, if we collect new, recent information, information, it will be better for all of us.

So, I will share. And if you -- if you can share your database and numbers also, that's an awesome idea. Thank you.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Excellent. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Does anyone else have any questions for them?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Do you have questions for us?  
We do have a position open for the CIL on the Council. We haven't had anyone for years. So we would love to have one of you join our team and you will have a voice on the Council.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Yes, Glenna told me about that and so I have put in an application. But we were discussing and trying to figure out who would actually be that person; whether it would be myself, Monique, Colleen, someone else. So we have to decide on that.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: We'll keep you posted.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other questions? On the phone, people on the chat, on the phone?

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael, I do have a question.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I'm trying to see... well... let me ask you this: How often do you end up meeting with stakeholders, whether they're legislators or whoever in Tallahassee?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. This is Debbe. We meet four times a year, four, four times a year. We rotate. And we typically, for February only, we try to meet in Tallahassee, so we have an opportunity to meet with the Legislature. But the other times, we rotate. And so we haven't decided, but there's a possibility that maybe in August, we will meet in person. We're waiting... so, there's a possibility we'll meet in person. So we will pick an area and we'll have the hotel, have public comments for people to voice their complaints or issues.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: -- so a follow-up question. Do you have your own lobbyist?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No, we're not allowed to lobby.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Why not?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We're not allowed. We're a council.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Oh, I see. Because each Center for Independent Living has their own lobbyist, so I just wanted to make you aware.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: That's interesting...

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: And they can go and, you know, fight for funding or advocacy purposes or many other issues that our consumers would need to speak to somebody in Tallahassee about so they can hold those meetings for us.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So we should be collaborating with FAD and HLAA and ALDA, all of that to work together, um, and you can be our spokesperson as a lobbyist.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Absolutely! Yes! Please let us know and we can pass that information on to our lobbyist.  
Is there a sign for lobbyist that you folks have seen? I'm spelling it. Has anyone seen a quick and easy... all right, I'll keep on spelling it then.  
But we can pass that information onto our lobbyist who can represent those issues. You know, sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't work. But all we can do is try.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anyone else has any questions? Do you folks have any questions for us?

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Now, in terms of a town hall meeting, I believe that's at 2:30 today. Do you often have many people showing up to voice their concerns and complaints?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sometimes we get a few people show up, and then sometimes we don't get anyone.  
So, we need to do a better job of promoting about the public comments and FCCDHH meetings and all that. We need to do a better job on that.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Do you receive any sort of --

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It's posted on the website and it's posted on Facebook, and it's also the responsibility of the leaders, the representatives, to distribute that to their community. Um... and we've had -- we just got a new person, Sean, Sean, who's new, and so we're...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: If you can give me all of your e-mail addresses and for each CIL, we can distribute announcements directly to you.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: That's great! That was going to be my next question.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: If you can distribute that information for us, that would be very helpful.

Now, October 6th, I believe, in Lakeland, there is a deaf and hard-of-hearing event. Are you planning on having a booth set up there?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Yes, the event in Lakeland. October 2nd I thought it was. October 2nd.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, the 2nd, okay.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: It's called It's A Deaf Thing, that event, It's A Deaf Thing.

>> It's called It's A Deaf Thing.

[Pause].

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: This is Monique. I know that October 2nd in Lakeland -- it's October 2nd. Are we talking about the same event? Maybe we can talk about having a booth there; that's definitely worth exploring. Thank you for that information!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I believe it's October 6th, 6th.

[Talking over one another].

>> I believe it's the second.

>> It's the second.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Let me look it up.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: It's on a Saturday.

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Same place it was last time.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It is... you're right, it's October 2nd in Lakeland. Parking is \$10. I'll post the link --

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Parking should be free, I thought.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: -- in the chat box.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: You know what? I could be wrong about that.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: We can check on that later.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Right, so there will be activities, a lot of different performances. It's not just going to be a series of booths.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We, as the Council, did go one time and I do feel like it would be a good idea to attend again, for sure.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: This is Monique speaking again. I know that you guys are wanting to collaborate with D/HH and we are really wanting the same thing, so that would be wonderful if we could hopefully, you know, all of us, all of our offices could collaborate.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: We would like to build a stronger network of people in the state of Florida to bring together people in the state of Florida and bring about a change.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And again, if you share your e-mail address with me, I will certainly disseminate our information to you so you know when our upcoming meetings are and you can share that widely and hopefully get people turn out for the town hall, Michael.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I would like to share one issue that has come up, but I will be here this afternoon to talk about it.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: One minute. Will the co-host please turn the camera on for Sean?

He wrote a message saying that the camera is turned off by the host. Lisa?  
Okay, great, okay. Okay. Any other comments on the phone, the chat, anybody?  
Sean, do you have any questions?

>> SEAN ISAAC: No questions at this time.  
I appreciate the comments you said, Michael. Please reach out to me for anything you need. And the same with you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anything else you wanted to...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. For 2021-2022, what goals are you trying to accomplish in regards to CIL?

>> COLLEEN METCALF: This is Colleen. I think our main focus is providing access to interpreters. We want qualified, licensure would be a great thing. Again, advocating and lobbying for some sort of licensure for sign language interpreters in the state of Florida.

That, I think, would be key to really seeing some change.  
Most of our clients complain that not only do they not have interpreters available or provided to them, they're just not qualified.  
So we're really hoping to put all of our energy behind that.

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: What do you mean? RID certification? Is that what you're

referring to?

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: Our goal is to have a law passed requiring interpreters to be licensed by the state. So, again, this is Monique speaking, our main goal in that front is getting the state to approve some kind of statewide requirement for interpreters to receive a license, an approved certification, in order to interpret.

And that would just make things a great deal better, because at this point, it's hard to say, it's frightening just how bad it is for some people, to receive an interpreter who is not certified or not licensed or credentialed in any way, for example, in the public school system, it's rampant.

And our hope is that we're not allowing children to suffer with subpar services. It's really doing a disservice to them and by requiring licensure and certification of interpreters, that can have a ripple effect on, you know, not only the school systems but in colleges and doctors' offices.

And making that a state requirement that interpreters need to be certified would be a huge step in the right direction for us.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Michael?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael. In relation to what she was just saying, that licensure of interpreters is another -- is a big issue. But in general, we're talking about communication access.

So, I think later on this afternoon, you'll see that having a CDI, a Certified Deaf Interpreter, working in the United States Immigration Office, for example, is something we're talking about.

Just providing that sort of access. I'll speak more to that later.

But putting in place interpreters and having them placed correctly on screen so they can be seen properly, especially during COVID announcement and other emergency preparedness announcement is what we're advocating for and for the need for communication access in the state.

Captioning as well, closed captions.

I think there's still work to be done there, certainly. I'm not sure how members of the Council feel about the current state of closed captioning on the news, whether it goes by too fast or if there are missed cues and misspellings and if that issue needs to be focused on.

But just in terms of communication access, that's our main focus.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I would like for you to -- oh, hold on, Glenna -- I would like for you guys to take a look at the FCCDHH website and take a look and make your comments and share that with us to see if it's understandable, clear, not clear, more information, whatever you might need.

There are some videos on there in sign language, videos, so take a look at that and share that with your people.

There is a section on the COVID, um... share that with your people.

Glenna, go ahead; I'm sorry.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hi, this is Glenna. Do you know what's happening with advocacy for the state licensure a few years ago?

Yeah, a few years ago, we did some work, we worked very hard for a few years, FAD and RID partnered and really worked hard. We went to the Government for several



years, Tallahassee, and unfortunately things kind of fell through. And sadly, it was not a good time to ask for licensure, because the state and professional board, who was overseeing the licensure matter was really trying to cut the licensure for any profession.

So they are -- there's no more license requirements or required.

So, for a lot of professions, they don't want to have licensure or licensed professionals, they want the opposite, cut those, so it's a bad climate to do that.

We'll have to wait and see if climate will change in terms of the Legislature, but right now it's just not happening.

And for schools, it depends on the counties. Some counties require the EIPA certification and some counties have no requirements for criteria.

Some of the counties have a hard time getting any interpreter in there to interpret for deaf students, deaf and hard-of-hearing students. They really just try to find a warm body that's flapping their hands around and they say it's better than nothing.

And so we're definitely advocating for getting more qualified interpreters in the schools. We have 67 counties and most of them are very rural and small counties and that is a huge --

>> OPERATOR: Chris Littlewood has left the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hold on a second, Colleen.

Chris said I need to sign off soon and I certainly want to thank the CIL staff, Mike, Monica (sic) and Colleen for joining us and sharing and do stay in touch.

Okay. Go ahead, Colleen.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: I just wanted to say that for CILs, the Centers for Independent Living, we do work very closely with FAD. In the past, we know it's, true trial and error, we haven't been successful, but we're not going to give up, we're going to continue to work with the Florida Association of the Deaf and other organizations to meet that goal.

We still want to lobby, come next year when it's time for general assembly and see what kind of movement we can make.

I didn't know that that was something that they were no longer pursuing; I had not heard that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Monica (sic)? Go ahead.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead.

[Pause].

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: Sorry about that. So, Colleen was mentioning and Glenna was just describing, we really need to work with the legislators to let them know what's going on, because there's a group of legislators that are wanting to cut different licenses to certain professions, and perhaps it could be -- we could continue to work on the background but not fight too hard this year, since the climate is not so good.

And maybe wait until coming years when the climate improves.

Is that what your saying, Glenna? Was that your point?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. There's going to be a --.

[Background noise].

>> OPERATOR: Has left the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: There's still some background noise going on. You're off, Colleen, you're okay. Um...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary? Please mute yourself, Mary.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So in regards to waiting for the 2022 election, we can wait and see what happens with that, to see if there's a shift in Legislature in any way, any kind of change.

And also wanted to mention FAD had a board meeting last month and there was no discussion about licensure in that meeting.

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Yes, this is Michael. What you recently mentioned, Colleen was talking about the president of FAD and having a discussion with them about moving forward again. I think it was two weeks ago at their latest meeting, a Zoom meeting, we talked about partnering with FRID, the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, and working with them on trying to revitalize this effort and this fight. That was just two weeks ago.

But I had not heard about this recent meeting of the FAD.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Well, you know, yeah, it might be in the fall when FAD and FRID, we've decided to have a joint conference in October and I don't know if that's actually been decided on, set in stone. But that is the goal, in October. We're not sure if FAD is gonna join in on that joint effort. But at that conference, they might initiate some kind of licensure discussion and set up a bit of a road map for getting licensure.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: [On mute].  
Can you hear me now? Okay. Anybody else has any questions or comments?  
Anybody on the phone? Chat?

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I would like to add just one more thing, if I could. Again, we don't want to focus exclusively on the Deaf community, but also the hard-of-hearing community, so please know that about our efforts.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. With the Deaf community, the top issue is the

securing of interpreters. With the hard-of-hearing community, what's the --

>> OPERATOR: Mary has joined the conference.

[Talking over one another].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael again. Someone just asked me that the other day. Um... are you talking about receiving free hearing aids? Is that the question?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, getting them paid for.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I do know of one program that is currently on hold. The name of the program is Starkey and it is, unfortunately, on hold right now, which works on reimbursing or paying for a single hearing aid, 100 or 200 depending on the case. But currently that's not moving forward because of COVID. And that was the only program that I know of that was offering anything like free hearing aids.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right, Colleen.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: This is Colleen. I know that I always purchase my hearing aids through VR, but that's because I am employed and that is a benefit through VR. I know that those over the age of 62, those benefits might be available through Medicare. But, again, you might want to double-check and see what Medicare benefits look like for others.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael speaking, also UnitedHealthcare, UHC, as far as I know, they are the only insurer that covers, and I think it's 50% of the cost of the hearing aid. I received mine last year through UnitedHealthcare when I transferred from another plan, I got this new plan for that reason. And now, of course, I'm on a different plan than I was last year. So I was lucky to get it when I could.

>> COLLEEN METCALF: This is Colleen. I just wanted to mention also that I believe it's Medicaid that will only work with certain hearing aid providers to provide that no-cost or free hearing aid. So that also depends.

>> MONIQUE ROUSELL: This is Monique. Glenna, to answer your question, for deaf and hard of hearing, the emphasis is really to get interpreters, and you're correct, getting hearing aids for deaf and hard of hearing. Because they still have residual hearing and they do want to hear. So those are two hot buttons or topics, you're correct.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Yes, we hear the same thing during the public comments at the council meetings. We hear the same topics. And so we were -- I was just curious if you were getting the same message.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: For your information, HLAA has a website that talks about how you can get financial support for purchasing hearing aids. So you may want to look at the hearingloss.org and they have a whole section on about financial assistance for

hearing aids. Hearingloss.org.  
Michael?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael. I also know that most people who are veterans can also receive free hearing aid assistance. So I do see a lot of folks who come into our office or call in on the phone. And we often get that question about where can I get a new hearing aid, how can I get assistance for that. We do get that question a lot.

And it's a difficult question to answer, especially for the aging population

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I'll be happy to work with you on that.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Excellent, good to hear.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other questions? Gina, let me read back. Gina on the phone said very information -- informative presentation.

Cindy Simon said: Medicare does not pay for hearing aids. Then she said, Cindy said, some Blue Cross/Blue Shield covers hearing aids.

Medicaid may pay for hearing aids, but if you're -- you are limited to those on contract.

Gina said: Question, do you have any workshops on LDA?

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael. I attended one or two of them. We had them here in the Tampa area at one time, we have hosted those, yes.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Are they recorded? Are they recorded?

