

ROUGHLY-EDITED REALTIME TEXT FILE  
FLORIDA COORDINATING COUNCIL  
FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING (FCCDHH)

Quarterly Meeting  
Kissimmee, Florida  
Thursday, November 3, 2022  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. ET  
ONSITE CART CAPTIONING PROVIDED BY:  
Tammy Milcowitz, RMR, CRR, CRC  
Certified CART Captioner

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>> SEAN ISAAC: Debbe? Debbe, can you hear us?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Good morning! It's 9:00. Sean, can you do your thing with the conference call?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This meeting is now being recorded.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Good morning. This is the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing meeting in -- where are we today? Orlando, Kissimmee. November 3rd and 4th. First, I would like to recognize the service providers. We have working with us today, we have La'Shay Lewis, and CART we have Tammy Milcowitz, and then we have --

>> INTERPRETER: Sorry. We are not able to hear you guys.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: What's the problem?

[Audio indiscernible].

>> INTERPRETER: The people on Zoom are having a hard time hearing you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Well, I thought the people on Zoom are there to watch interpreters, and if you want to be heard, use your voice, you have to call in to the conference call separate from Zoom, so you have to do both.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Half of us can't see the CART.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: It's behind you.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Is there a way to move?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Karen, you can sit over here.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Is that okay to change? Do other people need the CART?

>> MARY HODGES: I'm okay.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: CART's online.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I can do it online. That's fine.

>> SEAN ISAAC: The CART information is on your agenda, so you can log in online to see it. As a reminder, the call is being recorded through the conference line. Hopefully we'll get that recording working, but all communications should be through the conference calling line. The Zoom is for visual only. The conference call-in is also on the agenda, but I can repeat that information for everybody here. That phone number is 888-585-9008. And the conference code is 828532954.

Give people a few minutes to call in.

As a reminder for everyone in the room, please make sure to mute your Zoom. Are all the lines muted in Zoom?

>> I have the Zoom muted.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. So the Zoom should be muted automatically now. So please make sure to use the conference call-in line.

>> INTERPRETER: She's explaining that it's muted, that the Zoom is muted.

>> SEAN ISAAC: And if you've called in and you would like to mute your line, if your phone does not allow you to do that, you can hit star 2 to mute, and then star 2 again to unmute.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: There's a person here who's on Zoom who's connected from the Web site. And apparently they're not in the meeting room that we're seeing on the screen. Somebody named Cory J. I don't know why they're not showing up on screen. I think you've connected to the wrong link. There's five people on another link.

>> INTERPRETER: We're going to get in touch with Lisa from the agency because we do have live interpreters in the room plus interpreters on Zoom, so we'll coordinate with Lisa.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: If you could have Lisa send me that information as well. Thank you. Looks like the Web site link is not connected to the meeting that we're seeing. So people from the public are trying to connect, they're not getting the right link.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Maybe change your view.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: It's not about the view. My Zoom logs in and connects to the meeting that we're

seeing on screen. It's not about the view. So that might be a barrier for some people.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you for that, Cory. There was a last-minute change in the Zoom address due to unforeseen changes, so if folks are having an issue with logging into the meeting, please use the CART at this time or the conference call-in line. That may be a difficult issue for some folks.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I copied the information from the newest agenda before I sent it out, so they should have had the right link.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: But he said just that it was changed --

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. The newest agenda does have the correct Zoom information.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: That's the one I sent out. That's the one I sent out. But there are two different ones. One for today and one for tomorrow, so it depends on which one they hooked up to.

Okay. As usual, start with technical things, as usual. Let's get back. Okay. I had already recognized AV and CART, and then I wanted to recognize the interpreters. Kelly Gagain, April Perry, Chris Costa, Brenda Stansbury, and I assume Janelle. Thank you for providing service today. Without you, we couldn't do it together.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: She's talking about opening up a -- Debbe is mentioning about opening up another window for CART, saying that she doesn't have the capability to see the CART.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: To open up the CART so she can follow the CART, do both, listening and CART, and that would help her.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Sorry. I just wanted to make you aware of what Debbe was saying.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Ready?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The interpreter for Zoom is hearing everything --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Before we start with the roll call, I would like to take a moment of --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The interpreter is not getting everything.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Can you hear me now?

>> INTERPRETER: I can hear you very faintly. It just sounds like you're very far away. Is there any way you could just bring the microphone to you, Glenna?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Do you want me to put it in my mouth?

>> SEAN ISAAC: The phone has to be -- we have to use my cellphone today, and the cellphone is way over here on my table. I can bring it to you, Glenna, if that's helpful. But the current set-up of the room is why that is. So if everyone could speak up a little bit, that would help.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Sean, as much money as we pay for this, we should be able to coordinate that with the phone system.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Again, this was an oversight by the Department. This will -- a telephone line, and so that's the reason why we have to use a conference call today. We did ask.

>> INTERPRETER: Can the phone be brought closer to the speaker then so that it can pick up everything that's coming through the microphone system? If that cellphone is what's feeding into the conference call.

>> INTERPRETER: Sean, I can hear you fine. You're very clear.

>> INTERPRETER: Testing. Testing. 1-2. Testing.

>> INTERPRETER: I can hear you, Sean.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Is this any better?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: All systems go.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Back on track for the third time.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: All righty. Third time's the charm, right?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Hopefully third time. Okay. I want to take a moment this time to remember the effects that Hurricane Ian had on Ft. Myers, seeing we just met there in May, and then the hurricane came afterwards, so I want to take a moment of silence in recognition of what happened there.

Okay. We now call to order and we'll do a roll call. We'll start with Mary. Your name and who you represent, and where you're from.

>> MARY HODGES: Good morning. This is Mary Hodges. I'm with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs in Tallahassee.

>> CINDY SIMON: Good morning, everyone. So nice to see everybody here. I'm so excited. It's been so long. I'm Cindy Simon. I'm an audiologist -- representing audiologists, and I'm from South Florida.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Good morning, everyone. Can you hear me? I think I just turned it off. Good morning, everyone. My name is Karen Goldberg. I am from the Tampa area. I represent HLAA Florida, Hearing Loss Association of America.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Good morning. This is Chris Littlewood. I represent the Association For Late Deafened Adults, board member for the Suncoast chapter. I live in Seminole, Florida, and I work for St. Petersburg College.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Good morning. This is Glenna Ashton representing Florida Association of the Deaf from South Florida, Boca Raton, and I'm the chair.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Cory Parker representing the Department of Education. I'm the coordinator of vocational rehabilitation, and I am the vice chair. From Tallahassee. Thank you.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Good morning. My name is Gina Halliburton. I'm representing Florida agency of interpreters for the deaf, and I am from Jacksonville.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Good morning. I'm Sean Isaac from the Florida Department of Health. I'm from Jacksonville, as well, hometown, but I currently live in Tallahassee, Florida.

>> ANGELA GREEN: I'm Angie Green. I'm from Tallahassee. I'm representing Department of Health and I am the liaison for the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing.

>> KHYATI MASTER: Good morning. My name is Khyati Master. I'm from the Florida Department of Health in Tallahassee, Florida.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Zoom, can people on Zoom introduce themselves, please.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is Debbie Hagner. I represent HLAA Florida. I live in Port Richey, Florida.

>> Good morning. This is John Jackson. I represent Department of Children. I'm from Tallahassee, Florida.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And?

>> Hi. Sorry. [Inaudible] -- I'm from family health services and I'm so excited to be able to join you guys today.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Thank you. We nicely have a good turnout today. So welcome, and for housekeeping, raise your hand or wave, and I will recognize you. And remember to say your name first before speaking.

Okay. So we have the minutes to adopt from August, and take a minute to read through it. I believe there's a few corrections to do.

Okay. One correction I have is for Friday minutes on the second page where it says about the bylaws, and it said that Debbie made a motion to accept the bylaws as corrected, and it was seconded. We did not make a motion on the bylaws. We held the discussion to continue it to today because we didn't finish going through it. There was agreement on certain changes, but we didn't finish going through it. So that was not -- okay. And the new business -- I will not be working with Cecil. The Council will support Cecil on an effort to get the TASA. I will not be working with him directly on it. Karen.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi. This is Karen Goldberg from HLAA. Just a couple things. Robert's Rules of Order. We accept a motion, second it and then discuss, or do we discuss first? Just educational. I cannot

remember.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yes. Make a motion, second, discuss it and -- or not vote. We decided to postpone this discussion.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: All right. Because it sounds like we're discussing, so I wasn't sure. Should we do it in a different order?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Okay. First is do a motion -- is there a motion open on the floor?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I make a motion --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We're talking about the minutes.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Right. Right.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And I made two corrections. The two corrections that I made was that we did not have a motion on accepting the bylaws, and the second correction was not working with Cecil on the TASA. The Council will support that. So those are the two corrections. So are you saying you're going to make a motion?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, I'll make a motion, but I do want to discuss, but I think it's supposed to be motion, second --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yes. Motion, second and discuss.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. So I make a motion that we accept the minutes.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: As corrected.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Well, I have other corrections to make, so should I discuss that first?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We went through the minutes and made the comments, and then we make a motion to add the corrections.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. All right. I'd like to make a motion, then, to not accept it. I'd like to discuss something or make a correction. I would recommend that we put down the names of the council members who did not attend. So who's absent. I was absent. I was unable to attend that meeting. But I think that would be a good idea in the future, is to make a list of who was unable to attend. Because 2007 make sure we have a quorum.

Okay. Now I make a motion to accept the corrections.

>> CINDY SIMON: I was just seconding.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So the motion is that the motion be accepted as corrected with three corrections, that members who did not attend be listed, that the bylaws was only discussed, not passed, and that the

Council would support Cecil in his efforts with the TASA bill.

And the second was by Cindy. Any discussion? Debbe?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I second the motion.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Any discussion? Okay. Go ahead and vote. Those in favor of the motion as corrected, raise your hand or say aye.

Okay. Passed. Thank you.

And now we have the agenda today and tomorrow.

The only thing I want to add is to start the planning for the 2024 expo that we had discussed, and we'll do that when we have free time, for example, like, at the end of public comments or something like that. So that will be a separate item? Any other comments on the agenda?

Okay. We have Angie Green.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Don't you have to make a motion to accept the agenda?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Do we have a motion to accept the agenda?

>> CINDY SIMON: Move we accept the agenda.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And do I have a second?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I second.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. We have a motion and a second to accept the agenda as it is. Any discussion?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Close the discussion.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All for vote. Those in favor say aye. Okay. We have majority. Passed.

Okay. Next is the DOH update action items. Angie and Sean and Anna. Okay.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I'm happy to be able to turn this part over to Angie to discuss with you all. I do want to publicly thank her for her taking over this process and planning a good meeting today. So I'm going to turn it over to her to discuss some of the different items that we have on the agenda.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I want to say before you begin, Angie, I think that it's wonderful --

>> CART PROVIDER: If Cory is voicing, I can't hear the interpreter.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Make sure you speak into the mic, and make sure that the mic is on.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: What I want to say is again to Angie. Thank you so much for putting all of these materials together, these documents, everything. The materials were very impressive. Everything was great. Itemized for us. It was wonderful. Fabulous. Thank you.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Okay. First thing I want to discuss is the calls that we have been getting and the

feedbacks that we have been doing. We've had a lot of phone calls about hearing aids, people needing services to either get them or upgrade them. We've had a lot of -- and we've referred them to our Web site, so there's lots of wonderful resources on our Web sites. I've had some good reports on people going there, and they told me that they've had a hearing test, and that they've moved to the second step of getting them. So it's amazing to hear them call in and tell me that what I'm doing is helping them. So that made me feel good. We've also had a lot of phone calls again about emotional support dogs and service dogs, which we still need to discuss with the Council on what to do about them, as we have no special way of telling them. So we need to deal with the Council so we can all agree on what to do about that process.

The second thing is we've had some feedback responses as well, and again, most of them are about hearing aids, and the links were sent for them. One was about captioning for the TVs, and that how TVs have removed them, so there's a way to complain -- not complain, but, you know, make your case known, and if you want to make a case known about that, you go to [consumercomplaints.fcc.gov](https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov), and you can make a complaint about the captions being taken off of the TVs.

The next thing -- yes, Cory?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Clarify that. First of all, I need to ask to have captions removed or that they are removed?

>> ANGELA GREEN: They are removed. That's what someone said, the captions are removed when certain programs, and they were having problems with it, and so they made a complaint. Yeah.

And then the next thing I want to discuss is the list of places that we will be having our meetings. The next one will be February 9th and 10th, and it will be in Tallahassee. That will be in person. We are looking into hotels right now. We're making the discussion probably in the next week, and hopefully we can make a decision on a hotel. We do have the Buddy Easily Conference Room. That is where we will be having our conference. It's a very nice room. I think you guys will enjoy it. And then as far as the next one, it will be a virtual one, and that will be May 11th and 12th. There's also some other ones in there for August 10th and 11th. That would be Boca Raton, and then November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of next year, 2023, we're looking at St. Petersburg.

So the next thing is the days. Now I made a copy of that for everybody, if you want to dig in and look at it. Yes.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Two things I want to -- with the captioning on TV, yes, they can make a complaint to FCC, but if they found -- correct me, but if they found the captions are missing, I think they need to contact the TV



station first to make sure they've turned on the captions. Is that right?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Yes and no. This is Chris. It depends on the issue. There are so many problems that can happen. Obviously the first is user issues with making sure that it's set up correctly on their television and through their cable or Broadband provider. Sometimes there are double caption settings in the TV and in the service provider. The first objective would be to contact the TV company or the TV station, the broadcast company, like you said, but you can also make a complaint to the FCC, but that is obviously more serious, but sometimes it gets better results.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: There's a few more steps before contacting FCC for them to try to resolve first.

Second thing is you mentioned the places for the future meetings. I don't recall mentioning Boca Raton being a place. I remember mentioning Hollywood is more south so that we can have Miami and Broward all come to a central place. In fact, there is a new mall with lots of hotels. It's near the airport and everything in -- what's the name of the mall, Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: It's called Dania Point, and there's plenty of places to walk in there to eat or do whatever we want to do without getting in a car, and on the perimeter towards the street, there's at least four or five of the hotels just like in this area to be at, and it's on -- it's between Sterling and Griffin, so the hotels are all on Sterling Road, and it's literally right off of 95. We're the first traffic light.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Because that would be a better location. That way, we can pull from at least two counties, Miami-Dade and Broward. Gina?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I have a question. Is the Council going to address at all what Angie said about the fake service dogs? We talked about it before, but I don't know if we can get involved in that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We kind of got vague information to Angie -- to better differentiate between different types of dogs and, quote, service dog stuff. We gave that information before.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Thank you.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I have a small section in my class that I teach about service animals and use under the ADA. I can certainly forward you that information. The simplest way to explain it is there's a clearly defined difference between a service animal and an emotional support dog. You can get a vest that says service animal, and you can buy that on Amazon, anybody can. You know, my dog is a pet. My dog is not a service animal. There are only two questions that you can ask a person that is using a service animal. One, if they've been trained. And two, what do they do for you. And the thing that they have to be able to do for you is something that's covered by the ADA. So if they alert you to sounds that you're not hearing, that's

covered by the ADA. If they comfort you because you're stressed out from post-traumatic stress disorder, that's not covered under the ADA. That's an emotional support dog. Okay? So those are the two main differences. The other thing is separate from those two questions, there's only two types of animals that are a service animal: A dog, and in some rare, rare cases, a small horse for people with mobility issues to help them stand up. You can't have a service snake or a service bird. Those don't exist. Okay? So any time you have any questions about service animals, you can feel free to E-mail me. I do not know everything about them, but I've had enough questions and been teaching about them long enough that I can maybe provide some answers. I'm happy to do that.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: Another question is I also got the impression they want to know how can they go about this, and where do they get them, how do they get them is the impression I got. And so I think we can find that we actually had someone a couple -- well, pre-COVID, come and show us the service dogs and the training, how to identify them. There are organizations, and the person who was here prior to Sean actually went and had to be trained for her new service animal, so I'm sure we can get that information. That's what they wanted, right?

>> ANGELA GREEN: Yes. Perfect. Thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Gina.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Chris, so if a person -- if we ask those two questions and they don't answer them correctly, then you're saying the organization has a right to refuse access? Okay. Thank you.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Yes, they do. They have the right to refuse access. Additionally, there are certain places for sanitary reasons that they can be refused access anyway without special conditions. That is usually only a hospital or a medical facility. You can still, in most cases, with the exception of a kitchen, a service animal is permitted in a restaurant. But you can refuse to have them in there.

The other thing, a service animal that has been properly trained will always be under the person's control. They won't be barking. They won't be growling at people. They won't be, you know, relieving themselves on the carpet or things like that. Those are not properly trained service animals. And the organization or the people in charge of the place have the right to refuse access if they're not meeting those standards.

It's still a sticky situation. Everybody from the TSA to shelter managers to hospitals, restaurants all deal with these types of things, so I'm sure you get a lot of calls on this, and I can do my best to support you. E-mail

me any time.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I don't know how many times you go into a store and you see people bring their little tea cup dogs or bigger dogs in strollers, and it's getting pretty bad.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Does --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sorry to interrupt. Continue, Angie.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I was just going to say sometimes business owners don't care, and they allow pets there, too. And most people will find pets -- are fine with pets being there, unless somebody has a severe pet allergy or something, or is intimidated by dogs. You know, the old saying, you know, you can make all the people happy some of the times, but you can't make all the people happy all the of the times or something like that. That certainly is very true here. But like Home Depot, things like that, places like that, they let people go in there with their dogs all the time.

The other thing with the service animal that I forgot to mention is they do have to be on a lead or a leash. They can't be going free.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I want to ask you a question. Just about the certifications. Is it to go with the dog so that you can actually show it or the service animal? It says that this animal is trained and has all of the requirements.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: They used to require showing certification. Now, no more.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: There's no certification required.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi. This is Karen. So, you know, there's this whole debate about a certified service animal versus a certified emotional support animal, and is there a certification. And there's some private companies that do certification for emotional support animals, but it's not the same thing as a service animal. Service animal has been specifically trained, as Chris was saying. An emotional support animal is really kind of a basic kind of thing. And as a physician, I've been asked to write letters for all kinds of animals that have been deemed emotional support, and if you're watching the news, you've seen people bringing I think a pet alligator or something, somebody wanted to bring a pet alligator on to an airplane or something like that, or a peacock, or -- I mean, it got really out of the hand, and so then there was more of a push of let's make sure that this is really meeting criteria. I think the airlines have gotten much more strict on that. But there's a difference between a certified service animal versus an emotional support. I don't know if that adds to anything.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. I think we're ready to move on.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Okay. So if they want to look at the handbook, I've added a few things to it. So if you go to page 5, I've highlighted where I've added the new stuff. And I just want everybody to look it over and make sure it looks good, and, you know, do any changes need to be made or added or anything. I'd like your opinions on that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Pretty much copied from the statute, the 17 people that are supposed to be on the Council. The travel information, you already know to put that in.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Just a quick question. Some of this looks a little redundant to our bylaws, but that's okay. This is sort of a handbook as opposed to the bylaws. So I think we would want to make sure that we're in line with what we're saying in the bylaws. In the bylaws, I think that we had decided that it's either FCCDHH or the Council. Is that correct? We want to be consistent with the language. Here it says the Coordinating Council. So I think we want to be consistent with the language. And, I mean, I appreciate having a handbook. One of the things I would really like to see in the handbook, and this is for our council itself, just nuts and bolts like on how you do the TAR and how you do all that stuff.

What is the liaison? Oh, that's one of you guys.

>> ANGELA GREEN: That's what I do, yes.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. I probably would say that the DOH liaison.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: For the liaison responsibilities, respond to phone calls, E-mails, and we need to remember to also ask the Council for the expertise to help you with the information. Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: Okay. I'm not sure we need to go back and be a little more general. We're looking at some things, but under meetings, number 1, I think our bylaws -- the Council information, it says the bylaws that it's I think supposed to be the second Thursday or Friday, unless an exception is made, so I don't think you can say the first or second, because there was a standard set, and the Chair has the right, with vote, to change it to another week, which we've done before.

Second thing is the Council meetings last all day Thursday and half a day Friday. That's not necessarily true. That's at the will of the Chair. We've had other meetings where it was decided it was only going to go for one day, and it's up to the Chair to make that decision and any exceptions, so I would not put this in here because there are times there are exceptions. When we've been online, we've only done one day. So I think we need to change that wording.

I'm sorry. Maybe -- I don't know, Glenna, this coming in yesterday is the first time that I've ever seen this, so

I assume it was just written. Maybe at some point tomorrow, because I think we need to take more time to go through it and see where little things like that occur. You don't want to commit yourself to something where now you can't move out of the it. So I think we need to really look at this wording.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sean.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I would just say you have more flexibility than that. As the Department, we felt it was needed for this position to have some type of handbook to transition information from one person to the next. So this is not a document that will be ever stuck in the mud. We can make updates as we need. If you go home and you realize, hey, this might make it a little bit better for the new person or persons currently, you can always send information to us. There's no meeting that you have to present that information in. You can always send us an E-mail saying, hey, please consider doing this or making this change.

