

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

Thursday, May 11, 2023  
9:00 a.m.

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Lisa B. Johnston, RMR, CRR, CRC  
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>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are we ready?

>> NETZA: We're trying to assign the captions. Enable manual caption is on.  
Assign....

[Please standby].

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): Okay, we're ready now, Glenna. This is Lisa.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm throwing my cat out of the room.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. No voice, you can't hear my voice, right? You can hear my voice? Oh, we have everything included in one? Wonderful!

>> VOICE: Recording in progress.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hi, good morning. This is the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Good morning. This is the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing meeting on Zoom today, May 11th -- already May!

Hopefully we will have a quorum today. I see a few people haven't shown up yet. I want to start with thanking the service providers all here: The three interpreters and CART, Lisa, and the AV guy, I don't recognize the AV guy, it's a different one. And apparently we have a new person from the Department of Elder Affairs? Jenny Rojas. Is that correct?

[Pause].

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes, you said it right, Rojas, that's correct.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Rojas.

>> None for me.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So we'll go ahead and start with a call to order. And we need to have a roll call of members that are present, please. And starting with me. I'm Glenna Ashton, I represent the Florida Association of the Deaf. I'm in Boca Raton. And I'm the Chair.

Okay. Next? I can't see...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: I'm Cory Parker. DOE/VR, Tallahassee, Florida.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: John Jackson?

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

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. We have three... I don't see Karen or Gina.

Jenny?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Jenny Rojas with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs in Tallahassee, Florida.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Would you mind explaining a little bit more about yourself so we can get to know you?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Sure. I am representing the Department of Elder Affairs. Mary Hodges retired last month and I hope that she is doing well. And I know that I have some very big shoes to fill!

I have been with Elder Affairs for 17 years. I previously worked for the Department of Education Voc Rehab, that was a long time ago. And I've served on the Governor's Commission For Disabilities in 2007, so I hope I will be able to represent Elder Affairs well and help you guys out to the best of my ability.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Have you had any experience with deaf and hard of hearing at all?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Very little.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So it will be a learning experience for you too!

>> CORY PARKER: Welcome!

>> JENNY ROJAS: Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, welcome.  
I see we have a lot of visitors. Okay, Angela?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Roll call. Angela, please.

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: Any, this is Angie Green with the Florida Department of Health and I am the liaison for the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and I'm in Tallahassee.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Good morning, this is Sean Isaac with the Florida Department of Health.  
Did you hear me?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Anybody else on the council that I'm not seeing?

[Note from CART Captioner]: Cindy is in chat on StreamText.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, again, thanks to the service providers. And welcome to the visitors that we have here.

Whether you're on Zoom or conference call or CART, please make sure that you raise your hand in some way, either using the reaction button down at the bottom or in CART, so that you can be recognized.

Is anybody watching CART chat?

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): Glenna, this is Lisa. There are people in the CART chat.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Is Karen or Gina there?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina is in the chat, she is in the CART chat.

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): Gina and Cindy are in the CART chat but not on the call. This is Lisa.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Can you ask Gina to -- Gina, please identify yourself for roll call please.

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): This is Lisa, CART Captioner. Angie or somebody will need to read the CART chat, please.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, Angie, will you please monitor the CART chat, please?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Will do.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I see Karen Goldberg, you're here. We're just doing roll call now.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Good morning.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen, can you identify yourself for roll call please, Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Good morning, this is Karen Goldberg, HLAA representative.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Glad to have you here.  
Was Gina on chat or not?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Angela, do you see Gina on chat?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Sorry, I was talking away and I forgot I had it mute.  
Yes, Gina Halliburton representing the Florida registry for the interpreters for the Deaf from Jacksonville. Welcome, Jenny.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm glad to see we have five out of seven -- no, actually we have six, we have six out of seven here on the Zoom meeting, so that's great. I know that Chris Littlewood is not here because he's at a conference, being a presenter. I'm sure something related to FEMA, emergency management, or something like that.

Okay. The February minutes were sent out to you, hopefully you had time to review it. Are there any corrections on the minutes?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Jenny said she did not receive the minutes. Angela, did you send the meeting packet to Jenny?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I will send them to her right now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Since Jenny was not at the last meeting, she really can't comment on the minutes, because she wasn't there to verify the minutes.

So, I'm not hearing from any members that were at the meeting last time. I take it that I would ask for a motion to accept the minutes, to approve the minutes.

Can I have a motion, please?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. I make a motion to accept the minutes.

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John, I second the motion.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. We have a motion to approve the minutes from

February 9-10. All in favor, please, raise your hand.

>> JOHN JACKSON: Aye.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Indicate with a reaction button thumbs up.

Either raise hand or use a reaction button to show a thumbs up and raise hand. I see one, I see two. Karen? Gina?

Okay, pass. That's four out of the five that were there.

Okay. We have the agenda. Did everybody see the agenda?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is everybody okay with the agenda as written?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We will go ahead and will turn it over to -- what, Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: How can someone have the link to StreamText?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's a separate link.

[Note from CART Captioner]: It's on the agenda.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's a separate link, you would have to use your iPad or open it up in a separate window.

>> CORY PARKER: Okay. But where is it?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It was at the top of the agenda. Where it says CART.

>> CORY PARKER: I got it, perfect. I see it now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So Angela, go ahead with your report update.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, okay. So for the appointments, they're still in the review process. That is including the old ones and the new ones.

I want to also give a reminder for anybody that still has the financial disclosure form out, to please get that done and turned in. It has to be done by June 30th.

The biennial report is still en route to approval, but it is getting there.

And did everybody receive the e-mail I sent from Steven Zuilkowski? I sent that out for everybody to -- it was an e-mail regarding the question --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, yes.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Okay. So that was also asked of Octavio, so I figured Steven already answered that, so we're good there.

And that's it for right now.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I see that Cindy is in CART. So, Cindy Simon is present also. Great!

Cindy, could you identify yourself on CART?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Angela, is Cindy...

>> ANGIE GREEN: I just sent a message to her.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

[Talking over one another].

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Cindy Simon --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are you done with your update? Do you have more to say?

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Cindy Simon, representing audiologists, I will be in and out due to a funeral, so for personal reasons she will be in and out.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you. I hope you can....  
All right, Angela? Do you have more to report, please?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No. What would you like for me to update? I'm sorry, did I miss something, Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, on the agenda here, there's a long list of things. What happened with the appointments?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, the appointments, like I said, they are in review. Both the new and the old. So they are looking at the new applicants as well.

I will give an update -- I forgot about this, I'm so sorry -- on the phone calls that I have received.

I have received a total of 279 phone calls since the last meeting. And 163 are related to the deaf and hard of hearing. Of that, 116 had nothing to do, they were either dental, IEP, or something other.

So, 43 were just asking for general resources, period, for the deaf and hard of hearing. 20 had something to do with service animals or emotional support animals. 30 needed hearing aid assistance. Eight were the ADA. Nine, I'm sorry, needed CIL. 19 needed interpreters. Two needed help with how to get their newborn hearing screening. Two were mental health. Two were home health aide. And there were 28 just random, random included, like, wheelchair assistance, statistics for the deaf per county, getting GED help, help with Baha compliance after surgery, things like that.

And that is all I have.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, with all of those -- wow, that's a lot!

So, with all of those requests for help, were you able to give them each one resources or referrals or anything?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Oh, yes, I sent all of them e-mails with lots of resources. Of those I did not know, I did reach out to council members who gave me answers and I relayed that become to the people themselves.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yep.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So you were able to follow-up on pretty much all the phone calls related to deaf or hard of hearing.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Absolutely.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's great. So we have -- do you have enough resource information or are there more resources you wish you had had with help providing more resources, more connections or any contact information? Is there any areas you would like to have more of?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I think you guys do an absolutely wonderful job of answering each question I do have. You guys are amazing at answering them!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So you do have enough information? Like, for example, interpreting agencies in each county, you have a list of all of those?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No, that would be nice to have. I just give them the RID link, that's what I do and that's how they get their interpreters.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, okay. I think that would be something good to work on to have a county-by-county interpreting agency listed, that would be a good resource to put on the website.

>> ANGIE GREEN: That would be wonderful.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Put that on a to-do list.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Got it down.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And audiologists and hearing aid specialists and ENT doctors, I think that would be easy enough for people to find on their own. Just tell them what kind of person to look for.

Schools, education, that should be... again, that should not be hard to find.

Okay. Question: Why is it so slow with the biennial report? I'm amazed how slow it is this time, compared to the past when we would have it finished in November and it's printed by February for distribution. And now it's May and it's STILL...

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, it is --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is not like before at all.

>> ANGIE GREEN: It is routing. There is a lot of people that it has to route through. People can be very busy. So we just have to give them a little time to get it, to be able to preview it.

So -- but it is getting there. It is close to being finished; just waiting on a couple more people to get through it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, the thing is, I have never heard about the report having to go through a "review process" before. This is the first time this has ever happened, that it has to go through a "review process," and I'm concerned if the report is going to end up looking like what we wrote or it could be changed and possibly have misinformation in there.

>> ANGIE GREEN: No, the only thing they're doing is grammatical errors and spelling errors and things like that, that's all they're doing, they're not rearranging things or changing anything. They're just correcting issues that are minor that are there.

And since I am new here, I don't know the process before me coming here. This is just what I was told to do, is route it through. I think it had to go through 12 people or something like that, so it has to route through quite a few people. But it is getting there.

And once it is there, I will definitely let you know.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Wow... I mean, to me, the report is pretty much dead, because the Legislature has closed. And now... are the... will they see -- how are they going to see the report now? They've all gone home now!

>> ANGIE GREEN: I am not sure. Do we have addresses for them? We could send it to them.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory? Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Glenna, I'm listening to your remark about the routing that DOH needs to go through. And what we realize sometimes is that with different departments, different management comes in and takes over or whatever the case may be.

So sometimes our -- the routing is a must. So that could be one of the reasons why. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I've been on the Council since 2013. This delay has never happened before! It was always quick. And always on time to get out the report before we go to visit in Tallahassee. The first time it's ever been this slow. It has never been -- I mean... whoever was our liaison has never talked about doing reviews and things like that.

It's always just we did the report, we had a bid from the printer, outside printer, and then it's done.

>> CORY PARKER: Yeah.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So I'm shocked at how much it's changed. It seems like we have to start working on 2025 report now to get it done!

>> ANGIE GREEN: Like I said, I apologize. I do not know the reasoning, you know, I don't know what happened before me. All I know is I'm doing what I was told to do, is just



route it this time around.

I do think we need to start it earlier for the next one, just to make sure it does get through the routing process and printed on time for you guys to hand out in February. And Karen has her hand up.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi, everyone, this is Karen. So, it seems like perhaps the procedure has changed, which is not uncommon that things change over time.

It would be helpful, Angela, if we could get a clear understanding of what the procedure is now.

And I don't quite understand what this means "routing." I don't understand what "routing" means. Who is it going to? Who is checking it? And what's the purpose of it? Thanks.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Okay. You're welcome. Yes, of course, it's being routed through all the way up to the Surgeon General. So they just preview it, they, you know, want to make sure everything is correct, you've got the right information, everything is, you know, grammatically correct, spelling is correct, and everything like that, they're just checking everything out.

I can send you the review process so you guys can understand how that works. I will do that during our lunch break.

>> CORY PARKER: Routing is another thing for our review process.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Correct.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We had it finished in November. And now it's May. I think, really, there's no excuse for that, for having to become month-to-month-to-month instead of a few weeks.

>> CORY PARKER: What that will mean is that our staff, we will need to continuously ask, meaning to Angie and Sean, they would need to continuously ask and follow-up, like maybe weekly?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I have been getting updated. And, like I said, it is flowing through the process. You've just got to understand that some people can be very busy at this time, with the end of the fiscal year and stuff, so it may take them a little longer to go through it. But everybody is working it at reviewing it and getting it through.

>> [Open mic].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sorry, this is Sean Isaac. Can you hear me? Hello?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes.

>> SEAN ISAAC: I just wanted to say right quick, that report is being reviewed by top leaders at the Department, including Communications.

This year, as you all remember, we finished it and finalized it right around Christmas time and sent it in and usually it does take us a little longer to review those.

And then you recall, we made changes and revisions at our last face-to-face meeting here in Tallahassee. And so those revisions also have to be reviewed. That's the DOH policy.

I apologize about that, but I'm hopeful that it will be released soon.

I also wanted to say that we, if you'll recall last time, we had to send those reports out to the legislators' district offices and so I think we can still do that same thing at this time.

That's it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: When you send the reports to the legislators' offices for distribution, is that going to be distributed only in Tallahassee or is that also going to go to their home office?

>> SEAN ISAAC: We sent those to their district offices, as I recall. We sent several copies to the district offices. Remember, that was during the pandemic as well [chuckles], so they -- from my understanding, they received those; that's not a problem.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Well, we get 500 copies, right? So there should be enough to send them to the Tallahassee office and send another one to the home office, so each office gets one copy and then we still have them left over for council members to pass out. Correct?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I believe there's enough to do that, yes.

>> ANGIE GREEN: That is correct, yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Make sure you have two copies each, okay.  
All right.

I know that if Chris Littlewood was here, he would be REALLY UPSET about that!  
Anything else, Angela, or anything else, other questions?

>> ANGIE GREEN: John and Karen both have their hands up.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. We have comments in the CART. Angela, can you read the comments in CART?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No, Karen and John both have their hands up, there's no comments in the CART.

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): This is Lisa, CART. There are comments from Gina in chat.

>> ANGIE GREEN: I see Gina says: The routing and reimbursement processes has changed, please send updated reimbursement for rental car versus personal vehicle. I will get that for the meeting and updated for you guys.

Karen says we still need to send the legislative offices. That will be done.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So we're caught up in CART comments?

[No response].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. John?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Good morning, this is John. I was just going to suggest that we draft a letter with the reports when they're sent to the individual congressional or representatives and senators' offices, you know, basically telling them who we are and also saying that traditionally we have released this report during the legislative session to give legislators the maximum amount of information they can get when they are, you know, legislating and unfortunately the process wasn't done in time, unfortunately, and we're sending you the report now.

>> CORY PARKER: That's a good suggestion.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So would anybody volunteer to write that letter?

[Pause].

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: I can help John.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: John --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: John, we can write a letter, maybe include a letter and Angela and Sean can --

>> CORY PARKER: Wait, wait, wait, this is a letter to legislators? I can't participate in that, I'm sorry. I can proof, I'm happy to edit, but...

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. I understand where he's coming from. Basically, I mean, it really just needs to be three sentences. I think that probably, you know, I would think that Angela or Sean could take care of that; just basically, you know, this is the report from the Council normally provided during legislative session; unable to get it to you at that time, so we're giving it to you now. I mean...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. John, if... maybe you can do a quick list of what you're suggesting to include in the letter, if you could do that, like, during the first break and send it to Angela and then she can send an e-mail to us and we can kind of try to get the letter done today, while we're together.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina said she would be happy to help with the draft of the letter.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, okay. All right. So let's see if we can do that during break or lunchtime and then maybe we can finish the letter before the end of the day, so that way... because this is the time we would be allowed to work on it together, you know. When we're not meeting, we're not allowed to work on it together.

So that would be good if we could get it quickly done today.

Karen, you have your hand up?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yes, this is Karen. It just... um... I want to reiterate that it does look like the process has changed and it kind of caught us all by surprise. So I don't know what was different in the old days or how it got through so quickly, but now it seems like it's a very prolonged process.

One thing I do want to say is that, is it taking a longer time as it goes through this routing because it sits on people's desks or inboxes? Or is it as slow as the Appointments Office? That just worries me, because time is of the essence on these types of reports.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen --

>> Well...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- it's an issue that this has happened this year, with the 2023 report, as compared to the past. It's an issue and we're stuck and we just have to follow their procedure.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Does anybody have anymore questions or comments related to Angela's report?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. We'll move on to the next, which is organizations updates. I'll start.

FAD had a board meeting April 29 on Zoom and we finally had 15 people show up. It had been a long time.

FAD will have a booth at the DSA, Deaf Seniors of America which is the end of June in Hollywood. And they are rebuilding a new website and they're going to be -- they're going to make Facebook and Instagram more active.

They're going to look at the bylaws, which has not been looked at for a long time.

And they're definitely planning on having a conference again. Finally. At FSDB, the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind in St. Augustine October 28th, which should be I think at the same time as homecoming for FSDB, so this way we'll draw more people to come.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And they had suspended membership during COVID, but now they're going to start requesting membership dues again.

So, finally we're getting active again, so I hope that they will do it and we'll get more activity. And we will have elections in October too.

Okay. That's my report for Florida Association of the Deaf.  
Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi, everyone, this is Karen. For Hearing Loss Association of America Florida State Association, there was a quarterly meeting March 25th and this was really to discuss the future of HLA Florida.

We have tenures that are expiring on June 1st Debbe Hagner is going to be stepping

down as the president of HLA Florida. She's done a tremendous job with keeping the State organization going for a very long time.

We have a number of active chapters that have regular meetings and informationals for the public on hearing loss-related topics.

And at this point, you know, Debbie's been running a lot of those and at this point it sounds like she's going to be stepping down from that.

Right now, we don't have anyone who's taking over as president. I previously served as president. I'm not able to do that at this point.

So we have a call out to members to see who could step up.

We also have a National connection where some states could change from a State Association to a State, I think it's an organization, or a State Office and then it just changes the structure.

So we're trying to decide if we're going to move in that direction or not.

Tanya Williams has also been another individual who's been very active in HLA Florida and she's served as a chapter coordinator and member coordinator and she's also going to be stepping down.

So we have some changes that are happening to HLA Florida. And I'll keep everyone up-to-date on that. Thanks.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I've noticed that -- that that's happened with a lot of organizations, with people who have been involved for a long time and we seem not to have a lot of younger people joining organizations; that they prefer to do it on social media.

I sent an article recently to Angela, and I didn't see her share it, but there was a *New York Times* article about how a LOT of younger people, I'm talking -- are using their hearing aids, starting to wear their hearing aids, because now the way that hearing aids have changed in the way they look and the way you can buy it.

And because they're used to doing earbuds and Bluetooth, they're more willing to use hearing aids.

And I'm talking about young people in their 20's and 30's, 'cause a lot of much younger people are losing their hearing from loud noise, music, and earbuds and all of that.

It used to be, like, people who lost their hearing was, like, in their 90's and 80's and 70's and 60's and 50's and 40's and now it's going down to the 20's, teenagers are losing their hearing.

I remember when I was teaching in high school and I had my ASL hearing student come up to me privately saying they're losing their hearing already.

So, we need to find a way to pull in the younger people to get involved in organizations and they may have to do it through social media. This applies to all organizations, not just deaf and hard-of-hearing organizations, but all organizations who are dealing with that.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy? And Cory? Go ahead, Cory.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. I have no report.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Cindy or Gina, are they still on CART and do they have anything to report on their organizations?

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, Gina says FRID has no events upcoming that were posted other than the board meeting on 5/13. I have not received any additional information to share.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I thought I saw they advertised an online workshop, like yoga or something like that?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy? I don't know if she's there. John? Jenny?

