

**Minutes from the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the
Hard of Hearing, Special Board Meeting.
Meeting held February 4th, 2025 at 3:00 pm.
The meeting was held via Zoom Teleconference.**

Call to Order & Roll Call

Commissioner Sienko called the meeting to order at 3:03 PM.

Commissioners present: Catherine Sienko, Randal Kidd, Harvey Goodstein, Diana Herron, Virginia Thompson, Fred Williams, Melanie O'Rourke, Sarah Bolmarcich, Debbie Venkatesh, Jennifer Scarboro

Commissioners absent: Scott Madsen, Andrew Cohen

AAG: Elise Phalen

ADOA: Brian Westerberg

Staff Present: Nikki Soukup, Ricky Gonsowski, Chyla Dalton-Nava

Approval of Minutes from January 15th Meeting

Commissioner Kidd moved to approve the minutes from the January 15th meeting, Commissioner Goodstein seconded, the motion carried unanimously.

Chair's Report

Chair Sienko opened the meeting by welcoming the Interim Executive Director, Nikki Soukup, and thanked her for her support in taking on this new role within the agency.

Reopening the Search for Executive Director

ADOA Representative Brian Westerberg explained the process for reopening the search for executive director search, explaining that the board would first need to vote to officially close the current job request, and then vote again to officially re-open the search. He also explained that if Nikki Soukup, the current Interim Director wishes to apply for the reopened position, she is able to do so, however she must recuse herself from the search process, in order to preserve transparency in the process. Nikki Soukup responded that she is interested in applying for the position, and will respectfully recuse herself from the Executive Director search process. A discussion followed. **Commissioner Herron moved to close the current existing Executive Director job request effective immediately; Commissioner Kidd Seconds the motion, the motion carries unanimously.** Brian Westerberg informed the board that he will be closing the post by the end of the day today. A discussion followed on how the process of the search should



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proceed, with Commissioner Kidd asking whether a third party could be used to assist with the process. Brian Westerberg explained that the board has the option of using a third party to assist with the search process, however, this would need to be approved by the state HR director Nicole Sorenson. Chair Sienko would need to write a letter justifying the need for a third party search team, and this letter would need to be sent to Nicole Sorenson for approval before the third party search agency could be used. Commissioner Goodstein expressed concern with the way the original job description was written, and asked if it was possible to table the discussion until the next meeting when there was more time to discuss. Chair Sienko reminded the board that Interim Director Nikki Soukup is on Special assignment through the Arizona Department of Administration from January 30th, 2025, until June 30th, 2025, so time is of the essence, and this process should not be delayed any further. Brian Westerberg added that if the position description is changed, there is a new process that it will need to go through to make sure that it meets state requirements. A discussion ensued. **Commissioner Herron moves to re-open the Executive Director job post on March 1st, 2025;** a discussion followed, **Commissioner Herron withdrew her motion.** Brian went on to explain the process for modifying a position description. Commissioner Bolmarcich moves to reopen the executive Director job post; Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion, a vote was taken by roll call with Commissioners voting:

O'Rourke: No
Kidd: Aye
Thompson: Aye
Venkatesh: Aye
Sienko: Aye
Herron: Aye
Williams: Aye
Scarboro: Aye
Goodstein: Aye
Bolmarcich: Aye

The motion carries. The commissioner continued the discussion. They discussed options for third party search firms, and Brian Westerberg noted that he had not yet worked with a third party firm. Commissioner O'Rourke expressed her disagreement with using a third party for the process, as she feels like it is an indication that the previous search did not reach the people it should have, which she strongly disagreed with-as she felt that the candidates were qualified. She feels that some chose to make a decision based on personal needs and concerns, not for the full board or the hearing loss community. Commissioner Thompson asked if the board would be seeking quotes from a variety of third party agencies. Commissioner Scarboro stated that ASDB has used a third party

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Governor



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Interim Director

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agency in the past for recruitment, and asked if it would also be possible to also advertise the position on platforms such as LinkedIn or Indeed. Commissioner Goodstein stated that he would like to see both passive and active recruitment used in the search and not be limited to just the third party search. He recommended that Innivee be used as the third party firm for this search. **Commissioner Herron moves that Commissioner Sienko moves to move forward with recruiting a third party agency to assist with the Executive Director Search; Commissioner Kidd seconds**, a vote was taken by roll call with Commissioners voting:

Scarboro: Aye
Williams: Aye
Bolmarcich: Aye
Herron: Aye
Sienko: Aye
Venkatesh: Aye
Thompson: Aye
Kidd: Aye
O'Rourke: No
Goodstein: Aye

The motion carries.