>> CINDY SIMON: I think everybody needs to agree with it. Like, for example, I might have said, Council meetings will -- are typically one and a half days but may only be one day at the discretion of the Chair. That would generalize it where no one has to change anything, and it wouldn't have to be re-looked at, and that's the type of thing I'm talking about. I couldn't call you and say listen, I just found this, later on, because we should pass it by everybody. And so that starts getting into a whole thing. So I just thought maybe we could revisit this at the end and just ask anyone, are there any other changes that you think we should make.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Mary.

>> MARY HODGES: I just wondered about the target audience. Is this for new members, or the target audience for the handbook?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The handbook is for the office people, because we've gone through so many changes, and we lost the information from the previous people, so it's for them. So if you remember, Sean was totally lost because he didn't have any information. So trying to make life easier for the next person.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Glenna. I wouldn't say totally lost. I had some map as to how to get to where I needed to go. I'm teasing on that. But thank you for that. No, you're correct. Thank you for the question. The audience is really for the Department, to help us move forward so that nothing is lost when folks transition positions. You all have such history of information when it comes to the Council. That is why we put this before you, because you're going to know things that we may not have been privy to in years past. One example is things like action items. This is something that has been an ongoing issue, or an ongoing service that the Department has provided to you all. Walking into it, I may not be -- I may not know that. So what we were trying to do is just provide the information for us to keep us educated and to have a

new person have something to go by. It is not an official document that governs, by any means, the action and activity of the Council.

I will say, adding "at the will of the Chair" is simple language. We can add that, when it comes to the meetings.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I will say the one -- biggest number 1 impact is hearing aids getting reimbursed quickly. Somebody had their hand up. Gina.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: First, I want to parrot what Cory said. Angie is Godsend. I mean, what she has done has been phenomenal, to me, which has to be get everything pretty quickly and organized. The handbook I think is a great idea. Because as positions change, it's very difficult for a person to walk in and not have a road map. So I think it's a great idea. And great job, Angie. Kudos to you.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Thank you.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I have a couple questions or concerns. First, I'm hoping John Jackson is on the line. I know his name is on the Zoom there. I don't know if everybody's always able to be on the entire time. But when Cindy was pointing out her question about the handbook, she mentioned that it was the first time that she's seen the document. And me, too. And one of my big concerns is that on the meeting minutes from the August meeting, number 16 under staff update says Council members cannot share business-related topics outside of the meetings. And I'm not sure where that's coming from, because I'm not sure that that's correct. And that's a concern. Because one of the big concerns I have about this Council is we should be able to conduct business a whole lot more than four times a year. And it puts an awful lot on Angie, and on Glenna and Cory, to only have them doing the work. We should be able to communicate on any of us. If it's regard to the Sunshine Law, the only thing we cannot communicate on is things that are coming to a vote, where it's less than the entire Council. And I missed the last time somebody was brought in from the Sunshine Law to discuss this, but I know the Sunshine Law enough to say that we can still conduct business outside of the four meetings.

So if this was discussed, I apologize that I missed it. I know that we had our last August meeting online. I was not able to participate the entire day, but I am a bit concerned about the fact that we have not all seen this. I think it's an outstanding idea, and I want to help build on it. So I'm not saying we kick it to the curb or anything. I'm just saying, you know, feel free to communicate with us, or I think that we're allowed to communicate outside of these meetings.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Karen.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi, this is Karen.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Oh, wait. Wait. I forgot he was next. Sorry.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I just wanted to mention the time. We are a couple minutes over for Angie's report. So I wanted to make sure that the next -- or that we've ample time before the break. Just recognizing that fact.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi. This is Karen. I just wanted to make the statement. My understanding with the Sunshine Laws is that we cannot go to lunch and discuss Council business with one another. We can't do Council business outside of the meetings or outside of a designated medium, which the public has been notified. I think it's seven plus one days. So if we were to have a meeting outside of this meeting for the bylaws committee or the EMOT Committee, or whatever the committee is, we have to give the public ample notice. So it's not that we can only speak four times a year about Council business. We just have to do it in accordance with the Sunshine Laws and notification of the public. So I think maybe that needs to be reworded in the handbook to reflect, that we can meet every week if we wanted to, as long as there is -- it's following the Sunshine Law, if that makes sense. So maybe it just needs to be tweaked.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cory.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I'm really confused. I'm listening to a lot of the mixed messages. But I do want to say something about this handbook. My two cents about this handbook is that it is wonderful. I think it's something that will be used as a building block, and something that we can expand upon. Now, getting back to what Chris was saying about limiting ourselves to four times a year in terms of discussion, we have so much housekeeping, so much house cleaning to do, and to be boxed in by that four times a year idea, we can definitely meet more often to do the sort of cleaning house that we need to do to get things in shape before we enter these public-facing meetings. So I'm in support of that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: We can definitely tweak the language to make sure that we're speaking about the Sunshine Law and making sure that we conduct any business-related discussions inside a public noticed meeting. I think that was the intent of the discussion. We can certainly send out the sunshine law presentation that Angie submitted a few weeks ago, because that does provide some clarification. The attorney put that together for this Council and presented that to this Council this year, in February. We sent that out in May. I think we put that in a packet in May, if I'm not mistaken. I believe the handbook was provided to the Council in May in the meeting packet. These are documents that we are developing, so they are new. So

fear not, you're getting information as quickly as we can provide it. But we are addressing issues that are somewhat new to us, and that we want to make sure that we address them for you folks and -- for new folks and new liaisons moving forward.

And thirdly, I did want to acknowledge what Cory said. We do want to honor the break time. I just wanted to give Anna Simmons an opportunity to introduce herself and provide a couple words of support for the Council. We wanted to make sure that you all knew that the Department of Health was supportive of the Council, and that we hear you, and she also hears you, and she took time out to be here today so I just wanted to give an opportunity, if that's okay. Anna, can you hear us?

>> Anna Simmons: I can. Can you hear me?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sure can. Thank you.

>> Anna Simmons: Great. No, Sean, thank you so much for giving me a chance to say hello. I met you guys a few years ago, pre-COVID, when I went to a meeting with Shay over at Pensacola Beach. I gave a presentation on our -- on developmental disabilities. If I heard Council some of the -- [Inaudible] -- based on the feedback. So thank you. You're definitely making a difference. I wanted to pop on today. I was hoping to be able to join in person, but unfortunately I wasn't able to. So Sean is like well, we have a Zoom option. I'm like, let me on! So thank you guys so much for everything that you do. Thank you for your diligence to this Council and the advocacy that you do for this community. We are thankful for you and appreciate your work.

Piggybacking on the public records, you heard it -- you're in and out hard to hear, so if I've already said something, Sean, I'm sorry. We can certainly have our program attorney come on to the call and review Sunshine Laws and go over, like, what some of those hard-nose are, what is okay and what isn't okay, and just do a refresher, maybe. Or maybe at the meeting in February have them come to the meeting, Sean, and do a presentation then, and that way you guys have full access to talking to the attorneys that help guys these policies and interpret that law for us. But I'm going to be in and out today joining you guys over today and tomorrow as much as I can in between some meetings that I have here. I'm looking forward to hearing more about what's been going on, and we're here if you need us. Thanks so much.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Thank you, Anna. We appreciate your support.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Thank you, Anna.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Angie, do you have anything more?

>> ANGELA GREEN: No. I just wanted to thank you, Anna. That was very nice of you.



>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. It's 10:01, and we're running out of the time, so we've got to do the committee updates. So Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: Well, I just wanted to make one last comment, that as staff changes, things change also, so this is very fluid. I've been here I think the longest. Chris, the second longest. So we've seen the changes. All you guys, when you come in, each of you have different strengths and play to that, so again, we want to leave this loose enough for that, since I've seen all of it. And Sean, I think you've done a great job. And Angie, everyone's done a great job. But Sean, I don't want you to feel any less, because you have been fabulous. And Angie, you're, like, right there back and forth, like we've done. So going back to the Sunshine, I also want to say that sometimes it's more difficult because, and I would love to know, like, I would love to contact Gina and say, okay, what day do we want to offer them to have a committee meeting? You know, I had problems getting your E-mails. They disappeared in cyberspace. Supposedly she said communications went out. I didn't get any them. Because you know when I sent to you, Sean, that I didn't get it. So the ability to do that with your co-chair or something would really be helpful. And you're just talking about a date. We're not talking about business. So I'm not sure where that would come in. But it would help people with committees to be able to better do this.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: One quick question. -- I'm not used to talking. We do have what we call the Executive Committee that the four of us, that would be the four of us, me, Cory, Sean and Angie, correct? So that means the exception, we can talk freely any time to work on anything together, right? Mostly logistics, but, you know, in writing, and -- that doesn't require notification, it would just be the four of us. We're allowed to do that still, correct?

>> SEAN ISAAC: There are no restrictions for the Council speaking to the staff. So you can do that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So that means a lot of work would be on the two of us.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: One last comment. I've always found it very helpful, I think at the Tallahassee meeting in February, when we have somebody come in and discuss the Sunshine Laws. We've done it I think the past few years. I just think it's helpful, particularly when we have new members joining the Council, and I think that was very helpful, so maybe we can do that for the next one.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Gina. Last one. Last one. Time.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Just really quickly. I just want to get back on what Cindy said about is it okay if we call each other to set up meetings before we tell you what the dates are. And two, is it okay to, if I wanted -- if I had an employee question that I wanted to ask Chris about a texting 911, can I just ask him?

Not discussing Council business, we're just trying to get information and support to the people we represent.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sean.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Really, want don't -- what's correct or incorrect under the Sunshine Law. I do want to provide as much technical assistance as I can. Regarding your question, Gina, though, the DOH attorney did say that Council members can speak with each other regarding non-business items or things that won't come before the Council for a vote at any time. You can talk about movies. You can talk about information. Anything like that is fine.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. We need to move on to the committee updates. Okay. Education, medical, outreach, technology, Gina and Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: I'm passing it to Gina. Like I just said, we've had a hard time reaching because we couldn't contact each other directly, and apparently things were sent out there, and I didn't get them, and Sean, like I told you, if I don't respond to something, call me because I obviously didn't get it, because I do respond usually. So we have not had a meeting. That committee used to an ad hoc committee, where you do stuff as you need to. I did not have to go on all the time. And it had been two separate committees that were joined together. So I think if we can call each other and say here's clients to send out, then we can easily send it to Angie or Sean and say please send this out and see, you know, what date works for everybody, and then we can do this better. And don't you dare do that.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I'm not sure what happened with the last time, but I know at the meeting, we set the date. So everybody was in agreement to the date, and then Sean sent out information. I don't remember anybody responding. So I'm not sure how we can close that gap. But we did set the date for the meeting before we left the previous in-person meeting because it was important that everybody got their letters in to Sean, and blah, blah, blah. And for whatever reason, it didn't happen.

>> CINDY SIMON: When you're not there in person, it's hard to get every little thing like that, which is why I look forward to communication, but if I didn't get it. So that's it for us. We're going to set up a meeting coming up.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The letters that were already developed, have they ever been mailed out? So maybe the next thing is to go ahead and mail out the letters that were finished, developed and send them out.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Now, the Department of Health mails them out, correct? I just want to make sure. So I don't know if they were mailed out. I know I didn't mail them out.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Once the letters are finalized, the Department will send them out. I believe that we're still working on the letters, if I'm not mistaken.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All right. So it seems that with the few letters that we have, maybe the committee can do a meeting, do a quick review and finalize and double check who to send them to and then pass them on to Sean so he can get started with those few letters, and then follow up with more. Karen.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I felt like I dropped the ball on this because I was revising some of the letters, and so I apologize for that. What I would like to do is make sure that we have the most up-to-date letters. Sean, can I ask you to send the most up-to-date that you have to me, or to all of us, and that we look at them this evening on our own, and then maybe is there a time tomorrow? Do we have available time to squeeze in? I'm uncomfortable mailing them out without review by the Council, the final product. Okay?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: From 4:15 to 5:00, we have time for that. Today. Today.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Is there a way to do it for tomorrow? That way it gives us a night to --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We have a presentation tomorrow so there's not going to be much time left. Maybe lunchtime you can send them out, the letters? Okay. Gina.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: The letters that were submitted months ago have been reviewed, have been corrected. Debbe even had input from that previous meeting, so the letters that have already been submitted have been reviewed. Our question at the last -- before the last EMOT meeting was all the letters that people signed up to do that were not submitted. Do you remember, Glenna, the list you had, everybody chose certain topics, and only maybe three or four people submitted anything. And that was our question that Cindy and I, our question was, okay, do we have to wait until everybody submits their letters or can we just use the ones we've already reviewed? We've reviewed them, like, more than once. Karen gave her input. Debbe gave her input. Everybody had a chance. And so I'm just curious, can we just send those out or do we still have to wait for the people who did not send the letters that they signed up for?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I say go ahead. We've been holding on to them for what, a year already? So I say go ahead with what we have now. Sean.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I just want to say, on Friday, I think when you left a little early, there were additional comments about the formatting of the letters. Isn't that correct? That's what I recall. I think it was our May meeting, if I'm not mistaken. And so that was the correction that we were talking about.

>> MARY HODGES: I was just going to say, that's my understanding as well that they were still a little rough, and I think Karen was looking at them, and maybe there was some other minor edits, but I'm not sure that the

full Council had a final look at them and that they were actually ready to go.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: Maybe the simple way to do this, if it's only a couple of letters, maybe we can have copies made before lunch and we can look at it over lunch and get it done right after.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sean, can you do that?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I can certainly give it my best effort. We will have to work with the hotel to see if they'll help us out with that, but we'll do our best.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Thank you.

Ad hoc bylaws committee. We have it on the agenda for tomorrow to continue working on the bylaws, and, more importantly, the statute. I should have said the statute, the bylaws and statute, because ideally I would like to have something that we can bring with us to advocate for in February when we're in Tallahassee. Because that's the time to do it. So read the bylaws, the bylaws that he printed out is in the folder was read for change and moved for more information, and one line was like a big question mark, so just do a quick review of that tonight so we can discuss it and maybe try to move on to some kind of -- the good thing about bylaws, they can be changed any time. We can go ahead with what we have and then change again another time, and we can change it. The important point would be how do we want to influence changing the statute, because we have to bring that as a bill. And ideally, it would be nice if we were able to do that by February so we can bring it to -- rather it should be before February so that we can start contacting the home office of the representatives and senators to get -- find sponsors, and then shop it around, I guess, whatever. Budget Committee. Sean.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Sean and I have been working together. And I'm not quite there yet.

>> CART PROVIDER: When both are voicing, I can't hear and understand well. I'm sorry.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: The budget is still -- Sean and Angie both have been working with me so that I understand how everything goes, and we had planned to have a meeting, but we weren't able to meet. We had a lot of conflicts happening. So I'm sure by February I should have a report and be able to read it by February. Okay? So for right now, I'm going to look at Sean, and Sean's going to take on that for me. Thank you so much, Sean.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Cory. The first time I gave you the wrong numbers, so for the balance of our expense funding we currently have \$15,925. Expenses, as you recall, are for travel for this council, and for the Department of Health staff, as well as office supplies or any other supplies deemed necessary by Council.

The other funding category we have is contracted services. The total budget was \$37,503, and so far Council has spent \$5,464. The rest is addressed in contracts for a total of \$31,962. And basically what that does is that eats up that entire contracted services budget.

I can repeat that if you would like, but that's the budget that we currently have so far.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Sean, you mentioned some changes in the budget. If you could expand on that as well.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sure thing. So what the department has done is looked at our -- when I say our, I mean looked at the Council's budget for the past several years to see what it has expended, and based our budget on that. So those changes include basically looking at our previous expenses, and basing our current-year budget on that. Our fiscal year is from July 1st to June 30th. So that's where we got those numbers from. That's what leadership has done.

One other -- there's another budget category that funds the liaison position, but those are three different categories that we have. Salaries, the expenses and contract services. That's a quick and dirty summary.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Looking for a paper. There's so many papers here! I was seeing something about 15 or \$17,000 for supplies and things, that's the money we could use to make business cards, buy the portable wagon and pens and all that stuff?

>> SEAN ISAAC: That's the expense budget. The total budget is \$17,978. So far, Council has spent \$2,053, and so the balance is that figure of \$15,925.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. We talked about ordering things, though. Have you done anything about ordering different things we've talked about getting?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Again, I would like to say thank you to our new liaison. She has been working on several of those things. One of them should be in front of you, the business cards have been purchased. We're still working on the towable wagon. I'm trying to think of another name for it, but we're still working on ordering that. The travel, along with those office supplies are --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The pens and the post-it notes that have the logo on it.

>> SEAN ISAAC: We're still working on ordering those. We have some pens that are available if there are meetings or conferences that you all want some for, we have those pens here today if you need them, but we will be ordering those for sure.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And all the things that we had, does Debbe still have them or did you get them back?

>> SEAN ISAAC: We have most of those items here. Debbe does have a couple of items that we had

planned on picking up. Because of the hurricane, we'll have to pick those up at another date.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Legislative committee. Okay. As you know, we all have to wait for the November 8<sup>th</sup> election to see who's going to be going to Tallahassee. This year, the first day of the session will be March 7<sup>th</sup>, which is also the last day to file bills, which means if we want to have any bills like TASA or the Council statute or whatever we're supporting, we have to do that before March. And the last day of the session is May 5<sup>th</sup>.

And most of the committee meetings are going to be December and March. So we're going up there February, right in the middle, so we want to be proactive in finding out who's on which committee that would be supportive of DOH in general, and more supportive of the Council more specifically, and then find out where they're from and then we need to follow up with a visit before we go up there in February.

The talking points that we want to have is the 2023 biennial report. If we are successful, possible statute changes, mentioning the 2024 expo, and saying that we would appreciate it if you would think about increasing the funding. Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: First, I want to say I think you did a great job when we went through the bylaws at the last meeting and really tightening and changing things in there, and I think that's going to be easy for everyone to look at. And I don't know -- I'm not quite understanding the budget, so I know that Tallahassee is probably a much more expensive meeting for us because those of us in South Florida have to fly there, right? And we're not going to have any hassle. So the sooner you tell us when we can set up our flights, the better, because I will be flying. Glenna will probably fly, too. Be aware. Unless there's a less expensive time to be there while the legislature is still there.

When you're changing something like a statute or something like that, I would say be really careful because there are other people would have, like, little tickle things to look in and try to insert their own things into these. So whenever you're opening up, you really want to look and be careful, because it can backfire on you. So we need to be really careful, seeing if anyone else is trying to piggyback your own agenda on us. And I just want to make that warning.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I was saying we have to be careful because other people would do sneaky things. Yeah. The other question I have related to Tallahassee in February, traditionally, we use Wednesday as a day to visit different legislature, and I'll be happy to set up the appointments and all of that. But I wanted to know who's wanting to go visit the legislators on Wednesday, if you know now, if you're able to, that would be February 8<sup>th</sup>. Anybody be interested? Karen? Anybody else?

>> CINDY SIMON: I would love to but only if I can change my class around.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I would love to go but I've gotta check my work schedule first.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Debbe? Debbe has gone before. Would you want to go again?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Possibly.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cory?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I can't participate on Wednesdays. Because I'm working. I can't participate because there's a conflict for me. My position is a conflict.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Can we clarify that? I mean, I just want to clarify if that's true, because you are the Vice Chair of Council.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Government job.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: No, I understand. It's a government job, but --

>> SEAN ISAAC: I can certainly ask the DOH attorney to get clarification on that. Part of the Council's calling is to inform and educate and provide information to the legislature. You are a different agency, you may want to get clarification on that as well because the DOH attorney may have slightly different information. But I can certainly get some clarification on that. I just want to answer right quick also a question regarding can you fly to Tallahassee. The answer is yes. That's fine, especially if you're flying from South Florida or Miami. And then it may or may not be more expensive, probably, perhaps. You can drive or fly. Usually what we do is if you -- the decision is between driving in your own car or renting a car, and we have a form to help with that. So hopefully that answers the questions.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: On the years that I've been on the Council, we've had people who work in Tallahassee -- conflict of interest. Never had that.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: We want to clarify that because we're not lobbying to the legislature. We're informing, which is what we are tasked to do. So for Council members, that is one of our tasks, is to inform the legislature of our activities and what we are doing. And so we have to be very careful that we're not lobbying the legislature. We're informing what the needs are of the community. So let's double check that maybe with legal as well. Okay?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We have four minutes left and one more committee together.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I will not. At all. Participate, regardless. Anybody says yes, I can do it, I will not.

You guys can do that. Those people who don't work for the State all have the opportunity to do that, and I appreciate that, but you know, you have other people other than me, you know, it's not critical that I be there. So I will not just because anything can be twisted, and I was advised that's something that you don't do, period, so I'm not going to challenge it.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: One other question for Sean. At one point we were told, and this actually happened to me, that the state will only reimburse what was less expensive, the flight or driving. And I drove, and the flight would have been less expensive to Orlando, and so they cut it. So, you know, yes, we want to fly to Tallahassee because it's way too long, but they don't always go by that. It depends on which they determine is going to cost less, and that's what you get.