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. I'm sorry, Glenna. Why are you calling out to me? I don't have any reports.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, okay. Nothing going on related to Deaf and hard of hearing in Families and Children?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Nothing that I have to speak to or announce. I mean, we're coming off the legislative session and I think that's been the only real activity of the Department, it feels like, for the last several months. So I don't have anything specifically to report for the Council.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Jenny?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Good morning, this is Jenny Rojas with the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. And I don't have any updates to give either.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Cindy says no reports on her end.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy? No? Okay.

I guess we're finished with organizations. Are there conferences coming up? I know... HLAA has an upcoming conference very soon in New Orleans. In New Orleans. I think it's in June?

And the Deaf Seniors of America has a conference the end of June in Hollywood, Florida, and I'm involved with that; I'm on the Workshop Committee. I think we have about 1,000 people coming.

And like I said before, FAD will have a conference in October.

It seems like in-person conferences are happening more and more now.

Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: Hi, this is Cory. You know that there's the Sunshine Deaf Festival?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are you talking about the Florida ASL --

>> CORY PARKER: No, the Sunshine Deaf Festival, the RFP Funding Center, that's the one for June 2, 3, 4, something around there. It's the first week in June.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is that the one named for the organization that used to do It's A Deaf Thing?

>> CORY PARKER: That's the one, yep, the same.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> CORY PARKER: It's the same group.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, and that is decided right before the Deaf Services of America.

>> CORY PARKER: That's correct, that's correct.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I have noticed that there's a more and more... um... with the younger people on social media -- well, Facebook, I see it on Facebook, I'm not on Instagram and all the other things.

>> CORY PARKER: Neither am I.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The younger people are hosting a lot more activities and hosting fun things. They're hosting events at a park, to go there. They're hosting a DNO, Deaf Night Out, where they go to bars or they go to places where they can play games.

Like, one time they went to a bar that had battle of the axes, where you throw it at a bullseye.

So hopefully we can lead them to being involved in more than just fun things.

Karen, you have your hand up?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yes, this is Karen. I just wanted to also reiterate that there is the HLAA conference in New Orleans, as you had said. It does have free registration for all veterans. And I think registration closes May 26th. But it is nice to see that they have a free registration for the veterans.

And... um... let's see what else I wanted to tell you about that... there is a webinar coming up through HLAA on May 18th called The Workplace and the Law. People can access that by going to the HLAA website.

They also have a list of other types of webinars that have been done previously. And I think that's the main issues. Thanks.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, thank you. The military vets, it's good that they offer free registration, because I've read a few times with the military, it's one of the highest disabilities that the military has is hearing loss. That's one of the highest ones. The highest percentage is hearing loss, you know, from all of the shooting and bombs and whatever!

Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. And I also noticed that in the meeting chat, there are some comments from Cecil. Cecil Bradley has got a comment. So do you want to go ahead and have -- is someone reading those comments?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, go ahead.

>> CORY PARKER: I don't have access to it, I just wanted to share.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh. Angela, could you read the comments in CART, please?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I don't see any comments from Cecil. They're not showing up on mine, so I don't see any; I'm sorry.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Lisa, Captioner Lisa was the one that mentioned there was a comment, I think?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: There is a comment from Cecil in cart.

>> ANGIE GREEN: I just see that he entered CART.

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): I was commenting that he was present in CART, not a comment. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, okay.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. I understand. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Does anyone have anything to add about organizations or conferences or anything that's going on with Deaf and hard of hearing, deafblind, late-deafened and being more active? Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory again. In social media, there are quite a bit of deafblind events that are being posted in collaboration with each other as activities, get-togethers, socializing, etc. So I think that -- I don't have the exact -- oh, I see in our Zoom chat... there's an RMTCC mention about the education for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing conference.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, I see a comment from Cara Wilmont at --

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, there's a link there.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Are you having a conference?

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, this is Cory, this is the Florida educators for the Deaf and hard-of-hearing students. They're involved in teachers who educate Deaf children in mainstream schools as part of the -- for example, as the FSDB and they participate in a conference each year, and I think it's in November this year.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, November.

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, this is, it's this year in November in Gainesville and I will be in attendance.



>> GLENNA ASHTON: Where? November where?

>> CORY PARKER: In Gainesville.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, in Gainesville. Oh.

>> CORY PARKER: Yeah, you can see that in the chat. It's been posted, the link, for the details there. So that would be nice for the -- if we had a booth there.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That would be a good reason for me to visit Gainesville again!

>> CORY PARKER: And this is Cory. I think because of the fact that Angie, she had also mentioned, too, that there were a variety of questions. And I happen to be one of those people who answer her quite often and give her resources about her questions that relate to schools. And even just this morning, for example, there was an answer that I had offered from someone who wanted some information about the Deaf Schools that are actually in specific counties.

So it's real interesting about how some people are considering or even thinking about the fact that there are Deaf Schools, but they're not quite sure how to ask the right questions in the correct way.

So, I always point to or redirect them back to the FSDB Administration and their local resources, for their local special education. I guess you would consider special -- local departments that at least can offer some guidance to those parents where they might need to go locally.

So, we do field questions in that regard from the general public.

Specifically when you're talking about -- oh, shoot... with the materials and the technology centers for the Deaf and hard of hearing, that's a good resource as well.

So if Angie is able to take some notes of those responses and then we can ensure that we add them to our distribution, specifically with my answers or your answers or anybody else here on the committee, it might be nice and a great idea if we can come up with what you consider a... uh... kind of a CliffsNotes version

>> GLENNA ASHTON: FAQs.

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, a list of FAQs, exactly, Glenna. Thank you. That we can distribute when those questions are asked. Because there are some questions that are pretty consistent.

And it's great that we're getting these types of questions. People are using us for the specific purposes for which we are here for. We're here for resources and for information and sharing that.

So, again, back to what I originally was mentioning about the conference that's coming up. It's a great way for us to process that information and share it with the teachers and educators that are here. People who we can refer; absolutely.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's good. Thank you, Cory.

Question: Do you have a list of all the Deaf and hard-of-hearing programs in each county? Do you have a list?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory, yep, we do have a list. In our chat, the information

is right there in our chat, if you want to review it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is that on our website, that list, per county, so people know where to contact in the county?

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: An agency, there is a list of interpreting agencies, we should have a list of Deaf and hard-of-hearing school programs; Deaf and hard-of-hearing, the few centers that we have left, VIL (sp) we should have a list on the website so people can find it.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Not necessarily the actual programs, per se, but who to contact and where to get that information. Because I'm not sure if there are specifics when it comes to real-life programs for those of us that are looking for information. We know that there are specifics within their areas, but not necessarily the county.

So, if the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind is the state school, the RMTTC has a wealth of information for the Deaf and hard of hearing.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: They know that --

>> CORY PARKER: And we can add them to their website, the RMTTC, we can add them to our website as a project ten.

And on a state level, for VR, we have the RMTTC partnership, with the national effort that's called... um... with the National Deaf Centers, we do have a partnership with VR, as well as the State Deaf Education leaders. So we partner together and we have a lot of resources for parents; yeah.

So, if you see the chat, the RMTTC, Cara does mention there are a list of all of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing programs at that site. It's a wonderful resource for us to partner with. And I think for Angie, too, if Angie can go ahead and take a note of that.

If there are specific questions that come to us, we can refer them to RMTTC so that those questions and individuals can kind out the information themselves.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, that's good. I remember working with them before, when I was a teacher, and they have so many resources and they were always on top of the newest technology constantly; yeah.

>> CORY PARKER: And this is Cory. Glenna, just to add too, there are other places that are amazing resources for us.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: FFAST.

>> CORY PARKER: There's the Florida Association --

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: No, not that one. The Florida Association for the Deaf and Blind.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, yeah, yeah.

>> CORY PARKER: Oh, fabulous. Their resource list is impeccable.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> CORY PARKER: And I do remember -- I can't remember specifically, but once you go in and you take a look at their resources from their website, it's a fabulous place. It's well organized.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you!

>> CORY PARKER: You bet.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's good information for Angela!

>> ANGIE GREEN: I got it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's not yet 10:00 o'clock. So I would suggest we go ahead with the committee updates. The first one is Education Medical Technology Outreach, and that's Gina and Cindy, and you're both on CART. Gina or Cindy, do you have anything to say about the committee?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: While we're waiting, Cara has typed in another organization: The Florida and Virgin Islands Deafblind Collaboration, that one, yeah, the website and link is on there in chat on Zoom....

Gina? Cindy? Yoo-hoo!

[Pause].

[Note from CART Captioner]: There is a comment in chat.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I guess that means there's no report.

>> LISA (CART CAPTIONER): Glenna, there is a comment in chat.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Angela, do you see the chat comment?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes. EMOT -- this is Gina -- FRID has no events upcoming, she has no additional information.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you. The next one is the ad hoc Bylaws Committee. Okay. That we have a cleaned-up copy of the bylaws in February and if you can take a minute to open up the bylaws and give it a quick read through. It's been cleaned up with mostly grammatical changes that we made, if possible it would be nice to be able to vote on it.

So if you can take a minute to open up the bylaws attachment and read through it

quickly. This is important for the council members, because we need a final vote on the bylaws, if possible today. So take a minute to look at the bylaws now, please.

They're in the attachment with the meeting e-mail.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The only thing -- this is Glenna -- the only thing that I notice is that at the very end, it says amended August 19, 2022. Perhaps it should be changed to amended February 10, 2023. Because we did make a few more changes at that meeting.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, I'm sorry, I see on the agenda that the bylaws final approval was supposed to be this afternoon.

Does anyone want to go ahead with that? Or hold it so you have time to review it and vote on it this afternoon? Or do you want to go ahead with this?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi, this is Karen. I would recommend that we hold that to the afternoon so we can all read it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Rather than, I mean, there's just kind of silence right now [chuckles] as everybody is trying to read and catch up.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. All right. So do read it. And we will come back to vote on it at 2:45 or earlier, depending on how we're going.

No, it won't be too earlier, because we have a speaker.

So at 2:45, that gives you break time and lunchtime to read through it. And notice if there's anything that needs more fixing or anything.

So that's... moving onto Budget Committee. Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: Which part? This is Cory, which part, with the budget?

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: I'm relying on Sean and Angela's help to complete this. So if I say something wrong... but if -- we're looking at our expenses. The budget starts -- oh, goodness -- the expenses that we've had so far, the charges that it's 17,978 for year-to-date.

The expenditures that we're looking at are 11,429. We have a surplus of 65 -- or 65,409. For contract services, we have budgeted 237503 (?) so year-to-date is 36,025

[Note from CART Captioner]: Interpreted an odd number.

>> CORY PARKER: The amount is 2,027 and that leaves us with a total surplus in the red of \$849.

Now, if Sean can weigh in and clarify some questions, if people do have them, that would be great.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Did you say we're in the red? So what will happen with the -- oh, this is May. So we will start with a new budget in July and then we will have money for the August meeting. Oh, okay.

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So we're in the red how much? We're in the red how much? We're in the red?

>> CORY PARKER: 849.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. The Department of Health will cover that, right?

>> ANGIE GREEN: We are taking care of the issue, it will be taken care of this year. And you are right, we are starting the new fiscal year for our next meeting in August. The issue is being taken care of as far as the money needed to finish up the rest of this fiscal year.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is the budget still the same, 100,000, or did we get anymore?

>> CORY PARKER: It's still the same, no.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Did we get more for the year?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I have no update so far with the budget for this year. I'm just going through with doing what I need to do and I have no idea what the budget is this year. I imagine it will be around the same, but I can't say for sure.

>> CORY PARKER: It's still the same, 100,000.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Which means we are still limited in what we can do. Okay.

>> CORY PARKER: Pretty much, yes.

Remember that the 100,000 that we received is split up, so we've got money for, you know, specifics that are allocated for these things.

So... so that's going to be the start for this new fiscal year.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So that means that for the new fiscal year, we'll be stuck with doing a Zoom meeting two times and in-person two times, I'm guessing, August and February would be in-person and the others, May...

>> CORY PARKER: I think that the budget will allow for three in-person meetings, but if Angela could weigh in on that, that would be helpful.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes. As of right now, we do have it set as still two and two. Like I said, we have to wait and see what the budget comes in at. But as of right now, yes, we still have it as two and two, so it will be August and February in-person, and then the other two will be virtual.

Karen has her hands up.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, sorry about that. Ignore the clapping, I wasn't trying to clap, I was trying to [laughs] raise my hand!

[Laughter].

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I'm not supporting the idea of Zoom. It is very difficult to do these meetings on Zoom. And I can't imagine members of the public being comfortable with this format.

I've got three different screens up. It's ridiculous.

And I think we really need to go back to what the Legislature mandated in the statute for us, which is that we are meeting four times a year. Which is still not a lot of meetings.

And -- but that we are to go to different parts of the state to meet with the community there.

I think we really need to push back on this, because we cannot appropriately do our task with this type of limitations, particularly with the community that we are representing.

And I thought -- my understanding when I first joined was that any kind of Zoom meetings were really for committee meetings in-between our four core meetings. But I think we need to push back and make sure core meetings in person.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen, I think a lot of council members feel the same way, which is why we submitted our dream budget, to have four fully in-person meetings, plus have the money to go to where the people are, by having booths and so forth. And to give us the same -- limiting the money really hurts us. And because right now a lot of people say FCCDHH, what for? Who? It's not just they don't know. Many do know who we are, but "What do you do?" So it's hard to answer that when we have a very limited budget.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: Maybe we just need to meet with the DOH folks who manage us. Maybe the two of us can go in-person, have a meeting with them, or virtual meeting, whatever, and maybe explain to them, expound upon what our challenges are and what this limits us to.

The funding really does limit us for in-person meetings. And maybe we can ask them for additional funding for the two in-person meetings that we have, instead of having them virtually.

Like, for example, this meeting... um... this was supposed to be, you know -- we've requested and requested and requested for something in-person. And then they would be able to see us sign, they would be able to see the continuity of it.

You know, they probably wouldn't understand, you know, our needs, necessarily, with the committee needs and everything that goes along with it, with the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

Our culture, just our way of life, the requirements that we need for in-person interactions. Um... I think that's what we need to impress upon them.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you, Cory. Shay Chapman, she knows. She's gotten to many of our meetings before, when she was in a different position, before she moved up. She knows. Shay Chapman knows how much is involved in a meeting.

Sean, Angela, when you make the budget, do you get to talk to anyone in explaining why we want more money? And also why we need an outreach educator to travel around for us? To go to different things. We do workshops, that's something we were supposed to do before and we have not done workshops or training, direct training, in a long, long, long time.

This is why we had a budget of 250,000.

>> CORY PARKER: It's hard for us to do this with the cost of living and the cost of things continues to increase. So it's hard, it's still very hard to use that same budget amount, because it continues to reduce our ability to utilize it, the services, the price of things.

The price of goods in general, interpreters, CART, everything, those prices are going up.

So... they really need to understand that what we're managing is -- if Shay really understands that, if Shay Chapman really understands that, maybe we should get Shay to go in with us, be an advocate and help explain what's going on.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: You know, they passed the budget already. I don't know if it's too late or not. The only way would be to get more money is if the Department upheld itself, reallocates money. Because they have always done that to cover us when we are in the red. The Department of Health finds money to give to us. So maybe it's not going to the Department of Health themselves and ask them to find more money to give us to reallocate some money. Because they've done that before when they realized how expensive it was to have meetings.

Because we know Shay before, she was the one that got us more money.

>> CORY PARKER: Sean and Angela, maybe you can weigh in on this?

>> ANGIE GREEN: With me still learning, I don't know how everything was done in the past. I can certainly, you know, look into it more and get back with you. I don't have the answers right now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> SEAN ISAAC: And this --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Maybe the two of you can make -- Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I'll just say briefly -- this is Sean -- you know, the budget is always a challenge for every program and division in the entire Department of Health and in all of the agencies throughout the state of Florida.

So, your concerns are valid. They're always valid.

I don't think that more communication is a bad thing. We do get input as to what the needs are. However, we have to work within the budget. And what they've told us is within the past several years, the average of what the Department -- the average of what the Council has spent -- excuse me -- has been about 100,000 and that's why they went with that budget, okay.

So we realize that all costs have gone up with contracted services, with expenses, with cost of living, everything has gone up.

And so that's why I say that more communication is not a bad thing. But I do know that

that's what they were basing that budget on what we've spent.

In previous years, if you'll all recall, the Council used to be a little bit bigger. The Council being a little bit smaller now, along with the pandemic, you know, limiting some of our travel, I think our average spending went down. And that's part of the issue that we're dealing with.

Now some of our calls have gone up. We're trying to travel more. We're trying to get some more people, although that's still, you know... it is what it is....

So, these are issues that not only this Council is probably dealing with, I would assume that other councils may be dealing with that as well.

So, like I said, more communication is not a bad thing.

I think our spending this year, appropriately, the funding that we received will go a long way for the Council to try to get additional dollars in the future.

But, again, I'm not opposed -- I think always communicating is better.

Does that help? I hope so.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you, Sean.

Sean and Angela, have you ever seen Shay, talked with Shay at all?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Angie speaks directly with her supervisor, which is Anna Simmons, who you all met at the last meeting. And then Anna speaks directly with Shay. So that communication line is open.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So can you try to be more... um... keep talking about FCC, keep talking about the Council with Shay every time you see her. I know she has other programs and everything. But every time you talk with Shay, keep us visible, maybe. That will help her help to....

So... they based on what we spend and what if we continue spending and we go in the red again? That's not going to happen because we have to get approval for everything. Okay, never mind.

Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: Yeah, I was -- I think it would be a good idea for us to go ahead and ask to set a meeting maybe within the next month before everyone's so busy during the summer months. And also before the new fiscal year begins.

That way we can ask for additional funding, we can see, you know, how it goes and we can also talk with Anna and see about -- what they have to offer about hiring interpreters, about all of the processes, maybe talk with them about what the needs are.

Do you think it's possible?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. We would just have to ask them. I'm sorry to not have a great answer for you, but I think we just need to ask the question.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. And you're saying that they're basing it on the average what we spent in the past year. Does that not allow for new ideas, new efforts to expand what we're doing?

So, it's basing it on the past instead of basing it on future projects and future activities.



That's not really fair.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: This is Karen. I've had my hand up. Do you mind if I jump in?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Go ahead.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. Look... I don't mean to be as brash, but I'm going to be... um... this is oppression. If you look at it, you know, what the Deaf communities have dealt with, there's always been a sense of marginalize. That's what's happening now. The budget is getting smaller and smaller. It's forcing us into a format that does not work for this community.

It's oppression. And I think it mirrors what the larger community is dealing with. And I think we need to impress that. The State Legislature, that this Council is mandated by state statute and we have a smaller number of people than even the statute states that we should have.

And they cannot base it on the small number. They have to base it on what the statute says and how many members should be on the Council; that we need to meet in person, with accommodations, so that people can have full access to communication.

We represent the larger community of Deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind community in Florida.

And if we're being marginalized, you know, this is exactly what's happening in Florida with the larger community. And we have to make a stand for what we need as a Council in order to represent what the larger community needs in the state of Florida.

And we need to make some noise.

