



DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

1010 Richards Street, Room 118 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Ph. (808) 586-8121 (V), (808) 586-8122 (V) • (808) 586-8129 (Fax)
(808) 586-8162 (TTY) • (808) 204-2466 (VP)

MINUTES

Standing Committee on Communication Access Meeting

Location: In-Person Location
Kamamalu Building
1010 Richards Street, Rm. 111A and 111B
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Location: Virtual Location Via Zoom

Date: July 6, 2023

Time: 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Gerald Isobe, Nikki Kepo'o, Board Members; Kirby Shaw, Bryan Mick, Kristine Pagano, Staff

GUESTS: Peter Fritz
LisaAnn Tom (effective 7/3/23, Board member)

SIGN LANGUAGE

INTERPRETER: Jackie Emmart and Denise Green

REAL TIME

CAPTIONER: April Chandler and Kelly DeCamp

- I. Chairperson Gerald Isobe called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m.
- II. Board members, staff, captioners, sign language interpreters introduced themselves.
- III. Chairperson Gerald Isobe reported that one testimony was submitted. Relay Hawaii is celebrating its 20th anniversary of providing relay services. Relay Hawaii is hosting a celebration at the Honolulu Zoo on Saturday, September 16, 2023 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Ticket reservation is available on Relay Hawaii's website (www.relayhawaii.com/zoo/ or see Deaf Safari Day icon) and Facebook page at www.facebook.com/RelayHawaii711. Tickets are on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you are interested, please contact relayhawaii@t-mobile.com.

IV. The February 28, 2023 meeting minutes were approved as circulated (M/S/P Kepo'o/Isobe).

V. Old Business

A. Communication Access Program

Kristine Pagano reported that there are thirty-one sign language interpreters who hold the Hawaii State Sign Language Interpreter Credential. Out of the thirty-one sign language interpreters, twenty-one are enrolled in the Continuing Education Program. Note that two interpreters completed the previous cycle but failed to turn in their renewal and application fee by the deadline, and one new interpreter enrolled in the program.

Guest LisaAnn Tom asked if the thirty-one sign language interpreters are on Oahu or is the number of interpreters statewide? Kristine Pagano replied, thirty-one sign language interpreters are statewide. Guest LisaAnn Tom asked if there was a breakdown per island? Kristine Pagano report that staff does not have the breakdown now and will send the information to LisaAnn Tom.

Board member Nikki Kepo'o asked if the information is on the DCAB website? Kristine Pagano replied, that DCAB maintains a listing of Communication Access Providers. The list includes sign language interpreters by island however this is optional for sign language interpreters to post their information.

Kristine Pagano added a note that DCAB tested two applicants which increased the pool of sign language interpreters.

B. Communication Access Specialist Vacant Position Announcement

Kristine Pagano reported that the Communication Access Specialist position announcement is still posted on various websites. Staff also distributed the position announcement to individuals to share with their networks.

Board member Nikki Kepo'o asked if anyone was interested or applied. Kristine Pagano reported that individuals have applied, however were not qualified for the position. Board member Nikki Kepo'o asked what was missing in their applications and how are they not qualified? Kristine Pagano reported that applicants lacked experience.

Guest LisaAnn Tom asked how long was the position vacant? Kristine Pagano reported the position has been vacant since 2020, however it was due to budget cuts impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The position was restored with funding in fiscal year (FY) 2023. The position has been vacant for almost a year.

Guest Peter Fritz provided comments to reevaluate and revisit the position credentials. He also provided suggestions to develop a training system to increase one's experience or create a lower-level position such as Communication Access Specialist Level I and Communication Access Specialist Level II. He also noted that it may be appropriate for the Committee to have another meeting or for the DCAB Planning Committee to reevaluate the standards to hire someone who can grow into the position because the position is currently set at a higher level. There is a need to serve the community of people with communication disabilities.

Kirby Shaw reported that he lowered the minimum qualifications regarding sufficient fluency in American Sign Language (ASL). Applicants were asked if they would be willing to learn ASL while on the job. To redescribe the position, it will take a year. Guest Peter Fritz noted that the DCAB Board has several capable people who have experience in position descriptions and a discussion should take place because the position has been vacant for a while.

Board member Nikki Kepo'o would like the Committee to review the position description and provide suggestions at the next meeting.

Chairperson Gerald Isobe asked about providing an internship for the position. Kristine Pagano reported that recruiting interns were unsuccessful.

VI. New Business

A. FY 2023-2024 Plan of Action – Communication Access Review and discuss the FY 2022-2023 Plan of Action and Communication Access goals and objectives for the FY 2023-2024 Plan of Action

Staff provided a report of the FY2022-2023 activities.

Chairperson Gerald Isobe requested staff to provide a report of the number of hours and days working on each objective.

Guest Peter Fritz commented that there is a need to serve the wider range of people with communication disabilities relating to document accessibility such as PDF files. Kirby Shaw added that staff is tasked with updating older files to accessible PDFs and will research the possibility of hiring a company to convert legacy documents to accessible formats.

Nikki Kepo'o asked when was the Recommended Fee Schedule previously reviewed. Bryan Mick reported the Recommended Fee Schedule was revised on August 13, 2020, and effective August 14, 2020. The Recommended Fee Schedule can be revised as needed. DCAB consults with primary stakeholders and determines if any revisions are necessary no later than four years from the last report. It was determined that the Committee will review the current Recommended Fee Schedule.

Kristine Pagano shared the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf Inc. announcement on “The Regulation of the Sign Language Interpreting Profession” and the Federal Communications Commission seeking input from people with disabilities on the proposed rule on the Emergency System, Wireless Emergency Alert.

The Committee discussed and provided recommendations for the FY 2023-2024 Plan of Action. Staff consolidated the two reports (attached).

VII. Open Forum

Nikki Kepo’o announced that the Department of Education (DOE) is having difficulty in recruiting qualified Deaf educators to apply for DOE positions. The State does not have enough qualified Deaf educators working with the population of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

Bryan Mick announced that tomorrow, Friday, July 7, 2023, at 1:30 p.m. Governor Green will be signing several disability related bills. One of the bills, HB 834 will officially recognize American Sign Language. The signing of the bill is not open to the public, however will be livestreamed on the Governor’s Facebook account.

VIII. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 17, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

IX. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

NOTE: All votes were unanimous unless otherwise noted.

Respectfully submitted,



KRISTINE PAGANO