>> SEAN ISAAC: That is a general rule for the Department and for folks who are getting reimbursed for travel on behalf of the department or this Council. You do have to choose the less expensive option. In most situations, I will say, though, flying from Tallahassee to Miami and back and forth has typically been agreed to, and so that's all I can go on when it comes to that.

>> CINDY SIMON: I just meant in general, you know, in other things like do I fly to Orlando or drive. In a situation like that. Or Tampa.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Same for me, from Fort Lauderdale. Okay. Let's move on to the last committee before the break. We've got one minute. Debbe, Web site Committee.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. The Web site, we need to update the pictures, Facebook page, because it's old for our Web site. On Facebook, I have -- following the page. We need to encourage the people to post their events because that doesn't have to be the Council related, but the other events, such as HLAA or FAD or all those different organizations can post freely on the Facebook page.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Thank you, Debbe. The picture that we took when we visited FSCB, I got permission from the president to use that picture, and we're waiting for one more person to respond. She was traveling, but -- we do have a group picture ready to use once I get the last permission.

And I also asked for individual head shot pictures for the individual Council members. So work on that maybe sometime today or tomorrow we can stand against the wall and take pictures and use them on the Council, however you want -- or if you want advanced notice, you can go to the beauty parlor and get all pretty for the picture, then fine.

Okay. It is now 10:31. Break time. We'll be back at 10:45 to discuss the 2023 biennial report. Hopefully



take a few minutes to review the biennial report. The biennial report is read, there's a new edition.

[15-minute break].

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All right. We need to start. We are running late already. Please pay attention to the schedule so that we can move along on time.

We will now do the 2023 Biennial Report. I'm making one slight change in the agenda. We have one hour for lunch, but because of where we are located, we're pretty far from lunch places, so we're going to need more time to drive to eat and drive back so we're going to stop at 11:30, but we must be back at 12:55 for the presenter, who is going to be on Zoom. So hopefully he'll be on time. Again at 2:00 to 2:30 is organization updates, and we can use that time to finish up the biennial report, if necessary. Okay?

So please pay attention to the time.

Also, I want to put in the record a couple of corrections with the CART that Mary Hodges works for the Elderly Affairs, not the Veteran's, and that Debbe is from New Port Richey, not Port St. Lucie. So that's just a correct to the CART.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: And it's Port Richey, not new Port Richey. Right? Right, Debbe?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Another correction. Correction of the correction of the correction.

Okay. You all have in front of you the Biennial Report? Has everybody found the report? Okay. On the first page, I thought it would be okay to keep the same picture that we had across the top. And I just changed the year to 2023. You will see red are the changes I made. And I added senior citizens. For the year, I changed it to 2021-2022 and met online as needed. Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: Just a comment. Efforts are made to have an exhibit booth at certain statewide deaf-related events. I'd like to see a comment that's more generalized of hearing loss because it brings one thing to mind, and if you went to an HLAA meeting, that would be hard-of-hearing. So maybe events related to those with hearing loss, something that's more general. Otherwise this goes back to the impression when people say this organization is only for the deaf, and we don't want to give that impression. I'm sorry.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So deaf-related, not general enough?

>> CINDY SIMON: So this is deaf-related, but it's really others like the HLAA. So I'd like a more generalized hearing loss comment, because when they hear "deaf" they think that's it. And it's not only deaf.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So deaf and hard-of-hearing related?

>> CINDY SIMON: That's fine.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay.

>> CINDY SIMON: Or persons with hearing loss. Gina had her hand up, and then Cory.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Gina.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Would it be appropriate to say the statewide events that focus on hearing loss, period? Because hearing loss covers every spectrum, senior citizens, late-deafened, hard of hearing.

>> CINDY SIMON: That's why I said related to hearing loss.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Statewide events related to people with hearing loss.

>> CINDY SIMON: Yes.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cory?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: If you go back and look at type in deaf-blind, remember there's no hyphen. It's capital D-e-a-f and capital B-l-i-n-d. There's no hyphen.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: One year I had somebody tell me with hyphen. Next year I have somebody tell me with no hyphen.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Whoever told you that last year was wrong. It's been this way for the last two or three years. And they're really, really, really persistent about that, so we want to make sure we have that. Thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: That change has been made. Okay. First page, done.

And the second page is all new. We realized that we never put any statistics or numbers in the report. Mary?

>> MARY HODGES: On page 1 -- I'm sorry, going back, the third paragraph, I'm thinking that we need a second sentence that says that we met online rather than trying to put that in the same sentence. That we continue to meet, and then maybe period after maximize outreach, and say during 2021-22, the Council met online as needed.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So 2021-2022, period. We also met online as needed?

>> MARY HODGES: Yeah. Another sentence.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yeah. We also met online as needed, or --

>> MARY HODGES: I think so.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Anything else on page 1? Cindy, page 1.

>> CINDY SIMON: I'm not sure you can say continues, because this is now a past tense, so that would be grammatically incorrect.

>> MARY HODGES: In one sentence.

>> CINDY SIMON: So you can say that we continue to meet in face-to-face or online quarterly meetings, because everything wasn't face-to-face. During 2021 to 2022, by the time we see this in '23, it's a past tense, which is why you have to do that, and you can say these efforts are continuing --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So FCCDHH --

>> CINDY SIMON: Wait. Cory has --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Hold up. I was thinking, can we just say FCCDHH -- can we just say FCCDHH meets, instead of we continue. We have continue in every sentence, every paragraph, and that just becomes redundant. So if we could just say, if we could take out the continue, and just say that FCCDHH invites guests. We are open to the public. We provide resources instead of saying "continues."

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: So on top of what Cory is saying, then what you can -- here you said the following is an update of some of the things we have done since the last report, and then put this, instead of your full sentences, A, B, C, D, and just put it in there. It doesn't have to be a full sentence, and you can see, meets quarterly.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right.

>> CINDY SIMON: Or continues to meet quarterly.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right. Right. Things that we've done since the last report. 1, 2, 3, 4. List it.

>> CINDY SIMON: Yeah. Just list it, or, you know, it comes in, and it becomes the A, B, C, D type of thing.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right.

>> CINDY SIMON: It's a list, period, not full sentences. They're more likely to read it because it catches your eye easier.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right. Right.

>> CINDY SIMON: Than reading the full sentence.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So back to the third -- FCCDHH continues to meet face-to-face, or online video conferencing quarterly, blah, blah, blah.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: No.

>> CINDY SIMON: No. It would be like this: Things we have done since the last report: A, continue to meet quarterly, whether face-to-face or bullet points. Okay? B, or bullet point, next bullet point. I use little ears as bullet points, by the way, because they look cute. Invites guests to present on pertinent issues.

Okay. Next bullet point, continues to be open to all public meetings. Like that. Do you see what I'm saying?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So the first one, we're not going to say face-to-face or online, just continues to meet quarterly. That's all?

>> CINDY SIMON: Well, you can say whether face-to-face or online.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: If we say online, should we say online video conferencing?

>> CINDY SIMON: That's fine. Cory had addition to that.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I still have an issue with the "continuing," but that's up to you.

>> CINDY SIMON: Get rid of the word "continue."

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: But that's up to you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: For me, anywhere where we can eliminate, have less words would be better because we always have a hard time cramming it all in. The fewer words we can have, the better.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right. Right. So we can just take out the word "continue," and just say things that we do. We invite guests. We meet face-to-face. They know that we continue. But just, you know, for the purpose of English, I guess you can say --

>> CINDY SIMON: Or --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: That's just my editing mind.

>> CINDY SIMON: Or maybe Angie or Sean can modify this over the meeting so it becomes a bullet pointed list. If we have little ears, I would say, if you want to use that for bullet points.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right. Skim down. It's easier on your eyes, skim down, you can read faster. Bam, bam, bam, bam, bam.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. I'm going to change it and put little stars in front of the four things, or five.

>> CINDY SIMON: If you want to redo it, I'll --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I'm going to eliminate the words "continue" to make it more action-oriented, and just say face-to-face or online. Okay. Anymore on page 1? Debbie, Debbie, page 1?

>> DEBBIE HAGNER: Where were we meeting in the past year? Maybe people need to realize that, okay, we've been meeting here, here, here, here. And they'll say oh, darn, I missed. And people read that and say oh, darn, I missed it in Miami, or I missed it. It would be nice if we can put the actual location of the meetings.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I like that. This is Cory. I like that. We can put in the locations where we met.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, I think that's important to do that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We have to remember word count because we are very limited with word count, so that adds more words. I'll add it underneath there. Where did we meet? Where did we meet?

>> SEAN ISAAC: St. Augustine, Ft. Myers, Orlando, Florida.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Tallahassee also, right?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Tallahassee.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And how many --

>> DEBBE HAGNER: That way, people will realize maybe we can get some more people from the public for the legislature saying oh, maybe I'll come to the next one.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Well, Tallahassee 2023, so we can't mention that. We had two Zoom meetings. Two.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Anything else from page 1?

All right. Page 2 is a biggie, because that's all new. All right. Cory, first part, look at just the statistics part first, and then the education second. So look at the statistics only.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Okay. For the first paragraph, you have -- you are identifying a significant hearing loss, and the last sentence you have 12,000 culturally Deaf signers in Florida. Why are you only singling out Deaf signers? Do you have other information to share about other numbers for other members of the hearing loss community?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Do you have the numbers for deaf blind?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: No, I don't. You can find them. If that's something that you want, you know, maybe hard of hearing, Deaf, hard of hearing include, but just saying only Deaf signers kind of looks a little biased. I don't know -- I don't know, that's just my opinion when you look at it. But it's up to you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I mentioned the Deaf signers because we have a way to figure out the numbers of that, and Deaf signers are different. They require interpreting, they require --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Right. Right. Right. But it's not about that. It's about recognizing everybody. That's what I'm --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: But do we have numbers for deaf -- how many deaf blind? Do we have numbers for --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: We can find numbers from -- I can reach out and find out from H --

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I'm just saying from experience, it is very hard to get accurate statistics, because of the self-identification, because of the different definitions of what deafness is, it's horrendous trying to get

accurate statistics. That's just my experience.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: That's why I'm using the tool that was given by NIDCD so that we can justify that's how we came up with the numbers that we had.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Can we reach out to HLAA Board members for hard of hearing?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I pulled some of the numbers from them. It's in there.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Okay. Another okay.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: So one of the nice things that HLAA does on their brochure is that they do something very creative with statistics. So it's almost like there's a statistic, there's a statistic. So it kind of grabs your eye of I want to review these rather than read like a stats class. So we're just trying to get some basic information. I mean, I could see the 12,000 culturally Deaf and ASL users being one of those little -- oh, that's very interesting to know that. So maybe we take a look at that on how we do stats.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The problem is we are limited -- right now, we're limited to four pages and limited word count. So if we do any graphics, that takes away a lot from being able to provide information, and this is supposed to be a report, not a --

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Brochure.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I mean, most reports from other places are statewide pages report. We're the only one that does color and pictures.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Why are we limited to four pages?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Money. Money. Money and also encouraging -- this goes to legislation, and, you know, hoping that four pages are more than three, and if there's any more, they'll throw it away. Cory.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: This is directed to Sean and Angie. I am E-mailing David Volper from HKNC for statistics for deaf blind. Do you mind if I CC you on the E-mail?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Not at all, please CC us.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: David Volper from HKNC, Helen Keller National Center.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Debbe?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I -- [Inaudible] --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Chat box.

>> CINDY SIMON: She has in the chat box.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Which chat box? CART or Zoom?

>> CINDY SIMON: I have it here.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. What did she say?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: She just gave you a link to Hearing Loss Association of America, which I'm on right now. Let me see what she's looking at. Oh, she has the statistics page up. Let me load that up.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Oh, okay. Yeah. I took something from that. I have that HLAA handout, and I took something from there.

First paragraph of statistics, anything else?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I'm concerned about including that 12,000 culturally Deaf American Sign Language users or signers because it's a pretty small number of the many millions of people that live in the State of Florida. 12,000 people is not very high, and my concern for that is for emergency broadcast, we want to make sure that people know that that's used by a lot of people, and even people that are not culturally Deaf, a lot of times follow the sign language interpreter in an emergency broadcast. So that number is certainly much higher for the people that need that. That's one of my big concerns.

The other thing as far as statistics goes for our biennial report, I always want to make some comment that we have three or four million Florida citizens that have significant hearing loss who are Florida registered voters, because if we're sharing this with the governor and legislators, that's something that's important to them, that they want to make sure that they're connected with their constituents, and we want to make sure that that's addressed.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I had thought about that, putting that down, and you always want to have big numbers, so maybe just leave it general and just eliminate that last sentence and eliminate signers and eliminate deaf blind also. But it would be good to know that information about deaf blind anyway. So just eliminate that.

Yes? Okay.

Okay. So the last sentence was eliminated so that we can keep them focused on 3 to 4 million in statistics.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Next paragraph, education for children. And I need the number from DOE. I think it was 3,000 the last I heard. Angie?

>> ANGELA GREEN: Debbe has a question.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Debbe.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I was thinking that maybe we could cite -- I mean maybe we can say 1 million signers, and it doesn't matter whether you're deaf or hard of hearing or late deafened signers. So we can say eliminate the words "deaf" and just say there's 1 million people who sign in Florida. Use sign language in

Florida.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The problem is, where do we get that number 1 million from? We don't have a study or survey or anything to back up that number of 1 million. We don't have that, so we can't say that.

Second -- Cory?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Another place that you can get statistics for educational programs, not only recognizing the Florida School for the Deaf, but you can contact the Florida Educators for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I'm talking about the Department of Education. They should have the numbers.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Oh, they do, but you can contact -- these are the teachers who teach for, and I remember going to their conference last year. They were talking about the number -- I don't know if it was 54,000 -- 5400 deaf/hard-of-hearing children. So you can get -- I want to be able to include the mainstream population as well, instead of only recognizing the School for the Deaf, we could also recognize those who are in mainstream programs as well. So you can get that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I said that. I said County school districts serve approximately 3,000 with specialized programs.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Forgive me. Forgive me.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: I did see that line, and I had the same concern as Cory. But if you're going to mention the residential school, I think you need to mention another place like the Debbe School, or -- there's one other big one. Susan -- there was another one that's really auditory verbal for these kids, as well as in different areas, like where I live, the designated school for deaf and hard-of-hearing are the schools in my neighborhood in Plantation, where they come from around the county there. But the Debbe School is a huge one. The Clark School. That's the one I was thinking of. The Clark School is a really big one. And these are mainstreamed.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: In Florida.

>> CINDY SIMON: Yeah. Right in the same area.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I don't know that information.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: In Tampa?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The Debbe and Clark, putting them all together as private school programs. The county school and then private school programs, and we can find numbers for that, too.



>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Glenna, would you like me to connect you?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yes. Get the numbers from Lehigh and also DOE.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: You might want to consider as chair appointing a statistics committee, and that their whole responsibility is to get accurate statistics for the Biennial Report. That way you don't have all that burden on you. That's a lot.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: This is something we've always dealt with every meeting, the need for statistics and having a committee is not going to help with that because it's finding the sources, and -- the whole Council should be involved on that in finding sources and bringing back the information, especially from their organization.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Let's not reinvent the wheel here and start another committee. I will tell you for a long time, which I've shared, as Glenna just mentioned, statistics for people in the State of Florida that are deaf or hard of hearing, as an educator and a researcher, have been somewhat of the bane of my existence at times. I will say that recently I have partnered with the Family Center on Deafness and Jabil Circuit and they have helped us create an online survey for people that are deaf or hard of hearing. That's still out there.

I'm in the process of drafting an E-mail to Angie to send to everybody to remind them and get all of their people in their organizations to make sure that they take their survey, so hopefully we can get more accurate numbers. That would certainly help. So the survey is going to be available at least until the end of the calendar year. Unfortunately we had a Facebook live event, and we've done some things, but we launched it over the summer. We're going to push some more things before the end of the calendar year because when I said unfortunately, I was talking about the numbers have not been as responsive as we had hoped. So I will share this with everybody, so hopefully we can get higher numbers on people that respond to this.

Oh, the last thing I wanted to say about the survey is every question is in writing, it's in audio and it's also in American Sign Language for people to answer in.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So are we done with the statistics section. Okay. We'll find more numbers to put in.

Okay. The next section on senior citizens goes to the next page, so make sure you continue to the next page. It's just one sentence on the next page. Senior Citizens. Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: Okay. I love the way in the hearing loss in senior citizens has a far-reaching effect. I would probably skip going through the grieving process, because the big thing out there now is called brain hearing. That's what everyone talks about. There is evidence in many, many studies, University of Colorado, John Hopkins, the Packwood Study in Bordeaux France, which shows that hearing loss leads to

cognitive decline by at least five years, on top of ones where they did MRI studies and found more brain shrinkage in those who don't help their hearing loss.

Furthermore, University of Colorado was using both imaging as well as pupillometry for effort of listening, and in the imaging, they found that even early on with beginning hearing loss, the parts of the brain that light up were more related to visual than ear, and if they got hearing aids, they were able to partially go back. So I think saying, you know, they need to realize the importance of getting this for their brain health and -- we don't want to say cognitive decline. But this is the hot thing out there. This is the biggest thing, and I can tell you personally, people that come in here, the families thought they were mentally impaired. To get a power aid put on and they suddenly wake up and they're just so astonished at the reaction. I mean, I see that person, and like three years later they come in going -- where they were a vegetable when they came in, they're like, I have a -- my hearing aid broke. You better fix it now. That kind of change is astounding so rather than go on in the process, I would like to say how this sustains their mental acuity or something. There are studies that show even in Alzheimer's patients, once they got hearing aids, the decline leveled off. It went much slower than without hearing aids. So with everything going on, I think we need to add a little bit of something about that, maybe where you talk about the stages they go through. We've heard -- you know, I always use that in my classes. But it's more significant when they say, wow, it leads to cognitive decline? I better get this! And that's changed. The age is much younger coming in because of this brain hearing thing that they're seeing everywhere. Anyway, that's my little passionate comment.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Well, change what? Add what?

>> CINDY SIMON: Maybe in the middle where you go those losing their hearing go through a grieving process, you already said all the horrible things there. Maybe say that if they've got hearing aids, they would limit fatigue at the end of the day. The study does show 30 percent improvement in fatigue. 30 percent improvement in memory, being able to remember, because you're not using your internal resources. So just something that, you know, studies have shown cognitive decline at an earlier age when helping your hearing loss, and that can be mitigated with the use of hearing aids, or some amplification.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I'm sorry, but you're saying too much. We need to focus on words, and what -- if it covers it or doesn't cover it, if it's accurate or not accurate.

>> CINDY SIMON: Well, I'm telling you the numbers because those are accurate, and they're published. Okay? I know that. What I'm -- just that studies have shown cognitive decline as an earlier age when not using something to mitigate the hearing loss, or you can just say by not using hearing aids or cochlear

implants. And this can be mitigated with the use of devices to help you hear. Because it's not limited to hearing aids and cochlear implants. If you were using a pocket talker regularly, that would probably do the same thing.

And I'm talking specifically for people who developed hearing loss, not to those who are basically congenital hearing loss or happens very early on because you've already learned alternative ways to use this.

So this is specifically for those with adventitious hearing loss.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Well, this information, I pulled it from NIDCD, the National Council on Aging. This is what they said, and I'm trying to keep it as general as possible and as short as possible. We can't go in to so much detail like you mentioned. Great information for the Council, but for the report, it has to be limited, one sentence, and that's it.

>> CINDY SIMON: So I think if you start with those who lose their hearing go through a grieving process. You've already said all the horrible things that happens, the loneliness, the isolation, the disconnect. We don't need to belabor it with that. Cut it at that point. And then say studies have shown --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I was about to say the same thing. I was about to say the same thing. Too many commas, too many words, but same thing, maybe three.

>> CINDY SIMON: And then you say the next line is current studies have shown significant cognitive decline without use of some form of amplification, and this can be mitigated, this cognitive decline can be mitigated when using something to bring sound back to the brain. Or something like that. We can play with that sentence. Just one sentence to add. That's it.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I would love to see that article, or any kind of connection, what you were talking about from the University of Colorado.

>> CINDY SIMON: Google Johns Hopkins. They have all the studies. They did all kinds of studies. University of Colorado, there's an amazing neurologist there who did it, and the other one was actually done by gerontologists who have nothing to do with hearing. They were looking at their patients just prospectively with a questionnaire, and found that those amongst the other things, those who had earlier cognitive decline up to five years earlier were ones that did not use hearing aids, and that's the Paquid.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Stop.

Time out. It is already 11:30. We've already eaten up time, and we're summarizing it to one sentence, that recent studies have shown people with hearing loss -- senior citizens with hearing loss experience a decline in cognition and social interaction. Period. And then something else about getting help, or whatever. And

that would replace all that listing stuff I did.

>> CINDY SIMON: I was listing it because Cory asked me where it came from, so I was telling him.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Well, it's time. It's 11:33. We have to break for lunch and come back at 12:55, in time for the presentation. We'll have to continue this at 2:00 after organization updates, and hopefully we can get through it quickly enough so that we can have a report for February. Okay.

All right. We are having a lunch break now. Be back at 12:55, please.

And you can look through the rest of the report and have your comments ready so we can move through it faster. Okay. Go eat!