You know, I know that the squeaky wheel has some benefit. We don't want to be obnoxious, but I think taking the Oliver Twist approach of "Please may we have a little bit more?" Is not appropriate. We need to make a stand!

And I think we need to do that with cohesion and unified stand to the State, that we need to have the budget in order to meet in-person. Period. We need to be able to invite community members. We need to be able to go to these Deaf events and have a presence so that the community in Florida knows that the State is there and cares and has this advisory council and wants to hear from them.

They can't just push us off to the nearest closet and corner and say "do the best you can." That's ridiculous. It's going to make the rest of us want to just say oh, forget it, it's just not worth it.

For me to have to have two or three computers open just to follow this line of communication is ridiculous.

I do better when I can have an earphone in. I have one that has the earphone, I have one that has the chat line, I've got one... I mean, it's a madhouse right now.

And I already have a headache.

And I just think that we need to take a stand. That's my opinion.

I can't believe we've been slashed from 250,000 down to 100,000! This is ridiculous! It's just ridiculous.

So, that's my peace, my soapbox. That's where I am.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you. You are preaching to the choir. We all feel the same way.

I don't know what the answer is, because we are competing with so many other programs, councils, boards.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Let's take it to the larger community. How does the larger community feel about the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing being slashed in budget, having to have the meetings on Zoom, which is technology that can break down, people freeze.

Try to figure out what somebody is signing when they're freezing in mid air. Try to figure that out! I mean... nobody's going to stay online for that.

And so they're going to walk away saying, forget it, I don't even want to go to these meetings, you know?

So I think we need to take it to the larger Florida community. You know, do they understand that we even exist? Number one. Number two, do they know what we're dealing with? And how can we best represent them if we can't even get out to the communities?

You know, it's not in -- it's not in compliance with the statute. That's... I'm just... all right, I'm done.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: In February, when I visited the legislators, they were very open with the idea of increasing the budget. I don't know if that has -- and we had promised them the report. If we had the report to follow-up our visit, that would have helped to remember -- helped them to remember us. But...

I don't know what happened. If there was any possible result from our visit when the legislators were very open about increasing the budget, but...

Now we just have to wait and see what they....

Well... [Sighs]....

All right. Let's move on.

Legislative Committee. Well, recent legislation had finished in [chuckles]... the focus was on things other than really helping the community, okay.

So, let's just leave it at that.

But I do know that Cecil is working very hard on having a bill ready for the next year's legislation, which will start in January.

For the TASA bill, so we will get behind that for supporting Cecil on that TASA bill, which will help on a wide range of our communities.

So that's one bill which we'll definitely get behind on for sure for next year.

And then since they start in January, that means they'll have the committee meetings in November and December. So we will have to start working in the fall, this fall, on submitting the bill and, you know, making comments on whatever other bills come up.

Because by the time we visit in February, it's basically too late, okay.

I know in January they start committee meetings, I think by February something they start having their legislative meetings, so....

The Web Committee is vacant.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I guess we don't have anybody that's really tech savvy enough to take on the website.

But Angela has been learning a lot with the website, right?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, I've been updating as best as I can with the website. I'm learning things everyday and different things to put in there, so if you have any ideas, you just let me know. And we'll see what we can do. Am.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So all the things we discussed about putting in the website, please do follow-up by sending the information to Angela.

And from what I understand, there's some kind of restricting on what you're allowed to put on the website? Because, for example, I had sent you something and you said there was a question you would be allowed to do that, and that was information about a college program for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

And I didn't understand why that would not be added.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, from my understanding, it has to be, like, government-type agencies, things like that. I'm not exactly sure of the whole situation; I'm still learning all this myself.

So, like I said, I sent --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: They all can't --

>> ANGIE GREEN: Go ahead.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: They all can't come from governments. These are from organizations from and resources for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students to go to college. I wanted that added.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, you can send all of that information to me and I will pass it through to my supervisor and we can go from there. That's the only thing I can tell you of. Just let me know and I can always tell you if it can be approved.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. You still have that e-mail with that information?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, I do.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. That is good resources, because there's very few scholarships specifically for the Deaf and hard of hearing, so it would be good for them to know about that.

Okay. It is now 10:33. And we are past our break time; I'm sorry!

Okay. We will take a break now from 10:33 to... I can't count... 10:33 to...? Oh, let's make it 20 minutes would be 10:53 -- to 10:50, we'll have a break from now, 10:33 to 10:50. Be back at 10:50. And then... um... I see a chat thing. RMTC-D/HH is a BEESS FDOE agency and we have scholarship information on our website as well as summer camp programs.

Okay. Thank you, Cara. You're giving us a lot! All these links that are you are posting in the chat, Cara, could you please send a list of those links to Angela so that she can either add them or e-mail to us? Okay, thank you.

And I see that John Finch from ABLE is here already. So when we come back at 10:50, if we're ready to start, we can do that. Is that okay?

[No response].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. We'll begin our break now. Be back at 10:50.

[Break].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's 10:50. Is everybody back on? Hello? Is everybody back on? It's 10:50, it's 10:50. Is everybody here?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory, I'm here.

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie, I'm here.

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John, I'm here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I'm just checking to see if everybody is back on.

>> This is Ursula, I'm here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, John? Karen? Gina?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. We have a few minutes before John Finch presents about ABLE, at 11:00 o'clock.

John Jackson e-mailed a letter to Angela. It's a great letter! Thank you, thank you so much, John, for that quick action!

Just one small correction. It's the biennial report, not annual report, it's one word. Also, would that all fit on one page or a page and a half?

[Pause].

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John, I'm sorry, was that a question for me?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes.

>> JOHN JACKSON: It should. It should -- everything I wrote and sent to Angela should be one-page letter, I would think; yeah.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Angela?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yeah, this is Angie. I think it should fit all on one page; that's perfect.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, good, good. Thank you so much, John! Yay! Yes, I really would like to see that letter go out quickly to the legislators, especially the ones that we have visited and promised them the report!

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: Glenna, this is Cory. Yeah, that was well written. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: What?

>> CORY PARKER: I said that yeah, it was a very well-written letter. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, Cara sent an e-mail to Angela listing all the resources she had put in the Zoom chat. So thank you, Cara. Is she here? No, I guess not. Okay.

Apparently Cara herself is from RMTTC, which is why she knew so much! [Chuckles].

Okay. And I want to bring your attention to the schedule for the rest of the afternoon.

After the ABLE speaker, we have lunch. And after lunch, we will have elections for Chair and Vice Chair. So think about that.

And then we have another speaker, Olelo, okay. And then we have another break. And then that's when we will, hopefully, have a final approval on the bylaws. So remember to review that before then.

And then we will close with public comments.

Now, Cara has said that she wanted to make comments. But in the e-mail, it seemed that it was mostly related to fixing the website. So she can continue that conversation with Angela about the website fixes. Some links were not working or some names were changed and things like that.

So she can do -- she can follow-up on that. Angela, you can follow-up on that with Cara, okay?

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. Absolutely, I will.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. And I notice we have two visitors, Ursula Smith and Anthony Verdeja and also Netza. Okay. Anthony, hello, it's nice to see that you're here at the meetings and thank you for coming to the meeting.

Okay. Is there anything before we start with the speaker?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I guess we can go ahead. John Finch?

>> JOHN FINCH: Good morning. How are you?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Welcome! And we look forward to your explanation about the ABLE United. So, go ahead, the floor is yours.

>> JOHN FINCH: Well, thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I see you have a PowerPoint too.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yes. Thank you so much for having me today and hopefully this information is educational and we can educate individuals who may find an ABLE account beneficial.

So, let me do this so I can directly see everything. Perfect.

So, we are the State of Florida's ABLE program. ABLE is based on a piece of federal legislation known as the Achieving a Better Life Experience Act. It passed in 2014 to allow states to create a tax advantage, savings, and investment account for individuals with a variety of disabilities or diagnoses.

It actually added a new section to the Internal Revenue Code, Section 529A and the mission is to encourage individuals to save after-tax dollars to support health, independence, and quality of life.

So this is at the end of the day a financial product like a checking or savings account or

a trust or a Roth IRA all rolled into one. A very unique product.

My name is John Finch and I serve as director of the State of Florida's ABLE program. So here in the State of Florida, we had to pass our own legislation. This program is administered by The Florida Pre-paid College Savings Program so if you've heard of Florida Pre-paid or college savings account, that agency runs ABLE United and we launched in July of 2016.

And the goal of my presentation is for you to understand what ABLE accounts are. But to also think about how we might be able to partner and work together in the future, to discuss how we can educate the Deaf community and the hard-of-hearing community across the state about ABLE accounts.

So, think of the benefits. This may or may not apply to you, but it may apply to the individuals you all serve.

So, ownership of an ABLE account is an individual with a disability. However, somebody else can manage it on their behalf.

It's unique in the financial flexibility, is that generally funds in the ABLE account are disregarded for SSI and Medicaid and anybody can contribute to an ABLE account.

So a beneficiary can put their own money in. Family and friends can assist.

And then finally, the tax benefits. The ability to put money in and that money grow tax-free and be used for a variety of expenses without impacting public benefits.

What's unique about this program is that it started in the Down syndrome community and in the top left is John and John's mother, he is an ABLE account folder, but 20 years ago, she sat around a dining room table why she couldn't save for her child with special needs as it was for her typical daughter. And through her hard work and advocacy, ABLE came into existence.

But it brought in who could take advantage of these accounts, to include Alicia down here, who is saving for a wheelchair-accessible van.

Or Elliott and his mom Sandra, in the top right here, who, although he doesn't rely on public benefits, uses his ABLE accounts to offset some of the cost of his DJing side job.

So pretty broad, a broad spectrum of individuals who can utilize an ABLE account.

And please, if there are questions, feel free to put that in the chat or you can interrupt me at any time.

So, let's talk about who's eligible for an ABLE account. What's unique is an ABLE account, you can only have one of them nationwide. So each state gets to set up and run their own program. And we all have to follow the same federal rules.

But one of the rules that states can follow is who they're open up for.

And so since we're Florida's program, we only serve Florida residents at the time they apply. But some states have opened up for national enrollment.

The other two points on eligibility is true for all ABLE accounts. One is that the disability, the diagnosis, had to have an onset prior to age 26. It doesn't matter the age of the beneficiary now, it's just that that diagnosis had to have occurred prior to then. And that's actually going up to age 46 in January of 2026.

Also, the individual has to have a severe disability. So either they're currently receiving supplemental security income, Social Security disability insurance, or they're self-certifying that they have a marked and severe functional limitation.

What self-certifying means is you have a diagnosis of physical or mental impairment prior to age 26. It affects your daily living and marked severe limitations and expected to last more than a week to 12 months.

For example, if I broke my arm, that wouldn't qualify me for an ABLE account. But if I had a significant disability that impaired my daily living, that would.

So, there's broad categories that qualify for ABLE accounts. However, I really want to

focus specifically on nervous disorders, which includes deafness.

And what's unique about ABLE accounts and eligibility is it points back to the Social Security regulations for eligibility.

And so I just put the -- on this slide is the references from Social Security on what it means to qualify for Social Security. So this is hearing loss not treated with cochlear implants versus ones that are.

And so I'm not familiar with this diagnosis language, but you may be in regards to air conduction hearing thresholds or word recognition score.

And so if you have an opportunity to educate me, I would love to know more about if this is applicable and you meet the definition on how an ABLE account may be used for you.

Ownership is -- belongs to -- the ABLE account itself belongs to the individual with the disability. But somebody else may establish or assist in establishing the account on their behalf. They would serve as the authorized signatory. And this can be a legal guardian, power of attorney, maybe a parent, spouse, sibling, or grandparent, or even a representative payee under Social Security Administration.

So that could be an individual or an organization.

We commonly refer to that individual as the authorized legal representative.

So now that we discussed eligibility, let's actually talk about how an account works.

So to open and establish an account, it takes about 15 minutes or less. It's done all online, so we're not associated with a bank.

But just like you were setting up any kind of financial product, we're going to need some identifying information.

So the e-mail address is used for logging in. But once you get to that point, we're going to need the date of birth, Social Security number of the individual opening the account, as well as the beneficiary, if it's somebody else.

Self-certify, why you have the authority to open the account. If you're doing it on behalf of a beneficiary. Answer some personal identification information based on readily-available, online financial information.

So if you ever enroll in an account and it asked you for the color of a vehicle or maybe if you've -- if you have a bank account with a certain bank, those types of questions.

After that, you'll be able to connect your bank to make a \$25 contribution. Select whether this will be an investment or a savings tool.

And that's what's really unique about ABLE accounts, is this can be both an investment account or a savings account or even both. And so we designed it to help meet the needs of most investors by creating pre-designed portfolios. So those are investment options that are already diversified and they're risk-based, so conservative, moderate, and growth.

We also have individual funds, if somebody wants to do it themselves or if they want to select the FDIC savings account, they can go that route.

And so as you can see, most of these are managed by very large financial institutions. So Vanguard, Blackrock, those manage, U.S. stock, U.S. bond, and international stock options.

We also have a money market account tied to Florida Prime which is like the State of Florida's money market account as well as an FDIC product through our bank.

So individuals can utilize the account however they need. And when they contribute, they get to pick which of those funds they want to.

So let's talk about contributions. Generally, anybody can contribute to an ABLE account. So it could be the beneficiary, it could be a parent, it could be a family. It could be an organization.

Generally funds contributed to an ABLE account are not considered income, unless it's the earnings of the individual with the disability.

There's a typo on this slide, sorry -- individuals is 17,000 on a calendar year so not -- I'm going to go ahead and make that change now, 'cause why not? So you can make 17,000 per calendar here. If individual is working for that saving for retirement, they can contribute more than that amount. There's some rules that follow as well.

And if individuals or family members have leftover 529 college savings plan funds, those can be rolled over to an ABLE account.

So the most important thing is, is an individual putting earned income or even unearned income, for example, if they're receiving SSI or some type of other public benefit resource, those funds would still count as account for public benefits programs for potentially the IRS.

So ABLE account assets, not earnings.

We will also create a gifting portal, so if you are able to establish or the individual you serve established an ABLE account, they can actually set up a, kind of like a Go Fund Me page they can put it out on social media to friends and family and they can make a contribution online.

Now, my favorite exception: Spending the money. Once the money is in the account, how do you get it out? There's a couple ways. You can withdraw back to that connected bank. You can request a check, either over the phone or online. And we also have an optional ABLE Visa pre-paid card. It's a reloadable debit card used anywhere Visa is accepted.

You can make a withdraw, earnings are tax-free as long as you use it for a qualified earning expense and I'll explain more about that on the next slide.

You also get to choose how you want that money to be pulled out. You can select from the investment options, savings options, you have the ability to choose how you want to take the money out of an account.

When a withdrawal is made, though, it triggers a 1099-QA which is a tax form that tells the IRS you have an ABLE account and you had withdrawals and how much earnings was on the withdrawals.

There's no taxes and you don't have to file. It's just you need to keep documentation on why those withdrawals for the calendar year were qualified disability expenses.

So what is a qualified disability expense? Very broad. So broad, that the final regulations that the Treasury put out said "Is to be construed broadly."

But they also provided some categories: So, health, so if you think of an upcoming doctor's appointment, maybe it's your co-pay, those type of expenses, as long as it's for the beneficiary qualified.

Education could be for going back to school, it could be helping you pay for classes, books, tuition.

Housing and housing related expenses, it could be anywhere from paying your mortgage, your rent, your utility bill.

Taxes, because everybody loves paying taxes.

Transportation is also acceptable, whether that be a down payment on a vehicle or using ride-sharing services.

And the list goes on.

Assistive technology and support, whether that be maybe you need to go somewhere and you have somebody assist you. Or maybe you're buying technology that's going to give you that assistive technology support you need.

But legal fees, financial management, funeral burial. Really -- my light went off, sorry....

What it came down to is really does the disability -- does the expense relate to the individual with the disability and help improve or maintain their health, independence, or



quality of life? That's kind of the benchmark that the Treasury has.

And so people have justified it for vacation expenses, for buying groceries, everyday living expenses.

Generally giving the funds away or using anything that's going to be hurtful or harmful to the individual, such as tobacco, alcohol, or even gambling, those would not be qualified. So pretty broad.

So you're all probably thinking, this sounds too good to be true. What's the catch?

So this is a State of Florida program. We tried to make this as accessible and the best value for Floridians as possible.

So there's no fees associated in establishing the account. Our investment options do have an investment advisor fee from 0-2.9% annualize on the account balance. When you see the returns on the account, that's net of this administration fee.

And the FDIC doesn't have any fees tied to it.

If individuals do want a paper statement, there's an annual \$10 fee for that, but you can always download your statements online.

Also, that optional Visa pre-pay card does cost \$2.50 per month for that flexibility.

As mentioned, we try to make this the best value for Floridians, so no application fee or monthly account maintenance fees. Most other state programs do charge monthly account maintenance fees and paper check fees. However, we don't.

And the great thing is this program is backed by Florida pre-paid over 30 years and helped two million families save and now they're helping the disability community save.

All right. So let's talk about public benefits.

But any questions so far? I don't think there is.

I don't see any. Okay.

All right. Yes?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: [On mute].

Okay. When you were discussing... you were discussing about hearing loss not controlled with cochlears... and then there was a limit to the amount, the decibels, there's a limit to -- I noticed a word that you used? What was that? I'm hoping that maybe Cindy is on chat and maybe she's listening to this presentation?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Was someone talking at the same time as me?

>> INTERPRETER: Glenna, this is the interpreter. You're on mute.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh... okay, now you can hear me. Okay. I'm concerned about the restriction with the hearing loss and word recognition. Because that can really vary with different individuals, when you say, like, less than 43% word recognition.

I have, like, 60, maybe 50% word recognition and it's still tough. Some concern about the arbitrary cutoff for the dB and word recognition, because it can vary with different individuals, if they have more hearing or more word recognition, but they still struggle.

Is there any flexibility with that cutoff?

>> JOHN FINCH: Thank you for your question. So this is a copy and paste from the Social Security Administration's Bluebook, which provides a list of all of the various diagnoses and disabilities and what the qualifications are for an individual to receive supplemental Social Security income or SSDI.

SSDI is more of a can you gainfully be employed?

So, what's unique about this product is that this is run by the IRS, but the qualifications point back to Social Security Administration.

So, I'm in-between saying well, here's what the Social Security Administration says, but it would be up to the IRS to prove this, if you were to be audited.

So, when it comes to the flexibility, unfortunately this is what the regulations that Social Security has as it relates to hearing loss.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Very good. I know, for example -- this is Glenna -- I know for example, in some schools, they will accept some students who only have a 30 dB hearing loss because of the classroom situation, where everything is very noisy.

So even just having a little bit of a hearing loss, makes it very difficult in classrooms, so... no flexibility. Okay.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That can leave out quite a few people.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah. And that's what I'm starting to learn. As you saw on the previous slide, there's a wide variety of disabilities.

We really haven't focused on deafness, just because I'm uneducated as to who would be eligible. And so it's helpful to hear from you that the Social Security standards are pretty strict.

What's unique is that these regulations point to a child. However, the ABLE Act says it's based on this standard, but regardless of age.