Commissioner Kidd moves that Chair Sienko be assigned to communicate with ADOA about recruiting a third party search firm; Commissioner Bolmarcich seconds the motion. Commissioner Goodstein would like to amend the motion to specifically mention Innivee Strategies as the third party firm. A discussion followed. Commissioner Goodstein withdrew his amendment to the motion. A vote by roll call followed with Commissioners voting:

Scarboro: Yes
Goodstein: Aye
O'Rourke: No
Kidd: Aye
Thompson: Aye
Venkatesh: Aye
Sienko: Aye
Herron: Aye
Bolmarcich: Aye
Williams: Aye

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The mission of the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the Hard of Hearing is to ensure, in partnership with the public and private sectors, accessibility for the deaf, deaf-blind, hard of hearing, and persons with speech difficulties to improve their quality of life.



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The commissioners continued to discuss the options they have for third party providers. Commissioner Goodstein offered to add a substitute motion to have the Board Chair consult with Innivee Strategies as the third party search firm subject to ADOA approval. Commissioner Bolmarcich asked questions about Innivee Strategies, asking if they would also work with hearing professionals. Commissioner Thompson stated that she was not comfortable with selecting only one organization to conduct the search, and would prefer to compare at least three organizations to ensure that the agency was getting the best value, and also not discriminating against those with different hearing status during the search process. Commissioner O'Rourke stated that she feels that the Board should be looking for an individual who represents not only the Deaf community, but the Hard of Hearing community, and is very capable in communicating with people who are Hard of Hearing. **Commissioner Kidd moves that Chair Sienko works with ADOA to find three third party search firms, and then present those findings to the full board at the next Special Meeting; Commissioner Thompson seconds the motion.** *Commissioner Goodstein started a new discussion on whether the board should walk back the assignment of a third-party party search, instead to utilize a passive search rather than an active search. It was determined that the board could not make a new motion unless the original motion was withdrawn.* **Commissioner Goodstein asked if Commissioner Kidd would be willing to withdraw his motion. Commissioner Kidd declined, keeping the motion in place.** The motion is voted on by roll call with Commissioners voting:

Goodstein: No

O'Rourke: No

Kidd: Aye

Thompson: Aye

Venkatesh: Aye

Sienko: Aye

Herron: Aye

Bolmarcich: Aye

Williams: Aye

The motion carries.

Chair Sienko reminded all Commissioners to share any names of third party search agencies with Chyla Dalton-Nava, who will then pass that information along to ADOA.

Officer Elections

Chair Sienko began the discussion on officer elections. **Commissioner Kidd moved that Commissioner Sienko remain as Board Chair.** *Commissioner Herron called a point of order to remind Commissioner Kidd that a motion needed to be made to begin the*

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nomination process first. **Commissioner Kidd withdrew his motion. Commissioner Herron moved to begin the nomination process for the officers, including the Chair,**

Vice Chair, and Secretary, to begin immediately; Commissioner Kidd seconds the motion, the motion carries unanimously.

Board Chair: Commissioner Kidd nominates Commissioner Sienko to continue as Board Chair, Commissioner Sienko accepted the nomination, no other nominations were made. A vote was taken with Commissioners voting as follows:

Scarboro: Aye
Goodstein: Aye
O'Rourke: Aye
Kidd: Aye
Thompson: Aye
Bolmarcich: Aye
Williams: Aye
Herron: Aye
Sienko: Aye

Commissioner Sienko will continue as the Board Chair.

Vice Chair: Commissioner Goodstein nominates Commissioner Bolmarcich as Vice Chair, Commissioner Bolmarcich accepted the nomination, no other nominations were made. The nomination passed unanimously.

Commissioner Bolmarcich is the Board Vice Chair.

Secretary: Commissioner Goodstein nominates Commissioner Kidd as Secretary, Commissioner Kidd accepted the nomination, no other nominations were made. The nomination passed unanimously.

Commissioner Kidd is the Board Secretary.

Adjournment

Commissioner Kidd moves to adjourn the meeting at 5:00 PM, Commissioner Sienko seconds the motion, the meeting is adjourned at 5:00 PM.

The undersigned certifies that a copy of the attached notice was duly posted this

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7th day of February, 2025 at 3:00 pm by Chyla Dalton-Nava, Assistant to the Executive Director.