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: No, they were not conducted on Zoom. I'm talking about back in the day when they were pre-COVID and we were doing live, in-person workshops. I think we did one or two of those. But I haven't heard any developments.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Marry asked regarding the aging population, I'm happy to assist as well.

Mary Hodges, she works for the Department of Elderly Affairs.

Um... Cindy Simon said: The veterans get free hearing aids through the VA and they are usually high end, meaning expensive.

Mary said: We need to include any resources in our resource database for the elderly network.

So, again, please take a look at the FCCDHH, take a look at all of our particular representatives' websites and make comments.

Share it with Sean -- with Sean or me, and then we'll be able to make sure we get it sent to the appropriate people to update their website or our website or Facebook.

>> Okay.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anymore questions or comments?

Thank you.

All right, so Sean has typed in his e-mail address in the Zoom chat box. And we need to copy that, I will copy that onto the other website (sic) over here.

Okay, got it. Okay. Monica (sic)? You said you would like to put in your e-mail, if possible, and collaborate with FCCDHH.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. My name is spelled D-E-B-B-E, there's no I in my name, and that's my legal name, D-E-B-B-E, no I. So it's Debbe. No I.

Cindy said: I am hoping that my aural rehab classes will be a new resource for Floridians this year. All right!

Okay. Any other questions? Comments?

Our time is up. And so I want to thank you. Thank you! And welcome! And I hoped you learn something from us. We certainly learned something from you guys. So thank you so much!

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Thank you, it was our pleasure! Have a great day.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you very much for your time!

[Talking over one another].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Thank you for inviting us.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. It is 11:22. We normally would be doing the committee updates, but we already did that. So, um...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hold on. Cindy made a comment, I don't know if -- she said I'm sorry, all, I am at a cousin's funeral and we are now moving to the site. I will be back for this afternoon. Thank you for the presentation. Okay.

Mary... okay.

Lisa is asking if Mary can join the Zoom meetings? She is not deaf, she's hearing. She works for the Department of Elderly Affairs. She is a council member, Lisa.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Lisa.

>> LISA: This is Lisa. I just wanted to let you know, Debbe, that Mary is in the Zoom room and that's fine. That was a little bit of, um, background noise that we were hearing earlier. So... just a reminder, anybody in Zoom, you need to keep your cameras off and your mic off unless you are speaking.

But the Zoom room is for access for the deaf and hard-of-hearing council members. So Mary, you're welcome to be in Zoom. And I see you in here. Just keep both of your mics muted.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. We do have one person, Eloise Schwartz wants to join the Zoom meeting. She is on the phone and she e-mailed.

So she is -- she is deaf/hard of hearing. So she can join the Zoom meeting or no?

>> LISA: This is Lisa. Yes, if Sean can get her the link or Glenna or you, Debbe, can

get her the link, she's more than welcome.

Again, we just ask that anybody who's not speaking to close out their camera to make sure the interpreters can be seen.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. I will... um... give Sean her e-mail.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I sent it to you, Sean.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Thank you --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, Glenna, go ahead. Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Before we break for lunch, I just wanted to mention that I just realized that we forgot to put down on the agenda that we were supposed to have election for Chair and Vice Chairperson, so....

In the afternoon, this afternoon, perhaps we can discuss the August meeting, we can discuss that election as well, and hopefully we will have enough people here to vote for that this afternoon.

I just wanted to mention that now so you can start thinking about that in regards to the Chair and the Vice Chair so we can be ready to discuss that this afternoon, if we have a quorum, if we have enough council members here for that

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Um... I guess we'll go ahead and take a lunch break, lunch break, and resume by, um... 1:00 o'clock.  
Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And Tracie will be on a little bit early to coordinate her presentation, for the interpreters, just to let you know.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Thank you. All right. Now it's 11:27. We will take our lunch break until 1:00 o'clock.

So please be back at 1:00 o'clock. You're happy to turn off your video, turn off your phone, and then we'll start up and we'll do the roll call exactly at 1:00 o'clock. Okay? All right. Great. Thank you! See you at 1:00.

[Break].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Welcome back. Today is May 13, the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. My name is Debbe Hagner. I would like to do a roll call for the people on the Council, please.  
So Sean, would you like to introduce yourself?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Yes. Can you hear me?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. Again, this is Sean Isaac. Once again, I work with the Florida Department of Health. And I was asked to help facilitate this meeting today by

Shay Chapman.

I've been with the Florida Department of Health since 2004. And all of that time I've been with the Public Health Dental Program and I also work under Shay inside the Bureau of Standard Health Services and so she's asked me to facilitate this and here I am today [chuckles].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Great. Okay. Chris Littlewood -- anybody on the phone or in the chat who would like to introduce themselves?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina is representing FRID from Jacksonville, Florida. Welcome. Good to see you. Anybody else?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody on the Zoom wants to introduce themselves? Chris Littlewood?

[No response]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Cindy Simon representing the audiologists. Thank you. All right. Let me see who else is on... um... Chris Littlewood, are you there?

[No response]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We have Chris Littlewood representing ALDA. Glenna, would you like to introduce yourself?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna Ashton, I am a representing of Florida Association of the Deaf and I live in Boca Raton. I'm still checking my view settings; bear with me one moment.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anybody else?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. I want to welcome Tracie Snow who is the president of FDB -- oh, wow... Florida School for the Deaf and Blind. Welcome! And congratulations to you in your new position. Congratulations! I'll send it over to you.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Thank you, thank you very much. Hello, everyone! First I would like to thank Glenna for reaching out to me -- oop...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: You're good.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Let's get our views going. I think --

>> INTERPRETER: Glenna thinks she can't see Tracie, so she is making some adjustments.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: You're good, you're good.

[Pause].

>> OPERATOR: Mary has joined the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, switch it to...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I can neither see the interpreters more Tracie, I'm not seeing any of them right now. Aren't they supposed to be spotlit?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go to the upper corner in view, you can change it to speaker view or gallery view. On the upper right-hand corner. Where you see the word --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: She's reiterating, can somebody please take control and spotlight the interpreters?

>> INTERPRETER: This is Carrie, all of the interpreters, including Miss Miller (sic) are spotlighted.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm seeing just a small column, I'm not seeing full screen. And pressing the view button is not...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Up on the upper right-hand corner, on the upper right-hand corner, there is view. So there's speaker view and...

>> INTERPRETER: Debbe, I don't think Glenna can see you right now, so she's not hearing your instructions. Can you send her a message, either text or chat or something to let her know?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, go ahead.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Okay. Well, hopefully... Glenna I guess can't see anything still.



I'll go ahead with my presentation with the introduction and hopefully the technological part will work itself out.

Again, hello! I'm very happy to participate today.

I want to explain a little bit about myself and then I know the group asked me to explain a little bit about FSDB and how things have gone, starting in the spring of 2020, how we're doing in regards to the pandemic.

But firstly, introducing myself, my name is Tracie Snow. This is my sign name. And I've been here at FSDB, the School for the deaf-blind almost 26 years, I started my teaching profession here at FSDB and I usually tell people that I was raised, as it were, at FSDB.

I moved here with my husband and both of us graduated from Gallaudet University and started teaching here and both of us adopted two Deaf children. And they were also or are also students of FSDB.

Our oldest graduated in 2014; the youngest is now a senior here. So it's really been a cool experience. Because my youngest will be graduating in just a couple of weeks and I will get to hand him his diploma!

I was appointed in November of 2020 the president of FSDB and it has been quite a six months, let me tell you! With the pandemic and COVID and everything going on, it's been quite an experience. I feel like I just jumped into the deep end!

Fortunately I haven't drowned yet!

Now, shifting gears, I thought we would talk a little bit about March 2020, as you are all aware, the 13th of March was really the time when they told everybody, the schools and campuses, need to be closed and we needed to shift.

And so that was quite a pivot, needing to pivot to distance learning.

And I use that word "pivot" quite a lot here, because I think we needed -- we did need to pivot. There were a lot of transitions, a lot of schools, a lot of changes in our school.

And so that started our spring break was actually Friday, March 13th. We had no school, the kids went home, and they were expecting to be back in a week and we had to pivot, we had to change.

And we had them come back three weeks later.

So, during that spring break, the leadership team worked tirelessly to figure out a plan.

And we led those efforts. And I was the administrator for the instructional services and so that was my role prior.

And so throughout the springtime, that was my role.

And we wrote what was called our ICP, our instructional continuity plan.

So, we had to write that, cram that in in one week.

We had no model to go on. We tried to see if there were other districts who were -- that we could glean; maybe Miami or other, Duval County, but really, there was no model, there was no model for us at the DB school, we are a DB school and there were no other models for us to go on.

The other districts work with other schools and we had to work with DOE to work with other students with disabilities and they were really in the same boat as us.

So we really feel that FSDB led the way and pioneered these efforts.

And having distance learning here in school and continuing to serve our students.

So that first week was just a limited number of staff involved in the discussion. Then we branched out the second week. And then the third week we expanded things a little bit.

But all of our staff, teachers, students, and families had to stay home. And our campus was actually closed at that time.

So, we looked to the Department of Ed for their guidance and to the Government for

their guidance and we did our best to follow all of the different executive orders that were issued.

I'm sure you're very familiar with those. And so we tried to keep ourselves abreast of those updates, to keep running our business as a state agency. And just like many of you, we are a state agency. So we tried to follow those same guidances that you did back in the spring of 2020.

And then throughout the summer and the fall. And then here we are in the spring again.

One of our most important responsibilities was to continue that ICP -- and the IEP, excuse me, for those students.

Now, fortunately, the Department of Ed had different webinars set up for us in those school positions to glean some information and learn and understand what we needed to do. We had legal counsel that was very helpful.

And then we needed to provide free and appropriate public education. And that was really a priority to keep that going.

And our key for success last spring was our relationship with [indiscernible] and we depended on working with them very closely, because we didn't really have the technology set up like we do now. We're so familiar with tools like Zoom, but back then we weren't.

So, the, you know, we were working through Microsoft Teams and that really was new for us. There was a learning curve. So we were really working with families, how to talk over the phone, how to use video conferencing tools, educating them on video relay services, like Sorenson for those deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

So there was a lot of pioneering and a lot of phone calls that were made. And the teachers were very flexible, as to when to talk with the students.

You know, now this year we have video conferencing set up at the same time for the students that are at home and the students that are here. But we didn't have that back then. Everything was asynchronous.

And so the teachers had to be very flexible for these services that were provided.

And it wasn't your typically eight hours; it was, you know, blocks of time throughout the day.

We did the best we could.

And the students kept learning and kept growing and that was the keys for us. That was our mission, really.

I'm trying to think about what else we could mention from 2020....

Another key was communication with our stakeholders.

We used our website as a tool, social media, sending out e-mails and using all these tools to keep everyone informed and abreast of what's going on.

And also internal communication is so important. I just mentioned Microsoft Teams as a tool. FSDB recently adopted that in the fall of 2019 and changed over to Outlook e-mail and changed over to using Teams.

It was a learning curve. We were really baptized by fire and so we had to keep communication going very quickly.

So teachers, staff, and all of us here on the campus -- we weren't on the extras anymore. So we had to set up ten different Teams for each school program. And it was really a time of very rapid communication.

And honestly, by the time May came around, we felt like we were hearing -- developing a twitch any time we would hear a ping, people would send us a ping, a comment, a question, and we were developing plans at that time.

So communication was a key during that time; keeping everybody included and in the

loop. All the stakeholders and constituents, it was so important. And so that first week of spring break was not really a spring break for us! It was a week of very hard work. But we did take a step forward, but we weren't sure if that step would land on ground. We weren't quite sure. It was really the unknown. We were stepping into the unknown. As a society. And we all went through very similar experiences because of COVID. We had never experienced that before. We were learning differently, communicating differently. Life changed during that time. And I'm really proud of our school, how we made it through the distance learning last spring and.... So, that is my explanation about what happened back in the spring of 2020. But I want to open the floor to you. Do you folks have any questions in regard to --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

>> TRACIE SNOW: -- last year.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That was spring in 2020, right? Can you update us to where you are now?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Yes, I will be updating. But did you have any questions in regards to the spring of 2020 and around that time?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. As far as students and staff, can you speak as to maybe their mental health during the pandemic? Any issues with that?

>> TRACIE SNOW: That's a very good question. That was really a hot topic. And I think a lot of people, a lot of us didn't realize the impact that that isolation would have. We didn't -- we weren't really prepared for that. And we were very blessed to have strong mental health staff, mentally healthy staff here. We have several psychologists, clinicians for mental health, mental health providers, social workers, and we really used them as a resource during that time. They were the first contact for our families and we really required them to check in with the students weekly to make sure they were doing okay and handling stress, handling having no language at home, what's the impact of that on their lives? And the frustrations or lack thereof with the classes. We did really use those clinicians and providers on our staff. Yes, some students did have documented in their IEP that they required counseling, but we also knew there were other students that were maybe high risk and their families, based on their family situation, you know, and having some homeless students who really had a difficult time. They were in pretty deep poverty, so we really made sure to reach out to all the students. And our mental health team was, wow, just amazing! Their hard work that went in last spring was amazing. There is a list of students who were listed as homeless. We wanted to make sure that they had food, whether it was us sending them gift cards or reaching out to their local school district. Now, the students we serve are owned by their school district, technically, so they

provide free food.

Our students get -- if they provide free food, our students get in with those programs with the breakfast and lunch under their local school district and those food programs. So we wanted to make sure our students still had access to that and serve whatever needs they had while they were at home.