So, I don't know, you know, how that's interpreted to you. But I did want to provide this so, you know -- and it is helpful to hear from you that not a lot of individuals reach this type of threshold that the Social Security has. Which might be, I think from a previous meeting I attended of yours, that's always been an issue for individuals trying to receive SSI or SSDI.

Is that a true statement?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes.

>> JOHN FINCH: Okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Because -- I wish that Cindy was on. Because she would have a LOT to say about this.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hearing loss is not like vision loss.

>> JOHN FINCH: Mmm-hmm.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: At all. It's really a lot more complex. And it's just like, you

know, putting on a pair of glasses, you're done, you're corrected. Hearing loss doesn't work that way. It really varies a lot with the hearing aids, with the comprehension and how much they can hear and how much they can understand. And which kind of sounds they can hear and which kind of understanding they can do.

It's really a lot more complex.

So seeing those restrictions is, you know, a concern about that.

>> JOHN FINCH: Okay. Well, thank you for that educational moment for me. As my background is more in the intellectual developmental disabilities. So I will keep that in mind, though, as you -- because I know, for example, one group we're starting to work with, it's based out of Panama City, the Florida... it's a Florida family group for mostly families with children who have a hearing loss.

And a lot of the families, they believe, would be eligible for ABLE have additional types of disabilities, so whether that be autism, learning disabilities. And so those individuals would most likely qualify for ABLE under some of those other diagnoses rather than specifically the hearing loss section.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, yeah. I mean, that's pretty obvious, if they're, what we call Deaf Plus, you know, Deaf Plus, they have other conditions. The question is which one is primary? It's not like at the Family Café is primary, but everything is -- hearing loss is lower down.

And this one talks about hearing loss is primary or the only thing. So... okay. Thank you.

>> JOHN FINCH: Thank you, Glenna, that was very helpful.

So, I'll just touch briefly on public benefits. The main takeaway I want you to have from this section is that ABLE accounts are generally disregarded when determining eligibility.

So, Medicaid, SSI, one of the things they look at is how much resources, how much money you have on hand. And generally funds in the ABLE account don't count towards that limit.

So, I'm not going to bore you too much with some of these details. But if you do serve individuals that are on SSI and qualify for ABLE and have an ABLE account, there are some additional rules.

So, for example, the first \$100,000 in an ABLE account does not count as a resource. And if individuals that are retaining funds passed at the end of the month, if it's used for housing or non-qualified expenses, it would count as a resource.

So, I usually tell individuals, you know, there's an online Social Security Operations Manual known as the Palms, and they actually have a dedicated section about ABLE accounts.

And so I always point to that.

And this is just an example of somebody, let's say Amy takes money out much her ABLE account and retains it past the end every time month for housing, then that would count as a resource the beginning of the next month.

So, to not worry about jeopardizing SSI, they could just have the ABLE account pay those expenses directly.

I know that was brief and I think I'm going to give you back some of your time, because I heard somebody's stomach rumbling! It might have been mine.

But how to reach us. We have a ton of resources on our website. Also there's the ability to meet with me directly, if you would like.

And we have customer service. But if you need to, we can always use 711 to get ahold

of our program.

I did want to say how you can assist us. You did mention Family Café, were there since we've launched, we're coming onto our eighth annual Family Café. If you're meeting with families and if there are any opportunities to exhibit or any additional speaking opportunities, if you have the ability to include us as a resource, whether that be on your website or on an e-mail, we always appreciate that.

And then also we have a pretty large social media presence. So if there's an opportunity to provide you all with social media clips or recommended posts, we would love that as well. And then you can always reach me, I put my e-mail on the slide here, but John.finch@ableunited.com, that's how you can get ahold of me.

Glenna?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: [Chuckles]. A question again. Again, with the hearing loss, is that if you only have a hearing loss that applies only for children can get that? Or can adults with hearing loss can get it? Or is it only children? I was not clear on that slide.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yes, yes, so it's anybody that has -- that meets that hearing loss, regardless of their age. As long as it was diagnosed prior to age 26.

So, for example, if you were 37 and you were in an accident which ended up resulting in complete hearing loss, you would not qualify for an ABLE account, because that disability wasn't diagnosed until 37.

I hope that makes sense.

So we have -- for example, we have people in our program that are in their 80's that have an ABLE account, because their diagnosis happened when they were a child.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. But I see in the slide, it says it would change to age 46 in 2026.

>> JOHN FINCH: Correct. So there was a piece of federal legislation that got added to the last year's Omnibus Act --

[Meow sound in background].

>> JOHN FINCH: -- which allowed us to up that age to 46, but that isn't until the year of 2026.

That example I gave of that 37-year-old, they wouldn't qualify today. But if that happened or they waited until 2026, they could qualify for an ABLE account, because that age has been erased.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Why did they pick the arbitrary age of 46?

>> JOHN FINCH: Sorry, I'm fighting a little cough here.

That's a good question. So if it -- I gave you the long story of it. When this legislation was at first being brought, in order to get it passed -- let me back up.

So the Congressional Budget Office that looks at federal legislation, when ABLE was first coming around, they said if this gets passed, it's going to cost roughly \$10 billion over the next ten years. So \$1 billion a year was their estimate, because you would have some individuals, for example, that could now maintain their benefits that previously couldn't.

So there was a big fight to say no, that's not the case. But in order to get it passed,

they said well, if we put an age of onset of 26, it lowered that down to \$2 billion over ten years and they were okay with that. That was back in 2015.

Since then, we've pushed to remove the age. But that had a superfluous amount tied to the Federal Government for any age. So we said what about 46? They did the math, okay, 46 would only account for this much. It's an arbitrary age, there's no rhyme nor reason tied to anything.

We know as individuals age, the chances of a significant disability occurring later in life, so whether that be cancer, Parkinson's, ALS, something of that nature, you would have a huge amount of new people qualifying for ABLE and, therefore, you know, could be eligible for Medicaid.

So, it's... unfortunately it's just an arbitrary number that the Federal Government put on it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Would the money that goes into the account come from the people themselves, right? Their own savings? Their own investments? So why would it cost the Government money if people are putting in the money themselves?

>> JOHN FINCH: So --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: How does that cost the Government money if they're putting the money in?

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah, it's the eligibility, maintaining the eligibility for government benefits. For example, if someone is receiving Medicaid services, depending on how, you know, how much Medicaid services they are receiving that costs the states and feds government and they say okay, previously they have previous hundreds of dollars and they previously had hundreds of thousands of dollars and still receive Medicaid and that's where they're coming up with their overall costs associated with the ABLE programs across the nation.

That's my best guess. I mean, I'm not a [chuckles]... I'm not an expert into the rhyme or reason legally or statutorily why. But that's my best guess.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, thank you. I want to go back again to the minimum requirement. I forgot to ask about the cochlear implant.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: You talked about cochlear implant.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah, it looks like, and this is where you can provide some guidance for me. It basically seems like if somebody gets a cochlear implant, they're automatically not eligible for Social Security benefits; therefore, would not be eligible for ABLE.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: But, yeah, that's really a big mistake, because a cochlear implant, they're treating a cochlear implant like it's a cure-all, that they're hearing fine. And it's not true. It varies a lot, again, depending on the person's background.

For some people, the cochlear implant only gives them a rough environmental sounds. That's it. All the way to other people who it helps them hear almost everything, over the phone, and the TV and everything.

And most fall somewhere in-between. So that's really arbitrary to make it look like oh,

cochlear implant is the answer, it's all fine and you're not disabled anymore. That's not true at all!

The cochlear implant varies a lot on how successful it is.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah. No, I understand your point of view and I agree with you.

You know, but for me, for the program, I'm only doing what, you know, what the Feds point to back to the Social Security Administration on the rules that they have in place for Deaf and hard of hearing. Which is unfortunate, right, because it's very, to your point, they have it very concrete and that's, you know, just like in any disability, it's a wide range, right?

Like to say -- like what they say in the autism world, if you met only one person with autism, you've just only met one person with autism. It's unique to the individual. And I would assume it's the same for this community as well.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are there restrictions for blind or low vision, are there similar kind of restrictions?

>> JOHN FINCH: Yes. So, for -- when it comes to blindness -- and now I'm just going to go to our website real quick, because I believe... um... the blindness is listed... let me find it on here.

[Meow sound in background].

>> JOHN FINCH: The Social Security Administration outlined for what blindness is, so the 20/200... yeah, right here.

So, central visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye. So that's very specific Social Security Administration directive also applies to blind and low vision as well.

[Meow sound in background].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And that is for disable people too?

>> JOHN FINCH: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I heard about ABLE before, because I have friends, the parents are Deaf, their son is not Deaf, but he has multiple handicaps, multiple disabilities, sorry. CP, autistic, non-verbal, on and on and on.

And she mentioned -- and I asked her if she already has that and she says yes, she already has it.

What she really appreciated was that she gets a lot of information from ABLE and that their videos are captioned and they are interpreters, and she really appreciated that communication access.

>> JOHN FINCH: Well, thank you for that. That's something that we I think a year or two ago that we said no, in order to be truly accessible, we needed to put that --

[Interruption in meeting].

>> [Open mic]. Hi, guys! Hey! Hi! Hey! Hello, hello.

[Open mic].

[Laughs]

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We need to get them kicked off. We need to get them kicked off.

>> [Open mic].

>> JOHN FINCH: I guess we're teaching our kids about technology in school.

[Interruption in meeting].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We've had a problem with that before, people getting into our meeting when they shouldn't be able to. It looked like kids playing around.

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah, you should be able to lock your meeting. We started using Zoom to your accessibility features, to your point, it allowed us to do ASL interpretation as well as Spanish and captioning.

But, Glenna, if there are any other questions, you all have my contact information. Feel free to reach out to me.

But, you know, like I mentioned before, this is a newer disability category that we're investigating and, I think to your point, Social Security is so restrictive on their definition that, you know, we may be reaching primarily Deaf Plus-type individuals.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Does anybody else have any questions for John?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No?

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sorry, I didn't have any additional questions. Thank you so much for that presentation; I appreciate it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: John, thank you very much for your presentation.

And do people who get SSDI or Medicaid, are they automatically informed about the ABLE trust?

>> JOHN FINCH: No, no, they're not automatically informed, but they would qualify based on receiving that, as long as they're receiving it for disability diagnosis prior to age 26.

So if you do have individuals who are on SSDI, they would qualify automatically. That's one of the -- so it's SSI, SSDI, or they have to self-certify that they're meeting the hearing definition under Social Security.

[Meow sound in background].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So when people go on SSDI or Medicaid because of a disability, do you automatically send them information about ABLE? Or do they have to find out for themselves? Which?

>> JOHN FINCH: Yeah, unfortunately they have to find out for themselves.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh.

>> JOHN FINCH: So that's a -- Social Security has information available on it, but they're not pushing it out. Same with Medicaid.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hmm...

>> JOHN FINCH: I know... we've tried to -- which is interesting, because we're a State program. But some of the federal agencies have had -- haven't been as pushing forth or educating the communities they serve.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Do you go to Family Café?

>> JOHN FINCH: Yes, we'll be there. I'm fortunate, I usually do two presentations, the Governor's Summit, we usually have three to six booths. And that's -- because you look familiar. So I think that's may have been where I've seen you in the past. Because I've been there. I think I've gone to 12 of the 25 of them that they've had.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I went two times and we decided not to go anymore, because our focus is on people with hearing loss as the primary thing, and -- and they focus really on just one, communication access, that's all. And the Family Café didn't really fit what we represent.

>> JOHN FINCH: Okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So, if no one has any questions or comments or anything, I want to thank you, John, for taking the time to give us good information.

Again, maybe this is something to consider to add to our website so that people could find out about ABLE United program.

So, Angela, if you can look into checking to see if we can add that information, okay?

>> JOHN FINCH: Great. Well, thank you all for your time today!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, thank you!

>> JOHN FINCH: Thank you.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Does anybody have any comments or anything they want to say before we break for lunch?

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. I have none from me.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Okay, thank you.

So, again, we're breaking for lunch. I'm not sure if everybody got the e-mail about the letter and about the resources from RMTTC. If you did get it, if everybody got that, all the



council members only, review that; please remember to review the bylaws.

And think about elections for Chair and Vice Chair.

Okay? So I guess we'll -- it's 11:40, so we'll go ahead and break for lunch.

We do meet again at 12:45. So please be on time to meet at 12:45.

And thank you for being here on this Zoom meeting. We'll see you this afternoon.

[Break].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Are we all back? Hello? Hello? Anybody here?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Good afternoon. John is here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny is here. John is here. Who else is here? Jenny, John. Anybody else here?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy is in chat. Great.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Oh, Angie's here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Sean is here.

>> VOICE: Recording in progress.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory, are you here?

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory, I'm here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. Gina, are you here?  
We need to do roll call after lunch.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Cindy's here; Gina is here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy, okay. So we have... I'm here, Glenna's here; Cory is here; Jenny, Sean, Angela, John, Cindy. Anybody else? Of the council members.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina is here as well.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Gina, you're here? Okay, wonderful.

Karen? Karen? Oh, Karen did say she had physical therapy, so hopefully she'll be back soon.

Okay. Let's see... we have Cory, Jenny, John, Cindy, and Gina. Okay. So we have six people, six council members here, out of nine. Chris and Karen and who else is missing...?

Okay. So we can go ahead. First is the election for Chair and Vice Chair. Does anybody want to make a motion or...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is anybody interested in being Chair or Vice Chair?  
Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. And I'm interested in continuing.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Cory is interested in continuing.

>> CORY PARKER: If you'll have me.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And I'm interested in continuing one more year. And then....  
Okay. So do we have a motion?

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: We can't motion ourselves.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well... Glenna Ashton is interested in continuing as Chair.  
And Cory Parker is interested in continuing as Vice Chair. I need a motion from someone.

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. Is it the motion to have a vote or is it to start the  
vote or discussion? Or what's the motion? What motion do you need?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: A motion to nominate the two of us.

>> JOHN JACKSON: Well, I don't know if we need a motion to nominate, but I  
nominate Glenna -- this is John -- I'll nominate Glenna for the Chair and Cory for the Vice.  
Is that what it was?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, yes, that, that's what I needed. Thank you, John.  
Okay, so we have nomination for Glenna as Chair and Cory as Vice Chair. Are there any  
questions?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina seconds it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. All right. Gina seconds. Sorry. Okay. Any  
discussions? Any... um... any other nominations?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Is there a motion to close the nomination?

[Pause].

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. I move that we close the nominations and move  
to a vote.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Now it's awkward on Zoom. Please show a hand up,  
if you are visual. If you're not visual, click on the reaction with a hand up. Or if you're on

CART, say aye or nay.

All those in favor of -- to vote for nomination, who vote for -- well, it's not a motion. All those who vote for the slate of Glenna Ashton as Chair and Cory Parker as Vice Chair, all those who vote for that nomination, raise your hand or type aye or whatever.

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina and Cindy say aye.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So we have one, two, three, four... Jenny?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny?

[Pause].

>> JENNY ROJAS: Hey, I'm sorry, I just don't know enough about any of you to feel confident in placing a vote. I don't know what to do about that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, based on what you've seen from us so far today, how about that? And based on what Mary might have told you.

>> JENNY ROJAS: Um... I didn't receive a meeting packet, I didn't even know we were doing this today.

Okay... [chuckles]... I'm sorry.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. John, you have your hand up?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Yes. This is John. I'm really not sure that we need to have a vote at all. We have one nominee for each position; no one else is nominating -- there are no other nominations, correct?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's true. So it's basically -- that's true. It's especially by acclamation, I guess.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, okay.

>> JOHN JACKSON: So I would move --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So Glenna Ashton and Cory Parker -- Cory Parker as Vice Chair by acclamation, okay. Thank you. I hope we can serve you well for the next year.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Thank you.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. We have a few minutes before we have the next

speaker. I don't see him on Zoom, Tyrone Allen. Has anybody heard from Tyrone Allen? Angela? Sean?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, he's at 1:30. Okay. He's at 1:30.

All right. The letter that John has written, you said that it was still one page. I wonder if maybe we could cut it down to be short and sweet, since it's going to go with the report.

So, perhaps some of the things that are repeated from the report, we could minimize to make it a short and sweet letter. Would that be all right?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We have that big whole paragraph explaining about FCCDHH, that's at the beginning of the report already. So maybe...

[Pause].

>> JENNY ROJAS: This is Jenny --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I don't want to be, like, eh... hopefully fill all the way. John first, then Jenny second, then Cory third. John?

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. I guess maybe I'm just somewhat of a pessimist, I guess, as far as the way Government operates, but I just thought to myself the letter should introduce who it is from and give some background, you know, before we talk about the report, about, you know, what happened with the late report.

And I guess the reason I'm the pessimist is because I -- any -- I'm not so certain how many of these legislators are even gonna read the report. I mean, they won't open up the letter, their staff will open up the letter.

My hope was that if it sounds like we are a statutorily-created council, that it won't just sound like we're an activist group, or something like that, and that might improve the odds of the letter and the report actually getting to the legislator's desk.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. This is Glenna. So you're saying you're used to seeing that kind of long letter. So it's not something that they would see it, oh, it's long, and not read it, but they're used to that kind of long letter. Okay. Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Yeah, I think, Gina (sic), you said you had something first? Or was it Jenny? I think Jenny was the other person? It was John, then Jenny, then me?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny? Do you want to say something? I see you have a hand up.

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes, please. This is Jenny Rojas. I agree with everything that John just said. And I also agree with Glenna about not being repetitive.

Just real quick, to clarify, this is going to be attached to the report that we're submitting?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: John? Did you want the letter to go with the report? Or did you want the letter to go out ahead of the report? Which?

>> JOHN JACKSON: No, my assumption, and correct me, I was assuming that the letter was going to go with the report. So when they got the report, you know, not only would it kind of provide some explanation of why a slate for those legislators who might have remember gotten it previously during the session, but also, you know, because I just assumed that it would make more sense to send it with the report, you know, so the product is there.

So, my assumption was it was going to go with the report. Here's our report, sorry it's late. But this is who we are and please put it on your legislator's desk [chuckles].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Anything else to follow-up on that, Jenny?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I just didn't want it to come across as calling anybody out or making it give the perception that somebody had dropped the ball or anything like that, for those people that are -- it's still routing through. I didn't want to step on any toes with that, and that was all. Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, there was no names or anything like that. Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. And I think that John has everything that's included in the letter that's necessary. Because who we are and then the statute, that impacts us. And traditionally, we do have a newsletter, so we could just be on the lookout for that. And I'm not quite sure if we need to -- it needs to be much shorter than that.

There are some things that are already highlighted and mentioned. But maybe we could change the font? So it's 12 -- from 12 to 11 [laughs], if that's something that you want to shrink down.

But I think everything that needs to be in the letter is there.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. All right. I was just wondering if, you know, those --

>> CORY PARKER: Thank you, John.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- all those people, when they look at long letters versus a short letter. I was just wondering about that. Okay. John?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Yes? Oh, I'm sorry, I forgot to lower my hand.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. All right. All right. So we'll leave the letter as it is. And maybe Angela and Sean can -- because the letter, we said it was a first draft, so Angela and Sean can check over it, if it needs anymore cleaning up, if there's any typos or whatever, and then have that letter printed and ready to go with the report.