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The comments that we made about -- [audio cutting out] -- all the different reports, make a list of all of that and send it to all the Council, and maybe we can put those stats on Facebook and on the Web site. Can you hear me?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Yes. Yes. That's a lot of information to share. Okay. So let's be back at 12:55.

[Lunch break].

>> CART PROVIDER: The Streamtext link will be stopped for the lunch break, and will be restarted when the meeting resumes.

[Standing by].

>> PHILIP KWIEK: How are you guys today? Can you hear me okay?

>> We're the vendors, AQI, for Council, and the only way that we communicate with each other is through the teleconference. Do you have the phone number that you can call the conference, and then everything on Zoom is muted. The reason why, everything that you say will be included on CART, the CART transcript. That's the captioning that's happening in the room live.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Yeah. I see. Okay. No, I don't have that phone number.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Phil, Sean is sending that to you right now. Phil, can you hear me? Phil, can you hear me?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Thanks for your patience.

>> No, absolutely. And my words were starting to transcribe, but now they're not.

>> Right. And they are. They're actually live streaming right now. So are you on the audio call yet? I can give you that phone number here.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: No. I'm not on that call.

>> Let me give you that information.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: She can type the phone number in the chat, too.

>> Oh, okay. Do you see the chat?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Are you using your iPad or apple?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: I'm using a laptop.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. It should be at the bottom.

>> Everything's going to go through audio here.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Phil, can you hear us?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: For those on Zoom, we have a delay in starting the presentation due to technical difficulties. Be patient. We will start soon.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. I think we're going to get started here in just a couple of seconds. Let me start the recording.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Are we ready?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Looks like we're ready to start. We'd like to welcome -- we have to do a roll call after lunch. So we need to do roll call on the members present. Starting with Angie.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Angie Green. I'm with the Florida Department of Health, and I'm the liaison for the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Good afternoon. I'm Sean Isaac with the Florida Department of Health.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Good afternoon. This is Gina Halliburton from the Florida Registry of interpreters For the Deaf.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Glenna Ashton representing Florida Association of The Deaf.

>> Lisa with AQI services has joined the conference.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Good afternoon. This is Chris Littlewood. I represent the Association of Late-Deafened Adults, specifically the ALDA Suncoast Chapter in the Tampa Bay area.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Good afternoon. This is Karen Goldberg. I represent HLAA Florida.

>> CINDY SIMON: Good afternoon. Cindy Simon, representing audiologists in the state.

>> MARY HODGES: Mary Hodges, Department of Elder Affairs.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Debbe.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Debbe Hagner, represent HLAA Florida from Port Richey, Florida.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: John Jackson?

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John Jackson representing the Department of Children and Families in Tallahassee, Florida.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And Cory Parker is here, but he stepped out of the room for a moment.

Okay. Now we would like to welcome Phil Kwiek. I don't know how you say your last name. Phil Kwiek?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Phil Kwiek. Correct.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. And he's the staffing coordinator for the Amazon Workforce Staffing. So take it away, Phil!

>> PHILIP KWIEK: That's correct. Thank you so much. Thank you so much, everybody. A special thank you to Angela for helping facilitate this, and Sean Isaac, who's been my contact for the last year or so. I've been looking forward to be able to present to you all about some different types of opportunities that Amazon can afford to -- to your organizations to work with on a regular basis. Also on the line is -- from our ASL department, and if I'm introducing you wrong, Roger, please correct me, but also on the line is Roger who will support me with some of the financial aspects of some of the ASL needs of our deaf and hearing community associates.

So I'll start off with since this is the first meeting for a lot of us here, I'll share my screen. I'll make it as short a presentation as possible. I know you guys just finished lunch.

So that being said, let me share screen, if possible here. Can the host of the Zoom call please enable me to share screen.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: I'm going to leave and come right back. I'm still on the call.

I appreciate everybody's patience, but my as far as the interpreters on the call, so appreciate all the patience. And my presentation is really more, this is visual and I use it more of a crutch to not forget things, so I can still see things without the visuals. If as long as you guys have the information as opposed to see it on the screen.

So to be very, very clear about what our team is doing, we are more what we call tier 1 or tier 2 level associate at our warehouses, and my team works through the entire northern Florida and the coastal parts of Georgia and South Carolina. Obviously we're more concerned about Florida in this meeting today, so I'll speak more to that as we go forward.

So our warehouse is in Amazon. I use this presentation more for a crutch. We do have a mission to be earth's best employer, offering all kinds of opportunities to all people. We have great benefits, pay time off, 401(k)s, medical coverage, career advancement. I'll stop there for just a quick second. I start off in the

warehouse. When you click those boxes that say the college level, I'm the one that says some college. I worked my way in within the system and I used my history to help me advance. However, I put two years in Amazon warehouse counts as an associate's degree in a lot of positions that we post. And in addition to that, our internal postings, there's almost twice as many internal postings as there are external postings. So if somebody's trying to get hired out of the college, no connections, they'll have -- we try to do everything we can for our work-life balance. So time off for family. A lot of our warehouse has four days on, three days off, so only four days of commuting instead of five. We do flexible schedules, and we guarantee that if you're hired on full-time, you're guaranteed 40 hours a week should you want it. We have a huge uptick -- we have a huge focus on diversity, equality and inclusion. Our leadership supports it, safety first above all else. In the warehouses, relaxed dress code, so there's no reason to dress up in uniform or any of that stuff. We do wear vests for visibility and safety, but outside of that it's pretty relaxed. We have just the schedules at work with a lot of people with different needs, and we are always trying to upskill and move up with technologies. We have several different types of facilities in the northern Florida area. I'll speak to the ones mostly that we have that will affect your organizations. Some -- new orders come in on Amazon, it gets picked up in the center. From there it goes to what's called a source center where it literally gets sorted. There it goes to a different facility called the delivery station, and then it gets shipped out to your -- to the orderer's home. Our XL warehouses are specifically like delivery stations, but for much larger items like 80-inch TVs, couches and furniture.

We don't have a whole lot of groceries up here, so I won't be speaking to that as much.

A lot of duties will be moving around a lot, loading boxes, putting stuff away, taking stuff out, operating a pit, which is the powered industrial trucks, and we use a lot of technologies. All of our training is specific as if you had zero experience with any of it. So we will teach you everything you need to know from the ground up.

We're one of the first companies -- I'll tell you, I've been with the company for five years, and we were the first company to come out and say you know what, \$7.25 is not a living wage anymore, we'll be the first at \$15 an hour, and that was a little over two and a half years ago. Now a lot of our facilities offer up to as much as 17, \$18, depending on the shift, which is competitive, especially when you add in the 401(k), vacation. We have paid work breaks, and things of that nature. The medical benefits, some of the full-time associates is very comprehensive. It's very affordable and pales to -- there's 24-hour support for all different types of needs, whether it be parents with disabilities, child and elderly care, all the way up to different types of leave

absences and MLA, stuff like that. So we have 24 hours, 7 days a week for all of our associates. We also try to set up programs for partnerships, and at college, and for development. For development we have what's called career choice, and that's offering pathways to our -- we offer to pay for college, \$5000 a year for full--- \$5200 a year for full-time college students. We have what's called pathways, which is getting folks more in to the fields such as HVAC and certifications. And then we have foundations -- so English proficiency and GED.

Again, I don't want to bore you guys with this. I'm looking forward to the Q&A. So if you have something, you can ask me about it.

One of the things that I'm really proud of with Amazon is we have something that's called the Infinity Networks, where we have different groups of associates or members, different groups, such as Amazon people with disabilities, Latinos of Amazon, Indigenous Peoples. But a lot of different ways to support all the events, support local events as well, and work out in the community and things of that nature, so there's a lot of different ways to connect with other people with similar backgrounds. We have a huge inclusive work environment. Accommodations, and we'll get into that a little bit later. A network of support, and benefits for employees' family members as well.

We're super clean. We're one of the first companies to come out with a fleet of electric vans. And be sustainable towards the future. We also have for students that are out there, we have what's called accommodations for school schedules. Anybody who's been to college knows the schedule changes from semester to semester. On Amazon we work around that so we won't punish people for missing work because of that. What we do is we take a look at their schedule and we'll excuse those times. Military folks, folks that are veterans, active duty, retired, military spouses. We have so many different pluses for that. There's leadership, structure, we do have affinity groups specifically just for military, so again, there's that support group. And we do have a goal to hire 100,000 veterans and military spouses by 2024, so we're actively -- not only actively, but aggressively seeking out military hiring such as retired and active duty. Staying at home, non-military spouse for some part-time work or just to get out of the house, or going through boot camp and need to supplement their income. All different ways.

So how does somebody like your clients apply at Amazon? It's really, really simple. I'll share a link, or I'll share it with Angie and Sean that your client can go straight to, and it's a link that will go right to put in your zip code and look for job opportunities in your area. If there's nothing there, you can share this with your clients, if there's nothing there, there's no hiring currently in that area, but if they keep diligent about it



because of the new change order, we -- every Friday night is the time to look for most opportunities would be Friday night or Saturday mornings. So go through the process, fill out the name and address, all the stuff that you normally fill out. Come see my team. Here, we do everything. We'll go over the work authorization and we'll do the drug test to the point where all that's needed to do is -- for everyone to show up. It's really quite simple. And there's a link. I'll share this later with Sean and Angela, and I do encourage anybody on this call today to please consider my contact for any questions about Amazon hiring or facilities nearby or anything when it comes to warehouse hiring, as in northern Florida.

I'll pause there for just a second to kind of talk about our accommodations program. We have an entire team called ATAP that's dedicated solely to making sure that every single candidate has the opportunity that they can have within reasonable accommodations. So speaking firsthand, I have seen -- I was in the department where we trained. We have interpretation programs for folks who are either deaf or hard of hearing. We can assign an ASL interpreter to the first day, second day, so on and so forth, and for other things like HR needs, whether they have coachings coming up or they have their own meeting, they can request an interpreter at that point.

In fact, what I'm going to do now, I brought a friend with me on this call, Roger, who actually helps facilitate. Roger, can you share some pertinent information that these folks might want to know? Roger, are you also dialed in?

>> Are you able to hear me now?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Yes.

>> ROGER: Okay. Yes, so as he said, I am a staff interpreter for Amazon. I work in the Central Florida area so I'm technically housed in Orlando, and there are four of us across Central Florida. One in Tampa and three of us in the Orlando area right now. And so I wanted to just be here, be available to you guys to answer any questions you might have. As a staff interpreter, we do provide interpreting services across our entire landscape of Amazon in the area, and then also we super service provision to our vendors and for our deaf associates. So a couple things I just wanted to bring to you guys is about -- [indiscernible] -- but yeah, we provide interpreters any time that a interpreter is requested. So we have a few different options. We have VRI options, we have remote interpreting options. We've got on site options and we've also got ad hoc pre-scheduled and ad hoc. So we have a lot of different options available to deaf associates. Most of our tier 1, entry level deaf associates are approved for ad hoc accommodations, just like we had for trainings, or conversations where an interpreter is needed. And then when our deaf associates promote to positions of

leadership, which we have many throughout our U.S. network, when that happens, they are then approved for what we call consistent interpreting services, so then they have interpreters with them for their entire shift to remove communication barriers on their team with their leadership, and if any one of them has a requirement of duties. So that's kind of where we serve. So as Phil continues, if you have any questions for me or how it works, I'm happy to help with that.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Thank you so much, Roger. I appreciate that. And I really appreciate all you all. I have one ask, is that if at some point y'all could send me an E-mail or a Zoom chat right now, if you guys can send me an E-mail so at least we have contact with each other, I'd much appreciate it. I don't think I've met most of you. I think I've only talked with Angela or Sean, so this is a pleasure, and I want to make sure I'm a source as far as Amazon is concerned. So I'm going to stop sharing screen, and I will open up the floor at this point.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina. I have a question. Is there a strength or dexterity test to work in the warehouse, and do you require a CDL to drive?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Good question. So in the warehouse, there are no drivers in the warehouse. So no CDL is needed to work. However, there is no strength or dexterity test either. It is the requirements for a warehouse worker to be able to lift up to 49 pounds with or without accommodations. And if you can see -- how do I put this -- there isn't a consistent need to lift up to 49 pounds in the warehouse. However, it is expected that they can.

As far as driving is concerned, we do have several different types of driving positions. The drivers you see in vans in your neighborhood, all those are hired through independent contractors that own the vans. And I don't think that they need a CDL. However, there's other jobs, once they get promoted beyond the warehouse, there are drivers within the yards and the building and those are required to have CDL. If a client of yours does not have their CDL but they do want to be a driver, that career choice program I brought up earlier would be a great program to go to, and we'll pay for that schooling. So if that's what somebody wants to do, Amazon -- they can come in and work in our warehouse, have their schooling paid for by Amazon, and then transfer jobs from being in the warehouse -- actually promote up to be a driver in between the yards or in between the building.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: This is Glenna. Two questions. First about the interpreters. Are they staff interpreters employed full-time by Amazon directly, or is it a contract with an interpreting agency?

>> ROGER: I can answer that. So yeah, we have -- we currently have about 70, I think it's just under 70 staff

interpreters that are what we call blue vests. We are full-time, permanent staff interpreters for Amazon. We're positioned throughout the country, and we also have one in Canada. So our program is growing. However, 70 interpreters, as you can imagine, is not enough to fulfill the needs that we have on our sites. My own site here in Orlando, I have about 50 deaf people in one building on various shifts, so that's a high demand. So we do depend heavily on contract interpreters as well. We have two contracts right now that we use nationwide for all of our contract interpreters.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Thank you. I didn't realize that many worked for Orlando. 50. The other question is I know some deaf people that have worked at Amazon or are working at Amazon and hear different things, some things positive, some things negative. One of the negative things I hear, when you're working on the floor, I don't know what you call them, productivity goals or quota where they have to move fast, fast, fast, fast, fast, and maybe don't get breaks, things like that. So is there any truth to that? I've heard that a couple of times.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: That's a great question, and believe it or not, that comes up from time to time. And I appreciate candid questions like this. Like I said, I started off in the warehouse, so I can only speak to my own personal experience. I had great managers my entire time in the warehouse, two and a half years. I'll speak to statistics more than anything else, and then I'll come back. Statistically, our turnover, less than 5 percent of our terms are from production reasons. In other words, nobody will be fired for a lack of production. Almost nobody.

We do continual coaching. We do everything we can to help an associate go forward. Does that mean that an aggressive manager was misinterpreted as setting expectations high? I can see that being possible. I'm not going to sugar coat or lie about that. Our managers in every business in every company in the world get overzealous and try to motivate in different ways. Is it the best way? Not always. Because it's open to interpretation.

There are breaks. Different sites -- one of our facilities do ten-hour shifts, and within those ten hours, 30 minutes is legally obligated for a meal break. From site to site, it's different after that. They'll either do two 15-minute paid breaks or another 30-minute paid break to the typical candidates for the break. And that varies from site to site. But there are breaks, both legally and policy obligated.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Mary.

>> MARY HODGES: Thank you.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: And you'll hear different things based on each individual interpretation of things as well.

When I was in training, and training on new hires, I think you've all seen our sites. They're really large. And I always say to the new hires, this is a pretty big building, right? A lot of the times the largest distance of this entire building will be the four inches in between your ears. It depends what you make of it.

>> MARY HODGES: I have a question. Do any of your staff work from home?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: We have a huge workforce from home. However, my team does all the hiring for the warehouses. So it's a whole different business plan.

>> MARY HODGES: So what do the people who work from home do?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: A variety of different jobs. Too wide to really talk about here today. I'm just thinking more about the warehouse jobs, some of those jobs, because I'm much more familiar with those, and they're not as large a variety as those folks that work from home. You have to remember, Amazon owns a movie studio. They own studio platforms. They own computer technology software, crossover everything in the world companies. We have grocery stores. If you don't think there's support for every single one of those lines from home, or if you don't think there's -- that's what they -- or just sometimes it's straight-up leadership will work from home to be able to focus on different work/life balance. A lot from home. Customer service, things of that nature. Interpreters. ASL interpreters.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Not only --

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Excuse me.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Not only where you have a large number of deaf people working, but also where there might not be many deaf people working, do those deaf people have a equal opportunity to actually move up as managers, so forth, or do many of them tend to stay at the same level?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: That's a phenomenal question. Thank you so much for asking that. It's as equal opportunity as I've ever seen it in many other companies. Roger and I were speaking earlier this week, I didn't know about the sign interpreters that he mentioned, but the -- just the fact that Amazon is one of the few companies that's going to get you an interpreter for -- whether it be -- I shouldn't say that. For an interview for prep or for help with your manager or one-on-one, whatever somebody that needs an interpreter has a need for it, Amazon has provided it. We have a lot of different people that are deaf in leadership roles and advanced roles.

>> ROGER: I just wanted to ask real quick -- add real quick that currently, because our team tracks the data that shows promotions, right now, we currently have, in the operations phase, which is warehouses, which is what Phil hires for, we have about 100 deaf associates nationwide who are at least assistant manager or

above. And many of those have happened in the last six months to a year, and so deaf people are moving up very quickly and very successfully within Amazon, and so we definitely have that ability that you don't often see in other places of employment for deaf people because we are so focused on them having a great experience and their career developing and being accommodating as best as we can. So it's really been awesome to be a part of the team to see those kinds of promotions happen.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I have a question, and then Gina. So if you have a lot of deaf people in one area, do you also provide ASL classes for other employees to learn -- employees and managers to learn so they can have more direct communication instead of having to go through interpreter all the time?

>> ROGER: Yeah. We definitely encourage that. So each building kind of runs on their own -- as their own site. So each site has -- there are several sites in the Orlando area that actually had some of their deaf associates step up and take on the extra task to actually teach those classes to their managers, to the leadership and to other associates at the same level as well.

As our program offers a project that we call Project Makari. Which is actually based off of the deaf Marvel super hero, Makari. What that is, that's a television set up in any of our facilities that actually teaches basic sign for conversation and work-related signs. That just kind of runs on a loop. And so we have that available nationwide as well, so we definitely provide that, do our best that we can, and when we have individuals that maybe have deaf parents or deaf family and happen to know sign language and they're in those positions, we encourage them to do the training and to do those interactions without interpreters as much as possible.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Gina.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: When your deaf employees are hired, are they hired somewhat like just one deaf person in a group of several hearing people, or do you have a system in place where there's more than one deaf person in a unit? And hold on a minute. And then if there are more than one deaf person, how do you handle their need for socialization? Because they would have to talk with their hands, and whereas we as hearing people can work and talk at the same time, how do you balance that?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: We don't hire in groups. It's every person's their own, so if there happens to be more than one deaf person in a facility, that would be a bonus for those if they get along, I guess just like anybody else. That's a really good question about the socialization.

>> ROGER: Just to clarify, as Phil said, they are hired individually. Once they are onboarded and they are cleared to train, they may be put in training with a group of associates that are also hired. So those trainings

will happen with hearing associates. We typically provide interpreters on site, and also the videos that they show in those trainings now have interpreters fully integrated into the video presentation so that they're getting that information on screen with the other hearing associates. And yeah, you know, during work times, socialization with everybody is kind of at a minimum. Stations inside the warehouses tend to be very -- interpreters are provided, or we have VRI options available for those ad hoc needs. But as far as socialization, that's part of creating an inclusive environment, which is what we're striving for. ASL classes help encourage more of that signing space. Yeah, so that's from our perspective.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: And I will add to that just from, again, my experiences in the warehouse, Amazon's inclusivity includes T-shirts with the sign for Amazon across the front of the shirt. To encourage others to sign and things of that nature. So I'm no stranger to seeing these things.

In fact, in my current role a year ago, we had somebody present to us a few simple signs. Do I remember half them? No. I'll be honest. But I do remember a few. And just the fact that they're trying to expose us to -- without opening up a whole school for signing. But they really try to do a lot to expose us to at least have awareness of the need for these types of communications. So I hope that helps answer.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. You talked a lot about deaf people who sign. What about hard-of-hearing and deaf people who don't sign?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: I've been exposed to a few folks on the floor, as we have gone through the hiring process that don't sign, so I know what my team does. I'm very sure if they requested person-to-person to make sure that we're facing the person so that we can read -- so that they can read our lips, that we do that. I have not seen, and Roger, you can add more, this transcription software that we're using for this meeting today, this is my first exposure to something like this. So this is awesome.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Well, we're using CART. CART.

>> ROGER: Sorry. I had to find my mute button. So yeah, we actually do partner with CART services when requested, by request. We don't have any kind of full-time captioning services, but CART is a part of our plethora of options for communication access.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All right. Do you have any in South Florida, where deaf people work in South Florida?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: I'm not sure I follow that question.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: You mentioned you have warehouse here in Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville. What about South Florida?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Oh, okay, yeah. Of course. Of course. Yeah. We have Miami -- I haven't memorized

all of our buildings, but we have an entire team that's hiring for colleagues, probably 15 different folks down there, if not more. It's only when you get to more remote areas, more rural areas that you probably see a lot less opportunities just because of logistics, right? If there's only three people living in town, there's no reason to have a delivery station there. In fact, I'm going to one of those rural areas tomorrow.