Does that answer your question, Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. Did you provide any technology support, internet service provider support as well for those learning remotely?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Yes. Remember I mentioned that first week that we were together was that spring break, the staff worked hard on some things, and then these next two weeks, we worked on how to send the technology and devices and such to the students.

FedEx was our best friend during that time. We sent out multiple docs all over Florida. We used the district's bus to actually drive and meet families or ask families to come to the school and pick up.

They could -- local school districts could do that. But actually we are a statewide, we serve statewide, so we had to send devices and such to families through FedEx. iPads, some had iPads and laptops. And also their school materials.

The Blind Department, they made sure they received their assistive technology devices. So Braille readers, screen readers, and other devices were sent out to them.

And fortunately, the end of the year, we, hopefully, we will get those things back!

But we did send a LOT of devices and equipment out there. Just to make sure that their education kept continuity and there was no interruption.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. Just with COVID and all of the repercussions, I wonder during this difficult time with anyone, did any alumni reach out to FSDB to offer any help?

>> TRACIE SNOW: We didn't really. But our mission really was to provide education to the students. And so our students, you know, sometimes would hear about family situations, moving jobs, you know, working in a restaurant continuously and then losing their jobs.

So we really tried to support those families in those ways, with listening and empathy. But providing those services, unfortunately, were not part of our purview.

The alumni, some, I did hear some stories that alumni did provide some support, mainly empathy. A little bit of practical services and help and providing resources to them.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. Did you receive any communication from parents who were very frustrated at home, possibly, whether they were parents that were sighted, hearing, deaf, any difficulties at home?

[Pause].

>> TRACIE SNOW: I think both sides learned to appreciate the other sides. Parents appreciated more about what teachers did every day and teachers appreciated also more about the relationships with the families. So, yeah, there was a mutual

understanding there. And we really took from the Department of Ed their, you know, going through this with courtesy, kindness, and compassion.

So we really tried to model that with our families as well. We, you know, sometimes the families would work all day and the kids are home alone and they couldn't, you know, had a hard time reaching out to us. Maybe they were young, not good with technology.

And so we did try to stay very flexible. When they would send assignments, when they would finish their work, how they finished their work. Sometimes it was just over video conferencing, download it, or it would be over the phone.

We just try to do our best to just keep things fluid and just work with the families and not just take the approach that it's 100% their responsibility.

But we tried to stay flexible.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. As far as any positive outcomes, did some families that had not learned sign language, maybe still be able to start learning now?

>> TRACIE SNOW: I think so, yes. We did try to provide that service, sign language resources for the families, because they realized, wow, how do we communicate with our child? Some of the students are with us during the week so, you know, parents don't help with homework.

So we tried to, um... you know, we don't often send home homework during normal circumstances on the weekend. They arrive home Friday night and come back Sunday morning and the minimal time with their families, we try to respect that.

But now with the kids at home, the families are required to provide that help and homework.

So we did notice more families wanting resources, asking about how to learn sign language, where to learn sign language.

And our teachers have done a beautiful job video recording themselves in sign language with the assignments, storytelling, vocabulary, and other subjects that we tried to send, just to make sure the kids had language access as much as possible.

So, I will go ahead and shift as to the --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: One question --

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina said: Thank you so much for this rich information. Have your students returned to school? Would you please provide your contact information? In the chat box, in the chat box, would you send it to Sean?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Okay. So do you want me to put it in the chat box then?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, and I'll put it in the other -- I'll put it in the other StreamText captions.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Would you like me to go ahead and do that now?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead.

[Pause].

>> TRACIE SNOW: Got it?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hold on a second... I'm copying your e-mail...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Copy and paste. Okay.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Okay. This is Tracie continuing. Now, before I get into the fall, I want to talk about what we did over the summer, because we can't just skip ahead without forgetting all of the work that we did throughout the summer as well.

As you can imagine, we were very busy. It certainly wasn't a summer vacation for us, those of us on the front line.

After seeing everything that had worked successfully with our families and students and staff, we saw a lot of growth, as we were learning more about the pandemic, the CDC providing more guidelines, we had a lot of studying to do.

We really needed to revamp things before we came back to school, in August, remotely, but with now a definite plan and an infrastructure.

So both internally, our staff, as well as externally our stakeholders, we wanted to make sure everybody was on the same page and we wanted to be transparent and clear in the information so everyone knew exactly those guidelines and what kind of structure we would be following at the beginning of the school year.

Because this is all new to us.

So yes, for an entire month, we met almost daily. We met individually, as teams, to really revise. We went through several different versions of what our COVID-19 plans would be.

It's important to notice, though, that stakeholders, most important, our stakeholders and our parents, we wanted to include them in that communication and as well include their feedback. The staff on campus, as well as the employees.

You know, we have employees that belong to a union and they had a very strong voice that needed to be heard as well.

So, communicating to everyone that I mentioned, respecting everyone's feedback, we really felt that we had come up with a plan that was going to be steadfast, but we had to retrain all of our staff and teachers before returning to school in the fall.

So, the Department of Education, as you may know, last fall, gave everyone assurance that we would be open. We would be fully operational in the fall, regardless of what county or school district, the state of Florida would be open.

Our leaders, our Governor, commissioners, within the Department of Education, assured that education is important in Florida. And regardless of what other states are doing, we are going to be fully open.

It's ironic that here we are at the end of the school year and there are other states just now opening the doors to the brick and mortar schools.

So it was not easy, definitely. There are many families with students that did remain at home. But we looked at how we could provide the school environment once we were able to be open again.

Now, we use what we call an ILE... illustrative... illustrative --

>> INTERPRETER: Innovative learning environment.

>> INTERPRETER: Thank you.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Innovative learning environment, ILE, and BAM is the other acronym, brick and mortar.

So, families in the state of Florida had a choice, from the Department of Education from the get-go. Parents had a right to choose if they were going to send their children on campus for learning or if they were going to learn from home.

So with that flexibility, if a family did choose to work remotely from home, the innovative learning plan, that's fine.

We didn't expect them to be on campus.

Now, that choose, though, had to remain firmly in place. They were not allowed to begin remotely and then come back to campus any time.

We did want them eventually to. But initially that decision for a brick and mortar-type instruction, we wanted them to remain that way as well.

And that was mainly for the purposes of safety with COVID-19 transmission and making sure that students and families weren't bringing potential illness into their home from school.

So, we worked very closely with our teachers, our providers so that when students were home over the weekend and back on Monday, we wanted to be able to remain available to provide that technological support.

If they needed to stay home for whatever reason, if they needed to quarantine, then that technology would be available for them, so they could continue the testing and other assignments.

So we knew we needed to be flexible. And we use algorithms, again, such as Microsoft Teams, we used e-mails.

In the beginning of the year, the announcement was we are hoping to be in person brick and mortar instruction, but that could pivot quickly and it could change.

Now, I want to use a wrestling analogy -- I'm not a wrestler myself -- but if we look at any kind of support, we have conditioning, right? Conditioning is practice. It's not the actual game.

And so we did that for our students initially.

And... my son included....

Because we weren't able to have sports, because we weren't able to have sports and programs

>> INTERPRETER: Thank you, Chris.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Students were concerned to go back and have sports and not have that sports experience, so I had to wear a new hat as a sports conditioner for my son.

[Pause].

>> TRACIE SNOW: We wanted the children to be able to communicate with the rest of the children on their teams, so keeping the lines of communication open, even though they couldn't be together on campus.

So, again, it was a matter of using all of the tools that I could as both an educator and a mother, bring all that together. And that did prepare us to work things out the best way we could.

I could witness it for myself and see how it was working both in the school and at home.

[Pause].

>> TRACIE SNOW: Of course, everyone's in a rush to get back to the on-campus experience. But in the meantime, it was wonderful to see how our school was able to work through the challenges.

So, of course, dealing with COVID, quarantines, other situations, was right in the middle of when I became the president back in November. And as you may recall, it was a VERY hot month in terms of COVID cases; we were seeing an upswing in identified cases and positive diagnoses.

And it reached a pique at our school at that point.

Now, we didn't notice it spreading because of the school, we didn't have very high numbers in general, but for us, one student or one staff member is enough to have a very strong impact.

So, a decision was reached at the very top level of leadership, that everyone had to take and pass what was called the Johns Hopkins University Contact Tracing System.

Now, this took place during the winter break. And all of us took part. And thankfully passed.

We became certified in that process for contact tracing.

And that way we were not relying on a single person, but we could instead divvy up the work amongst several of us for making sure that students and family members were kept safe and were reached out to in case of any potential exposure.

And that was a huge difference in terms of the normal functions at our school.

It was, honestly, a bit of diversity pivoting for all of us at the top level in leadership. But it was something that we took on as a necessary project.

I'm just looking at my notes for a moment; excuse me.

[Pause].

>> TRACIE SNOW: Now, in terms of in-class instruction, of course at first it's a little awkward in terms of what to do with students who were staying at home. How would they participate? How would they remain engaged with classroom instruction and be included with what was happening on-site?

So we had to reach a balance of respecting those students with disabilities as well.

We had to make sure that the camera was placed properly so that you could see everything happening in class.

But, of course, students who are deaf and/or blind who cannot come to the campus, we needed to respect their privacy as much as possible as well in relation to their disability.

So, we had some students who were learning from home. And if we had a camera just focused on the teacher rather than the classroom, that was one of the options.

Because we wanted the students to be able to see what was going on in the camera, but we also had to respect the privacy.

And of course FERPA rules say that people have the right to non-disclose disabilities in those cases.

So, we had a lot of different subjects to balance different things leading us in different directions.

It really ended up working out really well. It was challenging, but students were able to, if they wanted to, come up to the camera and chat with other students online.

And it just made it a more enriching environment for them.



And quite frankly, I'm very proud of the way our school and our community got creative in terms of incorporating those at-home students.

To be getting back to my point about communication in general, we know that -- I told you before during the summer, we spent a lot of time revamping our system, liaising with the Department of Education on what their rules were and looking back on what we had done and making adjustments that we had at that point.

For example, visitors, oftentimes we would have visitors come to campus and we would do tours so that they could see the facilities. But during COVID, that was absolutely not going to happen.

The last thing we wanted was to have someone who eventually would have a positive diagnosis, but at the time was unaware visiting the school and potentially exposing students and staff.

So we had to prevent that from happening, because we didn't want the community to be endangered unnecessarily.

So thankfully, we maintained good relationships with those who wanted to see what was happening at the school and learn more about our programs.

But we limited any kind of visitation only to parents of prospective students. That way they could still see what was happening on-site. And then eventually, as vaccinations become more prevalent, we may be able to relax those limitations, but we don't yet know what that will look like.

So we continue to stay in touch with the Department of Education, working with some of our other stakeholder agencies. And doing our best to maintain a continuity of expectation. Making sure our messaging is consistent and we can be of help to the community both on campus and off.

Helping everyone to understand what it is that we're doing, while at the same time remaining committed to our plan of reintroducing students back to campus life.

This past spring, of course we received even more requirements from the Department of Education in terms of monitoring the progress of our students academically.

And we had to make some adjustments to be in line with those new requirements.

For example, I, as president, now on a weekly basis or biweekly basis, will do a video, both in sign and in spoken English, sent out to our community as an update, giving them any new information or prevalent changes that are going on, so that I can keep an eye on what's happening on the campus in learning spaces, living spaces.

And that I can help them to keep in touch with me and inviting their feedback so we can help maintain positive experiences for the students in different ways.

Now, again, I would have to say that Teams chat feature is fantastic so we can keep in touch with one another anywhere we are. Letting people see me has been very helpful.

And having worked here for 26 years that I have, and now as president, I can see how important it is to maintain those lines of communications with all the departments.

There are people who are recent hires who I have not yet gotten the chance to meet in person, but thankfully we can meet virtually. We kind of feel like strangers to one another but we can do those virtual meet and greets and do whatever we can do virtually.

But my goal is to be a support to all of those, whether they can see me in person or not. Letting everyone know that I'm here to support them and getting us moving forward with the new normal as it stands.

Now, in terms of this school year, I have to say one of the most important things is to maintain health and safety. So we continue to monitor developments from the CDC, the Department of Health, and make sure that our local on-campus Health Department

is in line.

As we see more and more vaccinations taking place, we need to maintain good relations with the local community so we're abreast of any changes that are taking place.

And making sure that we and the students have everything that they need.

So that partnership, that ongoing partnership that we have been maintaining and building has been vital.

And as we move into hurricane season, of course we have to make sure that our emergency preparedness is on par as well.

Honestly, I'm not sure which is worse, the pandemic as an emergency or a hurricane as an emergency!

But they seem to be have some similarities and some differences.

But I'm just so thankful to the residents of Florida, to the Department of Education, to all of the stakeholders and the students who have worked together to make this work the way we have.

Our kids, for the sake of our kids and their families.

I would like to pause now to let you ask any questions that you might have, to make sure there's nothing that I missed.

Glenna?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: [Signing, no interpreting]

This is Glenna. Has there been any enrollment change since the onset of COVID? Any changes there in your number of students?

>> TRACIE SNOW: That's actually a really good question. That's an important question every year. We want to maintain our oversight of how many students are enrolled, how many families are involved.

For the students who choose to stay and go to school in a mainstream environment in their local school system, some parents choose that for their deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

But in terms of last spring, when we did close the application process -- rather, we put a hold on the application process, we did that partly because we weren't sure whether the eligibility was going to change, the eligibility requirements, I should say.

We were looking at state rules for who can actually attend FSDB and who was ineligible.