I suppose you have no idea what the timeline with the report, I mean, is going to go out, what, this month? September? When? Any idea?

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. So, I know it just has one more person to go through. I'm not sure exactly how busy they are. Hopefully within the next month, maybe

we can get it out. But that's, you know, that's, again, you know, I have no idea. It just depends on how busy they are.

I will update you as soon as I hear any information.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Do you think it's possible if you keep reminding them, that maybe we would finally get the report printed and ready to distribute before our August meeting?

So that way council members can take home some while we're there at the meeting?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I will definitely try for that, okay?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, you can tell them that they missed the deadline of February when we were up in Tallahassee. Your next deadline would be August when we meet again. And then go back home in the fall and start contacting home offices before they go up in November/December, whenever.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. We still have 29 minutes before we have our speaker.

>> CORY PARKER: Glenna, this is Cory.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: Can we ask Angie if there's anyone who's on the chat that might have some comments for us? If there's anything that might be on our -- or a text or... is anybody saying anything that might have some comments for us?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No, I'm looking at the chat --

>> CORY PARKER: Maybe Cindy or Gina?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No, there's nothing from Cindy or Gina. Just saying something about can Jenny abstain from the voting, but we already moved past that, so that's the only thing on there.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you for keeping an eye on the chat, Angie. Did everybody have -- Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. And I also wanted to say that I do look forward serving and working with you again, Glenna.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I look forward to working with you too!

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Did you all have -- did the council members have a chance to read through the bylaws?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Yes, I have. I have no changes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I know we're supposed to discuss the bylaws at 2:45, so I'm going to use the time now, is to check and see if everybody has finished reading the bylaws.

I read them. Cory, you read them. John read them.  
Did Gina and Cindy read them?

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: I'm looking; I haven't seen anything yet.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Yeah, I've already read them and I have no additional changes on my end.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Cindy says yes, no changes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, okay. So Cindy saw it. Jenny, did you finally get the whole meeting packet from Angie?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I did get the whole meeting packet. Thank you, Angie, I appreciate that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Good.

>> JENNY ROJAS: The only thing that I did not have were the changes in it, you know, my opinion on this, this year may not even matter; I didn't have anything to compare to.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Well, when we did the bylaws, we basically did just updating some of the words and cleaning up the language, you know. It was really more of a cleanup and we didn't make any big, drastic change.

The only change I can think of that would be different was we added under the latest thing that the Council would do is hopefully host a conference or an expo, where we bring in the entire community, with the entire spectrum, everybody in one place.

Because all of the people in the community, they have their own group, their own conferences, and their own workshops, and there's never really been anything where everybody comes in under one roof that represents the entire range of the Deaf and hard of hearing, deafblind, late-deafened community.

So this is the idea that we had that we would try to host something hopefully for 2025.

But... we got answers back from about the Council's identity as an advisory board and we still have to pull out the financial form 1, and that was answered.

We're still waiting for answers from another attorney as to how we can collect money, how can we ask for grants when we have no accounts of our own. I mean, where would we put that money? And where would we, you know... we haven't gotten an answer from that.

Angie and Sean, you haven't heard anything back about that yet, have you?

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. I'm still working on getting answers for you about that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The hardest part is that we start planning and the first thing is we have to reserve a place and we can't reserve a place unless we can make a deposit. And we would have to first do some fundraising or grant writing to get enough money for a deposit.

So that concerns me, because, you know, things are booked really early. And we're halfway through 2023 already, so...

>> SEAN ISAAC: Glenna --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So the only other thing I could think of is the does the Department of Health own any space that could be used as a gigantic expo space, similar to an expo hall or something like that? Does anybody know if the Department of Health has anything like that in Central Florida?

Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. First thing I wanted to say is the FCCDHH does have its specific own account with the Department. And I believe any checks or anything like that could be just donated to that particular account.

But, again, like Angie said, we'll need to clarify, just to make sure.

And then the second thing, I'm not aware of any spaces in Central Florida. I know of a certain number of county health departments, but I'm not certain of any just space that would be suitable for what you're looking for when it comes to a conference. We would have to check on that as well.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Maybe it might be worth checking into using the same space at the International Deaf Thing, the RP funding space. I think -- I can't remember many years ago, I'd been there maybe once or twice, I can't remember, but the booths that they had, they were pretty nice. The space that we were in was fairly nice. And to my knowledge, I think Florida is still very limited, even though it's been ten years and we've been going all out for this, but still....

As I'm thinking about this and envisioning what we're doing. That might be a nice location, a nice space to host this particular event. It might be worth just checking in to to see what we can negotiate with them or if they would give us a discount based on who we are, partner with them, maybe with other individuals on other boards with It's A Deaf Thing.

You just never know what kind of opportunities might pop up because of that.

The earlier, the better, obviously, that we can plan for the future would be best. But it's worth checking into.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thanks. There's another space that we could use as an expo hall for DeafNation in Kissimmee and that's more central --

>> CORY PARKER: That's right.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- and we don't have to rent the whole thing, we can rent half of it or maybe even 1/4 of it, they have halls A, B, C, whatever, you only have to rent -- but that's in Kissimmee and that's a lot easier, more people can come to Kissimmee than the Tampa area, which is a longer drive, going that way.

The only other thing is, like...



>> CORY PARKER: Lakeland is where the RP Funding Center is.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Lakeland, yes.

>> CORY PARKER: It's in Lakeland.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Kissimmee is more central. And I know from the past, DeafNation and It's A Deaf Thing, DeafNation draws more people because it's more central.

>> CORY PARKER: Yeah, I think it's --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The only negative is there's no real nice hotel near that expo place. It's pretty out there...

>> CORY PARKER: It's tough to find a hotel in the area. But there's one hotel right across the street, I think right behind, where... [Sighs]... it's, like, .5 miles, I believe, in that particular area, there are three of them. But I suspect if we book it and have it ready for the Sun Deaf Festival we have, there's 245 and a little bit further down, I think they may... I'm not sure. But maybe. It's something that we can definitely look into.

But that's been my experience. Just sayin'....

But it's good food for thought.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah. So, Sean, does that mean we can go ahead and start asking around about spaces and negotiating? And then... I'm going to imagine deposits would be, like, \$500 or \$1,000 or something. 2025, yeah....

Sean? Should we go ahead and try to contact places? Or do we have to wait until we have the money or what?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Typically those type of meetings are approved by the Council -- I'm sorry, by the Department ahead of time. So we would have to route a request to travel and hold that type of meeting and get that approved first.

And Angie could start that process, if that's allowed; mmm-hmm.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So, all right. Um... so that means we need to become more -- we have to be specific about where we want to -- where and when we want to have it? Or just a general permission, with the idea of hosting it someplace? At what point do we start the travel request?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Great question. I think the sooner, the better, is the answer for that one. And I'm just going to throw this out there as well: I was talking with Angie and one thing you may want to consider is I know we talked about planning and hosting this with other agencies or other organizations.

You know, you may want to consider hosting that meeting next year and inviting those other agencies that are going to partner with you to throw this meeting or conference.

Because that would, right there, get you some assistance and other donations as far as people who are willing to work on this with you all. That's just a suggestion that I'm throwing out personally.

But as far as the travel is concerned, yes, I will submit all travel as soon as possible [laughs].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Two things: I would expect all of the organizations and agencies that we represent on the Council should be involved in supporting this event. And hopefully with volunteers and money.

So, I mean... technically we are 17 organizations to represent and if we get all 17 involved and donate a little bit would not be hard. But... that's a dream, and the technology, technically.

The travel requests are not clear. Can we just... there's 12 -- they're going to expect that we have a specific place and a specific time, and we have to research on that and get to them, or do we just ask open-ended anywhere, any time, just for general permission to go ahead and start planning? Or do we have to be specific and ready with a place and time? Which is it?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. That's a great question. We haven't done this in a long time, if ever, Glenna, so pardon my answer if it's not exactly correct or if I have to go back and revise it in the future. But the way the Department does it is that we get permission to host a meeting first, and then you submit the travel afterwards.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> SEAN ISAAC: And then before that travel is submitted, Angie would go about securing the location, which she does now with the hotel, so it would be a similar process.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So Angie can start working on asking permission for us to host an event in 2025. I think we know we want it in 2025. And probably do it the same weekend as our quarterly meeting, would be the easiest way. May, either May or August, I guess.

>> CORY PARKER: That would -- this is Cory, May or August --

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: -- either of those two --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- no, if we have our meeting on Thursday and Friday and we stay Saturday for the expo. Or have the meeting Thursday, have the expo Friday. I don't know, something like that. That same weekend. Because we would all be there already. Which means we all can be volunteers already [chuckles].

So you can say -- then that might make a stronger case if we say we want to host an expo conference in conjunction with the quarterly meeting.

And if we do the quarterly meeting at a hotel, then it would be -- we just add the expense of renting one of the big rooms.

I know from past experience -- of course I don't know about the cost now -- but in a

hotel, if you rent a big meeting room, big enough, it's usually \$500 deposit. I'm going to guess it's probably up to 1,000 deposit easy, that kind of thing.

And then we have to buy food and beverage, like for a reception.

That's two ways it can work.

All right. John --

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- then Angela, then Cory. John?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Why don't we let Angela go first, because it might moot what I was going to bring up.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Well, I was just going to say that Gina raises a couple of questions and she wanted to know if we could plan our event in conjunction with our in-person meeting, which is what Glenna was saying.

And we also wanted to know if we can ask businesses that we associate with to donate to the Council and sponsor events. I don't know the answer to that particularly. Sean, do you have any idea?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I don't know, but we can certainly ask our legal and our financial people here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, remember -- this is Glenna -- remember, we have that sentence in the bylaws that we have the right to collect donations, grants, all that, so... it depends where we put the money in -- Sean?

>> SEAN ISAAC: You are authorized to accept donations and we did clarify that at our last meeting and you're certainly correct.

I was just thinking about if there are any restrictions on that process or from whom it's gathered, I don't know those type of details, but we can certainly ask Octavio and find that out.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Right, that's what we needed to know. Once we start getting money from wherever, where do we park the money? [Laughs].  
Okay, John?

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. I don't mean to add to Angela and Sean's plate, but I'm -- I think I'm going to.

You know, the process that the Department of Health requires first that we get permission to hold the expo, I guess, and then we have to go through a separate authorization for the travel.

My concern is is that we're going to get approved to do the expo and then we're going to start making arrangements and, more importantly, spreading the word about it, and then something is going to not be approved in the travel side of things, and, thus, we're going to have to change course or get a blast out to people of new information.

So, I know it's not the process at DOH, but there is -- if there was any way that you could have the, you know, permission and the travel go up at the same time. Or, you know, if the permission comes down as yes, go straight to the travel approval before you let the Council know exactly about the approval and what exactly we've been approved for.

Does that make sense?

I'm just concerned that we're going to find out, get an announcement that we have the expo, and then we're going to find out that we have travel restrictions that makes the expo with no travel or not possible.

And most of the people on the Council, they have come from their own organizations, we would be pulling from these organizations to do it right. I'm just concerned that a miscommunication could make all these, you know, after these other organizations step up and commit, that then we have to change plans in the middle of a stream, which might make the Council look bad, and also might, you know, possibly tank the expo.

So, again, I don't know if they could go up with the permission and travel together. But I would suggest that if they can't, that once the permission is gotten, the travel permission stuff starts right away before the Council is informed exactly what we have, what we've been given permission for, if anything.

Just because, you know, again, I'm just concerned about a miscommunication. I don't want the Council to look bad to our partners.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. That's a great question, John, and thank you for that.

Typically at the Department, when we're hosting an event for one of our programs, we submit that authorization to host that meeting, we call it a state-wide meeting, and in that permission, there is a description about the travel.

However, there is a separate travel procedure that you get travel approved through.

But when we're submitting the permission to get and hold that meeting, it goes up through the leadership, and so they would know about the oncoming travel afterwards. That's part of the process.

So, it's highly unlikely they would approve the meeting without also understanding that additional travel is going to be coming. I will say that first.

Second, we can work on those things as closely as possible together, as far as when we get the approval, if we and when we get the approval for the meeting, submitting that travel immediately.

But you all are a part of that travel process, so we can start that in anticipation, perhaps, if leadership allows us to, so that it's ready to go as soon as the meeting is decided, if you all are comfortable with that. That's one suggestion.

Of course, all of this has to be run through leadership. But we don't have any problem with doing those things as quickly as possible and as closely together as possible.

I think that's a good suggestion.

With that being said, if you all ask us where we're at [chuckles], it's hard for us to not tell you. So that's the one caveat.

But, yes, I think that's something that we can certainly work towards and see if it's possible, okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So seeing that we -- this is Glenna -- seeing as when we ask permission to host, it might be easier if we lengthen the quarterly meeting because part of the travel is already there, just adding one more day or whatever, for the Council.

And also ask either for May, which is this fiscal year, and August would be the next fiscal year, so maybe... the money might go up for your August -- in that fiscal year, knowing that we're planning a conference.

So we can suggest two dates, two different fiscal year, to ask for either May or August in two different fiscal years and then... plus the -- connect it to the quarterly meeting, so that way the travel is taken care of.

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Is that a good way to do it?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I think that's very wise of the Council to consider doing both of those at an already-planned council meeting, because that does and would save funding and that does add to your argument that this is something that we can afford.

I also think it's probably a good idea to have it at the beginning of the state fiscal year, in August, because you have more funding at the beginning, as opposed to the end.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. We could try to have it in either May or August and see what happens. Because May is exactly one year from now. August would give us a little bit of time, because by the time we get answers, it will be a few months later it will be already.

Okay. So Angela, you've got more things to do on your to-do list!

Tyrone Allen from Sorenson, where is he? Does anybody know where he is? He is supposed to be presenting at 1:30.

Does he understand how he's supposed to get into the meeting?

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: I sent him a message. I have not heard back from him. Let me try to call him and see if I can get ahold of him that way.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I guess with the ex -- this is Glenna -- I guess with the expo, should we set up an Ad Hoc Committee to have a few people responsible for the planning? Or would we just do it as a whole Council? Considering there's only seven of us anyway, there's only seven of us.

Cory? Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: [Signing; no translating].

I did have a question, I was waiting for the ad hoc in terms of the overhaul.

Is the interpreter caught up to where I was?

So, with that comment being said, I'm trying to envision it as someone who is kind of hosting a conference. I just recently did that. It's not but six months ago. So I was trying to envision that all of that happening and then immediately either having a meeting before or after.

Definitely we need to have that setting for people. So I'm interested in being involved on that. So I'm here to help.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you, Cory.

I think several people on the Council have experience with doing conferences, so it's just a matter of dividing responsibilities with what they're most comfortable to deal with.

But basically all council members need to get their organizations involved.

Organizations and agencies involved.

And now we still don't have a good name. We thought of continuum or spectrum or

something... I know we came up with an awkward name. But we need a catchy name. And we need to make it very clear how this one is different than all the other things that goes on.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's 1:30, we are supposed to have a speaker, Tyrone Allen, to talk about Olelo. For those of you who don't know what Olelo is, it's a cell phone app that you download for free. You have to swear that you are really Deaf or hard of hearing and it's a caption -- a caption phone.

I think the -- I have a few apps, I'm trying to think Olelo shows captions of both sides of the conversation, not just the other person's words, but also my words too. Olelo.

It's talking to text and it texts back too.

I didn't realize that was under Sorenson. I noticed another thing with VP, that it popped up and I didn't have a chance to follow-up on it, but it popped up that on VP, you can have captions on VP too

>> CORY PARKER: This is with fellow (sp).

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I haven't seen how to do it.  
Angie, were you able to get ahold of Tyrone? Yes, Angie?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, no, I have been calling him and I have e-mailed him and there is no answer. I apologize; I do not know what is going on with him. I sent him information last week and I sent him information this week. So maybe he just... got busy. I don't know.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Or he may not understand how to get into the meeting.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yeah, he has my phone number so he can always call me if he needs information on that. I've had a few people ask about that this morning.  
I don't know why he is not on right now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hmm... Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Can I make a suggestion that we just take a pause, maybe 10 or 15 minutes?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Our break is at 2:30.  
Well, we do have...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Two people... that's here that are visiting. Perhaps let them go ahead and do public comments?

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. If people are waiting for a specific public comment --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No, we will still have public comments later, yes. But for the people that's been here all morning, we can let them have an opportunity to do public comment rather than -- public comments, because I see that we lost one or two people from this morning.

Shall we try that?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Ursula Smith? Would you like to introduce yourself and share any comments you have?

>> URSULA SMITH: I'm just here learning, it's my first time. My name is Ursula Smith. I am an interpreter. And a liaison here in the Broward area, in South Florida. I'm just here, it's my first time, just learning, you know.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Welcome. Well, thank you for coming to the meeting. So, you work with -- or are you deaf or hard of hearing or do you work with --

>> URSULA SMITH: Lamont is my lead interpreter and I am becoming the interpreter here in the Broward area.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, you're in college to become an interpreter?

>> URSULA SMITH: I am now an interpreter.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, okay, you are an interpreter.

>> URSULA SMITH: Mmm-hmm.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. And as an interpreter, you work in South Florida, you said?

>> URSULA SMITH: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Which county? Broward, okay, Broward, okay, okay. Do you go to any of those DNO events? Okay, on Facebook, I don't know, it's South Florida DNO where all the young Deaf people go, bars mostly.

>> URSULA SMITH: [Signing, no translating].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Did you go to Miami-Dade college? North campus? No. Where did you --

>> URSULA SMITH: This is Ursula. No, I actually --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Where did you do your training at?

>> URSULA SMITH: The IPP program, my mom has been an interpreter for almost 30 years, so I grew up signing and I just took the certification exam; yeah.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh! Interesting. So you -- you have a social life with Deaf people growing up with your mom.

>> URSULA SMITH: Yeah, I live in the Deaf community, yeah.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I was wondering if you might know some of my former Deaf students.

>> URSULA SMITH: [Signing, no translating].  
You may know my mom.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, I'm thinking I should know. Angelina? Angelina? Yeah, I think so, yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, I think I met her one time. Oh, okay! Small world! Okay.

I used to teach at South Plantation High School

>> URSULA SMITH: [Signing, no translating].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That's where you are now? Oh! South Plantation High School, the Deaf and hard-of-hearing program opened in 1975. That was me, that was me, yes, I opened up the program in 1975 and I was there until 1991, 15 years. And I moved on.

The other teachers stayed, they all finally retired. So you have Jeff West there now

>> URSULA SMITH: Yes, he's here now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: How many students are there now?

>> URSULA SMITH: Uh... I am thinking 25-ish?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: 25? 25? It really opened up. We started with about 35 and the numbers kept going up and up and up and up until we had 60, and then they started going back down again; yeah.

>> URSULA SMITH: Yeah, and the students that we have now are generally students with implants, many oral students, they use the oral method.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Not hard of hearing.

>> URSULA SMITH: Not really, maybe 15 students --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Not really Deaf. Okay. How long have you worked at South Plantation High School?