>> ROGER: I just wanted to clarify, too, our state is one of the larger states and larger population states -- when I say Orlando, what I mean is the entire Orlando node which spans from -- Tampa covers the entire Tampa area, Clearwater, St. Petersburg, and then we have the northern nodes as well and we have the southern nodes. So when I say Orlando, we have about 30 sites that are in the Orlando node. Now, my building has 50 deaf people, but throughout the node, we have about 170 to 200 deaf people working at area sites. So an area that I call Orlando is a much larger scale than what you're thinking when I say one site in Orlando. But then you do have many sites in all of those different regions.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: And all these services that we're talking about today are available nationwide, this isn't just for our region, it's the entire country, we do for one, we do for all. So this is not just a small thing we do. It's something we do at Amazon on a large scale.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: First, Phil and Roger, I want to thank you for such an excellent presentation, the information you provided has been really great. But my next question is, do you have statistics that you could send us in terms of the number of deaf people that you have outreach opportunities to, as well as how many are hired, how many have been successful in promotion rate, the, you know, turnover rate for that particular population?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: I can look into that. I'm not sure how much information would be considered proprietary, but I can look in to statistics we can share externally with you all, and I can get -- whatever I can get, I will be happy to get you.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Thank you. That would be so helpful.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: It seems like you have a pretty large number of deaf signers that work there. Do you have another group that is a large number that are represented, like, I don't know, disabled veterans or wheelchair, or a large number of other blind or a large number of disability in addition to the deaf signers?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Yes. Absolutely. I'm not supposed to have favorites, but I have a favorite organization I work with here in the area, Division of Blind Services. It's a statewide organization for folks who have vision impairments or are fully blind, and I touched base with them back in June and since then we've actually employed six different folks of different vision impairments, or blind, in the Jacksonville area. My dream goal

is to have all the readiness in all the buildings here so we can go ahead and multiply that number, as well as they can go across the entire state and the rest of the country. And I have a real personal passion for doing things like this, because I have -- I just like to make sure that everybody has opportunities, regardless of their situation, whether you have vision impairments or hearing impairments, disabled veterans with different backgrounds, we all support each other with great benefits. But to answer your direct question, yes, we have wheelchair accommodations, we have also vision accommodations. And Amazon, if we have to rebuild the entire building, we probably won't do that, but there's short and simple things like using different apparatus -- we will do that. We have had -- I've seen it where we've had seeing eye dogs and things of that nature at our site. It has to be analyzed on a case by case, but once it's been determined that we can do it, we do it, and we follow through with it.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So does that mean all the, quote, normal people are trained in working with people who are different, and what do you do about managers who don't or are not open-minded, or show bias -- I mean, is that a company-wide thing, or -- I don't know if you understand what I mean. What do you do about managers who don't follow along with the philosophy?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Well, from the get-go of the presentation, I know I moved through the presentation. So we are all -- network wide, nationwide, worldwide, we are about diversity and inclusions. So if there's a manager that is not open-minded, and is not open to diversity or inclusion, they will not be managers -- in my experience, they won't be managers for very long, and definitely won't be working with people for very long. You're asking a behavior question. That type of behavior is not just frowned upon, but will not be accepted at Amazon. Period. There's zero tolerance for that kind of thing. Really.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Thank you. Cory.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Hi. This is Cory. I think we have come a long way to hear a major company such as Amazon state such a good statement about including folks would have disabilities, and including diversity and inclusion, and considering folks would have disabilities in that category, and to say that they have this space where they can come to earn a living, and I'm really, really impressed, and I was only able to observe a few minutes of your presentation, but I'm already impressed to say that. You know, we've come a long way to hear people say that, and you can go to Amazon. Well, are they going to accept me? Oh, yeah, they're going to accept you, you know, it's really a real comfort.

And I represent the Department of Education, Division Of Vocational Rehabilitation and I've had other vendors and other people tell me about how Amazon has just been amazing, and I just wanted to say please continue



what you're doing because you're making folks have lives that they otherwise wouldn't have. So thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Considering --

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Thank you for saying that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And considering how much you have done with inclusion and everything, I'm wondering, do you have any influence with other large companies to follow you in including diversity and -- you know, other large companies? Do you have any influence to encourage them to do the same thing?

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Well, I'm glad you asked that because as soon as that \$15 an hour minimum wage thing happened in Amazon, all of a sudden, Disney did it. All of a sudden Target did it. So it's funny how you start a trend in that fashion, and it catches. So while we can't force anybody or influence anybody in any other way, except for being a good example and a great employer, I have a feeling that's a pretty good way to start.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I think Amazon is a trail blazer. You guys are the catalyst. You gotta start and others to follow, and especially in this field where we're in, we're always looking for improving independent living and employment for people would have disabilities. In this case, with this board, deaf, hard of hearing or deaf blind folks, so you guys are really good leaders in that area.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Great. Thank you guys so much. I do have a -- we were scheduled until 2:00, so I don't want to take up too much of y'all's time. And I'm sure we all have our agendas today as well. I will end by saying, Sean, I think Angela have been really great communicating with me. You guys have my E-mail address. Please, if you all would, send me an E-mail with your signature and contact so we can continue this conversation and have a relationship with the Board. I would be remiss to say if y'all are in Tallahassee right now, we're opening a huge facility there next year, so there will be a need there. In turn, if you guys have colleagues or other organizations that you want to recommend for me to reach out to here in Jacksonville, I'd really appreciate that opportunity, so that way I can get out --

Any last-minute questions from anybody?

>> CINDY SIMON: Thank you.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Thank you so much.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yeah. We really appreciate the information you shared with us, and we'll be sure to bring back the information to encourage people to continue applying to work at Amazon. So thank you very much for your time. We appreciate it.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Perfect. Thank you guys. Have a great afternoon, and I'll put out some support material to Sean and Angela to share with you guys as well. Okay? Have a great day, guys!

>> SEAN ISAAC: Take care. Thank you.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Thank you.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Oh, who should I sign -- when I had to share my screen, who should I hand over the reins to assign a new host to the Zoom meeting? Is that Cory?

>> SEAN ISAAC: No, not Cori J.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: My options are Janelle, Shay, Lisa, Jackson-John or Cori J.

>> SEAN ISAAC: It's La 'shay.

>> PHILIP KWIEK: Okay. All right, you guys, have a good day.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: It is now 2:05, and break is at 2:30, so we will use this opportunity to go back to work on the report. We were working on the section dealing with senior citizens. And Cindy worked on her -- suggesting saying that instead of saying losing their hearing and going through a grieving process and often don't get the help needed or use resources available, they need to learn to use technology to become adaptive, empowered and proactive and live in a way with social interaction and accessible communication. And this is from the National Council on Aging. She suggested to change it to one sentence.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I'm just looking at the agenda. Did we decide not to do organization updates?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Oh, okay.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I just want to make sure. I just wasn't sure.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yeah. You're right. You're right. You're right. We'll go back to organization update, which is on the agenda.

Okay. Anybody have hot news to share from their organization? Mary?

>> MARY HODGES: I don't know if it's hot news, but the February meeting will be my last meeting. I'm going to be retiring in April, so I'm working with management -- leadership to make sure that we do get someone else on the Council. So hopefully there won't be a gap.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Well, congratulations on your retirement. Sorry that you're leaving. That is hot news! Wow! Cindy?

>> CINDY SIMON: Obviously everything hot is an OTC issue, the over-the-counter hearing aids issue, and everyone has something to say. Also, I think Medicare has gone back and they're going to reduce our rates

some more that they pay us, so at this point I get paid less than 50 bucks for an hour and a half with a patient. It's going down, but that's hot news all over the place, and there are E-mails from every organization you can imagine on that.

But OTC is over there, and God only knows what they're doing with it. Just so you all know, unlike when someone does what's now going to be called prescription hearing aids, they do not have to refund your money if you buy something OTC. It's up to each one as to what they want to do. If you see a professional, they are required to refund your money within 30 days. But not if you go OTC. And you can bring back to people, I know some are really happy about this, but the biggest thing -- I just saw someone who had an OTC, wasn't happy, couldn't return it, ended up in my office, and she had an acoustic neuroma, which is a tumor on the nerve of hearing. That, with OTC, those things will not be caught. They will go unnoticed. So that's it. That's all the hot stuff in the audiology world.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen representing HLAA. The hot news for HLAA is, of course, that that ability to get legislation passed for OTC hearing aids, and this does represent an affordable option for hearing aids for people would have mild to very moderate, mild/moderate hear --

>> CINDY SIMON: The law says perceived. I'm just telling you.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. So this is good news for people who are overwhelmed by the price of hearing aids, which in many cases for working Americans, and for people who are not working, it's very expensive to get prescription hearing aids, or to get the other types. OTC is not for everyone. It does not take the place of an examination. It is not a medical service. These are purely for the devices. And so that's the thing to say.

Anybody who's purchasing over-the-counter needs to be buyer beware. Do your research. Do your education. It doesn't take the place of medical -- the type of hearing loss that I have. I've been told very clearly that OTC will not work for me, and I have been waiting for the OTC because of the high cost of hearing aids typically out there. But it's not going to work for the specific type that I have.

I think most people understand, and they're informed that this is -- does not take the place of an examination, or working with your ENT, or even working with an audiologist. But when I went to an ENT, that was the question I asked. Could I possibly partake in an over-the-counter type of option, and I wanted a professional opinion about it. And that's -- you know, so the OTC companies don't take the place of that professional opinion.

So that's very exciting news.

We had the National Convention for HLAA this past June. It was held in Tampa, Florida, the national convention, so it was very exciting. I volunteered, I know that Debbe volunteered. She was fantastic in the work that she did for National HLAA representing the State of Florida. She received an award, so our Debbe received an award. Hopefully she'll talk about it. Oh, she's holding it up. So proud of her. And HLAA is really great organization for people would have hearing loss of any type. It is not a deaf-predominant organization, it is more for people who are hard of hearing and have varying degrees of hearing loss, but it doesn't take the place of something like Florida Association of the Deaf or National Association of the Deaf. But it's really nice that there's an organization that understands the varying complexities of people with hearing loss at all stages. So I'll see if Debbe, before we jump to Gina, maybe we can just ask Debbe if she has an update for HLAA since we've got HLAA on the brain?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Debbe is the other representative of HLAA. So Debbe, add more?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Yes. This is Debbe Hagner. Yes, I did attend the HLAA convention. Next year's convention will be in New Orleans next year. I also attended the NAD convention. I also just got back from ALDA. They were great. They had one of these magazines, where there's a picture -- somewhere there's a picture of me and --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Go, Debbe.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: And there's a picture of -- [audio cut out] -- again, HLAA is in New Orleans, and -- ask people to submit their call for papers so -- [audio cutting out] -- let's see what else. That's all I have.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Thank you, Debbe, and congratulations on your award. We all know how hard you work.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: This is Chris for ALDA, Association of Late-Deafened Adults, we've been working very hard lately and in communication with Pasco Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Services. Right now we have just as many members in Pasco County as we do in Pinellas County, so we've been teaming up with them a lot. They're actually having a wine tasting fundraiser tomorrow, and the director of Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Services there had asked me to do the announcements and the drawing there. So right after this meeting tomorrow, I'll be headed up to the Pasco County Deaf and Hard-of-hearing Services for that and to show our support for them.

Also, we are doing a joint Friendsgiving with Pasco County so that everybody can get together and celebrate and enjoy Thanksgiving type socialization. So that should be pretty cool. Also, as Debbe mentioned, she just drove to California and back for the ALDA National Convention, which was in San Diego. I flew, so I just looked out my window, and, you know, waved to her, I guess, when she was driving back. But anyway, it was

an outstanding conference in San Diego, and next year we're going to be in Austin, Texas, so we really look forward to that.

I will also say I, for the first time, attended part of the HLAA convention, because it was here locally in Tampa, and it was an outstanding convention as well. So a lot of really cool things happening. I'll post and share updates with Angie and Sean. The last thing I mentioned is that I forwarded the information for that survey that I've been working on with Family Center on Deafness to Angie, so hopefully she will share it with everybody so we can get some more respondents from that and update those statistics that we have that are like 20 years old. So that's about it for me. Thanks.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Chris did not mention one thing. ALDA gave him an award for his service.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Thanks. But anyway, it was pretty cool. It was the I King Jordan award. I King Jordan was the eighth president. He presented me the award. He's been a long-time member with the Association for Late Deafened Adults and it was for outstanding achievement and for my work in disability advocacy, so it was a lifetime honor for me. So thank you very much.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Stop being shy! That was great!

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We're proud that the Council has two champions on the Council, Debbe and Chris. FAD.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: We have more than two champions on the Council. We're all champions.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Thank you. FAD is -- the NAD conference, which I explained the last meeting, has been very quiet. Finally they will have a meeting November 19th, a Zoom meeting to elect a new secretary, to turn over on the Board and to have a general meeting. And I don't know what's happening with FAD. I've been calling. Other people have been calling, and I don't know. Sad to say, it just seems to be needing time to rebuild again, to restart again.

At the same time, other smaller organizations have become more active in providing Zoom workshops for a variety of different things, especially CIL. If you remember, we had CIL presenting, and they are really becoming more and more active in providing workshops, on a variety of topics, and they seem to have formed their own group, so we need -- I've been trying to get one of them to become a representative on the Council to replace a deaf representative that's pretty much gone. Not completely gone, but pretty much.

And other organization becoming more active, the one I tried to invite today, but it didn't work out, is the Florida Deaf Artists Show, which they do every year, and that's becoming a growing thing, too.

In the past, we've had Deaf Nation Expo and we've had -- it's the Deaf Expo. There's now a new third one called Deaf OPI, which is in Florida the next one will be December 10th. And I'm going to request that we

have a booth. The booths are free! So that's mine. Cory.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: This is Cory. With VR, with our unit, the deaf and hard-of-hearing, deaf blind unit, we have hosted the Southeast Regional Institute on Deafness, SERID. We hosted that October 13th through 16th. And I'm really happy to say that we had 24 states of representation around the country. 24 states. We had over 30 vendors come and set in our exhibit room. And what is SERID? SERID is for people who work with deaf/hard of hearing, deaf blind in VR, mental health and education, and this is on training. And people love our workshops, and we had over 300 people. We had up to 300 people join us. So the first time after -- or the second conference after the pandemic, so people were really, you know, more states have allowed people to travel this year than last year. Last year, we had about roughly 160 people -- 120 in person, and 80 people virtually. So this year was really, really good. So I'm happy to say that we had a really successful conference.

And right now, we're getting back to our roots with VR and helping people. So that's what we're doing really pretty much right now.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: SERID next year, where?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: The SERID conference rotates between the eight states of the southeast, so next year will be North Carolina, Charlotte, North Carolina. And they already jumped ahead of us. They've already booked a hotel. They've already -- and in 2024 is in negotiation of a hotel right now, so we're moving ahead, and then 2024, South Carolina. So they're looking at Greenville, South Carolina, Spartanburg, South Carolina.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: For '24?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: 2024. 2023 is Charlotte, North Carolina.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. That's '23. Okay.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: So one of the things that what you call a hot topic for us in our world, voc rehab, we have really gone through some changes in bringing out what's called the model state plan, and the model state plan really is a guideline that states use to set up services like mine in voc rehab. Believe it or not, not all the states have services for the deaf/hard of hearing. So this is really critical for our world, and we want to make sure that we have deaf services set up really nice. So that was a big emphasis, and a lot of new initiatives are coming up from this conference.

So that's a report from us. And we will have representation at the Florida Educators for The Deaf and Hard-of-hearing. Their conference is hear, actually, next week. Next week.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. This is Gina. We've had a lot of change over, too, in terms of positions and people coming in, changing their assignments. The only events we have planned coming up are the business meeting in December, which, of course, everybody can go to. The only hot topic that I'm aware of is the licensing of interpreters in Florida. They are trying to resurrect that again. As you know, a couple years ago, they did a great job, and for whatever reason, it didn't pass, and so they're trying again a different approach, so they're in the planning stages of that now.

But also --

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I was just going to -- I was going to ask you, do you know why there's so much difficulty in getting licensure passed? Like, what is the down side? Maybe I'm missing an issue.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Historically, nobody -- they do have people in the interpreting procession, you have deaf people that don't want it. You have organizations that don't want it. So you have a little pocket of opposition in every area where the services are needed, because deaf people want to use their family members because they trust them, it goes on and on and on. Terry -- I can't think of her last name, it starts with an "S." Do you know her last name? Anyway, she did a great job of documenting the pros and cons of licensing in Florida. And that was a couple years ago. But I also wanted to make a comment -- I was waiting to make a comment on what Cindy and Karen were saying about the OTCs, from personal experience. When I first came here, I had bought two OTCs, and when I met Cindy and she told me to quit being a jerk and go get a hearing test, go get a hearing test, and I've had hearing aids ever since and it changed my life. When I was doing the OTCs, they didn't half work, I had headaches, I was off balance. Everything echoed. There was no balance in sound. But I was desperate. And I didn't have any idea about all of this. Yes, Mary, go ahead. I'm sorry.

>> MARY HODGES: Thank you for those comments. I was wondering if, and it may be too late, if we could put something in the report about that issue, the over-the-counter hearing aids, pros and cons from the Council's perspective. We've got lots of experts around the table, and --

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: That's what I was going to --

>> MARY HODGES: Not taking a position, necessarily, but at least educating people.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: That's where I was headed, because I was wondering if Debbe on the Facebook or if DOH could do that because Karen mentioned about the education piece of it. Cindy mentioned about the necessity of having medical, you know, information. It's important, and it's a huge issue. And I know a whole lot of people that, oh, thank God, let me go buy some from Wal-Mart, you know, and it's our ignorance.

I was out of the ignorance. Until I met Cindy, I was out of the ignorance. I thought I was getting a hearing aid. You follow me? So I agree, if Debbie could put something, a blog on Facebook or DOH could put the information out there, I think it would be a huge help.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: When we were discussing reports, our different people had volunteered to write different parts. We did not get the part on OTC.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I think we want to be really careful and impartial and we want to make sure it's a fair and balanced review of the OTC and remain neutral. I don't know what the Department of Health's perspective is. I do know that nationally, HLAA is happy to see it, and as a physician, I'm happy to see the OTC option. And the reason why that there were so many people who are struggling with mild hearing loss would have neurocognitive decline, and this is a way to help them.

The cost of these hearing aids is -- I mean, it's an enormous cost, between 4500 to 6 or \$7,000 for a set. And it's not always covered. The OTC does offer an option, but it has to come with a caveat. It has to come with a caveat of that it's not replacement for medical services. And I don't think the Council should take any position that, oh, that's not a good option. It's not an option for everyone, but we're also not representing who is benefitted -- who has benefitted from them. I would like to get more information about who's benefitting from them. I don't know how to get that information, but that was the entire goal, was to make sure that people had access to affordable hearing aids. Not amplifiers, but hearing aids.

>> CINDY SIMON: So I purposely stayed out of the it because obviously I'm going to be very biased. I will also say that I was interviewed on pros and cons by someone that came out in a publication, and I read the entire law. So we have to be careful. The law does not want you to have an exam. The law does not want you to have a hearing test. You have to get them and teach yourself how to use them. That's the whole point at that price range.

The law says, and I quote exactly, that for the individual must have a perceived mild to moderate. So it's how they perceive it, not what actually is.

I could come up with tons of negatives that could be life-threatening, but the truth is, for those with barely any hearing loss, there may be many more benefit. Do you give more people the benefit for the few that are going to find out something bad was going on? I do not want to get involved because I would like to stay impartial, and not push my feeling and views anywhere in there. I can give you my list, but again, that's just me.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: OTC is definitely a current hot issue, and because it just recently became effective, I think



we should include a section on OTC and what we can do is a short summary of what the law actually says, what it includes and does not include, and that instead of saying pros and cons, we can say, from the audiological perspective, from the HLAA consumer perspective, from maybe different perspectives, it might avoid going negative or pro. But different perspectives kind of thing. And again, be really, really brief and general so that we don't get -- become too thick. Now I need somebody to write that. Cory.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I really, really in favor of neutrality, keeping it very neutral. And educating and keeping it straight facts. Because even with the article that we print, even with the discussions that we have, folks are still going to wander into Walgreen's or whoever sells them and go, oh, a hearing aid! Oh, that's what momma needs! I'm going to buy me a hearing aid. Why? Because \$59.99. And oh! That's what momma needs. She can't hear me on the phone. No matter what our Council -- warning signs and everything, lights flashing, people are going to -- so if we're neutral, people will find out, oops, this is not such a good idea, or this works for me, hey, you know. So keeping it neutral, I'm in favor of that.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: [Audio] deaf seniors of America -- those of us seniors, I think it's very important. From the consumer to reach out or go to, we talk about, you know, investments, to think about for what the -- [audio] -- let's say you have 's crossed and I's dotted, all that, so I think that would be good. [Audio cutting out]. Genealogy.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Debbe, your audio didn't come through very well. The CART provider and the interpreters had a hard time understanding you. Could you possibly sign and have the interpreters here voice for you?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Okay. I turned my phone sideways. I keep forgetting the mic is -- Deaf Seniors of America will meet next year and that will be important for those who are seniors to -- -- it's important that we have all of our documents put in place, a living will, et cetera, so I did do a call for paper so I'm hoping that I will be able to teach genealogy at that conference. Only 700 people are registered for that conference, and it will be in Hollywood, Florida.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I'm involved with the DSA Conference, volunteering for several things. We already have over 700 registered, and it's going to be the end of June 2023. So I'm sure we're going to hit 1,000 or over, easily, and it will be a lot of fun.