So, of course, we had to evaluate all of that. And as we did that, we, at first, were at a loss for how to evaluate those changes, because we had to go through not only educational, but psychological evaluations, behavioral analyses, and how can you do that when you can't see someone in person?

So, I would say there was probably a three-week period where everything was sort of on hold before we were able to get going again and start evaluating as a team what the negative impact was or was going to be.

Because any of that face-to-face meeting opportunities had to be put on hold.

And we noticed that there were a lot of families who were, quite frankly, nervous about moving or staying within their so-called bubble, in their comfort zone.

So, enrollment seems to have remained flat. We haven't seen a significant drop. I'm not sure if any of you saw on the news, something like 70,000 students in the state of Florida who are unaccounted for currently, have just not been showing up for school.

We did not experience that. All of our FSDB students are accounted for. And they either chose to move back into the local school system or continue to work with us in one capacity or another.

But we really haven't seen a mass exodus that some people saw.

But for the most part, it's business as usual in maintaining our numbers and when we see students coming back in the fall, deciding whether or not to stay with their local school system or come back to us.

But I would say we're still waiting to see what the continued long-term impact is going to be. But certainly because of the pandemic, we did have some students whose family moved from out of state, because in their home state, there was a complete lockdown and quarantine.

And they heard that FSDB was open and moved to us.

So we're curious to see over time if we will have more out of state students and if the demographics have changed, but for the most part I would say we have stayed flat.

And even though we have to maintain social distancing in the classroom of six feet, that, of course, impacts capacity. We can hit that capacity very quickly.

And so it's been a matter of trying to keep things quiet, because we're afraid of overcrowding.

We need to follow these strict requirements of social distancing and that's, of course, changing everything.

But enrollment so far, I'm very happy to say has been as expected or on par.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna continuing. May I ask you, as far as numbers for the deaf and the blind, do you have any idea what those are?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Okay --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> TRACIE SNOW: I would have to look at those numbers, those statistics. Usually we're about 1/3 blind to 2/3 deaf, that is the average mix here at the school.

Our current numbers, if I'm not mistaken as of last month were 535 total students who we're serving, that's K-12.

If you include our infant program, that really has a statewide influence for both deaf and blind children, it's almost 1,000 across the state of Florida.

And that's our parents of infants with deafness and blindness program.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. So your apparent infant program and your current program K-12, do you still have students receiving that free appropriate education through age 21?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Yes, we do teach students up to their 22nd birthday, just before then. That is still our mandate.

We're still calling it -- it's called a K-12 program, but they can either continue to work toward a goal of getting a diploma or at that point they would defer their diploma, which means they could still not graduate, the diploma is put on hold, but they could go back

to school and continue working in some kind of a transition program or employment training or other program that they would move into at that point.

So we do have some students coming back in the fall, going into a culinary training program; moving them towards college preparedness or some kind of a vocational certificate that they could use.

So we do have students that cap out at around age 22, yes.

Are there any other questions from anyone on the call or in the chat?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody on the chat? Or on the phone have any questions for Tracie?

[No response]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No? No?

>> TRACIE SNOW: All right then. I guess to sum up what we've talked about so far --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, hold on.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Oh, wait, hang on.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary asked, do you have a referral relationship with the CILs? The... um... Center for Independent Living? Do you have a relationship with them?

>> TRACIE SNOW: I'm trying to think how to answer that question... if students need that as part of their transition services, if that's part of our IEP, their Individualized Education Plan, then yes, they would, after graduation, start to work with the CILs. Or if there's another program that, for example, the vocational rehabilitation, VR, they will work with students on classroom readiness after K-12 portion of their education. So we might put them in touch with those services. But we also have the Center for the Blind in Daytona Beach, but once they start working with those programs, it becomes a post-K-12 which means they are finished with our services and they start using these outside agencies and continue working with them. And of course they're permitted to stay in K-12 until that age cap, but that's individualized on what to do in their cases.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Does that answer your question, Mary?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes, she said yes. Great. Any other questions from anybody else?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hi, this is Glenna again. I have a lot of questions! Can you tell us how Steph (sp) is doing? I know with the scholarship award at FSDB, can you tell us about your son?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Yes, my son's goal is to be a teacher. He, of course, has to pass

a special exam. He's retaking it again this month. That's one of his hurdles to get over in becoming a teacher.

But fortunately he has a short time left before he graduates. He's considering focusing on elementary school education; that's his current goal. He may decide to change that later. He also likes math.

But he's very good with the younger children and, you know, he's watched me teach high school and coached soccer and work with elementary school students. So he's definitely doing education of some sort or another.

And that's the path he's taking.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Definitely following in mom's footsteps. Please tell your family and your son I said hello.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary has one question. Mary said: Tracie, after hearing all of the moving parts you had to manage, I will never again complain about the hybrid teaching environment I am in. Will all hearing students.

You are -- you are to be commended. You answered my questions in your presentation.

Then Mary said: I do have another question. Is there any follow-up with the individuals who transitioned?

>> TRACIE SNOW: And by transition, you mean transitioning when they leave FSDB? Or what does Mary mean by "transition"? Or the transition back to the on campus learning?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I'm waiting for Mary to answer/type.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: "Yes, when they leave FSDB."

>> TRACIE SNOW: Well, we try [chuckles]! It's definitely one of the toughest things. Being human, we try to reach out to these students. And often we get no response. So we do keep in touch with alumni. Some do better than others at being communicative.

But I will say that I've noticed that a lot of our students, after time, will reach back out and keep in touch. But once they get very busy with their adult lives, years later is when we hear from them. There's often a time period we don't hear much.

But we do our best to keep in touch and we're very interested in them remaining part of our extended family.

[Pause].

>> TRACIE SNOW: [Signing, no interpreting].

So the question was asked, what are we doing in the fall and what will look different? I really can't answer that at this time.

I know that I want to be back on campus 100%. That would be ideal. And it depends on the state leaders and their wishes as well.

But things -- I mean, a lot could happen over the summertime. But we at FSDB will be prepared to be 100% back on campus, brick and mortar, face-to-face instruction.

And we will be flexible and we'll have to learn where we can give in those areas where we might need to be more flexible.

We do want to continue to empower and educate our students on how to use technology. There's more things that we can do that we're probably not even still aware of.

We also want students to take ownership of their learning and continue to communicate with our families, parents being our primary stakeholders.

And really reflecting on the lessons learned over this last year.

I can't say that the beginning of this school year '21-'22 will look anything like this past school year, but all of the training and all of the information that is learned, the plans that are in place, they will not change.

And I have to commend the staff of FSDB, we could not have made it and been as successful without them.

You can just imagine their commitment daily, day-by-day, and then just at a snap of a finger any time during the day to drop everything and be available for their students.

Unlike a very traditional class day in school, like we had been used to.

I think that collaboration with other stakeholders and organizations, really just being open, transparent, and communicating with each other, being confident with the teams that we do have.

And, again, embracing the resources provided directly by the state, I see nothing but success for the students at FSDB this fall.

You know, everyday over the last six months, I keep pinching myself because I can't believe that I am in the position that I am at this school. And it's been an honor to be the superintendent there. And I do see only success for the rest of us.

I think it's time for me to close. Oh, exactly on time!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We have one question from Mary. Mary asked: What are the other options for education for families with children who are deaf-blind? Is it public school system?

>> TRACIE SNOW: This is Tracie. I think it depends on the local school districts and what they are able to offer.

In the state of Florida, we know that an inclusive learning environment, inclusion, expectation is better for any student.

And as long as the school district can provide the active education, that is always an option.

Of course with IDEA and other laws in place, accommodations such as an interpreter and other related services, they can't be turned away.

I think looking at options such as clusters, parents do also have the opportunity to not choose their schools and other deaf and hard-of-hearing students or peers like theirs.

We are honored when parents and families choose us. We don't really have more of a say in bringing them to FSDB, but we do hope that they include us in all of those options.

FSDB, you know, there's always opportunities. And sometimes we see where the local school districts aren't able to provide the means for students and it turns into due process and then they might eventually find the best educational placement.

But really, options will always be available and they're going to vary depending on the student.

I notice often with younger children, they might start out in their own local school districts. They're able to get more of that attention from the instructor, more

one-on-one instruction, but, again, in high school they want more socialization and we often see them making a different choice.

Now, I can say as a parent, um... with my child, I don't know if I would want to send my younger students away and only see them on the weekends.

And that's why we want parents to understand that their children will always have a home here. But, again, we honor and recognize all of the children's --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: One other question that I have personally, are you, um -- get a lot of phone calls from different -- other schools in other states about how do you solve this problem, even the schools in Florida, our programs, mainstream programs, do you get a lot of calls about how you solve that issue?

>> TRACIE SNOW: We do. Not so much from stakeholders in other states, but we do every once in a while.

I know in the state of Michigan, they reached out to us as they were revamping their program. And yes, we were happy to share with them.

That's rare that other states reach out to us.

But yes, other states, other educators -- I know previously in my role as the administrator of instructional programming and curriculum here at the school, sometimes it's just better when we're looking at provision of services, maybe staying within their local school district is the better choice.

But we always recommend our website. We have many resources and information available on our website and we can provide support to them in that way.

Our MTC, which is -- provides services for deaf and hard of hearing throughout the entire state of Florida, I believe they're part of the Florida Department of Education. They practically live on --

>> OPERATOR: Has joined the conference.

>> TRACIE SNOW: -- but they do provide services and that outreach within the state of Florida. And that is an excellent resource.

But, again, being a state school for the deaf and blind, yes, we provide resources throughout the state and there's also a school choice --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, do you have a question?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I just wanted to wait for the other interpreter and the CART Provider to finish up that last statement.

You had mentioned before, I thought that was interesting, students using technology and sending all that home with them was a challenge, and I was thinking now that you have a higher expectation for all the students.

We realize that they can do more. Would you say that's the case? That the expectation has been raised?

>> TRACIE SNOW: Well, not only is that expectation for teachers, but yes, students have higher expectations for themselves. Whether they really know it or not, they've raised the bar.

I can speak personally as a mother, my son, in the beginning, it was pulling teeth to get

him to send an e-mail to his teacher to ask for any assistance!  
Now, he comes to me and he tells me he's already e-mailed his teacher if he needs help on an assignment.

So, I believe students, yes, we have set the bar high. They're learning how to work technology and learning their own education.

We see children younger and younger today, toddlers, using smartphones.

I think during this time this pandemic has taught us so many different things. It's taught me so many lessons, really not only in my professional, but my personal life as well, and I see more and more students more independent because of this.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I think this might change the dynamics of the teacher/student relationship when everybody comes back to that classroom. I think maybe students will be a little more empowered and they're going to be more savvy with technology. It will be really interesting to see how things develop going forward.

>> TRACIE SNOW: I have to agree with you, Glenna. We have already seen that first hand when the students came back in January and started coming back in March a little more appreciative of their teachers. Definitely enjoyed being back face-to-face with their peers, really working with each other, getting along with each other. So, yes, I would like to see that continue, I think that would be really great --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you and congratulations on your position. Keep up the great fabulous job.

I am overwhelmed with all of the things that you have done. Keep up, keep up, and join us any time to watch.

And if there's anything that we can do to help you, let us know.

>> TRACIE SNOW: Thank you, Debbie.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, it is --

>> TRACIE SNOW: Thank you very much. Thank you to the Council for letting me be a part of this.

I love to talk about FSDB. Clearly I'm very passionate about the school and the work that we do.

If I can ever be a resource to you all, please don't hesitate to contact me. You have my contact information now.

And thank you for allowing me time to present today virtually. Thank you very much.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you so much!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you so much for the wonderful presentation!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. It is --

>> TRACIE SNOW: Thank you, interpreters.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It is 2:07, we are a little over. So we would like to take a break and give a break to the CART, a break to the interpreters, bathroom time, and then we'll resume back at 2:30, okay?



[Break].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. It's 2:30. Let's start with the public comments. Do we have anyone here for the public comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Michael, do you have any public comments you want to share with us? The floor is yours!

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael. Yes, I do.

>> OPERATOR: Has joined the conference.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: All right, thank you!  
Earlier this morning, I mentioned the United States Office of Immigration and Naturalization. And here at CIL, we do provide some special citizenship preparation courses.

Oh, I'm being told to pause? Okay, there we go.

As I was saying, we do provide some assistance for deaf, for hard-of-hearing clients who want to become U.S. citizens.

And of course, there's a lot of training involved in this process. It's a several-week preparatory process, with lessons that we send to them.

Of course those lessons were sent to the Immigration Office for approval. And once we got them back, we started using them to educate our deaf and hard-of-hearing clients, to help them pass the required number of questions that are on the test.

We also help to schedule interpreters, to make sure that they're available on the day.

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: I believe that they're not truly providing access for deaf and hard-of-hearing people. Yes, they provide interpreters, but I think many of the deaf people who are going there would really be best with a Certified Deaf Interpreter, and often what they'll say is, in Tampa, we just don't have any, we don't know where to find them, we don't know how to get in touch with CDIs, with Certified Deaf Interpreters to make an appointment for them to come in. And we got a lot of hemming and hawing and passing of the buck when this comes around.

The last time this came up, we saw that it can take hours of rescheduling and trying to find the right person to request these interpreting services.

So, we often tell them to mention specifically a CDI. But most of them don't understand what that means or how to use one. So we end up doing a lot of explanation.

And we have seen that in the Miami area, there's a great deal of provision of Deaf interpreters.

So it seems to vary by county.