>> URSULA SMITH: I've been here for --



[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, wow! I was there for -- South Plantation High School had its 50th anniversary celebration, I was there, I was there, and three other former teachers were there, and I saw about... 10, 15 former students were there too, for the 50th anniversary thing, yeah.

Well, I'm sure you must have comments to share about working conditions for interpreters, for school interpreters. What you see happening in school, what you see or wish would be improved or changed. I'm sure you have some comments about that. So, come on! [Laughs]

>> URSULA SMITH: Yeah, I --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Go right ahead! We have time.

>> URSULA SMITH: I actually wish that interpreters were involved in the IEP process more. I wish that the signing students were required to take ASL. I wish that it was a graduation requirement, that they take sign language.

I wish the school brought in more Deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

An environment where students can be involved in more activities.

Because, like I said, the Deaf and hard-of-hearing students have been here for many years.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Do any of -- this is Glenna -- do any of you ever have any contact or do anything with Jenny, the ASL teacher?

>> URSULA SMITH: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, yes, she was my former -- she was my former student, she was my former ASL student, okay.

I know during my time I was there, we had several Deaf students that were involved in football, track, dance, drill, different things.

And, to me, the problem was having rides home after school.

>> URSULA SMITH: Deaf and hard-of-hearing students here are still very involved in different activities, but it's the culture here that you still have to, like, remind people, like, you know, this is a school for Deaf and hard-of-hearing students. Don't forget, we do require that there is an interpreter there, don't have conversations with students and they're missing, you know, their services and everything that's required through the IEP.

So, it's still, like, a lot.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah. Same fight I had! [Laughs].

>> URSULA SMITH: Yes, yes...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Thank you for being here!

>> URSULA SMITH: Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Thank you for your comments. Those are good comments that we need to be aware of what's going on with mainstream school.  
How often do...

>> URSULA SMITH: Question for me?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: How often do you get students who transfer from FSDB or transfer back from FSDB?

>> URSULA SMITH: Almost one time every year, but the numbers, when I first started here, the number alone was probably 15 students, but now it's almost 15 students for every grade level.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah. Okay. Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

>> URSULA SMITH: Thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. Netza Rodriguez, are you on? Or are you just the AV person? I'm not sure.

>> Yeah, Netza is the AV. And Patrick, yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, okay. Thank you.  
So, Angie, you haven't heard anything from the speaker, huh?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No. And I'm still trying.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Wow... hmm...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, it seems like it's pretty much open to discuss whatever we want to discuss.

Do we have enough people here to start discussing the bylaws for a vote? It's me, Cory, John, Cindy and Gina, are you still here?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cindy, Gina? Do you see them on chat?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I'm waiting for them to answer. Gina is still here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Cindy, are you still here?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No response from Cindy yet.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So that... that's only four people. We need --

>> CORY PARKER: Glenna, this is Cory, we have enough for a quorum.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We have five. Well, we have Jenny here, but she's new, so I don't know if she's willing to vote or not. But we need five.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: How many active members do we have now?

>> CORY PARKER: We have nine.

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory, we have nine.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Nine? No, active is eight now.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. If you're counting right, then you may be right.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Me, Cory, John, Gina, Cindy, Karen, Chris Littlewood, that's seven. Who else? And Jenny is eight. Eight, we only have eight members now. So the majority -- we still need five, we still need five, the quorum that we have is not exactly a majority, so we still need five. So I'm hoping that maybe with Karen and Cindy, they're looking at the schedule maybe, they will be back at 2:45 to be able to vote on the bylaws.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: And if I remember, Karen did mention that she had an appointment that she needed to leave for. Yeah, you know that, perfectly, so I'm not sure --

[Talking over one another].

>> CORY PARKER: We shouldn't expect her back, I don't think. And Cindy said, too, that she would be in and out of the meeting when we started today

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Right.

>> CORY PARKER: So we might just need to table it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Wait until 2:45, wait until 2:45, it's on the agenda at 2:45, and hopefully we can -- maybe at 2:30, Angela could text or e-mail to remind Karen and Cindy that we need -- we need them to vote on the bylaws.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. And we have no speaker for this afternoon, then how will we fill the time? We could do that by either waiting or just maybe moving ahead with the agenda?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: There's only two things left after the speaker: That's the bylaws and public comments and that's it. We have to stay until 5:00 o'clock.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory, that's correct, oh, until 5:00, okay.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: 4:15, 4:15, 4:15, the agenda says 4:15, so...

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. 4:15. Okay. I was not real -- I did not realize that we couldn't close the meeting early. So we have to stay until at least 4:15.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: [Nods head]. Because the last part is public comment. People could show up at that time.

>> CORY PARKER: So this is Cory. So because we're here and we don't have a speaker, should we just keep going or do you want to just take an extended break until a specific time?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Sean, are we allowed to do that, to have a break until 2:30 -- well, 2:45?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. I think that's up to the Chair. I don't see anything against the rules that say you can't do that.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Then I think it's up to you, Madame Chair.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. Um... we already used the other time, we started talking about the expo. We already discussed that. And... we have to wait for the process to start with the expo.

Okay. I will say it's 1:50 already, so I'm going to say break until 2:30, come back at 2:30.

I will apply the same rule like they do in college: If the teacher or presenter doesn't show up, you wait 15 minutes, and then nothing. And we waited 20 minutes already. And Angela hasn't heard anything.

Okay. I will call a --

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. I hope the speaker is okay. So let's hope.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah. I will call a break until 2:30. Come back. And during the break, if you haven't read the bylaws, please do read the bylaws and be ready. If you have any corrections or anything like that, but what I'm hoping for is that we vote and pass it and then we can post -- submit the changed bylaws.

So, you have a break until 2:30. Be back at 2:30.

And Angela, if you hear from Tyrone and if he's willing to go ahead and start when we come back at 2:30, we can use some of that time from the public comments, because I don't expect many people to show up for public comments, as usual.

Or maybe Cecil will come back during public comment. That's the only one I saw.

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. I will keep trying to get ahold of him and I will let

him know if I speak with him.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, all right. Break until 2:30, hopefully with a speaker. If not, then bylaws, and then public comments. Don't go too far away!  
Okay, thank you.

>> VOICE: Recording stopped.

[Break].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: [On mute].

>> VOICE: Recording in progress.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Angela, have you heard anything from the speaker?

>> ANGIE GREEN: No, I have not. I have been trying and I still can't get ahold of him; it still just goes to voicemail.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, well, that's the first time ever we have not had a speaker show up. Wow... hmm...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, it's 2:30. Who is here, please?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Jenny is here.

>> JOHN JACKSON: John is here.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Angie's here.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Karen is here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, hi.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Hi. I'm back from PT on my knee.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina is back on.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay, great, good.

>> SEAN ISAAC: Sean is here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Great. Cindy? Is she on?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I do not see Cindy in there yet.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I just want to let you know, I'm not going to use my voice anymore, I'm tired, I'm tired from talking all morning. I'm going to save my voice for another meeting that I have this evening.

This is Glenna, by the way.

I'm really surprised that the speaker didn't show up....

That mean that it's been the first time ever. Ever! That we've never had a speaker show up. Wow! Huh....

I hope there's a good reason for why he didn't show up.

Angie said she tried to contact him on multiple occasions and e-mailed him and called and got no answer, so... there we go...

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. I do hope he has a good reason, but... I'm sure there's -- I'm sure there is a reason why he's not here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Right, right, mmm-hmm.

Okay. So... how many of us are here? One, two, three, four, five, six... I think there's six -- six council members here. So I think that's enough. We've got a quorum and are able to vote on the bylaws, if we're ready to vote.

So, first of all, let's open it up. And is there any discussion on the bylaws at all? Do you have any critiques, any changes?

[Pause].

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John. I have none.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I know Cory mentioned before that he didn't have any either.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory, no, I don't have any.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And John says he has none. This is Glenna, she has none either. Karen? Gina? They don't have anything.

>> CORY PARKER: Hello, Karen.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Gina? Anything from Gina?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I'm waiting on a response from Gina.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, okay, okay, okay.

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Gina: The only change is amended date, which I will do.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, yes, yeah, you mentioned that before, that needed to be changed. I'm assuming it needs to be changed to today's date, because this is the date that we're actually going to vote it in.

So, it seems that we're ready to go ahead and propose a motion for us to accept the bylaws. Anybody willing to do that?

>> SEAN ISAAC: I don't think so.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Sean? No? What's the reason?

[No response].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We just need a motion to accept the bylaws, correct?

>> SEAN ISAAC: This is Sean. Can you repeat that?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah. I just asked if anyone had any critiques or any comments for the bylaws. That was my first question. So that we could have the discussion. And if not, no one seemed to have any, we ask those questions and now we're asking for a formal motion to accept the bylaws as they are and as it stands.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Gina has made a motion, Gina made a motion to accept. I will second. Okay?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Who?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Gina, Gina.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, Gina did. Okay.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I saw that on chat.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Gina made a motion to accept the bylaws as it stands, and then Karen seconded that. Any discussion?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm guessing no discussion, all right. So we'll move ahead and vote. Those all in favor of the bylaws, please raise your hand, click thumbs up or type aye. So we've got one, two, John? Gina?

>> CORY PARKER: I see them, I see all the ayes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So, Gina? She said aye. Um... we need one more, one more vote. One, two, three. John? John? Did you vote? John?

[No response].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are you there?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. John says thumbs up.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So we need one more.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: You already got my vote, right?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny?

Who is this? Oh, yes, yes, Karen, I saw your vote, yes, I did.

So, I've got Karen's, John's, Gina's, Cory's. So I need one more. And Jenny, I know, I know Jenny is a little apprehensive because she's new, but would you mind voting, please?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I will --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Wendy (sp) is not here, so...

>> JENNY ROJAS: I'll just say yes under duress.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh...

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: We don't want anyone voting under duress. We want to make sure. Do we need to --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No, definitely not.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Do we need to take a look at the bylaws and ask the questions?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I wish that -- this is Jenny. I looked over them and I wish I had questions to ask. It's just my first time, I didn't get a lot of background, and I wish that I had known about Mary leaving sooner so that I could have shadowed her a little bit and had the time to get to know you guys and know what this is all about.

And I feel really like a dead weight to you guys today; I'm sorry. And I hope to make it up for you -- make it up to you in the future.

>> CORY PARKER: Yes, I understand. But it's all right, it's all right.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: If -- this is Karen -- if there is not a quorum, I make a motion that we move the vote for the bylaws to the next time so everybody can have time to catch up and read and maybe by the next meeting, when we're all in-person, it will be a better time to vote on the bylaws.

I don't think there's a rush to get it done today.

We want everyone to be comfortable; we have some new members --

>> CORY PARKER: I agree and I second that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This -- we just postponed it so long already...

>> CORY PARKER: We don't have a quorum, so we have to kind of have a time out. Robert's Rules indicate that we must.

[Pause].

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Better to be --

>> CORY PARKER: Glenna, I'm so sorry.



>> KAREN GOLDBERG: [Signing, no translation].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen, what were you going to say?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: I was going to say it's better to be cautious than to push through and somebody vote on something they're not confident about.

The bylaws have been around. We made an amendment to them. It might be a good idea just to catch the people up who are new and then postpone this vote until August. I bet we'll have a quorum then, because more people will be in-person.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny, you have your hand up?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Thank you, Cory and Karen, I'm grateful for your patience on this. It would be nice to have until August, and that gives me time to ask questions, I'm sure through the liaison, Angela Green. And I was also a little bit curious about -- it seems like there are so many vacancies on this Council. I don't understand why that is. And I also feel weird about going through with bylaws with having so few appointments filled.

And I don't even know the background on that either.

>> ANGIE GREEN: [Open mic].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna.

>> ANGIE GREEN: [Open mic].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cory, go ahead and answer that.

>> ANGIE GREEN: [Open mic].

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. We've had this discussion, it's been on the floor and just to answer that question, that's the one you want me to answer, right? Okay.

Unfortunately, we've had... people whose seats have expired, their -- it's been a struggle, it really is. We haven't had a strong relationship with the Governor's Office who makes these appointments and there's many things that need to be cleared up.

We have to recognize that. And I'm the Vice Chair and I'm taking on some of that responsibility. I'm having to kind of already noticed that.

Angela and Sean, we have really been trying to work together, trying to get everything cleaned up, do some housekeeping, if you will, so that -- so to speak, so that we can move on. And that should be our number one, is to fill our vacancies.

Also, as you can see, our budget is shrinking and there is no way that we can afford to have in-person meetings that we have. We just don't have it in the budget and have additional people.

So, those are things that are definitely true.

So, please ask your questions. Go through Angela and Sean, they will mail them out to us if you have questions, and I'll try my best to answer anything that you do have.

At the same time, Glenna will do that too. So...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. We have a long history with the Governor's Appointments Office. They're infamous for really being horribly slow, just slow... slow... slow... and just slow as molasses really, and yes, Cory, they are.

For example, when I was first -- when I first applied for this position and the representative for NAD, it took them a while to get around to me. Quite a while.

At that time, I had volunteered and applied online and got it approved and then later, there were some changes to the application process, so I had to call, I had to do an interview, and really make sure that that person was a good fit for the Board -- or the committee.

So then there was approval that happened after that. So each appointment had to go to the Governor's Office for that and all of that paperwork had to be done.

We lost several people who did apply, they went through the process, they were very motivated and excited, and it was delayed more than once. And then they lost interest and they dropped out of the selection process.

So, we lost many really good people that could have served on this Council. And here we are.

So, it's been very hard to get people interested in applying, first of all. Secondly, it's just hard to encourage them to stay motivated as they go through this process, as we go through the appointed -- the Appointing Office.

So, it's just...

>> CORY PARKER: This part, how do we get this started all over again?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I think Angela was really trying to find other board members, trying to send out information for the appointments, things like that. But it's just -- the process is just so slow and we've only had a few councils and boards that are in the law itself, that are based in the statutes and require, they have to have a full representation on their board or the council, you know.

So we're trying to pay attention to all of that. But we don't have that requirement, so... there are several people -- I know when I joined, I think we were a pretty full council at that time, maybe only one or two vacancies or replacements that might have happened and that keeps shrinking.

I think we have only now nine or eight, we have eight, that's what we have, eight.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Out of those eight... hmm... out of those eight council members, you know, the Chairs, Sean can't vote, we can't count him or Angela either. Um... yeah.

It's very frustrating, it's very frustrating to work with the Governor's Office with this. So, there you go, Jenny.

>> JENNY ROJAS: Thank you. I really appreciate that. And I'm well aware of how slow some of these processes are.

You would just think that they would want us to keep rolling if they're going to keep giving us money, and I guess that's just... the way the cookie crumbles.

And, again, I'm really sorry to be such a dead weight to you guys. But I will get up to speed.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, no, no, you're fine! You're fine! You're not dead weight at all! No!

I appreciate you! We appreciate you being here. We need you!

>> CORY PARKER: We are so appreciative that you're here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This will be a great learning experience for you. And it was for Mary and the other people on the Council, so....

It's okay. We've got patience.

Any questions that you have for now really, it's really a good time for you to ask those questions about the Council, and so that we might be able to expound and explain whatever you need.

>> CORY PARKER: We've got the time!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We definitely have the time, so we're open to comments. I'm looking at the chat.

>> CORY PARKER: Karen has her hand up.

[Pause].

>> CORY PARKER: Karen has her hand up, Glenna. Karen, she has her hand up.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen, your hand is up? Go ahead, Karen.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, I didn't want to interrupt, it looked like you were right in the middle of getting ready to share something else.

I think it's great that you've joined the Council, Jenny, we're really excited to have you here! It's going to be a great experience.

I've been on the Council since 2016. I remember it took a very long time to get me approved.

But compared -- what I was told was that compared to others, I actually got approved pretty quickly. So I had applied, like, September/October. I went to the meeting in November as a visitor and I still hadn't been approved yet but I had already approved.

And then they got -- I don't know what you guys did -- somebody helped to get it moved forward and by the February meeting, I was on the Council.

So, which was great! It just takes a while.

Now we're starting to get thin again. And it kind of goes back to a number of things that I even talked about earlier today. I feel like there's a sense of demoralization in our group now. We're feeling kind of defeated. The budget got slashed. We have been told we can do two in-person meetings and the rest are on telehealth.

You know, we don't have enough people to fill the seats. We're having a little bit of challenges with HLA Florida as well. We can't get people to volunteer.

And I'll admit that I've been more busy in my other work experiences that I haven't been devoted as much to getting involved with contacting the Office of Appointments; getting involved in contacting more people in HLAA.

And in fact, while we've been talking, I've sent an e-mail to the current president of HLAA Florida, who is our beloved Debbie Hagner who served on this Council for years and has done such a wonderful job.

But I have just reached out to her and a couple other people to say that I'd like to set up a meeting with them to find out what I can do to encourage more people from HLAA to be involved with HLAA and to be involved or apply for the Council.

That's -- the other thing I think we need to do is start promoting available seats to

people who could fill them.

You know, sometimes you stumble on this Council and I know we can't really advertise, but there's got to be a way to reach out, maybe even contact places like, you know, FSDB and also Blossom Montessori School for the Deaf and reaching out to a parent who may be involved in the Council and being involved.

There are things that we can do.

And I would like to at least volunteer to be a part of that, to start to reach out to people. And maybe I could work with one or two others on the Council. Is that going to be allowed, Sean or Angie?

[Pause].

>> SEAN ISAAC: Hi, this is Sean. So, if you're working with... [Sighs]... working through Angie, from my understanding, that's okay. Once you start down the road of working with another council member, from my recollection of our presentation last time we were together, that's when they start to get a little squirrely and, you know, you had the attorneys feeling a little bit weird [chuckles] and not wanting to give a direct answer, so to speak.

So I would keep it as trying to work through Angie and then any kind of committees and just have the meeting announced. And once you have it announced, you can do whatever.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Can I make a motion -- I don't know if it's a motion -- can I make a suggestion that we create a committee called Recruitment Committee?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I think that's really a responsibility for all council members to be a part of the recruitment process.

HLAA, we need a second member. I'm FSD (sic) --

>> INTERPRETER: Or FAD, rather.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: -- so the president needs to appoint someone to apply.

But I think that's really a responsibility for all council members to be involved no matter what your position.

Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. I was considering asking some of the Deaf Service specialists from the Centers for Independent Living to see if they're interested to come on.

Recruiting particularly more Deaf and hard-of-hearing members. Also keeping in mind diversity of the council members.

I've been actively doing that at the National level and, of course, there is the question of the process itself.

I think it would be really nice if we were to develop something for Jenny as a new person, you know, something that, you know, we, first of all, knew in advance that she was coming and some sort of welcome orientation packet for her. Something that could be available to her, as an example, of a new member.

You know, here are the things that have happened in, you know, meetings prior to your engagement in the situation. So it welcomes Jenny and she doesn't feel, you know, out of

sorts and uncomfortable.

That should not be happening to our members.

So, I would love to have some sort of orientation/welcome packet.