But anyway, the time is 2:36. We are supposed to have a break to give all our tired hands and voices a break. So we have a break now until 2:45 and we come back for public comment. I'm expecting one person supposed to show up on Zoom, hopefully. Okay. Break time now.

[Break until 2:45].

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Time! Time! Time! Okay. Again, it's 2:48. We are starting public comment. I have one person on Zoom, Tom D' Angelo. I'm going to ask them to do two things. First, what he came on for to explain about the new app called ASL Anywhere, but I also want to step out of the that and then make comments as a private citizen about any issues that you've seen. Okay? So Tom, explain about ASL Anywhere.

>> Sure. I represent the deaf community. Are you guys ready for me to go ahead and begin?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yes. Yes.

>> All right. Hello, everyone. Thank you. It's so good to see some old faces. I've already seen -- it's very hard to see everybody on the video. My name is Tom D' Angelo. I'm very excited to be here this afternoon and be here with all of you, and this is kind of last minute. If I know ahead of time, I would be in person. In the past, I would always come to the FCCDHH meetings. I would be there. I would always represent FAD, as well as Sprint Relay, when I worked with Sprint Relay a long time ago. You're a great group of people. I love being with the working with the deaf and hard-of-hearing community in the State of Florida. So nice to see some of you continuing and doing the same thing that you've been doing.

I want to share about my new company, it's ASL Anywhere is the name of the company. It's a product that is on a mobile phone, the app to download. It's a very nice feature that we have. It's called the Future is Here. And the Future is Here is for deaf people who need interpreters on the spot. For example, if they go to a mechanic shop, if they go to a store, or a restaurant, a post office, a lawyer office, something like that, that's not ADA required to provide an interpreter and they refuse to provide an interpreter, how will the deaf person communicate. They can go back and forth, but a lot of times there's misunderstanding, miscommunication, you lose time and space, but with ASL Anywhere, a deaf person finally has access to simply click on their phone, it's in their pocket, and they have an interpreter with them wherever they go. The interpreters will interpret on the spot anywhere, all over the United States. I'll give you an example here. I'm pulling out my phone, and this is what it looks like. You download, you register for free. It's free to set it up. As a customer, you do have to pay. It's a 15-minute increment, 30-minute increment, 60-minute increment, and you pick what matches your needs. You can start with 15, and then as you need it, you just -- you use it as you need it. You may say you might have ten minutes left. You pay for 15, then you can use the next ten minutes and then we load as you go. There's no minimum. There's no contractual agreement. So that's the difference from the traditional VRI company. And I would emphasize that. They

are two separate organizations and services. One is the ADA accommodations, medical, courts, legal, that are very important. These are just to provide access to a deaf and hard of hearing. So this is the app. You just click on it right here. You can see that it will connect. You see how much -- we're waiting now to connect with an interpreter. It might not be available. There it is. Hello. Okay. So here's an interpreter live. I can sign with this interpreter. It's nice to meet you. Hello. Yes. I'm just showing a demonstration. I just wanted to show everybody. Thank you very much. All right. So how does this technology work? A deaf person just swipes there on their phone. It could be on their iPad, and they just sign. Okay? And it streams to the interpreter, and it's back and forth. It's just very smooth communication and it does save a lot of time. So I just wanted to share that with you and check us out. ASL Anywhere.

Any questions? I don't know if we can open up the floor to my personal comments, but can we open up the floor to other questions about the app?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yes.

>> Yes. .

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi. This is Karen. Thank you very much for introducing this information to us. I looked on the Apple phone. There's two apps. One is ASL Anywhere, and the other one is GTC business, and they have the same information, it looks like. But I downloaded both because I didn't know if there was a difference.

>> I'm so glad you brought that up. We do have two apps. One is for the deaf community. That's the ASL Anywhere. That's the white icon. The blue one that you just saw is GTC is for the interpreter side of it, because interpreters can use the app as well. They can download it on their phone, and they connect to the GTC part of the app to interpret, and then the consumer would be the white icon, the ASL Anywhere, but I just want to emphasize this is not only for the Deaf community. This can be provided from a hearing person who wants to speak to a deaf person, or a hearing person that needs to speak to a deaf person anywhere, they can both benefit from the service. It's not only for the deaf. It's not like VRS or VRI who is only really focused on the deaf consumer. This app is focused on both consumers. It's not under the FCC requirements and the federal law, because the consumer is paying for the service on their own. Does that answer your question?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yes. That was very helpful. I have another question. So the Deaf community, if they needed to speak with someone, let's say they went somewhere, couldn't they use Sorensen? I thought

that was available also as an app that they could get. Maybe I'm misunderstanding. Because -- I know that they -- if a Deaf individual goes through Sorensen, they can place call the hearing person.

>> These great questions, so what we have out there is called video relay service. VRS. They can only use video relay services through their phones, but they cannot be in the same room. Because it's by the federal commission, FCC, that is Sorensen, Purple, Combo, those organizations, which I actually even worked for before, so that is all on the FCC. This is a service, and it's allowed to be in the same room. It's very similar to remote interpreting, video remote interpreting, VRI. VRI is used for typically hospitals, doctors' offices, courts, professions for people who are licensed and certified and would have had the training. That's great. We need that. I'm not taking away that service. But that's scheduled by, you know, hearing people that need an interpreter next week, and, you know, we're scheduling out in advance, and there's a minimum time. But with this, this is for deaf people who just need an on-the-spot interpreter, right now, in the same room. They are not allowed to use VRS, even though -- they're not allowed to be in the same room, because that's what the FCC -- does not allow that, so but we're talking about a candy shop, a wedding planner, you know, they just show up at the planner, there's no interpreter, but they're not required by the ADA to require an interpreter, so how do they communicate? So the future is here. Deaf people can just click on this app at any time. Even if a hearing person wants to talk to a deaf person or they want to go to a bar, they meet with somebody, they want to talk to somebody, they don't have to write notes back and forth anymore, they just click on the app and they have a conversation right then and there, so hopefully that will clarify the difference between the two.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The big difference is that the consumer, the deaf person, the deaf and hearing person, they pay for it themselves. It's not being covered by ADA-required payment, like the hospitals. They're not competing with the hospitals and court for education. No. It's for an informal situation type of thing, but the big challenge is understanding that the deaf person has to understand that they have to pay for it themselves. And it's like more than a dollar a minute, but that's like international calls is -- a dollar a minute. Is that right?

>> That's correct. Yes. Let me give you a good example here. You know when people are driving and they're kind of stuck in traffic and it's stop and go, it's just like a deaf person trying to communicate. It's stop and go. It's writing, it's writing, it's writing, and the communication is -- it just fails and just leaves -- you know, sometimes somebody will take a toll so they don't have to go pay for it, but it's so much more smooth. Same kind of thing for our company. The deaf person wants to communicate faster or, you know, you just

wants it to be more smooth. There might be a cost. It's about \$1.50 a minute, but that's still cheaper than hiring a live interpreter. Their minimum is at least a minimum of an hour, could be a minimum of two. So it's the same concept as driving on a busy road and taking a toll. This is the same way as communicating, much faster, much quicker. It's not like the old-fashioned way. So hopefully that helps to kind of give you a better idea of how to use our service.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yes. But again, the issue is going to be that deaf people being willing to pay for it themselves when they've been so used to getting, quote, free interpreters. So that means you really can only market it to a certain group of deaf people who can afford to do that, because it's \$23 for each 15 minutes. But are you marketing it to -- also to hearing people, like to business places that occasionally have deaf customers come in, are you going to market it to them, too?

>> Oh, yeah. Yeah. We do market to even hospitals and medical as well. We know they are two separate -- focusing more on the community, but like say a mechanic, and they have some local deaf customers that come in, then yes, they could use it, or, you know, work with different companies who want to provide access, and deaf people come in to the sales reps, they just click in and join in and have an interpreter right then and there. So we're focusing on deaf and hard-of-hearing customers who live in Florida, and the reason why I wanted to bring it here today is because we have a contract with a few states now that provide interpreting services that the state will cover, and for a deaf person who cannot afford, they cannot apply for these services and hopefully Florida will look into that. So that's why I'm looking to partner with you guys and a couple other agencies to make this possible.

For example, for Hurricane Ian, you know, there were a lot of interpreters who couldn't come in to the area because of the dangerous situation that was happening in Florida, and so with FEMA, or with people that, you know, are in the same room, they maybe cannot use their VRS, but they could use this app to get better accessibility right then and there.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Mary, did you have a question?

>> MARY HODGES: I think he's answered it. I was just wondering how people access the interpreters if the interpreters had a subscription or a contract. And I think he said it's a contracted service. The availability of interpreters on demand. How does that work?

>> Yes. Great question. It is on demand, like you said. We have interpreters who are ready, sitting online, like I showed you, I just clicked in and just showed -- it looked for an interpreter who is available, and they just pick up the call. Again, that's all through the app. There's no fire wall issues, no challenges, just a

simple click and you'll connect with an interpreter who can be anywhere. They can be any place, anywhere, they just click and they can answer the call. So this is a different concept than the traditional interpreting services that you've seen in the past that require different -- that have different requirements. So this gives deaf people access to any time, anywhere. There are many different situations where this can be used. For example, there's a customer of ours who almost got arrested and the TSA at the airport tried to cuff that customer. They clicked on this app and got an interpreter right there and was able to get it all situated. They were able to get on their phone, so it's great to hear other stories. I've heard another customer, there was dog training that they were doing and they were trying to talk to the trainer. They were able to click on the interpreter and quickly go back to training their dog, and it was much more smooth. The interpreter side, we have interpreters ready. We have a panel of interpreters where customers can just click, connect to our interpreters through the app.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: So what you were thinking of, so Sorensen was --

>> Again, I'm sorry. Who is asking the question? Is it Debbe? Was there somebody else?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Just to let you know, Karen, what you were thinking of for Sorensen, the app is called Wavelo, provided by Sorensen.

>> Yes. And let me clarify. Debbe brought up a really great point. Wavelo is through the phone. You cannot be in the same room, though, again with the hearing person. By law, the FCC does not allow you to be in the same room, so if you're making a phone call, you can connect with a hearing person, and you can see each other through Wavelo. That's different, though. That's a different technology than what we have. This allows you to be in the same room, the same store, which VRS will not allow because of the FCC. So that's where you would use the app. Does that answer your question?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Another question, does it require wifi?

>> No. You can use your cellphone and just get right and use the signal from your cellphone. Wifi typically causes more problems because you have a fire wall and different pass words. So as long as you have good coverage, you're all set.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Tom, you've had ten minutes to discuss your app. We appreciate that. But we need to now shift over to public comment part, and not the app, but as a deaf Florida citizen, what do you see out there that are a concern or issue with interpreters or education or whatever. Not the app anymore. I've given you a few minutes to discuss that, but we need to stop with that app and move on to make public comments related to what the Council discusses. Okay.

>> No problem. All right. Well, first of all, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to share this app. Hopefully you are able to check it out and find out a little bit more about it. If you want to know a little more information there, you can click on the Web site and ask as many questions as you need to. So I am a Florida citizen. I'm a father of three deaf children. So now they're all in college. They are grown, and they -- we've been to so many different events, and events here in Florida, and they've been exposed to so many different things, and now we see with technology changing, Zoom is here, and it really has impacted the Deaf community as well.

I'm very concerned sometimes about communication access, whether it may be in a situation with an interpreter. Maybe they won't provide an interpreter for students. I think that is something we need to monitor. Another issue I see a lot right now is the FTRI, the Florida Telecommunications Relay, Inc. They are trying to provide wireless phones, but they're not able to because of the state statute. And they have worked so hard to change that law. Once that law changes, to me as a deaf person, I'm very excited to see all the benefits that will come, all the services that will be available that right now, we aren't able to use because maybe they're providing over TTY and land lines, which we don't use anymore. So those are obstacles that I think we need to work together to remove. I hope we're able to work together with FAD and FCCDHH. You know, all of us, if we can work with the legislature to change the need. I'm actively involved -- I'm a deaf citizen, to improve these things out and for the community.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Are you on the TASA Council, Board, or something with Cecil?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I'm supposed to be on the TASA Council Board. We had a meeting last week, I was on vacation, so I missed that meeting. We did have some E-mails about it, so I'll be happy to follow up with the Council.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Excuse me. Time out. We have two people signing at the same time. Who is being voiced? We have Debbe signing --

>> Right now is the -- [indiscernible] -- one moment. The interpreter is having technical difficulties.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Tom, the interpreter was not there to voice what you said.

>> TASA Advisory Board for the SCC and we noticed that something -- FCC -- [indiscernible] -- all -- they cannot get their whole services because they only have that online, and they have different technology available. So we're trying to get that changed for the benefit of everyone.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Is he on the Board? Did he answer the question? Are you on the -- is Tom on the board for TASA? Yes. Okay.

>> Yes.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Tom, thank you. Moving back to St. Augustine, have you noticed any changes in any issue that people there are facing?

>> Yes. Right now, the interpreter services for -- [indiscernible] -- we need to work on that, but I don't see any issues with technology right now, and a lot of changes -- there have been a lot of changes in the last two years because of COVID and the deaf community, challenges that we haven't figured out yet, but -- I see basically we'll keep doing what we're doing.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Did we get all what he said? Okay. Anybody? Okay. Thank you, Tom, for your time, and we appreciate you giving us public comments.

>> Oh, sure. My pleasure.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Thank you. Bye-bye.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I'm not sure -- I'm not sure if this is appropriate for public comments, but I'm going to ask it anyway. I'm getting a lot of questions from community members would have deaf relatives that are young adult age for transitional housing and support services, and, you know, if they're deaf-plus, particularly, if they have developmental disabilities or cognitive issues, as well as deaf and hard of hearing.

For instance, there's a program, I think it's in Lakeland, that has housing and transitional living for hearing young adults, or adults with developmental disabilities, but not for deaf, and I was wondering if anyone had any knowledge of those types of services in Florida.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Not in Florida.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Both the Hope Organization in Orlando and the North Florida School in Jacksonville have transitional housing plans that they're working on now.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Are you referring to FSDB has transitional?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: No. North Florida School for Special Education. Their organization, and Nathaniel's Hope are both organizations that serve any person with disabilities, and so they're including the deaf community in that for transitional housing.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Gina, thank you for that information. Do you know if they have deaf services?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: They have some. They have some. I would have to find out what percentage, but I know they have some.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I imagine maybe the local CIL might know of something.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: So when we're reporting to legislature, what are the needs of our community, that's



something that we certainly ought to be thinking about reporting, right? That there's a number of young adults who may have cognitive impairments or deaf-plus, if you will, who are not getting the support services that they need. And support housing.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: On an issue like that, I would probably make sure that you're communicating with APE, Agency For People with Disabilities. They have a lot of different programs for transitional housing. You mentioned deaf-plus. It's the "plus" that will get them in. Because for whatever reason, AP is not named correctly, in my personal opinion, because they don't consider people that are deaf or hard of hearing having a developmental disability, and somebody that's, you know, has a hearing loss that's at a very young age, certainly it is a developmental disability. But APD will not provide services to somebody that's deaf or hard-of-hearing. But when you add the deaf plus, like you said, the cognitive disability or something else, in addition to being deaf or hard of hearing, then they can get services, so I would recommend talking with somebody at APD.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: We have to still keep we still have to keep that neutrality, of course, because there are particular cases, we just can't say -- you know, trust the agency, APD. They don't, you know, we just have to say that we continue to support those who are deaf-plus trying to get services that they need with APD. We just can't say that they don't. But at the same time, APD is behind a lot. You know, the wait list is long. Debbe is waving.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Debbe?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: The sound is coming in and out terribly right now, especially while Karen was talking and the interpreter is having a hard time following and hearing, so can we take a five-minute break to figure out the technology and why the sound is coming in and out?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Are you saying my voice sounds funny, Debbe? I'm just teasing you.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: It's not you, Cory, no, but the sound in general coming from the Council is going in and out, and fading.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Do you want to take a five-minute break?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Do you want to take a five-minute break to do that?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: We have two people on Zoom.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Debbe, can you still hear us?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Barely. Barely, I can hear you through Zoom.

>> INTERPRETER: The interpreter is saying that she's reading the CART.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. We're going to take a five-minute tech break to allow Debbe time to resolve the Zoom issue. Five minutes.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: This is not coming from me. I'm just saying in general, the interpreter is having a hard time hearing the audience in the council meeting itself.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Debbe. Is she or he or they, are they signed in or called in to the conference call?

>> INTERPRETER: The interpreter indicated yes, she is.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I'm on conference right now. But I'm just letting you know the sound from the council is going -- it's dropping in and out, and the interpreter herself is having a hard time understanding what the Council is saying.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Thank you, Debbe. I think we have to remember, number 1, to talk into the microphone, and see if that helps us. That might be one thing. I know we are having our interpreters move the phone -- you can't hear me? Go ahead, Debbe.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I'm hearing no sound coming from the Council. The interpreter is currently interpreting from the CART, not from the sound.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. So the interpreter should be hearing and called in. Can they not hear through the conference call-in line, that what you're saying?

>> INTERPRETER: We can hear you, Sean, we can hear you, but we kind of lost everybody else.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Okay. Can we do a quick mic check for those folks that are in the room? Mary, can you see if your mic is working?

>> MARY HODGES: Hi. This is Mary. Can you hear me?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: I can hear now.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. Can you hear me? This is Karen. Can you hear me?

>> INTERPRETER: Debbe is indicating slightly.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen, but I'm really raising my voice. Oh, no, you did something. Better? Is it better now?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: This is Gina. Can you hear me?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Cory, can you talk into the mic?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Hello. Hello. Hello. Can you hear me good?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I think we just need to talk into the microphones deliberately. Maybe that might help.

Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Okay. So in Glenna's absence, I'll resume.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. So is there anyone out there --

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I have something to add. While I understand Tom came to explain to us about this great product and everything, I still think that was not appropriate for public comment. I just need to say that, and I think that maybe a different platform, a different time, a different place, another group would be good, but this is not -- public comments are not open for sales pitch. So please remember that next time.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I would tend to agree. That would probably be better for the expo that we've been talking about having, where we would invite any vendor that wanted to maybe advertise for something like that.

I think what Tom is presenting, and with ASL Anywhere sounds awesome, but there -- it essentially sounds to me like -- and Tom, if you're still online, you can just give me a yes or no if I'm correct, but that it's essentially just VRI on demand, but there's still a lot of places like with FEMA and other agencies, public agencies where they should be paying for it and not the individual. So I would be concerned that it would perpetuate the idea that the deaf person is responsible for paying their access to communication and not the agency. And it's really the agency's responsibility to pay.

So while I think that's great, one idea that may be good for your company is to maybe reach out to different agencies for them to create an account where they could communicate with people that are deaf or hard of hearing.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. I just want us to be really clear that we don't really have any parameters about what is and is not public comments, and so I appreciate what everyone is saying, but is there any particular mandate that people can or cannot say something about a product that's been helpful or something that they're launching? I mean, you know, we don't want it to be sales pitches, but is there any actual prohibition from the Department of Health's perspective that somebody could get on and say we've developed this?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I think, Karen, I think the point that we come from a mutual perspective or mutual standpoint, we will show favoritism -- neutral perspective or neutral standpoint, we show favoritism, and if we had time, we could invite XYZ and everybody else could come in and but we need to advertise for that.

>> I actually came on my own, so I apologize if you felt like this was a sales pitch from my perspective. I came voluntarily to share this information because I felt like it was very important, especially with the

communication that we have out there and all the barriers.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Just a minute, Tom, but when you come in --

>> Like hurricane, doctors' appointments, or just, you know, mechanic, but I will -- I'm so sorry if this was not the right place. Me as a deaf person who lives in Florida, I just wanted you to be aware of this.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: But you're talking about you want us to help connect your company to other places, and that's where it becomes a sales pitch and not information.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I'm not sure I heard that request. I just heard him sharing information, and as a member of the public and a member of the deaf community, I think you can share what you feel like you need to share. The Council is not able to -- let me finish, please -- the Council is not able to take a position on somebody's private business. That's -- I think there's a policy about that. We're not allowed to do that. But if somebody wanted to say, look, this is what I've come up with, this is my idea, I think it would really help the deaf community, they can certainly, as a member of the public, tell us that, just like they can tell us that things aren't going well in, you know, the Keys, or they're not going well in the panhandle, or we need more services. I think that we can hear information but we don't have to take a position on it and we can remain neutral, is what I'm saying. But I welcome this information. It was good information to have. So that's my only point.

I don't see us taking any position one way or the other. We are not allowed to connect businesses to businesses. That might be something, when we're having our -- that has come up before when we were having our expo of who can sponsor and who can't sponsor, that kind of thing.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: If we can agree to disagree, there's nothing wrong with what you're stating.