But here in Hillsborough, it's definitely become a big issue.

One of the related issues I believe that needs to be solved is that we occasionally see unqualified and unskilled interpreters being used. Some of the signs that they're using is very old and out of date. They don't know how to fingerspell properly. The hands that this person is using are sort of old and arthritic.

And so there have been calls and complaints about the interpreter they are using to try to remove this interpreter and use a different one.

I believe that issue has been resolved, so that may not be questioned right now. But it's one of the things that's been going on.

We have also found where they're getting their interpreters from, in the Miami office, and it's a company called Trusted Translations.

They have a contract throughout the state of Florida to provide interpreters for any of the USCIS offices.

So I have been in touch with them and explained the issues that we're facing

[Background noise].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Asking if they can reach out and educate our local offices about CDIs and the need for them. Because we're just not seeing that being adopted here in our area.

Again, this has been going on for quite sometime, since before COVID; I would say since early 2019, even before COVID started.

Does anyone on the Council have any thoughts or feedback or questions for me about this issue?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbe. I was wondering if somehow FRID can help facilitate and explain or just RID explain to that organization about the CDI, maybe? That's my thought.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina. Is it okay to go ahead --

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Don't you think that Trusted Translations, that company, should be able to provide that information or that education? Because they're the ones who actually have the contract. They're the interpreting agency.

I mean, I'm -- that's where I'm coming from, as the interpreting agency, they should be able to explain that rather than looking to -- I mean, you may be right, it couldn't hurt to get in touch with FRID or on the national level RID, either way. Worth a try, I suppose.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I know that -- is this a national interpreting agency, Michael, Trusted Translations?

If they are, then you should contact them directly and ask them to do that.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Yes, I did do that. I don't know what's gone on since then, since I've reached out to them. I have not heard -- I have not been able to visit the USCIS office, quite frankly, it's been an issue and I think there has been some avoidance.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Michael, for the record, we need to have you type in your name in the chat box and your phone number and e-mail for the record, so Sean can follow-up on it with you.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Sure.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Fabulous.  
How -- I'm not sure how to do that but I will find a way.  
But that's really all that I wanted to bring to the Council's attention. If anyone had any follow-up questions or comments?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anyone else has any comments on to Michael's issue or the interpreters with the immigration and the organization?  
CDI

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina, is it okay --

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina, is it okay to go ahead?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Wait, wait, Gina. Glenna has her hand up.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Michael, I'm pretty confident in what you've said as far as your contacts with the Immigration and Nationalization Office, but locally, surely they provide translations or interpreters for people that speak different languages, right? It's not just --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- American Sign Language.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: We definitely have people moving to the area from other parts of the state. We have Cuban immigrants as well, people moving from Orlando and other areas.

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

[Pause].

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. This is Gina. Michael, in terms of contacting with FRID or RID, it's probably a good idea in that Trusted Translations is really a translation company, not an interpreting company. And there's a difference between a sign language interpreter and a Spanish translator.  
So I don't know what people they're using. But I am sure that FRID or RID could give you some guidance on how to get a freelance CDI. They have a registry that's online that you might be able to check into.  
If Trusted Translations cannot provide you the kind of service that's needed.  
Go ahead.

[Pause].

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Okay. Debbe already mentioned to me something about getting in touch with FRID, so...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. Just to follow-up on the suggestion. I know that there are some places that may not really put any effort to look into getting a Deaf interpreter or a Certified Deaf Interpreter, or maybe providing a registry or a --

>> OPERATOR: Gina has left the conference.

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- rather than just saying they don't have anyone on staff.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael, I would just add that there have been a few situations, a few stories in the Tampa area in which the officer who was conducting the interview attempted to force the Deaf person to speak, even though they were not able to speak or lipread, they tried to force them to do so anyway, because they didn't believe that the person was deaf.

And it ended in tears and a very traumatic experience, complaints were filed. That's happened more than once with my clients.

It's... it's... [Sighs]... something is definitely wrong there and it's -- even with the filing of complaints that have gone through the offices, the official offices, we're seeing the problems continuing, because who is really being reached? It's very difficult to find out how to move up that chain of command because it's such a large organization and you end up getting lost in the red tape of it all.

And they never call you up or follow-up to your complaints.

So, that's just another one of the issues that we've been trying to solve with the help of the DA. But the DA's Office has been unable to make any headway.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna again. You said that there was an officer there at the Immigration and Nationalization Office trying to force the applicant to speak. Well, there may have been a reason. I'm sure they have had imposters trying to use that as a reason for an accommodation.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: But in these cases, they're already providing an interpreter. So... it doesn't make sense, you know, if you're providing an interpreter, why would you then -- you know, on the application form itself, it allows you to check for that you're a Deaf person and to provide proof of your deafness.

Now, that's... [Sighs]... insane to me, but...

I think there is just maybe using a different interviewer for the deaf and hard of hearing? I'm not sure what the answer is here. We didn't get -- it's really hard to get the specific person's name to file a complaint against, and that makes it that much more difficult.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Maybe the, I don't know, maybe the Council can write a letter to

that agency -- or the agency and explain about... um... about deaf people don't have to use their voice if they don't want to? I mean... maybe, I don't know. I don't know if that's something that the Council can do or not.  
Anyone else has any comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina? Cindy? Chris? Anybody?

[Pause].

>> CINDY SIMON: You've just got to keep pushing and filing complaints. And at some point, you're going to have to find it.  
You can plan and try to get the names as they try to do this.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: If there's a way for the Deaf person to take a picture somehow of the officers, um... somehow, and then that will be enough, "This is the person who is violating my rights" or something.

>> CINDY SIMON: Yeah, it just depends.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Michael already said that it has been very challenging to get the names of people, even up the chain of command, who is the right person to speak to, so maybe putting something in writing.  
I don't know about getting a picture of an interviewer, that might not go over so well...

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: This is Michael. What I plan to do next time when it's a deaf or hard-of-hearing client of mine going in for one of these interviews or examination, beforehand I want to make sure that they ask right from the get-go the name of the officer or the staff person.  
The idea of taking sort of a clandestine picture, I'm not sure that will work either. But going forward, I want to make that as part of the process for them.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gene says the EMOT can certainly include that in an action. So we could -- our team, EMOT, can write a letter and hopefully that will work.  
Also Gina said: If the immigration is anything like the Customs, no cameras allowed.

>> CINDY SIMON: This is Cindy. Do they have attorneys with them, by any chance? Can't they be instructed to get that information? Or what about that attorney who was such an advocate, is he in Tampa and has gotten involved in a lot of other cases, and she might have some constructive ideas.  
Um... the other thing I can do is if you get it to me in writing, I can ask my husband to try to look it up in the system who you're supposed to contact. 'Cause he's an attorney.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Okay, okay. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anything else? Any other comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you so much, Michael, for coming! Thank you so much for your comments!

We will try our best to follow-up on it and act on it and keep you posted.

>> MICHAEL YELAPI: Thank you for your time, I really do appreciate it. And have a good day and be safe, everyone!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Bye.

Okay. Do we have any other people here for the public comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Eloise, do you want to speak?

>> ELOISE: Sure. My name is Eloise Schwartz. I am a retired R.N. case manager. I live in Hillsborough County. I am hard of hearing since birth. I am the leader of the Sun City Center chapter of HLAA.

I am here in Florida two years.

I am from Wisconsin, where I was living for the last 46 years.

The reason why I am interested in your council is because I also was on the Governor's Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in Wisconsin and worked very hard with both the deaf and the hard of hearing and advocated for issues that you're presently talking about as far as interpreters.

We had the same problems as you are having in Florida about quality interpreters.

We have worked with our Congress -- rather, our legislators to make sure that we had the best interpreters as possible and sign language for our interpreters, by getting them to be certified statewide.

And when I was on the council, we got that passed so that all of our interpreters were classified under passage -- yeah, it was passed ten years ago, so that we would have qualified interpreters.

And it took about three years to get that passed, but it was a very good motion to be done.

But I brought -- but what I have for you today is a continuation of what I had three months ago. But this time it has to do with the fact that I live in a 55-plus community. I sent my comments, um... on the fact that yes, the legislators had, um... a number of bills on their terrible that directly related to our deaf and hard of hearing.

And I was brought to their attention about that, particularly House Bill Statute -- the State Bill 700, which particularly was interesting to me as far as hearing aid bills that were through the mail.

So, I got involved in that, because HLAA National was averted to the bill as it related to our Florida legislation.

What I did was I contacted the committee that was involved in that and I sent out close to 23 different letters to the legislators about it. And received a number of different senate trackers on the bill and was actually contacted by a number of different legislators about the bill, and they made changes to it.

I was interactive with them and told them what my thoughts were on it.

I was disappointed on it in that in the final outcome, when they changed much of the bill, it went to the Appropriations Committee and was killed or died on May 30th.

They had -- what we had also proposed to the committee was that they set up a task force on studying this, because in a lot of what there was, much of what the legislation has written in the past in the state of Florida, as I have compared it to Wisconsin, is antiquated.

There are a lot of legislation they have written is based on rehab -- the Rehab Act as opposed to the ADA, and needs to be updated.

So I think what you're dealing with your interpreters and any kind of accommodations in the state of Florida is not updated.

And I think what needs to be done in working with the legislators in the off-season now, leading up to February next year, is talk with your lobbyists and talking with your legislators prospectively is to deal with how they can update some of the legislation to deal with, um, getting, you know, your -- your interpreters, um, to be state licensed, to include updating your interpreters, of course, but also to include new things.

And some of that has to do with, um, the Sunshine, online Sunshine interpreting, of course, but also including things for hard of hearing.

Because we know that one of the things your comments were about how many people are being serviced under the umbrella name of deaf and hard of hearing.

We don't know how many are in the state of Florida, because with the 600-1,000 people moving to Florida, we need to know how many are actually disabled.

And with the survey, a survey of some kind, we need to find out how many are of us.

And with that number, because everybody likes to have statistics of numbers. With that, we can go back to the legislation and say, with this high number, which is much different than the lower numbers of 2014, of the last, you know, time a number was, you know, received, we can say with this, we need this. We need interpreters to take care of these higher numbers we have.

We need to have, um... captioning. We need to have assistive listening devices

>> OPERATOR: Tiffany Baylor has joined the conference.

>> ELOISE: We need to have, you know, more accommodations for the number of children, teenagers, middle Americans, elderly, you know.

We know our state is fluctuating with higher amounts of population that are disabled. So in order to service that post-COVID, we have to have services or resources to help us do that.

We have fine examples of, you know, what's being laid out now going forward, but we can't do that unless we have the services to allow for that.

And with the survey numbers of how many there are of us, we have a stronger way of providing that, if we can show them the numbers.

Unless you have numbers, they will turn the other way and not say anything or not do anything.

I intend on continuing my conversation with my legislators, because they respond back to me.

And the National Office recognizes that and are willing to work with me.

I have been also working with, um, the communities around here, with my communication cards. I sent them out also on the document I sent to you. And have them for my EMS system, the paramedics, the police, and, you know, the fire department.

And these can be used for anybody that's deaf, hard of hearing -- blind are a little bit

harder -- but anybody who has disabilities of some kind, these are easier for people who have difficulties with talking, but these are a means of working with your departments to help with when you're sick and you're not able to speak up, and you have a means of communication.

So working with any kind of way of communication is our means to show that we're viable, we're useful, and we're here to help everyone that needs to have assistance.

You know, that we're not standing by and waiting for someone to help us.

We are here. I'm here as, you know, a service to others as best as possible.

So, all right, those are the things that I'm working on. And I certainly, you know, wish that, you know, your committee continue all of the things that you're doing.

The last item that I think would be useful for your Council to do, as we did in Wisconsin, was inviting, you know, your Governor to visit and come on to your meeting and see who you are and request that they, you know, have him come at least for an hour and see how valuable you are.

And that way, an invitation is given, that he can give you at least an hour's worth of time.

And then, you know, the fact that you have open positions that, you know, you are a viable council, you know, regardless of what status you are, you know, that we are how many, you know, four million people in this state, you know, of Florida, that's 5% of the voters, you know.

We are a vocal group. And that's, you know, that's quality people.

There's lots to be proud of here.

And I would think, you know, it would be worth the effort to send a formal letter to him and invite him to the next meeting and give him an opportunity to say a few things, you know, to the Council.

And I know we did it in Wisconsin and he, you know -- at the time it was Governor Doyle and he was the one that appointed me and, you know, we did a lot of good things.

At the time, one of the things that we did was we passed the legislation to give hearing aids to both, you know, to the kids for -- hearing aids for kids that were below 18 years of age.

So... um... I am still working on right now for myself, I am working to make sure Congress passes hearing aids for Medicare.

So, those are the things that I want to do before I die.

And that's -- and that ends my dissertation.

If you have any questions, you can ask them.

Well, you know...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you so much, Eloise!

Please type in your name and your e-mail and phone number in the chat box and for the public record, for Sean.

Okay. Anybody wants to make any comments on that?

Any other people on the -- that are here for the public comments?

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Hello, this is Tiffany Baylor, I am here for public comments. How are all of you this afternoon?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hi, Tiffany! Good to see you!

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Yes, thank you. I wanted to just add that I miss all of you! And regarding what the young lady just spoke, I concur on the section of having the Governor come out. Remember, we attempted at the two conferences ago, I believe,



maybe three, to have him come out. Because it really does put us in the mind of him at that point, especially when he gets to see who we all are.

The Council is full of you guys who are very educated, very well spoken, can explain what your needs are and what is missing for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. And you guys could present it so much better in person and it just would be so wonderful.