I know, you know, I've taken that role before and I would be willing to do something like that for her. But I would love to prepare something like that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Did Mary have anything, any information from -- about the Council for you, from your department? Did anything come to your desk from Mary at all?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes, I received -- and, I'm sorry, this is Jenny -- I received some of her old binders from previous meetings that I had not had a chance to look through. But I did notice -- thank you, Cory, for thinking of me and, you know, if we're gonna recruit new members, there needs to be something for other new people, not just for me.

But I know it did say in statute that there's supposed to be some sort of training for the new members. And it gives what the training should address, at a minimum. And that's in... Section B, right after the list of the people who are supposed to be on this Council.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. You know, there's not a lot of training -- this is Glenna -- there's not a lot of training. Most of the training would be focused on Sunshine Laws. Are you aware of Sunshine Laws? Do you have some awareness of Sunshine Laws, Jenny?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes, I'm very -- I have been a State employee for about 20 years at this point and I do get that training every year.

And I was on the Governor's Commission for Disabilities many, many, many moons ago, back in 2007, so I have some idea of Robert's Rules of Order and the procedures for being on part of these committees and councils and things.

But I just need to get back in the swing of things; it's been a while.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. You know, most of the training would be about Sunshine Laws. And really, it's focused on people who are not as familiar with state positions.

So you have the basic information. The only thing left for you, really, to learn is about Deaf and hard-of-hearing people, the world, the world of Deaf and hard of hearing and Deaf culture.

Also, there should be a handbook, something that would apply to new members?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Angela?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Weren't you and Sean working on a handbook? And could some of that apply to new members?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, we are still working on that. It is being updated. There has been more added to it, but it is not finished yet.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, that's a handbook, really for people who work in the office, like you and Sean.

But perhaps that could be a portion of the handbook that would be appropriate for new council members as well.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Of course. I can send that out to everybody and you can pick out what you would like to have in your little book and we can make that up for you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: As Cory mentioned, Angela, if you can work with Cory, and Cory as our last new member, before Jenny, he might be a great person to look over. Different than me. Because I have a long history with this Council.

So I think Cory and Jenny as the new folks, and Angela, as a new person as well, you might be able to represent the Council in that way.

So, information that could be added about Sunshine Laws should be there. Maybe... what else...? Different organizations, a little bit of background on who the organizations are.

Perhaps communication needs and how to meet accommodation needs, that could be there.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. It looks like Gina has something? Gina?

[Pause].

[Note from CART Captioner]: There is a comment in the chat by Gina someone needs to read?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, Gina says: Jenny, Mary was a member of the EMOT Committee. If you are interested, we can share more about that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, go right ahead, if you would like to talk about that committee and perhaps explain the organization? We certainly have the time to do it.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Gina? Give me one second, because Jenny just put something in the chat, in the Zoom chat, that is.

She's talking about a part of the statute...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: We don't... there was a time where we had an outreach educator who actually traveled the state, giving presentations, workshops, and trainings, providing resources, and we lost that position -- help me out -- 2015? Was it 2015? '16? Somewhere around there, maybe?

And basically they were an advisor, sharing resources and information, supporting other organizations and agencies around the state.

We had a recent audit. You probably heard about the budget discussion, where we talked about the budget.

Requirements of documentation. So that's the public notice of our meetings. You know, we are not able to have a meeting without publicizing the dates and times, quarterly meetings or committee meetings, that is.

There's a code of ethics as well related to finances; yeah.

So, really, the things that are listed here are standard for all board and council members. It's not really all that unique for this particular Council. But this would be just for our general knowledge.

Karen? Or --

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm sorry, Gina, did you get to -- I think that we were hearing from Gina. Or maybe she wanted to say something else?

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, Gina had stated, she says this is Gina. Cindy and I Co-Chair the EMOT Committee which serves as a communication tool for our consumers. We take suggestions from the Council and collectively draft informational letters to our consumers, as well as other communication tools.

And she says EMOT is education, medical, outreach, and technology.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: EMOT Committee wrote the letter, although it hasn't been sent out, and made a plan for a PSA. However, that's not been produced. They've had a real tough time finalizing that and meeting under the Sunshine Laws.

Karen? Karen?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: So, what I wanted to say is that, you know, Jenny brings up a very good point, that if the -- if our statute states -- if the statute states that prior to joining on this Council, the appointees must attend orientation training, we need to see if we're following statute.

When I joined, I didn't have an orientation. What did happen when I went to my first meeting is we had somebody present about the Sunshine Laws. And that was about the most of the orientation I got about being on a council.

The rest I picked up by listening to everybody in the meeting and what was going on and the different council members.

But I think this is important. I think we need to go back to basics and really take a look at if we're following the statute. If we're not, how do we fix that?

We have really motivated folks that are our liaisons with the DOH, with Angie and with Sean, who can really help us in this regard, and really help us put together an orientation program, okay.

And the more that we do, the more we're showing the State Legislature that we're here, we're an advisory council, that we have an important role in the State. And we'll get more notice, if you will. The more that we make sure that we're following everything to a T, okay?

That's my opinion on it.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. You know, personally, I don't know any trainings -- I didn't take any trainings or orientation or anything like that. It was all done by being on the Council. If, for example, if we finally were to get someone from a -- a second

member from another organization, I would be responsible for training that person if they came from FAD, you know, with the expectations for being on the Council.

Obviously we still have to be accountable to the Sunshine Laws and we would have to watch the PowerPoint training.

It looks like on the committee, we have a Budget Committee. That's what Cory reported on, was the Budget Committee.

And I think we got the idea, we got the understanding of that. A little bit of history with that as well.

The Legislative Committee, the reason that we have the Legislative Committee is to try to follow bills and see if there is any impact on the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community.

When we visit or contact our legislators, we mention whatever bills, whether we're supportive or against those bills.

There have only been a few bills, really. They tend to be, you know, related to children.

One example that comes to mind was a bill adding an infant screening, hearing screening, and that was to add another specific screening that would lead to a particular diagnosis that had to do with hearing loss, and if they had that genetic marker -- what else was there? -- children in school, finding a way to provide hearing aids. You know, there's always a bill that, you know, that gives \$800,000 to some oral school.

What else do we follow?

There are other bills that are a little bit more generic that are related to people with disabilities in general. Perhaps with Medicaid, SSI, education, IEPs, you know, things that could impact Deaf and hard-of-hearing children as a part of the people with disabilities category.

We talked about helping FTRI. FTRI is the Florida Telecommunications Relay, Incorporated which is responsible for distribution of captioned phones and telecommunication devices. For example, amplified phones.

So, they collect money. It comes from landline charges. And that's certainly suffering, because the budget from the landline is dwindling because pretty much everybody switched to cell phones these days. And they can't subsidize it from cell phone income.

So changes are being made about collecting money in different ways and, you know, to allow people to use smartphones or iPads or other technology instead of the old fashioned landline and caption telephone. Or a TTY even. Even older. When Deaf people used to type on the phone, those are -- gone are the days of TTY. But FTRI still has that because the law has not been updated, 20, 30 years behind.

So we're working hard to -- or they are working hard to get that bill in front of the legislators.

What else...?

Yeah, so that's the Legislative Committee. That's what we do.

And of course there's the Web Committee. They review our website to make sure that all links are functioning. To make sure that it's updated resources and information. And that it's as current as can be.

Angela, do you have your hand up, I see?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, I just wanted to read a statement that Gina had put in the comment -- in the CART section here.

It says Glenna -- this is for Jenny -- Glenna has a wealth of information and understanding about the legislative meetings and process. You may want to meet with her for training to attend the visits in February. Not to discuss council business, just training.



>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, thank you, Gina. But Jenny is the state -- is a State employee and because of that, she's not allowed to visit legislators. Only people who are not working for the State are permitted....

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny, we also do public comments too. And in the past, we used to have many people show up for public comments as well, and that was in-person.

And then I guess because we had more of a limited budget, one person was the outreach responsible person, and unfortunately there was not much movement going on there.

And the people who were showing up in person to those public comments also started to dwindle.

So, there was one time, gosh, I think it was last year possibly, it was in St. Augustine, and I remember, I had reached out to some friends there and that person was a leader in the community for a different organization. He was fabulous at really trying to get people to come to our meeting. And it was great!

And so for some of the council members, it was our first time actually seeing people face-to-face in our live meetings standing up for public comments.

And I started to go to different conferences as well. Different events. I was hosting a booth and I was able to bring some papers with me that, you know, people could fill out their names, their addresses, and write their public comment.

But, you know, when you have that written English for our community, sometimes it's more difficult, so some people have written English as a second language. Sometimes English is a second or third language to them.

So, I remember the last time that I had attended an event, it was very similar to the expo that we were discussing earlier, and we had a table there. I was able to receive 40 public comments. And from that collection -- it was fabulous! -- and that was a better way to actually go to where the people are and collect the public comments that way.

And again, public comments tends to be a lot of the same message from the community. There are Deaf people who might sign that need interpreters. Sometimes if there's a doctor or a hospital that is not providing an interpreter, even though the Americans with Disabilities Act requires that, that's one of our most common problems for that community.

And there's another most common comment we get from the hard-of-hearing community where they might not be able to afford hearing aids.

The prescription hearing aids. They can average several thousand dollars.

Mine were almost \$5,000.

And also the community, the deafblind community, having to have trained interpreters who actually know how to interpret for the deafblind community specifically, as well as SSPs. What does that stand for? I think it's support service provider? They just changed it to a new name now; it's called co-navigator.

And we just don't have enough trained co-navigators to support the deafblind community.

And late-deafened community members, there's a problem there with no interpreters, as well as being able to afford the hearing aids for that community. As well as cochlear implants.

And I think for children, for parents that have deaf children, getting the right accommodations for their children, if something's not being provided or is substandard, the

parents just don't know their rights with their IEPs and the specifics there.

There are teachers who are teaching the Deaf community who are also frustrated with their IEPs, that they're not being followed as expected.

They're frustrated with, gosh, trying to work with the schools and being oppressed in that scenario.

Gosh, what are the other comments that we receive traditionally...?

Those are the most common we hear from the community over and over again from the public comments.

I mean, we just don't need to prove public comments anymore, to pass on to the Governor.

I know that we had mentioned every two years there was a requirement for us to report to the legislators. It was an odd number year for us when it came to us reporting those numbers.

But the other issue that came up too were emergency notices, when it comes to things like hurricanes, there are no interpreters! Where are the captions? Where are the interpreters for the emergency services? The Deaf and hard-of-hearing community needs to know what's going on and where to go.

During those emergency situations, we need to be prepared.

Also now with COVID, there were times where things were great during that COVID, where there was local interpreters, there were -- being supported.

We did have a lot of what you consider press conferences that were happening early on at the beginning of COVID. But once COVID became a more common subject, it was not as frequent.

There are also -- something that we're using more now because of COVID is something called CDIs, which is Certified Deaf Interpreters, that came out more as COVID started to reveal itself, and they are trained as interpreters. They're Deaf interpreters that are trained and certified.

So it was something that they don't get -- when you use a CDI, you don't have English-based interpreting like you do with a traditional hearing interpreter. Yes, people can understand captions if you need an English word order.

But the CDI was able to communicate specifically directly to the ASL community. And that was a little bit different than what we see here.

Even when you see here with the interpreters that we have present, they're not completely in ASL when they communicate. They just don't have the time to do that, when you do things simultaneously that way.

So it's -- to provide CDI provisions, there's a lot of translation changes that need to happen.

So, it's basically about interpreters and hearing aids in our public comments.

One new thing that is coming up and I think it popped up a few times is group homes. About the comment for group homes for low-functioning Deaf populations that don't have language. They might have additional issues.

Deafness is their primary issue, but when it comes to being Deaf Plus, assisted living, nursing homes, those type of scenarios where the Deaf community is just left without being provided any services.

But, again, I could go on. I mean, these are comments that are coming up. And the nursing home comment is something that's becoming a little more frequent because now we have some elderly people, especially within your department, Jenny, when you're talking about the elder, the elderly population in assisted living or the nursing homes, for sure, it is a very, very high percentage.

Almost all of the people in the nursing homes have a hearing loss of some sort.

So, yeah, that happens with old age. And the assisted living or the nursing homes don't make accommodations for that.

>> JENNY ROJAS: This is Jenny. So speaking of that, it would be very important to have a representative from the Agency for Healthcare Administration on this Council, because they are over all of the nursing homes and assisted living facilities. It's not Elder Affairs. It's Agency for Healthcare Administration and they would be the one staff to put that in place.

I hadn't thought of that.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: For sure. We're supposed to have representation from DOH, the Department of Health, so that's a position that's vacant for us as well.

Angela, maybe that's something that you could reach out to the Department of Health for and see if we can get a representative from DOH and see if there's someone, you know, maybe there's someone for the nursing homes or assisted living?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I will write that down and look into that.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And Jenny, I know that you're still working at the Department of Health -- I'm sorry, Department of Elder Affairs. What specifically do you do when you work with the elderly population? I mean, that's a big majority of the population with a hearing loss. Is there anything that you can comment about that?

>> JENNY ROJAS: The Department of Elder Affairs doesn't provide direct services to the elderly. We contract that out with the Area Agencies on Aging, also known as the Aging and Disability Resource Centers, so they're divided up amongst the state. There are eleven of them.

And so I personally do not deal directly with elders. My title here is special projects coordinator. My most recent project was helping people with their Medicaid hearings and screening tools and didn't score high enough to come off of our wait list. So that's what I have been doing.

And in that time, I did close to 250 of those over the phone and I didn't come into contact with a Deaf or hard-of-hearing person.

Our biggest issue that I ran into in that particular role was people who spoke a different language. And I had done that for about a year.

I was recently made aware of Mary retiring and inherited some of her duties. They were kind of divided up between two of us, so that's why I'm a little late to this ballgame.

But I've worked with the elderly in some capacity since I got my graduate degree.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So this is Glenna. Then maybe, Jenny, maybe you can take a look into the elderly -- I mean maybe your department and your program could reach out and see if there's anyone that's doing anything about making those accommodations for the elderly people who have a hearing loss?

I mean, most of those people in that population has a hearing loss. Just even though it may be late to the game, but... you know, they're trying to hear. Maybe they don't realize they have a hearing loss yet.

>> JENNY ROJAS: This is Jenny. I --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: That might be something to bring to the Council, sure, if you could check on that?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I briefly looked at our screening tool and comprehensive assessment that we use and we ask three questions regarding hearing loss, but we don't... um... Elder Affairs doesn't directly refer people; it would be with the Aging and Disability Resource Center that would go through one of their contract managers.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. And I think that's what I mean. Is it possible that you can survey them, those who contract with maybe finding assisted living centers? If there's any training or doing accommodations for any people with hearing loss? Could you survey them and find out?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I can try to go through my supervisor and ask if I can do that, but I'm not allowed to contact them directly.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, you're not. So how can we find out that information? Yeah, that might be another project to add to our list of projects of things to do how we can work with the nursing homes and the assisted living centers.

>> JENNY ROJAS: So, the nursing homes and assisted living facilities is the Agency for Healthcare Administration. It is not Elder Affairs.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So --

>> INTERPRETER: Jenny, say it again. The agency for...?

>> JENNY ROJAS: The Agency for Healthcare Administration, AHCA, AHCA.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: That's AHCA, yeah.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So do you contract with Area Agencies?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: On aging?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So then that's a possible question. We could reach out to area agency on aging. And we can ask them if there's anything -- if they do accommodations for disability or hearing loss or anything like that. Is that possible?

>> JENNY ROJAS: To my limited knowledge, I worked for the area agency on aging

here in Tallahassee for a very brief time. The information and referral specialist usually would refer someone to Florida Relay, that you were just talking about a few minutes ago.

But you would have to go through, and I can do it, but I would have to go through our Community Support Services Bureau, because the Area Agencies on Aging, they are the ones that provide the direct support to community dwelling elders.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So those are the people that work with the elderly in our communities.

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are there any of those people, any of those that have any kind of training as to how we might be able to meet the needs and manage those that have disabilities for this or hearing loss as it applies to this?

>> JENNY ROJAS: It's a --

[Talking over one another].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Are there people behind the scenes?

>> JENNY ROJAS: I would not know, I would not know in my role. It's possible. I don't want to say no, because I just --

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Well, how do we get to that then? You know, how... it sounds like now, you know, we're starting to have lots of comments from people who are in HLAA and there are lots of complaints about hospitals, lots of those. People are just, you know, they're fed up with no communication. They are people who are hard of hearing. So, yeah... it's... yes.

>> JENNY ROJAS: So, any healthcare-related complaint must go through the Agency for Healthcare Administration, regardless of the person's age.

Just when you hear "nursing home" and "assisted living facility," everybody always associates that with Elder Affairs. But that is not us.

If it's a facility-based issue, it's the Agency for Healthcare Administration.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: The agency in the area, this agency in the area for elderly affairs, do they provide services, correct? Am I understanding that correct?

>> JENNY ROJAS: The -- I can provide Angela with the links. But the Agency for Healthcare Administration, AHCA, A-H-C-A, they have all the oversight for every assisted living facility, every hospital, every nursing home, hospital -- I think I already said hospital, I'm sorry -- any healthcare-related facility belongs to AHCA. They provide the state oversight.

Elder Affairs has oversight for the Area Agencies on Aging.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. So is there an Area Agency on Aging that they contract with to provide services in the local area? Is that -- that means there are people here that work with our aging population, either at home or in nursing homes or whatever. Are there any one-on-one individuals here?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Well, for example, Glenna, what county are you in?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I'm in Palm Beach County.

>> JENNY ROJAS: So, that's the Area Agency on Aging for Palm Beach Treasure Coast. That's the name of the one that would be in your area.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay.

>> JENNY ROJAS: So that's who contracts with local service providers. And I wouldn't -- and I don't know who those are off the top of my head, but they provide things like homemaker services, congregate meals, things like that, Elder Affairs and the air agency on aging -- area agency on aging do not provide any medical related services; nothing medical.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: So the people that, like, for example, that bring Meals on Wheels, so Meals on Wheels, the volunteers or whatever that bring those meals and they knock on the door, maybe that individual -- maybe they don't hear the door or whatever and they bring those meals and they're talking to an elderly individual who can't hear and there's no training on how to communicate with that individual... do you see what I'm saying?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Mmm-hmm, I do see what you're saying. I just don't know that we identify them.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: I don't know if we were able to get them all together, if we could do a presentation or... I don't know how... I don't know... just for them to be able to understand and be able to be around them, the loss of their hearing, as you get older, and I'm not exactly sure -- that's the type of training I'm talking about, I guess, for the people that interact with them.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. I've been doing a lot of talking! John? Take over, come on!

>> JOHN JACKSON: This is John.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Somebody.

>> JOHN JACKSON: I just had a question for Jenny, if Jenny knows the answer. I know there were various agencies on aging around the state. Like you, Jenny, my wife worked at one here in Tallahassee at one point in time, about 20-plus years ago.

My question is, Jenny, if you know, a lot of those organizations have some sort of umbrella organization that handles things from lobbying, to training and other

administrative things, organizations that take care of administrative things for all organizations, and I don't know if every agency has such a thing.

But it would be kind of the Area Agencies would form some sort of group that would then take care of a lot of the administrative lobbying and whatnot for all of the Area Agencies in Florida.