There's nothing wrong with Tom's product and showing and saying information, but it still reeks of sales pitch and I don't think that public comment is the appropriate time.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Public comment is the time for people to share their concerns and issues, and when we discuss public comments, we look for solutions, so what he is talking about is a solution is another way to look at it, a solution, and that's not -- it does not obligate us to do anything at all.

>> CINDY SIMON: I just want to say that he did ask permission to do this. He was given permission to do this, and so this is at the right of the Chair to decide. I'm not disagreeing with you, but he did ask permission and was told he could do it. So I just want to make note of that before he feels like he did something wrong. He asked. And he was told yes. Whether or not any of us agree becomes a moot point, because he was given permission.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Is there anyone on the conference call or on Zoom or in the audience that wants to share public comments?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I do have a question. This is Karen. I remember a few years ago when I came to -- before I was on Council, I came and I observed, and I think we had one of the original Council members in attendance at that same one, and he had shared that when the Council was originally put together, the hope was that all of these people on the Council would come together and be able to discuss the concerns for persons in Florida, right, from their different perspectives and organizations that they were representing. But, you know, as I've come to the meeting several times, I've wondered about representation from areas in Florida rather than just organizations. Does that make sense? Like, if we did a Florida map, do we on the Council actually represent or get information to share with one another about what's happening in the Panhandle, what's happening in, you know, the keys, what's happening, you know, in Central Florida, as much as we could to be effective and getting that information from those folks and then on to the legislature. I've thought about this a lot, and I often have wondered, is there a way to do that, such as assigning a region, let's say, to a couple of Council members. I don't know if that's a good idea or something to even ponder about.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Interesting you mentioned that because FAD was discussing the same thing, because we have fewer and fewer deaf clubs, there are the original members of the Board, and so many of them have closed, and they had discussed the idea of changing to like a regional type of thing, but we haven't gone anywhere with that. NAD is set up to have regional representatives so that the whole of the U.S. is represented. I don't know how -- we would have to totally change the statute to do that because it's based on organizations, representation rather than locations. Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: All I was going to say is we are open to public comment and concerns, maybe what we need to do is find contacts in each of those areas where we can push, okay, we're having a meeting. We want to know what your concerns and your needs are. Please share and join in our public comment or give it to us and we'll bring it up there. So that would be one way to do it without having to change and head up, like, local CIL or something like that for each area.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, my -- I don't think we would need to change the statute. I just wonder if, as a council, we can decide that we might help better by kind of dividing into regions a little bit to just reach out. I mean, even as an experiment to see if -- you know, if that would do anything. I just -- I don't know that other people -- I mean, we do public comments every time, but I don't know that people have the ability or time to come to these meetings. Gina was waiting first.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Go ahead.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I have a few copies of this if somebody wants it, but this is a map of CIL advocacy and support for the State of Florida. It's center for independent living. I'm also on the State Council for Independent Living. As Glenna mentioned before, there used to be many, many, many deaf and hard of hearing centers around the State of Florida. Most of them have closed their doors. There's a handful, at best, in the State of Florida. What I can say is the centers of independent living have picked that area up. There are usually somebody that works with people that are deaf or hard of hearing in each of the centers for independent living. That is one thing that we should look to in the future for when we have our meetings, is invite people from these CILs to public comment, in the future maybe make that an action item, or if we're meeting in Tallahassee or something, make sure that Ability First is contacted, because they're the CIL that covers Leon, Wakulla, Gadsden, Madison, Taylor and Jefferson County. Also, Disability Resource Center in Panama City covers the other towns just west of it. But this map basically breaks down the entire State of Florida for all the CILs that cover that. And included in independent living is working with people that are deaf or hard of hearing.

So I think that can probably help handle that in a lot of ways. And remember, because I'm on the council for both, I can kind of be a liaison between the two.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: But not every CIL has a deaf/hard-of-hearing program. There's only about eight or ten, that's all, right?

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I don't know that everyone does, but most of them have somebody or somebody they can contact. I know when I was at the CIL conference last week, I sat with a group of a lot of the different CIL organizations and deaf and hard-of-hearing service people that work with them.

So even if they don't have one in their center, they can connect with somebody in another center, and that's our support.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Gina.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I wanted to say in terms of discussing what time to present it, it was great information. As he was presenting it, I loaded up the app, tried it out to see what it was all about because I thought he was sharing information that would help us to be able to help the community. And I think that where it got maybe misunderstood was when the question came up about are you marketing to sell it to other companies. Then it became more like a business contract, and that's when I asked Sean, I says you know what, Tom would be a great presenter, not necessarily a public commenter, but a great presenter, that maybe

in one of our other meetings, we could invite him to come and share in full the information that he has about, and give all the pros and cons, et cetera. That's just my two cents on it. Because like I say, it started off really good and I thought it was great information. No different than when we had the deaf person with the travel agency, the cruisers doing cruises. It was great information that we could have as to what a deaf person is doing himself, you know, and that's important. I mean, to see the success a deaf person has in whatever field they've chosen. Go ahead, I'm sorry. I'm talking too much.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Also, founded by a deaf person, deaf -- deaf people have their own business, it was founded by deaf people.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: That's my point. That was my point.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I wanted to go back to the CIL. I think that it's great that you went to the conference recently. I would like a copy of whatever you have. You said you have a few copies of those. I would love to see it. If there are deaf service centers closing and deaf representatives at CIAs not as available, like they've gotten to about eight there is what I'm hearing, I'd like to know why. What's going on? Where's the root cause of that, that we're shutting things down? And is that ultimately in the best interests of our deaf and hard-of-hearing community in Florida? And if it's a funding issue or if it's a lack of use issue or whatever the issue is, we ought to be informing the legislature so that they can be aware that perhaps the needs are not being met appropriately for Florida's deaf/hard-of-hearing community.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Like I said, I have several more if anybody wants a copy of it. We had a conference last week for centers for independent living throughout the State of Florida. When I talk about the deaf or hard-of-hearing centers that have closed in the State of Florida, that's over the last 20 years or so. It's the economic trend that everybody's trying to do more with less and combine things into different agencies and things like that, and a lot of deaf and hard-of-hearing centers have had to close their doors. So this has been one of the ways that it's been handled so that people that are deaf or hard of hearing are still getting services, just in a different place.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Or are they? That's the question. I'm just concerned that the people who are not -- may not be aware that services are being cut, and we ought to be representing them to say, look, we've seen this trend over the last 20 years, that there's been a lot of funding or services being cut, why is this happening, and this is ultimately in the best interests of the deaf/hard-of-hearing community in Florida, or is it cost-saving measures only? I think that's why the Council exists, is so that we can advise. That you're going to keep cutting these services, but these folks are falling through the cracks, and it's getting worse.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Tom?

>> Okay. Can you hear me? This is Tom. As a deaf person here in Florida, I do want to emphasize the importance of the CIL. I have seen the reduction of services. It's not the CIL's fault. It's technology, like ill mentioned with the FTRID providing equipment, they would go to the CIL to get services, and now we don't have that available equipment because TTY is only relying on land lines, and people don't use that anymore. And so many of the services are closing their doors, and that's why it's so important that we look at the legislature and look at the society as well. Technology is changing. We need to improve our laws to be able to provide better services to the deaf community, again, to grow and open services again, or have better technology to support the deaf and their needs, as it is right now.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Tom, thank you. With the Deaf Service Center, one of the original ways they used to support themselves is that they provide interpreters, and the deaf service centers got paid and then it changed when interpreters went out and were independent, set up their own agencies, and so they lost them, plus we had the technology changes. And then plus the funding that would come from the county, or United Way, or something like that, but also the Deaf community in part did not do enough to support the deaf service centers to go visit United Way, to go visit as a way to show support for deaf service centers. So a lot of the problem is that the deaf community does not really advocate enough for themselves in a political way like other disability communities have become really smart in advocating in a political way, and the deaf community has not done that. First of all, we have the barrier of communication right there, so it's a lot of different things that happen, but basically, it's money.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Or we don't unify in the fact that hard-of-hearing people don't advocate with people that are culturally deaf that use American Sign Language, with people that are deaf or hard of hearing -- I mean, people that are deaf blind. Audiologists all unifying together and advocating at one, I think there would be a lot more power. That's just my personal opinion for the deaf and hard-of-hearing community. So that's something to consider.

Back to Karen's point about identifying the needs, first I would say that we have to identify the people that need services, and the best way that we can do that is update these statistics that we have that say how many people that are deaf or hard-of-hearing in the State of Florida. So that link that I shared for the survey, that's just for educational and research purposes only. That's what we're supposed to be doing here as a council. So I certainly encourage everybody to share that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: What you mentioned about different groups not supporting each other or come together,



that was one reason for the idea of the 2024 expo, to try to pull together all those groups, and, you know, build something from that.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Yeah. Tom, I hope you get this, but I just wanted to say thank you for the information that you shared. We are certainly not trying to scare you away from the Council by any means. It was a lot of really good information about a product and a deaf business within the State of Florida. I think what Cory was just saying that more should have been a presentation outside of public comment, and public comment should just more be for issues that particular consumers have. Maybe as Glenna mentioned, we could in the future talk about having you discuss that more as a presentation outside of public comment. That's all. That's all. Kudos to you for what you're doing.

>> Thank you. Thank you.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I'm in agreement with what Chris said.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All right. Any other public comments?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I do have a statement. This is Karen. When we're going to certain areas, I know that Glenna, you had said you posted something. But oftentimes we don't see very many people come in for the public comments, and I think maybe we could be doing more to encourage people to come out. And I'm not sure what that "more" thing is, but there's, you know, a "more" thing that's needed.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yeah. The one time that it was really successful was in St. Augustine, because I asked friends in St. Augustine that I knew that were retired, so I got to one guy, Andy Lange, and he had influence as a former leader, so I knew that he would help, so that really worked really good because that's what we -- but the thing is hopefully now with Angie on board, as soon as we find out the hotel and as soon as we set up the agenda, the earlier we can promote because so often we're so close to the time that by the time we get all the information, it's tough to get on the people's calendar to make time to come. February in Tallahassee. There's very few people -- a lot of people that live in Tallahassee area, but still the CIL in Tallahassee, right? We can invite them to come.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Yeah.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And maybe CIL can help lobby CIL to get their clients to come, and that would be one way to do it. Cory?

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Glenna, there's a lot more deaf people in Tallahassee than you know. But a lot more -- there are a lot more people in Tallahassee than you know, because I lived there for the last nine years.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So you bring them. You get the word out there.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I'll try my best. I'll try my best. But I understand what you mean, getting more people to come to the meetings again, which we'll each have that obligation, you know, when we post the meeting to have more people come.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And I was going to try to pull somebody from the Florida Deaf Artists Show. My idea was like, oh, they can come and present and have a display of artwork that would get people to come. Oh, we can come see the artwork and we can come do public comments at the same time, or at that time maybe we can get somebody to do an entertainment. Oh, come see the entertainment, stay for public comments. Something, you know, we got food, whatever. Business meetings, so let's just find something to draw people in. Cindy.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I've been saying for years that it's everybody's responsibility in here to let the people in the State of Florida know where we are having the meetings, when we are having the meetings. That's why it's so important that we get the agenda as soon as possible so we can spread that on social media. But also, it really needs to be the responsibility of the Department of Health office to help share that information. There is an E-mail address for the Florida Association for the Deaf, and Angie, if you were not aware of it, you need to know about it, the E-blast site for the Florida Association for the Deaf. There are different people in the State of Florida that need to be contacted with HLAA and different chapters around the state, so there are other members that are not part of the -- on the Suncoast, but there are other national members outside of Central Florida that need to be reached out to. There are so many groups that we just need to regularly contact before we have our quarterly meetings. And like I said, that's the responsibility of everybody here. The last thing -- I'm sorry. The last thing I want to say is one of the things that was most interesting about being on this Council, I was invited to speak at a council meeting like, you know, 12, 14 years ago, and I went to the first meeting. It was in Miami. And it was a room like this, a big room. The public comment section in the back was standing room only with people waiting to make comments. That was really exciting to see that. And people talking about all the problems with effective communication, and some people had ideas for solutions and things like that. That's what's important. That's what we're here to do. And if we're not doing that, we're missing something.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Gina first, and then Cindy.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Along the lines that Chris was saying, the one thing that's important to get the public to come out is if the public can see that we're effective. And in order for them to see that we're effective, we've gotta be able to say what their businesses are, have come through here, we've gotta be able

to say how many action items the DOH receives, and of all the action items, we see 80 percent were resolved, 75 percent of the people were happy, you know, something to show that the Council is actually educating and it's making a difference.

You know, it's one thing to say we're advising and educating, but if we're advising and educating and nobody's listening, then that's not effective. And so if we can show that we are being effective, I think more people will become involved. But nobody wants to come and just -- hear something that's old news. You know, we've gotta be more vibrant and more involved in what this community is doing. I think it's a great idea to be able to advertise, but to be able to highlight deaf people who are successful. Like you saw on YouTube, the deaf person that became a millionaire. Who knows that? I mean, he came up with his own creative idea and became a millionaire, so -- do you know him? Is he a personal friend?

So anyway, that's all I'm saying, just -- don't make me laugh. I'm trying to be serious. Okay. To be able to show that we are an effective council.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I'm not sure if people become millionaires, if that shows we're an effective council or not. I would like to see us being a little more effective. I think one person did share that they come to meetings all the time. This is some years back. And it just seems like there's the same discussion over and over again. And I think we have the potential to be very effective. I just -- I'm not sure what we need to do. I think we need more people on the Council. We've been dwindling and the number of seats go vacant. Some of that has -- a lot of that has to do with the appointments office not being able to get those appointments processed in a timely manner, but are we doing enough to recruit and encourage people to apply for a seat on the Council with these groups, and, you know, I think we're really close to the line of not having enough people. But, you know, that's my --

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: So this has been an issue for years and we've tried to contact people, the deaf and hard-of-hearing centers that announce it. I think we need to push more there, and while we've had informative speakers here, maybe as we travel around, obviously the largest places when there's heavy-duty issues, Miami picks it up, Tampa picks it up, but what if we found a local group that did something, whether it be art or acting or dance and had them come, and they contact their people who all want to see them perform, and that might bring in the people, and they go, wow! They're really reaching out to us and that could be a nice thing to do, nice for us, and nice for them.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Another effective thing is to have -- I know I'm -- some particular weeks and some

particular months, but like suppose if we have meeting during NAD meeting here, we could attract more people coming in, and more comments, or if we have a meeting near the time that HLAA had their meeting, their conference.

I remember once when I served the National Black Deaf Advocates, we had our meeting, our board meeting during the NAD, Kentucky at that time, I think it was 2010. So those are the kind of things, you know, but we're kind of restricted with our meeting schedule, according to our bylaws. But if we could have some flex around that, maybe that would be a way we could pull people in for public comments.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Two things. Back in April, I went to a local meeting deaf expo, and had a free table, and I put out the public comment form, and I got 16 comments which I read in the May meeting, and that worked really good. Along with the -- December 10th Deaf OPI will be meeting -- Sawgrass Mills, a huge shopping mall, but they have a separate building for expo. It's free food. So I want to ask FCCDHH to have a booth there. I can go there. I'm free, I live right there. No travel, whatever, and I can just sit there and just gather public comments and hand out things, and that will get a lot because that kind of thing probably will get 1 or 2,000 deaf people there. DSA, Deaf Seniors of America, they're having their national conference in Hollywood the last week of June. I don't know how much the booth is, but it costs money, something, we could do the same thing there, and they already have 700 signed. 200 them are from Florida, so we will get plenty of Florida people to come. So those that are ones that are coming up that we can do. And yes, we can be flexible with the schedule because the bylaws says at least four times a year. And it does not block us from being able to do more to have a meeting, board meeting. Debbe and I are going to be there at DSA already anyway. Cindy lives near there. So we can be flexible and try different ways instead of staying with just the four amazing for public comment. We can go out there and gather public comment, too. Who's first? Anybody online? Debbe, did you have something to say? Debbe.

>> DEBBE HAGNER: One of the things of the Florida Coordinating Council was we're supposed to be a commission. Karen wanted to investigate the pros and cons for being a commission versus a council. We were supposed to invite somebody from Minnesota, and I don't know whatever happened to that, but that would be interesting to see if we can possibly go back to the legislature and see if we can -- the commission and see if we get a better turnout, if that would be better than a council, because the council can't do much. And I don't know if that's because we have a negative reputation or what.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Thank you, Debbe. Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: I just want to say we have been flexible. What was that meeting in Tallahassee, Chris,

remember when there was deaf and blind and they ran out of the ALDs for the room, they ran out of the hotel kits, and those people did not show to public comment. And we were in the same hotel together.

Remember that one?

We also never went back to the hotel because like Chris had reserved a set of devices, and they gave it out to other people, and they wouldn't go get it from another hotel, so we said no more. I still think if we do something that invites the local group to come in, they will draw the people in for us and get excited.

We talked about having a local politician come in and see, and maybe that would bring in as well, you know, put him in there and let him listen to other people come in and tell them we have someone to listen. So those are just two ideas.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: And also, with Glenna's passing out the public comments forms, or whoever, it's on the booth, maybe we can offer if you actually personally show up, you get a free gift, and that free gift could be a simple little swag bag, it could be a pin, it could be a free hearing test by the world's best audiologist. I mean, we can offer something, information. We can have little information bag from each organization, a little swag bag that tells what the Elder Association is doing, what audiology, you know, that kind of thing, information bag. They would be surprised, you know, what kind of representation is here.

>> MARY HODGES: I think we've got some really good comments. I want to build on several them. First, it's really difficult sometimes for people to travel and be physically present at meetings. I like the idea of having the various tentacles in the communities, like the centers for independent living and the different associations and especially the idea of actually having an ongoing mechanism for people to give public input on issues that they're encountering, and be able to, you know, identify where those folks are in the state, as Karen was saying. It's a political thing, because if I'm a representative and there are folks in my district that have issues, and they're, you know, more apt to listen, and maybe try and make some adjustments or changes for those people.

So I think there's some value in working with the centers for independent living, because they do have the direct contact with folks. You know, we're -- folks around the table aren't necessarily involved one-on-one a lot with people, you may hear, but at least -- I mean, if you got 16 comments from somebody in writing, those are folks who may not be able to physically show up some place but they want to be heard, they want their voices heard. They want their issues known. And we can, as a council, know about those things and advocate for those people in a way that it matters to people who represent them, or are supposed to be representing them, pushing that information up, that is to the legislature. I think that would be effective as

well.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Do we still have the ability to take and collect public comments on our Web site?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Web site does not have any interaction, but Facebook does, where people do ask questions on Facebook. But it's not the same as public comment. They're looking for help or --

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: We used to be able, through the FCCDHH Web site, have people type in a public comment, and then even if we had an empty room, we had, you know, a handful or more of public comments to read off of different issues around the state. And we should certainly have that.

The other thing I was going to say is when I was talking about that meeting in South Florida, where it was standing room only, you know, that was more than ten years ago, and way before Zoom, and a lot of the other technology that we have available to us now. So certainly if we're meeting here in Orlando, if we have somebody in Pensacola or Miami that has an issue that is not able to join us here in person, they should be able to do like Tom is doing right now and join us on Zoom and make their comment, and I think one of the things that Tom said in the very early comments he made was he was not very well aware of us meeting here, and that he wanted to be here.

And so we have to do a better job of making sure that people know that we're here. And then we become more effective.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Tom. Tom. Go ahead. Yes.

>> So yes. I agree. I think it is very important to be bringing people in. You said what, ten years ago, and then look how technology has changed in the last ten years. As a deaf person, I see a huge difference. Deaf people have different interests, different hobbies than they did years ago, different things that they enjoy doing. When there's a good workshop, a presenter, a different event, that typically brings in a big crowd, and you can have even a meeting right there. But just to have a meeting, people may not go out of the their way to come. You know, a change in behavior, like I said, we've got kind of a different cultures -- that's why I think that it's important that you're having the dialogue, and I'm very excited to work with you, it makes a difference. Make changes, and this could be exciting again. Like I said, I used to go to the FCCDHH meetings before and enjoyed sharing information, and I do think it's important, but I just see more -- I see the statistics. I see the numbers, and if there's no presentation or information to share, that may -- that's my feedback.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Thank you, Tom. That's exactly my point.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Tom, are you a member of FAD?

>> Yes.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Okay. So we have an opening for a representative from FAD. If you could apply to the Council, that would be a huge step up.

>> Sure! I'd be happy to do that. Like I said, I love the State of Florida, and I've been gone for a couple of years and now I'm back. And I'm motivated. I talked to Glenna. I said there is no FCCDHH? I want to bring things back, I want to see the growth within -- absolutely.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: FAD will have a meeting November 19. I'll be there and I'll make sure to bring up the issue of needing a second representative, and I guess I will go ahead and mention Tom's name, right? Okay! Got a live one!

>> I will actually be there myself anyway, yes!

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Right. Right.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. So, you know, I really love when we have these discussions because you can see the passion in everyone's eyes. It's just like people get motivated. We get excited about what we're talking about, what we can do. Glenna, I love your idea about reaching out to representatives in those areas. I think after the election next week already, I think it is, and we'll have an idea of who we need to reach out to, and we ought to start doing it right away, and getting us, you know, out there and inviting them when we're in the area to come.