That's how come you guys go to the -- during the legislation session, you guys go and meet people because you guys do such a wonderful job in expressing the concerns of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

And I agree, and maybe once the COVID concerns slow down, that the Council may consider putting in another request.

It's really simple and I have the things, I have the documentation that you have to put in to have a request. But, you know, get another request in and see if he'll come to, you know, give us an hour, if we're ever in person or in person in here in Tallahassee area. Just something where he might be in the same area. That would be great.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, that would be great.  
Anything else you want to add? Any other public comments?

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Nothing else right now. I'm going to listen in a little more, and then I'll have to go back to work.  
But I just wanted to give you guys my support and let y'all know I miss y'all. And I know you guys are going to be doing great things, so I'm looking forward to keeping up with you all. Thank you. Tiffany signing out [laughs].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you so much for stopping by! And keep up -- good luck in your new journey!

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anybody else here for public comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We have till 4:25 -- or 3:25 for the public comments.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody?  
Gina has a question for Eloise: Where do you live in Florida?  
She lives in Sun City Center, which is south of Tampa, near Riverview.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Let's see... who else... anybody? Anybody else for public comments?

[Pause].

>> CINDY SIMON: Debbe, this is Cindy. I think that if there is no other public

comment or no answers, you can go on with the agenda and then come back to it, if somebody comes in for public comment.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, all right, great. Okay.

[Background noise].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We're getting all kinds of background noise.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. The next thing we have on the agenda is to return to the public comments. With Michael, talking about his issue with the clients not getting equal access for the immigration to become a citizen. Anybody have any comments on that?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. One thing I can think of is related to the CDI issue. I know that FRID has a list of CDIs and I know that in October, they are planning on strongly encouraging CDIs to come to the conference, because there will be workshops tailored for them. And so I guess we can see what happens with that. I know in the Tampa area, there are several CDIs that live in the Tampa Bay area and there are CDIs available for sure. It's just a question of whether we can make the agency more aware of the availability of CDIs and where to provide them.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other comments about Michael?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina said: Is it a violation of the Sunshine Law for me to follow-up with FRID on the issue?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Um... Sean? Do you know if the council members can talk to someone within their organizations?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Hi, this is Sean. Can you hear me?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> SEAN ISAAC: With regard to matters related to this meeting, then you may want to, I guess, conduct business.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Can you repeat that again? Talk a little later.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I think your question was is it against the Sunshine Law to speak with someone within your organization? And so my answer is if the matter that you're speaking with is about issues related to this meeting, perhaps you may want to reach through me, reach out through me, and then maybe that would avoid any issue. I'm not sure, to answer the direct question. But that's one way to avoid it.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Is that okay, Gina?

[Pause].

>> CINDY SIMON: I thought the issue was between if we spoke between ourselves, not outside of the council.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Maybe we need another review of the Sunshine Law. I wish John Jackson was here!

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Um...

>> CINDY SIMON: It seems to me --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I don't see -- anybody else has any comments? Anybody have any comments on Eloise, about the communication cards?

[Pause].

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Good afternoon, this is Tiffany. I do have one question about the communication cards. And I might have missed it already. I was wondering, I believe she was talking about you guys getting together and ordering these. But I was wondering, how does one go about ordering some or one or where could they access these? Like an individual person in the community or a little group in the community?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Eloise, do you want to answer that?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Eloise?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Tiffany, I have the list and website of where you can order it.

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Okay.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: HLAA is planning to order about 100 of them. I was planning to give each one to the Council; I will mail it to Sean and for Sean to mail it to the council members.

And then the rest can go to our community.

And again, I need to check with the copyright law, getting permission, all that stuff.

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Okay.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I can give you the website and you can look at it yourself.

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: All right. What is that?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Um... all right, let me go look... let me go look for it.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. Um...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Where is it... I have so many e-mails...

[Pause].

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Presently I have --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I'll get it to you, Tiffany.

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Okay. That's fine.

I would also be happy to remind y'all that there was a Sunshine Law PowerPoint that we did in one of our previous meetings.

So, if you guys want to take a look at that, that might help you with some information regarding that.

And in the meantime, I'm actually looking for it as we speak and see if maybe I could share that with the DOH and they can get it to you all for future reference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. I'm still looking for the website...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody else has any comments?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hi, this is Glenna. Two things. I'm not sure if you remember with the Sunshine Law, it only applies to members talking to each other about --

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Exactly.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- about the council business. That was it. It's not forbidden to go outside and speak to other entities, we can do that.

That's part of what we're supposed to do and our list of duties providing that information and resources. So we can go ahead and do that, speak with outside organizations.

Secondly, the communication cards are very slow. It had several interpreting agencies and the police, passing them out. I still carry one in my wallet, thankfully I have never had to use it. But there's enough out there.

Several interpreting agencies and county police, they have already provided -- I think that we have enough out there. Maybe if somebody has recently moved to Florida, we can provide them with some.

But I know the Deaf here in the area have the small cards, the big cards, the medium-sized cards, the full-sized cards. I think we have enough out there. There's plenty.

>> TIFFANY BAYLOR: Oh.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: They're nothing new, they're quite old; they've been around for a long time.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Gina said: Now that Cindy mentioned it, I do recall the prohibiting was for members to discuss issues, but we could discuss with non-members. Correct me if I'm wrong.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna, yes, that is just fine, not a problem. It's ideal, really, for the -- the idea is for the Council to --

>> OPERATOR: Eloise Schwartz has left the conversation.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- and members of the counsel talking about business and voting and such as that is forbidden, but we can speak to others outside.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anybody else have any comments?

All right. We're going to move on to discussing about August meeting.

So, um... on August 12th would be our next meeting. And we could either meet virtually or in person.

We need to pick a theme or a focus, a focus, or some suggestions for presenters.

I really would like to see the Governor to come, if we could somehow convince him to come to our meeting.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So, what's your thoughts and feelings about whether we do it virtually or in person?

>> CINDY SIMON: This is Cindy. I'll start off and say I really want to see you guys! Can we please do it in person? If we have to go back to school in person, we can certainly spread out and be in person, especially if the majority of us have been vaccinated.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Are we allowed to say those who are not vaccinated can't come to the meeting? I mean, is that legally to say that?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna? Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I thought Sean had made it clear that we do have to go back in person; the Governor already provided that order, made that order, and I think we do have to go back in person. I don't think we have a choice in that matter.

>> OPERATOR: Eloise Schwartz has joined the conference.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I thought Sean made that clear in the meeting, there's an executive order that we do have to go back in person, so...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. So we're going to make an effort to meet in person on August 12th. Now, we have to decide where we want to pick.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I would like to suggest Kissimmee. It's centrally located, it would be easy for the first-time people to come. Kissimmee is a good possibility that we could get people to show up for the public comment because of its location.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. And Gina said look at the Governor's agenda and choose a location within proximity and he may come.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Anybody has any suggestions of where to meet? Is everybody happy with Kissimmee?

>> CINDY SIMON: My only concern there is I'm not that familiar with the area. So we discuss all the time about having accessible transportation for public comment. Do they have accessible public transportation?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anybody else have any comments? Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I think the travel department is really responsible in getting to the hotels, the hotels need to meet certain standards and qualifications and also the hotel, you know, we would ask them to please include, you know, public transportation. And I do believe, if I'm not mistaken, that Kissimmee does have public transportation. There are a lot of workers who work the theme parks and so a lot of, you know, live

there in Kissimmee and I believe there's public transportation there.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. So, Sean? Are you there?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I am here. Can you hear me?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So, we've had issues in the past about traveling. We would be reimbursed very late, like months later. So we would like to get that straightened out. There was a time where we had to do it on forms, paperwork, paper, and then there was other times we had to do it online.

So, make sure that gets straightened out. I just want to let you know that we've had issues with rental cars. Some of us don't want to rent a car, with the understanding if you don't rent a car, you don't get the miles-per-gallon as if you rent it, because the Governor encourages us to rent a car.

But because some of us have our car already bluetoothed to our hearing aids, phones. So to switch to a rental car, we have to reestablish the connections. So that's an issue. Plus some of the seating, you know, some of us are too short or have long legs.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So those are the two things that we would need to make sure that we get cleared.

You have to make sure the room is big enough. We want it in a V shape, a V shape so we can see each other.

We need three interpreters, CART. We had an AV person, um... the AV's name was -- anybody remember?

[Note from CART Captioner]: LaShay.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Did they work for the Department of Health?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: LaShay, right.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna, was it Shay or -- it was a contract. I believe it was Shay? Shane? Started with an S. Shane maybe?

>> CINDY SIMON: It was LaShay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And also with the rental car situation... that's a big issue there with the rental cars, actually running out and there not being enough, you know. Will they have rental cars available? We don't know. So I'm not sure about that.

>> CINDY SIMON: That's very true. The last time I rented, I had to wait through three -- for three hours till a car came in. It was bad. You're right.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And we have no -- we have -- the only choice we had was to go through Enterprise, Enterprise, to get the rental car from, the contract with.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Hi, this is Sean. And there has been some transition in that area as well when it comes to the state of Florida and specifically the Department of Health.

The new contract is with Avis and so all the state workers and all of the employees with the Department of Health have had to adjust.

So you may consider, if you're interested in renting a car, find out your closest Avis and see if that was something accessible to you.

There was a comment also that some counties did not have access to Avis and so they were making accommodations for that as well.

So if you find yourself in that particular situation, please contact me and let me know. But I'll be reaching out to each and every one of the council members to discuss that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, great.

So, also could you please follow-up on the reimbursements system? Whether it's a form or, um... or online?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I sure will.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other issues?

All right. So, we will meet in person. We will meet in Kissimmee. It will be from -- typically we start -- are we going to go back to two days? 'Cause that's how we used to do it, it was two days.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I think one day, maybe a day and a half actually would be plenty.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: That's what I meant, I meant a day and a half.

>> CINDY SIMON: This is Cindy.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So, we will meet on Thursday. Thursday we arrive at, what, noon time, right? And then we work till 5, 6:00 o'clock.

And then Friday is 8:00 in the morning to noon. Am I correct?

No, wait a minute. Thursday, Thursday is 9:00 o'clock to 6:00 o'clock. Friday is from 8:00-12:00. So that means we have to arrive on Wednesday, the day before the meeting.

>> CINDY SIMON: So this is Cindy. I've been here so long. It's at the will of the Chairperson whether you do two days, a day and a half, um, one day, come in half a day on Thursday so people could come in the morning and leave at noon on Friday and do it one day like that.

The other thing I would suggest that I think is really nice is if we do public comment a little earlier in the day rather than later. If the agenda is done earlier, you are not required to wait for further public comment, as when we put it at the end of the day for the entire time.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Anybody else? I mean, I'm flexible. It's your meeting; I'm just the chairperson [laughs].

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna?



>> GLENNA ASHTON: I just warn Sean to start making these plans now for August, because the Travel Office takes a long time to get the hotels and everything. And so hopefully if we can start now, that will be plenty of time and we can get all of that information early.

Because sometimes it comes down to the eleventh hour and we get the information late and then we try to inform the public and that becomes a bit last minute as well.

So, if you can start working on that now, that would be much better, a much better chance more for the public showing up for the public comment.

You know, when they only find out a couple of weeks before the meeting, it's not enough notice for them to make their plans appear.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I hear you loud and clear. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. So what would you like to see the theme be?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Gina? Cindy? Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We've spoken so many times about how can we collaborate with different organizations and different agencies, like, you know, our representative organizations and also the Centers for Independent Living and schools and other agencies.

Maybe we can focus on trying to be creative on how we can really make those collaborations happen.

You know, we've spoken a lot about it and nothing's really happened. So maybe we can translate those words into actions and we can talk about that at our next meeting and come up with ideas on making it happen.

And instead of providing -- or inviting presenters, we can just encourage all of the organizations and agencies to come and we can brainstorm on how we can collaborate. Maybe we'll just have one giant state expo of agencies and organizations instead of -- I don't know, have a town hall or road show or something. I don't know.

But we've talked about it so many times. Now, how we do that, obviously we haven't discussed that. Maybe that would be discussed then.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Gina asked: By themes, do you mean focus?  
Yes.

>> CINDY SIMON: Something I would like to see, and some of it was brought up by Eloise, I've also gone through meetings through my organizations with some nightmares over legislation.

And people want to know why things don't get opened up, it's because others sneak things in that change, not necessarily in a positive way.

So I would like to see someone do a presentation and give out a list of what bills can we expect to come up in the following legislative session.

So maybe we can talk about it and brainstorm positives and negatives at the following meeting, do a two-meeting thing so we're ready when legislative season returns.

There was a lot going on, not all good, um... and actually, under federal law, you don't even need a hearing just to get a hearing aid. We know that doesn't work like that, so we should be aware of what's in there.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, there's a lot going on in HLAA that they're inviting the FDA -- yeah, FDA -- the FDA about the over-the-counter hearing aids, so that's a big topic going on right now.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other comments? Questions?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Any idea for speakers? Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, in relation to the legislative issues, I'm trying to think of who we could invite to teach us the politics of it. Not just, you know, I don't mean like a high school social studies class, but when it comes down to the nitty-gritty of getting a bill made, I do feel like by August, we won't know, it will be too early.

But we could have some idea of just how the Legislature works.

It seems to me that it really starts on the local level, finding out who your local legislators are and what they're interested in and then bringing it up to their attention as much as possible.

It's really a lot of individual effort of talking to those legislators and trying to move action forward that way.