Do you happen to know if there is such a group? And if so, what is it called?

Because that group might be who we communicate with to be able -- and they might be in charge of a training for various Area Agencies or have some sort of training component. And but for communication as well, they might just need a better place for us to communicate rather than going to individual Area Agencies, if such a thing exists.

Do you know, Jenny?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Yes, sir, I do. And it's called F4, the number 4, F4A, and that stands for Florida area -- Florida Association for Area Agencies on Aging and I believe the executive director for the Area Agency on Aging here in Tallahassee is the current president of that, but don't hold me to it.

[Pause].

>> JOHN JACKSON: Yeah, I put my hand back up.

I just don't know. Is it possible, again, adding to Angela and Sean's plate, is it possible that you guys could reach out to the organization -- I've already forgotten -- F4 or whatever that Jenny just talked about, and reach out to them on behalf of the Council to see whether or not, you know, if they do a statewide trainings, how does that happen? And if another outside organization that was into more specific type of elderly issues, i.e. the Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, if we wanted to present some sort of training or join with them -- join with them to present or some kind of training, whether or not that would be in the cards?

That something between now and the meeting in August that Sean or Angela could do for us?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, this is Angie, I will definitely look into that, John, and I will let you guys know.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. See, Jenny? You're already participating and actively giving us things here at the Council that we didn't know. So you're already helping! That's a good job!

>> JENNY ROJAS: That's great! That makes me very happy! And I will send Angela the contact information that she needs to reach out to these people.

>> CORY PARKER: Good job, thank you, thank you, good job.

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. Thank you, Jenny.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Great, thanks, thanks. There was something else you was going to explain to Jenny... um...

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: It's 3:45. We're going to be open to public comments. Let's wait and see if anyone shows up.

But for right now, let's go ahead and take this opportunity to kind of explain a little bit about our organizations. Just to make sure that you -- that Jenny, to make sure that Jenny -- she's explained so much about aging affairs that I didn't realize.

John, do you still have your hand up?

>> JOHN JACKSON: Yes, I do, I'm sorry. I was going to suggest a break before the public comments, but instead I'll just let you guys know that I'm taking a break before the public comments, but I'll be back for them.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: No, you're right, I think this is a good time for us to take a short break. And we'll be back at 3:44, okay? We did a lot of discussing this far, since 2:30. So we'll take another break and be back at 3:44, all right? And then we'll be back for public comments. Thank you! Break now, 3:44.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Did we ever find out about the presenter? Did we ever find anything out about him? No answers or anything?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Nope, nothing at all.  
All right. We're on break until 3:44.

[Break].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Hello, hello, it's 3:45, it's time for public comment. Anybody here? Is there anybody here?

[Pause].

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: All right. I'm going back on mute.

>> JOHN JACKSON: John is hear.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: What about in the chat on CART? Anybody there on the CART chat with a public comment? Anyone?

>> ANGIE GREEN: I don't see any comments on there yet.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: And I don't see any... the visitors that we had this morning are no longer here, so I don't see them any longer.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Cecil was here, Anthony was here, but I don't see them. Public comment is our last thing of the day, so maybe someone will come in.

Maybe I should have reminded them that public comment happens at the end of our



agenda so maybe they will come back later. Or maybe they will come back, I don't know.

Well... I guess we will continue our training with Jenny!

And now we're talking about the various organizations that we represent. I represent Florida Association of the Deaf, FAD. Florida Association of the Deaf was established in 1970 -- 1917, 1917. Yes, a long time ago! Over 100 years.

The School for the Deaf, the FSDB, Florida School for the Deaf and Blind which is located in St. Augustine was established in 1885.

So, Deaf people have been here all that time.

Now, before COVID, we had a very active organization, with an annual conference, national conference, a board, vlogs, local Deaf clubs, affiliates of FAD. Board meetings, where the Deaf clubs around the state were represented at FAD.

There used to be 13 Deaf clubs all over the state.

We're now at the point -- well, let me say it this way: The traditional Deaf club where there was a rented or owned clubhouse, a physical location where people would gather weekly, you know, they love playing cards and games and whatnot and socializing, watching, you know, shows together, and having their meetings.

But we are down to two Deaf clubs -- no, is that right? No, I'm going to say four, there's four Deaf clubs in the state. Two Deaf clubs own their location, they own the facility, so they have a clubhouse and a board. One is in Palm Beach, The Villages has one. St. Augustine has -- it closed temporarily, but it came back. Actually that happened a couple of times.

So, FAD has gone through many changes, simply because the representation and the folks on the board change.

Most of the people who are part of FAD are older, retired people, some working people. But, you know, with older children, family people with older children.

Younger people, we have traditionally had a hard time bringing in the younger generation.

FAD also works with FRID, which is the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. I think two or three times we've tried really hard to reach out to pass bills that required licensing for interpreters, sign language interpreters.

Because so often we have unqualified and uncertified interpreters.

And damage has been done to the Deaf and hard-of-hearing people who receive those lackluster and poor interpreting schools, whether that's in the community or in the educational system.

It's not a huge number, but it's still significant. And we failed every time to pass licensure in Florida.

So, you know, there's talks again, I don't know, we might try again, we might not.

Right now, FAD is focused on rebuilding.

Karen, did you want to now talk about HLAA?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Karen, are you still here?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Okay. How about Gina? Gina, are you here?

>> ANGIE GREEN: This is Angie. She says this is Gina, I represent FRID, the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. Our goal is to improve the professional lives

of interpreters, as well as the quality and accessibility of interpreting services for Floridians with hearing loss.

Glenna is correct, licensure is our greatest challenge.

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: FRID, will there be a conference?

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: I am waiting for a response...

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, okay.

[Pause].

>> ANGIE GREEN: Gina says: I do not see it on the itinerary, I have not been informed of upcoming plans. I will stay on it and let the Council know.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. I know that FAD will have the conference for the first time since COVID. It's going to be held in October in St. Augustine.

Karen, are you here now?

[Pause].

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

How about Cory? Cory, would you like to talk about vocational rehabilitation and DOE as it applies to Deaf and hard-of-hearing people?

>> CORY PARKER: Hello, my name is Cory Parker and I work for Vocational Rehabilitation, which is under the auspices of the Department of Education.

The Department of Education has several agencies housed within it. And Vocational Rehabilitation is one.

The purpose of VR is to help people with disabilities maintain, regain, and access employment.

We meet with our consumers and clients who have disabilities. We provide assessments for their needs.

And if their needs results shows a disability and that disability is an impediment to gainful employment, we are here to help by providing resources, whatever is needed to support that individual to complete training, to gain the skills for successful employment.

In my unit, I manage Deaf and hard of hearing and deafblind programs within VR.

My program is under Vocational Rehabilitation and there are three basic portions: First, consultation in the field, field meaning VR counseling staff and administration, about Deaf and hard of hearing and deafblind issues.

We are SME, we are subject-matter experts for our agency.

Secondly, because our agency does not have a specific counselor for the Deaf as a rehab counselor for the Deaf, we don't have that title for a specialist any longer. That's unfortunate but now they're served by general VR counselors. The statute no longer provides for Deaf rehab counselors and we are here to train with topics specifically related to hearing issues/hearing loss.

So training is another thing that we do.

Thirdly, we manage communication access. We have staff interpreters who serve all over the state of Florida, far and wide, to provide communication access from the initiation of a case till closure.

Their rehabilitation plan includes those services, including interpreters, to provide communication access, and we manage all of that.

Our staff interpreters are able to do some level of consulting with people. And if there's something that cannot be solved, then it can be referred on to us here at headquarters.

And so that is the nuts and bolts of what we do.

I've been here 25-plus years experience since I came into this position.

We have a really great program. Such fantastic support from the Department who really truly understands what we need for the consumers that we serve.

Our consumers begin at age 16 and we serve them through adulthood, whatever age of desired employment.

So, that's us in a nutshell.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. Thanks, Cory!

Let's turn it over to Jenny. Did you have any questions about FAD, FRID, VR? Any questions at all, Jenny?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Not yet. I'm just trying to process everything. But Cory, I did work at VR only for about six months. I was kind of bouncing around the state agencies to get to Elder Affairs, so it's always interesting in gerontology, I worked with Cecil a long time ago, I doubt he remembers me, but I do remember him.

And so, you know, just kind of the circle of life, I guess!

>> CORY PARKER: Sure, sure. You know, Cecil did not -- uh-oh. Oh, sorry, we were talking over one another, sorry. This is Cory. She mentioned Cecil. So Cecil works for FTRI now.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yeah, he's actually the director, yeah, he's the executive.

>> CORY PARKER: In addition to that, my experience working with resources, I've been given the opportunity to answer many of the Council's questions that are perhaps related to that information and referral, and so because of that experience, when Angie had some questions and was looking for information, you know, because of my years of work experience in that area, I was able to be instrumental. Thanks.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. You know, every council member brings so much information and experience.

Karen? I see you. Would you like to talk about HLAA? This is for Jenny's benefit.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yes. So, sorry about that. I had to jump off and take a medical call.

But I'm glad everybody went around and shared about what their organizations do.

So, when the Florida Statute was set up for Florida Coordinating Council, there is actually a mandate to have two members from... um... gosh, you'll have to help me remember the name, Glenna -- SHHH, what was it called?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, oh, Self-help For the Hard of Hearing, SHHH.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: That's what it was. It used to be called self-help for the hard of hearing.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, that's what it was.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Okay. So the name of the organization changed to HLAA. So you won't see in the Florida Statute that there needs to be two seats for HLAA, but that's what SHHH transitioned to, to HLAA.

So, HLAA is Hearing Loss Association of America and it's actually a very active and large group serving America's individuals who have a variety of different hearing loss and different types of hearing loss.

And it's not as specific for deaf or those with profound deafness or born deaf or Deaf with the big D which is the cultural Deaf identity.

And it's interesting that they do talk about hearing loss, hard-of-hearing identity, not being quite as robust as I would say D with a capital D, as an identity.

But many of the folks that are involved with HLAA are very active. They go on Walks4Hearing, they raise money, they propose legislation to make hearing aids more affordable.

And one of the big opportunities that came from that was the legislation passed on over-the-counter hearing aids. So that's been pretty exciting, because it does provide a more affordable cost for mild hearing loss.

I think the concern with over-the-counter is that while the cost is better, you don't have the expertise that you would with audiologists prescribing a certain type of a hearing aid for an individual based on their specific hearing loss or deafness.

And that's the downside to that.

I've asked many times could I get a hearing aid over-the-counter and my ENT and my audiologist are very clear that that won't help me.

I tend to have the type of hearing loss that... um... it started in childhood on my left side, this is more severe at this point, on the left side, and mild on the right. So I have always learned to focus on how I hear best, right? Like, I've learned to live with it. I sit in the front of class or -- that's how I always was.

And I've always -- I tried hearing aids and I don't like them. I have a problem. It takes time and it takes patience. And HLAA is actually a great resource for that, because they do talk about what the experience is like to try hearing aids for the first time or not give them enough of a try, which is me!

And -- because you have to retrain your brain. And I am very used to how my loss is.

So I'm fine if I listen on the right. I talk on the phone on the right. I put my earphone into the right.

You know, that kind of thing.

But HLAA is a great organization because you get a lot of support too and you get a lot of acknowledge. HLA Florida, which is the Florida chapter or organization from the main National one, has a number of very active groups and chapters. And then they have some that are kind of just not very active.

But I would have to say Sarasota, Jacksonville, maybe there's a couple of others in the southeast, New Port Richey.

>> Palm Beach as well.

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, Palm Beach had a very active chapter. And

whatever Debbe Hagner has run, she's the State president and she has been the president of Tampa and I think New Port Richey and Pasco County. I mean, she's kept a number of different chapters rolling.

And so that's good.

But the State, as a whole, has many chapters that are not quite as active and may have even become defunct and not really, you know, worked out well.

And that's kind of why HLA Florida is in a little bit of a flux right now on who is going to step in as president? Are with he going to stay a state -- it gets confusing, the terminology. One is called a state association where you have a board. The other is like a state... association? I might be a little bit confused, where it's more of a state office.

But I'm going to talk with Debbe more about that, what we're planning on doing in the future.

But HLAA, if you go to HLAA.org (sic), you'll see a number of different resources, and clearly the number of individuals who have some degree of hearing loss outnumbers those who are born deaf or who have really severe to profound.

So when we look at mild, moderate, to severe, those folks, there's a larger population of that.

And a lot of those folks minimize their symptoms and don't know where to get resources. It's not quite as clear.

They didn't -- a lot of people didn't grow up with a hearing loss, they developed it over time. And so that's... [Screen frozen] ... that's why HLAA is such a -- [Screen frozen] .

Some people are freezing now. The interpreter froze. All right.  
And that's HLAA.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right. Well, thank you. I actually just started HLAA... um... oh, um, so this year, in this location... um....

Before COVID, many members, there were probably over 40 members, but then after COVID, those numbers went down to about 20. Many passed away, which is terrible to say, but that's a fact.

So, those who showed up in my chapter are severe/profound deaf, even though, you know, most use spoken English to communicate. Many of them are in a situation where they're learning to sign, but, you know, it's been a slow progression that they lost their hearing over time or maybe they were ill and lost their hearing.

There's a lot of variety in HLAA membership.

So, looking for support and information, that's what brought them to the organization.

I think I forgot to mention that FAD is a member of the National Association of the Deaf, NAD. The National Association of the Deaf is in Washington, D.C. It's a very strong national organization. They have their own attorneys, they actually take on lawsuits, representing the members, suing very large companies.

There's one example: They recently sued Netflix. They sued them because of the captioning situation. So, see, it's not just interpreters, it can be captioning. It's all about access and opportunity.

Another example was the truck drivers, like 18-wheelers, were -- they were not permitting deaf truck drivers, semi, and there was a huge lawsuit. And now you'll find deaf truck drivers on the road.

And the reason was it was a lawsuit that was about CDLs licenses.

Hey, Karen? Did you have your hand up?

>> KAREN GOLDBERG: Yeah, I just want to say I gave the wrong e-mail address -- I mean website address for HLAA. I said HLAA.org. That's incorrect. It's

hearingloss.org. I put it in the chat.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Oh, sure, yeah, good, good.

Yeah, hearingloss.org, that's right.

So, Jenny, back to you. I know you are probably extremely overwhelmed at this point with all of the information and history we've been giving you!

There's more on our website about our member organizations and the list there. Different websites, so whatever you would like to take sometime to explore that and get different information about the agencies and organizations.

But that's our welcome to you! How about that?

>> JENNY ROJAS: Thank you! This is Jenny, thank you so very much! I am so appreciative of your consideration and your patience and the time you've taken with me this afternoon to go through your organizations and your roles.

And it's been extremely enlightening and I'm so grateful! This is exactly what I needed. Thank you!

>> GLENNA ASHTON: All right, great!

Oh, you know, all deaf people are different, you know, everybody has different needs for access.

Cory?

>> CORY PARKER: I just was saying that it's wonderful and it's been a fantastic opportunity to give you a little orientation, Jenny.

I think that this is something that I have said during all of my trainings that I provide, and that is: Hearing loss is not a crash course. You learn over time. There's a younger generation that is evolving. Hard-of-hearing people, late-deafened people are evolving.

Technology has come so far! Our world, you can actually say, is actually evolving. We've come from a time where we depended on other people to call and order a pizza on our behalf, to now, you know -- or children that ask their mom or dad to call a girl for a date, because we didn't have access ourselves.

But now look at us. We're on our video phones.

Deaf families are large and active. In the community, access is growing. I actually come from a deaf family myself. My grandmother was one of 15 children, all born deaf. My grandmother was the baby of 15. Two of them passed, didn't make it.

But we used to have our family gatherings, you know, my grandmother, aunts, uncles, and as they got older and started to pass, all those stories were passed along to the generations and, you know, we had a new tradition of family gatherings.

We're having another this summer and I can't tell you how excited I am! We're getting some special T-shirts made with the names of all of our living aunts and uncles on one side, and whichever branch of the family you belong to, their name is a brighter color.

And so we want this to be a tradition that we pass along to our proud family. 15 children. But my grandmother was the baby. She was the last on the list!

You know, our lives are so much different than that generation's were. Our life experience, you know, is very different.

My grandmother, you know how she used to wake up in the morning? They had a Hoover vacuum cleaner and they plugged into... um... there was a time when you plugged in your clock when you were on vacation and it would give you the time. It would fool people because they thought somebody was home, so you would set that on a timer.

So they used a timer for whenever you're not at home to make the lights come on, they

put that on a Hoover vacuum cleaner and stuffed it under the bed. That would get you up!

>> JENNY ROJAS: [Laughs]. That's rude!

>> CORY PARKER: Those are the ingenious stories of yesteryear.

And how we have -- if someone comes to your front door, now we have a flashing light. I could be in the kitchen having a conversation, all of a sudden the light is flashing because someone is through the peephole, you know.

Our deaf family has come a long way and technology has changed over time. It's changed our world. It's amazing to see.

So you, Jenny, will learn as you go about Deaf and hard-of-hearing culture. You'll learn about hard-of-hearing people, how they have their own cultures and values, and they're quite different than the Deaf community. I expect you will learn.

And I'm excited to have you here with us!

>> JENNY ROJAS: Thank you. I'm excited to be here.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: This is Glenna. You know, I think that is a great way to end our time together today. What a great day we've had! So let's end it in that way.

Our next meeting is set for August in the Tampa Bay Area. Hopefully Angela will have more information for us forthcoming with the specifics on, you know, the time and where and place and all of that.

I think it's the second week of August, if I'm not mistaken.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, it's August 10-11.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: August 10-11, yes, I see that here. August 10-11.

Okay. Any last words from anyone? Anything before we wrap it up and close and shut down the Zoom?

>> ANGIE GREEN: Yes, Glenna, this is Angie. Gina asks: Glenna, would you please send the information for the FAD conference you mentioned in October in St. Augustine? It's not on the website. She says thank you.

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Right, it's not been posted. The board is actually still in the planning stages and they have not done an official announcement.

There's a Save the Date that went out. That's what I know. It's October 28th, I know it's a one-day conference, October 28th, one-day conference. I saw the Save the Date. But more information is still in the planning.

So, I imagine that that will be released when it's ready.

All right. Council members, thank you so much for coming! Welcome again to Jenny!

Your homework is to read over the bylaws and review everything so we're ready to meet and discuss in August.

>> CORY PARKER: This is Cory. Can I make a motion to close the meeting?

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Yes, we have a motion to close the meeting. A motion to adjourn. And anyone second?

[Pause].

>> GLENNA ASHTON: Jenny seconds. Yay! Look at you, Jenny, it's your first time! Okay, cool!

All right, thank you, council members, and we'll see you -- see each other again in August. All right. Have a great day! Thanks for coming! Bye!

>> ANGIE GREEN: Bye, everyone.

>> CORY PARKER: Thanks to the interpreters! You guys did a great job! Thanks to Lisa for captioning our meeting!

And for the Zoom folks, the AV people, we appreciate your support today. Bye-bye!

>> Bye.

>> ANGIE GREEN: Definitely. Thank you, everyone. Bye-bye.

[Concludes at 4:22 p.m.]

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