And I like Mary's idea of having -- I don't know if you used the word tentacles, I think you did, of reaching out in to different regions and, connecting with CIL and see what's happening there. I just love that idea.

I would love for us to feel we're being productive, and that the community feels we're being productive. I do recall when Megan Callahan was our DOH representative or liaison, that she would present in her section who's contacted the office, or the -- what am I thinking of -- what do you call it, whatever it is, but she would often say, so and so from another one, this area, from that area, they've contacted us, and they have these questions.

At some point, and this, we can think about how we want to do this, it's important to get feedback from the community about how we are perceived as effective or not as effective. We need to do that so that we can grow as council and improve as a council, make sure we're meeting the needs of the community to the best that we can.

We have talked over the years about we would -- wouldn't it be great if Florida had a commission that had a little more say. Well, you know what, I think we may have inadvertently chained our ankles to the floor -- I

just finished watching that floor on Hulu, "The Patient" -- but anyway, I think we have inadvertently locked ourselves in and we feel like, well, there's not a lot we can do, but gosh darn it, there is a lot we can do, and I can see it just in this room today and with the folks on Zoom, that passion and desire to want to do more for our state and for our -- the community that we represent. And I think that we can. It's wonderful when we get together like this, and I get fired up each time, and -- I don't know, I kind of wanted to share that.

>> This is Tom. I'm Karen, I wanted to address you real quick.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So everything we discussed requires money, like swag bag, in the bylaws and in the statutes, we do have the right to fund raise. We've never really done that, and I know I've asked several times before, how do we do that? How do we collect the money? How do we have -- we deposit the money? And we need that information before we can do any kind of fundraising and finding sponsors. Like hearing aid companies, sure, we can ask them for money, but we need to know the DOH rules for being able to fund raise it because we had the right to do that all along and stopped. We never were informed how are we allowed to do that, how do we collect the money? How do we deposit? How do we spend it? And so we need that information ASAP so we can follow through with the ideas that we've been bringing up today. Cindy, then Mary, then Cory. Oh, no, and then Tom. And Chris. Okay. Cindy, Mary, Cory, Chris, Tom.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Oh, my gosh, Sean had his hand up. Don't do that, don't do that.

>> CINDY SIMON: Maybe we can just go around.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All right.

>> CINDY SIMON: So I wonder, number 1, what you said was correct, we have received in the past, so again it depends who's sitting in your position, as part of the report, they have a log of every phone call that's come in, and what was the question, and what were they told, as well as if they communicated with us and we were able to help, just like I think you sent me a question once and I responded.

So I think that's what you're talking about, so you can really see how many calls come in. Can we do something exciting on our Web site that's inviting to the deaf and hard-of-hearing, deaf blind community, late deafened community to come in and put questions there, but make it exciting and say this month, here's the questions that came in and here are your answers, and get them involved in it and looking at it, and then they'll see when we have a meeting because you'll have a little thing, by the way, our next council meeting is, give us your questions now or come join us, and ask your questions in person for immediate answers. So maybe we can do that, get the community involved in coming to our site and seeing it and passing it on to others. Wow, I put a question there and I got an answer. You can go there, too, and then other people do



it and it snowballs.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Mary.

>> MARY HODGES: I'm going to pass.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I love the idea of Tom joining as a representative of FAD. I think great motivation I'm seeing from him. I think it's great. But I think also that while we're on the topic of getting more people in and while we're doing stuff, I think it's also important that some of us council members get together and make sure our house is together, meaning our connections with the governor's office, our connections with the things -- the basic things that we do. We need to have our house together before we start opening up and say hey, everybody, wait a minute, wait a minute, wait a minute. We don't have a good connection with the governor's office yet. We need to get the procedures good. We need to have -- Sean and them talked about doing a guide book for new members that come in. I need to be savvy with the budget.

You know, we have so many little things that we need to do. So maybe that time in between meetings we use that time constructively by meeting and saying okay, let's get stuff done, and then when we come back to our meeting in February, our house is a little shinier. Ajax has been here. You know what I'm saying? You know what I'm saying? I'm not saying that we're running ragged. We're not. We're not. And I'm not saying anything about DOH at all. But there are some things that we need to get together. We've all recognized that. But it's like after we go home from the meeting, we just go back into our lives and everything. I know I'm busy, I do that, but I'm just thinking, when I'm coming here, when I'm driving here, oh, wow, there's so many things we need to get done, you know.

So let's do that as the same time, put the passion that we have with our recruiting and we want to grow. Let's also remember that same fire for making sure that our connections are good and true so that when Tom gets ready to come in, Tom can come in with a really smooth transition, you know what I'm saying? You know. So that's my two cents.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I have a request. This is kind of for the DOH office, I guess, Angie, Sean, let me know your input on this, but can we look into making sure that people can submit public comment online, create an E-mail address, a link on the Web site or something like that so that they can put it in so that we have it for the next meeting? I mean, that's something that's dropped off since COVID, really, because we used to have that ability. And I don't know why we don't have that anymore. Somewhere that got lost in the shuffle. All we've done in the pandemic and everything, and changes in personnel, but I really think that would help us get more public comment, and like everybody said, the best way is the in-person

communication with the public, but in lieu of that, having public comment that people can submit by E-mail would be a great thing to do.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I want to piggyback on -- I thought it was a great suggestion that Glenna made about having an artist or dance group or somebody as part of -- as one of our presenters. And I'm thinking if we had a local deaf artist as one of our presenters, and then the opportunity for the public comment people to get that piece of art, even if it's just a replication, that might be a real draw because they need to see people that are successful, that are creative, that are local, you know, it could be a deaf baker. He brings cupcakes, you know. Anybody that could show that they have contributed, and then have the public comments people have an opportunity to partake of that.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I wish I thought that -- in Orlando I tried to contact -- next week they're doing an event here called ASL Slam, and that ASL Slam is poetry in ASL is what it is. FDAS was helping to promote it. But it was someone else. I can't think of the name, but that's -- we could have invited him. He could explain about what is ASL Slam, and then a demonstration, and we could tell people, hey, come see him for free.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: What time is the break? 4:00! Oh, my gosh! I am so sorry! We are way past the time for our break because we got so involved in the discussion with ideas and everything. All right. We need to take a break right now! And then we soon have to close because we stop at 5:00. All right. It's 4:23.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I'm so happy we forgot about the time. When we watch the time, it drags out.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: 4:23, is the interpreter, CART okay with ten-minute break? Okay. So we'll be back at 4:33, and be back on time. We have not done good at being back on time today! Me included.

[Ten-minute break].

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. 4:33. On time! Okay. She came up to me with a question. She gave me another idea. We invite people, and usually people who are experts or from an organization and so forth, why not invite the Deaf community to present, not just do public comments.

Okay. Are we all connected now? Yes? All right. So to get the Deaf community more involved, why not invite them as presenters. For example, deaf blind, we can have a panel. We can have a panel of deaf blind that can show how they communicate and their unique issues, we can see how to support SSPs -- they have a new name, co-navigator.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Co-navigator.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yeah. We can invite a panel. But I happen to know there are several that live in The

Villages. We can invite, when we're in South Florida, we can invite a panel of Hispanic deaf, you know, their unique frustration, you know, get one in Spanish or trilingual interpreters. And they will have the panel and they can bring their friends and come see, and then they stay afterwards for the public comments. So that's another way to do it.

I mentioned ASL Slam, and I thought it was next week. Gina found, no, it's tonight and tomorrow.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: 9:00 is free online.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: At 9:00 free online. Okay. So if you could E-mail the link, send it to Sean to send out to us, and those of us who are still awake at 9:00.

>> CINDY SIMON: But can you explain what that is?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: I have no idea. It was interpreting. Now, I pretty much highly doubt it because ASL Slam is very unique poetry. It's very heavy visual on the signs, but heavy visual imagery type of things, so many times they tend not to be interpreted.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Sunshine 2.0 from NTID did an ASL slam during SERID. And of course I missed it. But it has a really huge audience, and people really loved it. And again, yeah, that's the ASL, people come up and they pull the audience and how you get involved in the music, and it was really good. Really good.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Sunshine 2.0 is now being directed by Fred Beam who is from Tampa, Florida, and I know that he goes home to Tampa once in a while, so maybe we can get him to come perform -- present. Present, and that would be a real draw.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I have his text. Let me know if you need it.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Oh, great! Karen.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I'm looking at the Web site for ASL Slam right now, and it says the poetry club meets on November 7th for an event, and then November 18th. I don't see any event for tonight.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I'm sending it to Sean now.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Oh, that would be great, because is it something in Orlando?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: It's online.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Oh, so this is in person. Maybe that's the difference.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: The live one is tomorrow. The online is tonight on Zoom.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I definitely want to see it.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Maybe I'll get my group. Okay. We need to wrap up because time is running out.

Before we had a break, we were talking about the Web site. Will they be able to figure out a way to have

public comments posted in the Web site?

>> SEAN ISAAC: We did not figure out a way over the break, but we will definitely take that back to our folks to see if that's something they can do.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: All right.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Glenna, I do have a few more comments when you get a minute.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: That's what I was going to say, next, do you have anything you need to say before we wrap up at 5:00? One thing I'm disappointed is that we did not finish the report. So tomorrow, we have a presentation, and tomorrow 9:15 to 10:15 was supposed to be the bylaws. I think it's more important that we finish the report, and ask, demand, beg, beg, please, do your homework tonight. Read through the rest of the report, write down your comments, and editing, and editing. And then Cindy is going to try to do a summary of the law about OTC. We're not going to do pro/cons on the summary of the law about OTC because it's 52 pages long. I want to really focus on editing. I don't want to start -- we're running out of the time. It takes time to get the final report typed up and get it printed and get it back from the printers, and find pictures and blah, blah, blah, blah. That's why we try to have it printed so we could pass it out by February, better January.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: I promise to be quiet.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Debbe had her hand up.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Debbe?

>> DEBBE HAGNER: Hi. This is Debbe. I just wanted to let you know that The Villages is having the NTID Alumni Night and also this weekend, this weekend is having their pickle ball tournament. There's over 200 deaf people participating in the pickle ball.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Yeah. I'm going. When this is finished, I'm going. Yes. Over 200 people live in The Villages and there will be over 200 players coming from all over the states, and tomorrow night's supposed to be some kind of social. I won't talk up FCCDHH, of course.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: What's pickle ball?

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Pickle ball is half tennis, half ping pong. It's a smaller court than tennis, but it uses a larger ping pong paddle with a ball that looks more like a whiffle ball. It's a ball that has holes in it. I learned to play it because my community opened up new ones, and then it kind of fell through, so I'm looking for other deaf players.

Anyway, we have 20 minutes left. Sean needs to wrap up things. Cindy.

>> CINDY SIMON: I'll make this really quick. One more thing I just thought of to get people to do this, maybe we can have a monthly featuring the community volunteer, someone who has been a citizen advocate for deaf and hard of hearing, and feature somebody once a month, and that might -- and take in people who represent others, and maybe that would get people looking at it, joining us, and when they see their friend on the front of our Web site as, you know, Advocate Of the Month, that could work and bring people to us.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: An Advocate Award type of thing.

>> ANGELA GREEN: Mary's report is in there as well for you guys to review for the biennial report. I just wanted to let everybody know that so you can review that one as well this evening.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Okay. Sean.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Thank you so much, Glenna. So many things you all have presented today. It's pretty exciting. I mean, I love the passion. I know that sometimes we disagree on certain things, but it's because we represent so many communities, and I don't think that's a bad thing. I think it's a good place to talk about those differences.

We struggle and think about who presents at these meetings for some of the very reasons you all have talked about today. We don't want this to be a public forum for infomercials, but at the same time, there so much public bidding, things that people are doing in the private sector, I should say. So thank you for your comments. That helps us. There is no written rule on that particular issue other than the fact that from what we've heard today, folks cannot promote their own personal biases, and we can't pick winners and losers here at this sector, but we do need to present some of the great things that are being done in the private sector, because it's a public -- so we appreciate that comment, I appreciated it, and I always like to hear passion. Always very interesting.

In addition, please send us listservs or E-mails or whatever we need to communicate this need to the public. We can take those. I have never received those. So Chris, please, share that with us, whatever those listservs and E-mails are. If you all have some different ones from your agency, or whoever, that is a simple thing that we can do. In addition, we've talked about trying to publicize the locations or the city of the meetings. We are working day and night, I should say, to locate the hotels, since you all have that information earlier, but as far as the cities, we can do that ASAP. We can do that quickly. And so if you have E-mails or listservs or whatever that we need to be privy to, please let us know. Okay? Please. I did also want to ask you all, do you send this information to your groups? Because I'm hoping that that's something that you all are doing as well when it comes to the new city that we're going to be meeting in,

because that's something that we would like for you all to continue to do. And are you doing that on Facebook as well? That something that is being done on Facebook? And I'll let you guys answer this tomorrow, I guess, or today later.

There's so many -- when you guys get into a group, talking about how to make the committee and the Council more impactful, I just -- I don't want to talk during those times, but I heard there were a lot of different questions that were close to the department. So number one, we are keeping track of all the folks that contact the agency. We keep a list of that. Angie's done a great job of listing that, and she can present some of that -- she can present those questions, the dates, the categories of that. When they contact us, though, often they're providing personal information, so we can't provide that, of course, but as far as the information and the different questions, that's certainly something that she's done a great job of listing. We present that at different times during the meeting. I was thinking that we do that usually the second day, Glenna, because that was usually the more business time frame. But this particular agenda was changed a bit, and so I don't think we had it ready for today, but we will have it ready for tomorrow to present to the Council. Okay?

The letters that you all asked us to present, Cathy did a great job in working with the hotel to print those up and provide that to everybody here, so they should be in front of you, the different letters. So please take an opportunity to look at those, and if you have questions or concerns or suggestions, please, make those available.

And then we definitely need -- there is definitely an opportunity to provide roles for the council during the meeting, as well as between meetings, because there are certain things that we -- that you all have commented on today that we do have an issue with and we do repeat, and that we can correct. Like Cory said, put our house a little bit more in order. Certainly during the end of the day, I think one thing we have to remember to have a time limit, and then we can have someone to kind of enforce the rules of not talking over one another, because you guys get so passionate. We get so passionate, and at the end of the day, we get so tired and those Robert's Rules get forgotten at the end of the day. Our wonderful contractors do the best that they can to keep up, but it gets difficult for them. Okay? So just keep that in mind.

And then like I said before, public comment, we'll definitely take a look at that as far as what we can do on the Web site. Okay?

>> CINDY SIMON: Do you have -- the letters are not in our packet, right? So do you have the letters that are completed?

>> SEAN ISAAC: During the last break, we provided the letters to you all. They should be in front of you.

>> ANGELA GREEN: There's a big packet of paper left together.

>> CINDY SIMON: Okay. I think I found it under here.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Yeah. It should look something like this.

>> CINDY SIMON: That's helpful. Thank you. My second question is, and this has come up before, so I'm not sure about the funding and the money we have. It does cost money to hold meetings, to notice, to hold meetings, to have CART, to have interpreters. Sometimes we've slowed down on outside committee meetings because of this. So could you tell us the status so Gina and I have a concept of, you know, setting up a meeting and knowing that it's okay, but if we don't do it, we do have some letters, so that's probably okay, too?

>> SEAN ISAAC: The concept of having a meeting? Let me say, first of all, this is a complicated question, because of the budget. The budget is somewhat complex and hard to sum up in about ten minutes or so.

>> CINDY SIMON: That's why I'm asking because I don't want to, by having all these support personnel, break the bank because we want to have a committee meeting.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Let me make two points. First point is last year, in the spring, this council suggested that we provide a video platform or a media platform for our meetings, and the State of Florida has done that, working with our contractors to provide that service. That's an extra cost, and so every quarterly meeting includes that extra cost. Every subcommittee meeting would also include that extra cost. It is a cost. Number two, like I said before this morning, our budget is based on what we've used in the past. If we have additional costs, some of those things may be outside the budget of what we are used to. As far as when I say used to, I mean as far as the department looks at when it comes to spending. What have we done historically.

So if there are requests that the council needs that needs to be communicated to the Department, and then we take those back to our leadership, and let them know, okay? In our current contracts, we have an opportunity for subcommittee meetings. We have had to adjust our schedule this year, and so we are deciding to hold two face-to-face meetings and two virtual meetings. Next year is a different budget. It might be different needs. And that's what we need to communicate.

>> CINDY SIMON: Okay. So I would ask, is there a possibility that rather than going through it, and I would rather the money but towards a face-to-face meeting, then doing that, maybe instead of someone coming in and talking about a topic we could send out stuff in advance, this is what we're going to do, and then hammer

it out. I thought we said Glenna, you did a great job when we were doing the bylaws on the last one, and maybe we can have a reserved space and alternate committees and hammer it out within the meeting so that we're not spending that extra that we don't have. It was just a thought. Leave an hour or an hour and a half, theoretically, we could start at 8:00. I know that's outrageous for some people, but, you know, if we can fit it in in between and maybe not have a speaker, because this is really important to do.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I think that's a great idea, to be as efficient with what we're dealing with.

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Sean, you said that we were talking about these letters that we've gone over and over, and you said at the last meeting, I left early and there were additional comments or corrections made to the letters. Are these letters that you gave us after those additional comments, so that means they're ready to go? That's my first question.

My second question or suggestion is in another group that I'm in, we have the same kind of diversity in our group, is it acceptable, depending on who's in the EMOT that's available to ask that person if they prefer interpreters or do they prefer CART instead of having both, if either one is effective. That's my other question. Because we have done that in previous meetings. Not with this group, but with another group I'm in.

>> SEAN ISAAC: First, when it comes to the letters, these are the letters that were sent out back in March. I believe the additional comments and formatting suggestions were made in May. That's when I believe --

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: So these are not --

>> SEAN ISAAC: I do not believe that those represent the changes that were suggested. They may. I don't believe I have those. I believe those were the ones that Karen was working on, so those are not these. Okay? I don't have those. I believe those were started on, but I don't think we finished. I think we planned to finish them in June, if I'm not mistaken, and we just never had those needs.

When it comes to the second question, that is a good question. I do not know if that is something that the Council is okay with. I believe that is fine, but please, give me the opportunity just to make sure. But is there no objection from the Council here if we have one or the other? I would have to, you know --

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: I just mean for our subcommittee meetings. I don't mean for the general council.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I'm sorry. I missed that question. What were you asking if we object to or not?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I believe Gina asked the question could we choose whether we had interpreters or CART. Was that correct?

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Chris, in another group that I'm in, we have the diversity of hearing loss, as well as



we do in this group. And so if any subcommittee meeting, for example, the only persons that are available, let's just say are you, me, Cindy and Cory, and so there would be some accommodation needed, then the question we ask is, which is your preference, an interpreter or CART. And if just say you, me and Cory agree CART is fine, then we would only need the CART person. But if we had a profoundly deaf person that didn't use CART and they only wanted interpreters, that would be their preference. Do you follow me? So it really depends on the composition of the group.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: I believe in committees we've only had CART anyway, historically. I don't know that we've done them on Zoom where we've had an interpreter as well in the past. But again, Zoom is something that's only been used more widespread since 2020, really.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So your homework tonight, please do it before you fall asleep or get up early tomorrow morning. Read through the bylaws to make suggestions, editing. Read through Mary's article.

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Get some sleep, Glenna! Get some sleep!

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Glenna, read through the letters.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: The letters. Right. Read through the letters, checking the letters, and if it has an address of who to send it to.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: Lastly, the draft of the biennial report, review that again in its entirety, I would think. But my concern there is in the past, we have always received a draft by E-mail to have our edits before we got to this meeting. We can't possibly all have our difference of opinions, and it's not a violation in the Sunshine Law for us to share the drafts of the biennial report beforehand. That's something that we need to be discussing.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: And for editing purposes, not a discussion, it's an editing thing, we should be able to do that.

>> CHRIS LITTLEWOOD: We make a final vote usually at the February meeting, but we can edit as we see fit and discuss it, you know, as a whole group or in part in E-mail. Either one. And we've always received it by E-mail. So when I see the draft of this -- I'm sorry, when I see the draft of this for the first time today in this meeting, I'm like, well, this is great, but I need more time to look at this.

>> CHAIR ASHTON: So tonight's homework, the report, first and most important because we have to get it done. Second is the letters because we've delayed it long enough already. And third is the bylaws. We want to have something to discuss with the legislature in February. Three things. Comment, think about it, and it's more of an editing -- really, we're at the editing stage rather than discussion and what to do. We're

closer to editing stage. So think edit, not more ideas, because we're running out of the time, and speaking of running out of the time, it is now 5:00. Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting? Cindy. Second. We adjourn the meeting. We meet again tomorrow morning at 9:00, fresh and ready to get things done!

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: And because of Glenna, we're not going to go to the ASL Slam!

>> VICE CHAIR PARKER: Oh!

>> GINA HALLIBURTON: Because it's at 9:00. We're too busy!

[Meeting adjourned at 5:00].

>> CHAIR ASHTON: Cindy made the motion and Chris seconded.

[Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.]