Um... and just identifying stakeholders.

So, first of all, interacting with those individual legislators and then with those committees that deal with these issues before the bill dies in that committee, because --

>> CINDY SIMON: Do you think there's a --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: There's a process but it's not always easy to find what's going on until it's officially been filed and posted online, and by that time it's almost too late to, you know, really lodge serious complaints.

So trying to find out what the preliminary steps are, who we could invite to talk about the political side of things

[Background noise].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And how to really get ahold of the legislators, the key movers and shakers.

I'm kind of at a loss as to who could tell us about that.

If anyone has, well, any ideas about how we can become more educated, more savvy on the process, finding out what's coming down the pike before it actually lands and dies before we get a chance to do anything about it.

Having that influence beforehand would be key.

>> CINDY SIMON: I get a lot of notices all the time. I know people who have special codes in there where you get it almost before it goes out.

Um... would there be a legislator in Kissimmee who maybe is a supporter of the deaf and hard of hearing who could come and talk to us about what the process is that we could invite? And maybe get a little heads up to what could be coming down the pike

to prepare for?

Also, there's that attorney who's an advocate who may know something and if you want, um... I know a couple of people from the audiology standpoint who keep up on the bills and get involved in this.

I just volunteered to help write legislation within my group; I haven't heard from them yet. But I can certainly ask one like Bob Piper.

But I think if we get a local legislator, that would be really nice for them to come to our group and maybe get a better heads up, especially if it's someone who co-signs something that is pro.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Gina wrote: I may know someone to school us on the legislative process. Let me check with them first and send to Sean.

Sean, we have to think of a sign name for you, because every one of us has a, um... sign name.

Is there any habit you have, Sean?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Habit?

>> INTERPRETER: Glenna is offering a suggestion.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Uh-oh, I'm nervous!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbie because I dress up nice, okay, Nancy. Glenna is a G right here.

And Chris, Carrie, okay, and Chris, what's yours, Chris? Chris.

So everybody has a, you know, maybe like this is Donna or Marie because a dimple or maybe there's -- you could be Sean this way for --

>> SEAN ISAAC: I do play the saxophone, how is that? Is that a good one?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I don't know. What would you like to be called?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I like jazz music a lot, I used to play the saxophone. How about that?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. So Sean?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no! No, that's not a good one.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I'll have to think about that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That doesn't follow the rules.

>> SEAN ISAAC: [Laughs]. That doesn't follow the rules? Um...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Well, we'll call him Sean for now, we'll just use this. Okay. All

right.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That works for now.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Um... we need to also talk about once -- Gina asked me if the voting for the chairperson is done every year. And I believe it is, yes. So, we need to decide who will be the chairperson for next month.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: You do it in May to prepare for August.

>> SEAN ISAAC: And this is Sean. I got an e-mail --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Go ahead.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Oh, I'm sorry.

This is Sean. I was just going to say, I received an e-mail from I believe Chris who stated that he wanted to make a motion to nominate the Chair, Glenna for the Chair, and then Debbe for the Vice Chair.

And he said to pass that onto the committee or to the Council.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. So first of all, do we have a quorum? Do we have enough people here to vote?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sean? Do we have a quorum?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: So this is Sean --

>> OPERATOR: Has left the conference.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Can you hear me still?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> SEAN ISAAC: So this is Sean, from my understanding of the bylaws, you just need a majority of the council members, and it's my understanding that you have nine currently. And so do we have five individuals who represent the Council?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We have four and Chris was here this morning.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Chris stated to me that he would join for the vote, I just need to reach out to him. So that would be five.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary, are you on?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Mary is here, is she not?

[No response].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: She was here earlier.

[Note from CART Captioner]: She's in the chat.

>> MARY HODGES: Excuse me, this is Mary. I stepped away from the room. What was the question?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We just wanted to make sure that we had enough quorum for the vote for the chairperson.

The motion was made by Chris Littlewood to have Glenna be the chairperson and Debbe Hagner be the Vice Chairperson, so we're switching roles for the next meeting. So we need someone to second the motion.

[Pause].

>> MARY HODGES: I will second the motion.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Mary, thank you for seconding the motion.

>> OPERATOR: Mary has left the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The next thing we need to do is we have to get Chris...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sean, can you get ahold of Chris real quick?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Hi, this is Sean. Yes, I'm reaching out to him now.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: In the meantime, is there anybody here for the public comments?

[No response].

[Background noise].

[Pause].

>> OPERATOR: Has joined the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sean asked me what is Chris Littlewood's number. Okay, hold on... I'm looking...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: [Reciting telephone number].

>> Debbe? Oh, okay.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: What was that?

>> Oh, nothing, I was just...

[Pause].

[Background noise].

>> OPERATOR: Tiffany Baylor has left the conference.

[Pause].

[Background noise].

[Note from CART Captioner]: Someone has an open mic, hearing background noise. Thank you for muting your telephone line.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Somebody has their mic open, so please mute your phone. Thank you. Somebody has their phone mic open.

>> [Background noise].

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Do you still hear it, Lisa? Because I'm not hearing it.

[Note from CART Captioner]: Yes.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hmm... I will mute mine.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Hmm...

[Note from CART Captioner]: Does anyone else hear it? Maybe I'm hearing things?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Maybe it's Sean? All right, Glenna, go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I notice that Jenny Locy is hear in the meeting and I was wondering if she wanted to make a public comment?

[Background noise].

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Jenny?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No comment. Thank you very much.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Do bear in mind that AQI Services sent a request to have Jenny present about CERT, CERT emergency training.

[Background noise].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: There was a comment made about that in a previous meeting to allow her to speak for an hour on that topic of CERT training. So that's another possibility for the August meeting.

[Background noise].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, Chris -- thank you, Chris, for coming. I want to make sure that we have enough quorum for -- we understand that you made a motion to have Glenna be the chairperson and Debbe Hagner be the Vice Chairperson for the next -- the August, the August meeting. So would anyone like to second the motion?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary, was that --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Mary seconded that motion.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. So now any discussion?

[No response]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All in favor of Glenna being the chairperson and Debbe Hagner being the Vice Chairperson for the next meeting in August?

[No response]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.  
All in favor?

[Background noise].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Chris? Cindy? Mary? Gina?

>> MARY HODGES: Aye, this is Mary.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, great, thank you.

>> OPERATOR: Has left the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. I guess it's passed.  
So, um... Glenna will be the Chairperson for the next meeting in August and I will become the Vice Chair.  
And so, great.  
Okay. Any other... um... anything else, Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I've been the Chair before, with Debbe as Vice Chair, and then Debbe became the Chair and I became Vice Chair, and we're flipping back and forth. We've worked together quite a few times as a team, so, yeah, I think that will work out.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. We still have till 5:00 o'clock.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Remember, October 2nd is It's A Deaf Thing in Lakeland. And then October 21st, 22nd, or 23rd is a tentative date for the FRID conference.  
And Glenna, myself, Debbe and I will probably have a booth there as well, is that right?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Sean, I believe that we have enough money?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I will have to check on the specifics of the budget, but I believe so as well. But I can answer that question after doing a little research.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Well, since our next meeting is hopefully in person, looking at the cost for audiovisual, interpreters, travel and --

>> OPERATOR: Eloise Schwartz has left the conference.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- I just wanted to check in with you to make sure that all of us, and especially Debbe and I, wanting to -- those two events I just mentioned, we want to make sure there's money in the budget for that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Also, there's supposed to be Family Café, Family Café is supposed to be soon. We used to have a booth there, but we haven't. Mostly it's for disabled people and not so much for the deaf and hard of hearing and deaf and blind.  
So I don't know... I know that the Governor usually, in the past, shows up for that Family Café. So is there someone that is planning to go on their own as an individual?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. All right. Any other comments? Suggestions?

[Pause].

>> OPERATOR: Mary has joined the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes?



Sean, go ahead.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Do you all have another meeting planned after August 12, 2021, and is that something you can do today?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna, yes. August, November, February, February usually is in Tallahassee, and May are the four months where we hold our quarterly face-to-face meetings, previously face-to-face. And it's usually the second week of the month -- of that month, that Thursday and Friday.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: November...

>> SEAN ISAAC: It looks like this year, November 11th is the Thursday, which is Veterans' Day.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, it is. We might need to move that up to the 4th then. We don't want to push it out a week, because that might be too close to Thanksgiving. So maybe November 4th?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So we will move it up, the FCCDHH on November 4th.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. Thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Oh, certainly, Lisa. Let's take a break for ten minutes, 15-minute break. So we'll meet at 4:15. Sorry.

[Break].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. It's 4:15. I would like to resume the FCCDHH, Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. I would like to say one thing before I forget. HLAA Florida -- I mean HLAA National will have their convention next year in Tampa, Tampa next year. So I am working, trying to be working with the National level, because I'm the president of HLAA Florida State, I want to make sure that we have a successful conference, hospitality, etc. So, I just wanted to let you know. Glenna, do you have something you want to share?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, this is Glenna. Do we know when that's going to be, that conference?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I can check. It's usually in June.

HLAA conference this year is virtual, virtual, and that will be held on June 24th to the 26th, online.

The theme is about hearing aids, mostly over-the-counter hearing aids.

It does cost \$35 up to June 15th. After that, it will go up to \$45. So it will be virtual

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So you said HLAA June 2022 and NAD is going to be in Orlando, the NAD conference is going to be in Orlando the first week of July 2022.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It's almost back-to-back.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Wow.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. Any other announcements anyone wants to make or share? Other than I'll be graduating from the Gallaudet University peer mentoring over Memorial Weekend and we'll have class on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Congratulations!  
[Signing but no interpreting]

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes, it will be virtual, yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's still virtual?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And that will be interesting a virtual graduation...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. For your information, anyone who's interested in joining the peer mentoring at Gallaudet University, it's free. They do limit it to ten people. It's a two-year program. You learn about the ears, how you hear, how the hearing aid works, how the cochlear implant works, the different companies, the different things. Then you learn about the different diseases, everything from the outer ear to the inner ear, how that all works. The different kinds of tests that they do to test your hearing loss.

Then they talk about the psychological aspects of it.

And then we learn about how to work with mentees, how to work with them.

So, it's intensive training. The classes are online, so you have to show up for classes, like, every week. It's usually on Mondays, depending on the group.

And then it's an hour and a half partly lecture, and then you do have homework. It's not that terribly.

You can mostly, maybe it's three to five hours on the homework.

If you know a lot about the ear structure, then it's easy.

And then... and then you're done.

So we'll start in the fall at Gallaudet University. It will be at Gallaudet University in the fall starting August.

So if you're interested, let me know and then I can give you the information.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. But it is focused only on hearing loss, is that

correct?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: No, no.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And deaf people who can use hearing aids?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It doesn't focus on the hard of hearing. We have -- we have eight of us -- nine of us in the class, three of us knows sign and the rest of them don't know sign at all.

And most of them have cochlear implants or hearing aids.

And so they're learning to cover both hard of hearing and deaf.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Well, I'm happy that I'm fully retired!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Any other announcements? Anything that anybody wants to share what's happening?

[Pause].

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Debbe, this is Gina, the hand raise feature does not work. Is it okay to go ahead?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes, go ahead.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. I wasn't clear. I missed some of what you were saying about Gallaudet University. It's an online class, is that correct? Is there something that's open or that you're taking with your group?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: You -- two years ago, I had to fly to Gallaudet University and stay there for the weekend. And then you come home and the class is online for two years.

And then this year, because of the pandemic, I will be graduating over Memorial Weekend and it will be virtual.

So next year, I mean in the fall, it will be on campus, but the course itself will be online for two years and then you go back to Gallaudet University for the graduation.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. Thank you interesting. Congratulations! That's great, yes, congratulations, and thank you so much.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary said: On May 20th, the Department of Elder Affairs will be hosting the annual 2021 Senior Summit. This is an event of advocacy, appreciation, and celebration of elder Floridians. Boy, that's a hard word to say!

Florida -- Florida -- never mind!

Thank you, Mary.

Any other comments?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Cindy, what's happening in the audiology world?

[No response].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary said she will send Sean the religious link to send to the group. Great.

Sean, do you have any words you want to say or share or any thoughts?  
You have your work cut out and all the things?

>> SEAN ISAAC: [Laughs]. Yeah, I have my work cut out for me, that is for sure!  
No, I appreciate the patience that the group has shown me and the Department during this time.

My hat's off to you all, you all continue to do good work, I can tell that from just this one meeting. Yes, I'm impressed with what you do.

I have my list of things to work on and I will be talking to you about that next week, absolutely.

Any questions for me or requests for me?

I will say that I have -- we have talented staff here who can work on the website, so when you all are ready, we can support that effort.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Good. Glenna, go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Sean, I notice you didn't mention anything about e-mails and phone calls from the public asking for help on anything. Were you gonna mention that?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, it's your job, Sean, as the... in your position, to keep track of all the phone calls. And then if someone asked about what to do with hearing aids or -- then you would answer it. If it's something you don't know, then you refer it to us and then we give you the answer to pass it on.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you for the question.

I don't have any to report to you today. I can certainly reach out to find out if there were any questions.

I'm not sure where those phone calls are being directed at this point. But I'll find out and then send that information out.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Yeah, you can ask Tiffany how she and what means she gets those e-mails and phone calls. Maybe they're not transferred to you yet, I don't know.

But it is kind of a critical part of being able to inform Legislature how much correspondence we're getting from the public through e-mail and phone call. And what the subjects are about: Interpreting services, schools, hearing aids.

We kind of have to keep track of all of that to present to the Legislature.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I would like everybody to kind of take a look at the 2021 biennial report. I want to thank Glenna for doing a fabulous job on this. Thank you, thank you, thank you so much.

Please take a look at it. I hope you appreciate the hard work she put together on this. We will need to... um...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Let's see... okay. We will need to make sure that we have enough copies to distribute, ten copies of the biennial report to all the council members so they can distribute it to their people.  
Any comments and feedback?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I think we've made 500 copies already -- this is Glenna, excuse me -- I think we've made 500 copies already.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean, yes, we have 500 copies, so I think that should be enough.  
If you all have any particular folks you want me to send them to, please let me know as well, and I will start work immediately sending those to the legislators and to the council members directly.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: One thing I was wondering, I think in the past, we had a cover letter to go along with the biennial report, right? Glenna? Do you remember if we had a cover?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Not every time, no. Sometimes we did, sometimes we didn't.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Now, if -- this is Glenna -- if we go to the October conference and we have a booth, we could have a stack of the reports there as well to give out. And if we do go... um... I don't know if Sean is aware of this, but remember we have the... the lanyards that we would give away and the pens? I wonder if Tiffany still has those boxes? Maybe we can ask Sean to ask Tiffany to see if she still has that. I don't know, Sean, if you heard me or not, but...  
Maybe we can ask Tiffany if she still has those boxes of the giveaways we would give, the Post-It notes, the pens, lanyards, and so forth.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: You can ask Tiffany where those boxes are.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Also the banner, the banner that goes on the outside of the door for the meeting room. Also the big banner for the expo, the popup, yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, the popup banner.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Hi, this is Sean. I will certainly ask Tiffany about all those things.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary wrote: May I have 15 copies of the report?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Absolutely. I will send everyone 15 copies [chuckles]. Unless you think I need to send more.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: For now, 15 will be enough. And then whatever -- make sure you cover the legislators, all those people, the Department of Health, the Attorney

General, um... all of those people.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And the Governor.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The Governor. The Assistant Lieutenant Governor, the Lieutenant. All the government parties.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I sure will.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And whatever is left, we will send them to the hospitals, maybe, to different other outside agencies.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I sure will; sounds good.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. So it is 4:31. Anybody else have any public comments? Announcements?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Debbe, this is Gina.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes, Gina? Go ahead.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. I just wanted to give you your kudos. I think you did a great job this year while you were the Chair. I know it was not easy, especially doing everything virtual. So I just want to give you a pat on your back. And I know you'll do well as the Vice Chair.  
And congratulations to you, Glenna, for being back as the Chair!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, Debbe and I are still just a team. We're a team.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Thank you for that comment.  
Anybody else have any comments?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I was thinking about the August meeting a little bit further and trying for Kissimmee as a location. I know ASL services is there and also... oh, I don't remember... Communication Center something or other, and they do advocacy workshops there in Kissimmee. And perhaps we should get in touch with those entities. And remember, Jenny as well wants to present. And we can contact the Advocacy Center there, perhaps they can present. And hopefully we can find a friendly legislator from that area who -- it could be Kissimmee or Orlando, really either one. Orlando's close by. If we want to learn more about Legislature and the bills and the process and everything, that means at the same time we still have to work on improving our collaboration with other organizations and agencies if we want to fight for these bills. We've got to come together and fight and do what we have to do to get these bills through.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And also, hopefully we'll have someone -- hopefully the Department of Health will have an opportunity to review the résumés and will ask us to review it and get advice and ask for feedback, that would be great.

I will be working with Sean on that next week, or whatever.  
It's important that we try and get all of our appointments accepted, find out what the process is, whatever it takes.  
You know, because all of us -- technically all of us are expired, all of us. It would be shut down. So we don't want that to happen.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So, any other comments?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Debbe. I want to mention that Shay has asked me to reach out to you all and find someone who can be a part of the interviews, that final round of interviews, so I just wanted to make sure that that was something that you were interested in doing?  
And particularly, that's for the position that Tiffany vacated.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I would be willing to help.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah. I think it would be appropriate for me and Glenna, the three of us, review the applicants. Because that's the FCCDHH committee, the three of us.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, again, that teamwork.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Can you repeat that last part? I'm sorry, I missed that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It would be Glenna, me, and you to review for the -- review the applicants.

>> SEAN ISAAC: All right. This is Sean, I'll take that back to the Leadership. Thank you.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I believe the last two people or last two positions we were not involved, they just hired and chose and let us know and we weren't really involved in the process.

So I don't know if there's a rule that we have to be involved or not? I'm not sure.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I can find out and see.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah, we've had some issues where they just signed up for it and not were really part of the organization or the organization didn't approve of them. It's, like, "Who are you? Who are you to say you're an expert in that area?" So we want to kind of avoid that surprises.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean, I understand [chuckles]. I certainly did not claim to be

an expert in this area. I was asked to participate [laughs], so, as the one who does not bring any expertise, I think it is important that you all have some input, and so does Leadership. I just need to find out that process and I'll find that out and let you know.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We will give you a crash course; we'll work together as a team.

>> SEAN ISAAC: [Laughs]. Thank you. This is Sean, thank you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Any other comments? Questions? Public comments? Any announcements?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary? Cindy? Gina?

[Pause].

>> OPERATOR: Gina has left the conference.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. So we still have to be here till 5:00 o'clock.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Mary said: I have no further comments. And thank you for all -- thank you all for a very good meeting.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, this is Glenna. Did we want to discuss what we learned about CIL and FSDB? We can discuss that.

>> OPERATOR: Has left the conference.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: What Tracie, all of the things that she had to go to, I am amazed, I'm so impressed. She could definitely be a role model for everything. I would like to see her some day become the president of NAD. I mean... she's great! I'm totally impressed. Go ahead, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, and I would say that family, the Snow family is pretty famous for being fantastic people in everything they do. The parents and the two boys, a very impressive family.

And back so the CIL presentation, I think we could definitely use their resources and their network to a great extent, whether it's asking them to please bring their clients to show up for open comments, we could try doing that, for sure.

I know, too, we've talked about... let me see... did the Council ever do an actual visit, a



campus visit, a tour of the campus?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The last time we had a tour, that was when we had the FAD conference. That was not with the Council; I don't believe so.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hmm... okay. So I think the Council still needs to take a tour of the campus. Maybe for our November meeting. We could certainly try to see in August, strongly encourage the Council to actually pay a visit. I think it's a very impressive facility. And they have resources there that "regular schools" don't have. High school and ASL students go there all the time and their mind is just blown on what they say. We don't have this in our high school, we don't have this, we don't have that.

Now, of course with COVID, you know, I think the technological side of things have just taken off out of necessity. So they're using a lot more of that. And it would be a very valuable experience for the Council to see for ourselves what it's like --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay.

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I like that idea. Sean, can you put that down for November, that we could meet in St. Augustine?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean, I sure will.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So you've got two meetings, and the travel/agency people have homework to do, to put in the bid for hotels. And make sure that we get a wide room and we're following the V shape and six feet, whatever the Governor -- whatever the rule is

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. This is Sean --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: If we have to still social distance, so that would make -- the room needs to be big.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Any idea about how many guests we could fit in that room?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Well, we have 17 on the Council, if all of the positions are filled. And then typically we've had ten, at the most twelve.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I think we had eleven at one time.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. So you have three interpreters, you have the AV guy, um... and then the public audience.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And of course seating for the public.

[Talking over one another].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay.

>> And Lisa on CART.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And the V shape and the chairs.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: You know, most mid-sized hotels don't have a room that big, we may have to go slightly larger type of hotel. Are you familiar with... [Sighs]... what's it called...? I want to say... is the DOH familiar with, um... Betsy Easley, the Betty Easley?

>> Betty Easley?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, that's what it is. That's a fairly large center with a large enough room. They should house enough room to accommodate something like that. That's about the size that we're looking for, basically.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: In terms of the widths and the lengths.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Betty Easley, you're referring to the room here in Tallahassee, our meeting room?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, yes. The conference room, when it's completely open, where all the dividers have been pushed aside, the full-size version of that room, that's typically the size of the room that we use, or bigger, if possible.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I'm familiar with that room and I'll examine it. Thank you.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. We have, um, 14 minutes. Anybody else has any comments? Announcements? Ideas?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Glenna, go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes. I think we should definitely extend invitations to the Governor, to all the members of the Legislature, just cast a wide net and see if we can entice any of them to be involved. And Debbe and I, for sure, have our work set out for us in terms of [laughs] trying to make that work!

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I know we had at one time dreamed about having a gala, a gala, to have all of the -- and just mingle. But...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, some kind of --

[Talking over one another].

>> OPERATOR: Mary has left the conference.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Having all of the organizations....  
If we could get all of our different groups, representatives of our groups to show up and really just encourage that partnership that we're all striving towards

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Getting everyone under one roof.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It would be perfect to just mingle at the It's A Deaf Thing, but, again, the last time, I think we had, like, 1,000 or 2,000 people showed up at It's A Deaf Thing.

So, Sean, you would be fascinated by that. We have entertainment, food there, different booths, where they sell "I love you" buttons and hats and different things, sign language things, videos, books, all kinds of things.

We have interpreter agencies. FEMA is there. Um... the Disability Rights.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And that really is focusing mostly on Deaf ASL users. I want to make sure that we're also including people who are hard of hearing, late-deafened, parents of deaf children, the entire spectrum of the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

We haven't really had anything like that in Florida, so that's why the hope was that FCCDDHH would be the perfect vehicle for that, representing all of these different organizations.

Of course, that's my dream of getting us all together in one place!

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. So you're saying that there is nothing in the state of Florida that brings all of these different communities together at this time? No events or any type of conference or anything right now?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I mean, they have one for the Deaf. The hard of hearing have their own. HLAA has their own. FAD, they have their own. But we want --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: They're separate groups.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We want to be all together.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, there are definitely groups that focus on ASL signing Deaf, interpreter organizations, teachers of the Deaf, families, audiologists, they all have their silos of events.

But bringing everyone together in one big melting pot just hasn't happened yet. It's a difficult thing, for sure.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Maybe we can invite Nyle or Marlee Matlin or some of the other famous people, hard of hearing, or Maggie or Mandy, who plays the -- hard of hearing, she plays the -- what is that called? That instrument?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: She's from Orlando, I think.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: A ukulele or something like that, that instrument. You probably saw her on "America's Got Talent"?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I will invite whoever you all want me to invite, I'll leave that up to you [laughs].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, at this point we don't have the budget to bring in any of those people of that caliber! [Laughs]. It would be way too expensive.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It wouldn't hurt to find out what they charge and say oh... we learn...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: All right. We still have eight minutes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I think we're talking about people who are out of our league.

>> SEAN ISAAC: [Laughs].

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Well, before I forget, I want to thank the interpreters for working so hard interpreting for us. Thank you, Lisa, fabulous job for providing us Zoom and the link.

I wanted to thank, thank, thank, Lisa, the fabulous CART Provider. Thank you, Sean, for coming in at the last minute and learning everything.

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Thank you all, it's been great and patient. I appreciate that. And we'll get that agenda fixed in the afternoon next time [laughs].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yeah.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I thank everybody else for coming. Jenny for coming, Mary, Cindy, Gina, thank you for coming. Chris Littlewood. Anybody else?

I want to make sure I didn't forget anybody.

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Debbe, this is Sean again. And I will reach out to, um... oh, I forget the organization, the organization that Cecil was a part of, to see if they're gonna name a replacement for him and let the group know, okay?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay, yeah. Cecil worked with the Department of Vocational rehab, VR.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Right, under the Department of Education, so he was responsible specifically for the VR program dealing with the deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you. I'll --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I was wondering myself who is going to replace him; yeah, good question.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Yeah, this is Sean. I'll reach out and find out.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Great.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Five minutes.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Ten... nine... eight... seven...

[Laughter].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. So this is Sean again, since we have a few minutes, can you tell me about some of the previous experiences you've had at some of your former meetings that really stand out to you? That really, I don't know, made the meeting or made it memorable?

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: We've had some fabulous speakers. One of the things we always here, some of the complaints, it's the same complaints. One of the things we would like to do is become a commission instead of a Coordinating Council. That would make a big difference. We're grateful that -- let's see, is it Chris Wagner is the one that started the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Chris Wagner, I believe. Glenna, do you want to share anything that was memorable?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: You know, Chris and Cecil, they were both members of the Council for a very long time, quite a few years -- sorry, that was Chris and Cindy.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I have another Zoom meeting at 5:30, until 9:00 o'clock.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: That's okay...

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Two minutes.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The clock is ticking...

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Again, thank you so much for everything.

[Pause].

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I really would like to encourage all of the council members to come to the meeting and follow-up on those who -- we have to document those who don't show up.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I sure will. I have started that process. I know some folks had, or at least one person mentioned they had a personal issue, that's why they couldn't stay for the entire meeting. But I will certainly follow-up on some of the other folks who I haven't heard from.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hopefully people will feel comfortable coming to the August meeting. We may have to deal with some folks who may not feel comfortable. I guess it's really the same issue we face in the past. If they don't show up in person, they can just call in. So that shouldn't be an issue. But just having enough bodies show up in August rather than having everyone on a call.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It's 5:00 o'clock! So, again, thank you for being here, for coming! So see you in August! Thank you!

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Have a great day. Goodbye!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you, Lisa Schaefermeyer. Thank you, Lisa, CART Provider.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you all. Have a good one. Take care!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: You too.

[Concludes at 5:00 p.m.]

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