

Katie Hobbs
Governor



Nikki Soukup
Interim Director

Arizona Commission

for the deaf and the hard of hearing

100 N 15th Avenue □ Suite 104 □ Phoenix, AZ 85007
acdhh.org

**Minutes from the Arizona Commission for the Deaf and the
Hard of Hearing, Search Committee Meeting.
Meeting held October 1st, 2025 at 4:30 pm.
The meeting was held via Zoom Teleconference.**

Call to Order & Roll Call

Commissioner Sienko called the meeting to order at 4:37 PM.

Commissioners present: Commissioner Sienko, Commissioner Bolmarcich, Commissioner Kidd, Commissioner Herron

Commissioners absent: Commissioner, Cohen, Commissioner Swenson

ADOA Staff: Brian Westerberg

ACDHH Staff Present: Ricky Gonsowski, Chyla Dalton-Nava

Approval of Minutes- September 15th, 2025

Commissioner Bolmarcich moved to approve the minutes from the September 15th meeting; Commissioner Herron seconds the motion, the motion carried unanimously.

Draft Interview Questions

Commissioner Kidd expressed his desire to go into executive session to discuss the draft interview questions. **Commissioner Kidd moved that the Search Committee enter executive session to discuss the selection process with ADOA; Commissioner Herron seconded the motion, the Committee moved into closed session at 4:41 PM.**

The Committee returned to open session at 5:10 PM.

Community Town Hall/Community Feedback

The group continued discussing plans for establishing a community meet and greet, to allow members of the community to provide feedback on the Executive Director Finalists. The commissioners discussed several options on how this could be done, with Commissioner Kidd suggesting a hybrid meet-and-greet (virtual and in-person) for statewide participation, plus a separate virtual town hall and survey to gather community input on the qualities they felt were important in an Executive Director. Commissioner Herron expressed concern with this, as the Search Committee is already at the interview

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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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stage. She proposed the option of an open forum where people could watch pre-recorded (or live-streamed) interviews and then provide public input to the Board for consideration, with a separate special meeting for the final vote. The group continues the discussion. . Suggestions include creating an "interview package" for the final two candidates, which would involve a community presentation shared via ACDHH's e-news, followed by a week for public input. This would be followed by interviews with the Board using the same questions for both candidates. Concerns were raised about the complexity, cost, and logistics of getting community feedback, especially ensuring input comes from relevant community members (Deaf, hard of hearing, DeafBlind, audiologists, interpreters) rather than individuals giving character references. The group acknowledged the tight timeline, and limited resources. The group discussed the National Association of the Deaf's (NAD) recent executive search process for their CEO position, specifically the publicly available pre-recorded interview, and discussed if this format would be possible in ACDHH's search. Brian suggested a multi-step interview process to manage costs and gather feedback. First, a virtual, recorded interview could be conducted with the finalists (typically two), with disclosures made to candidates that the interview will be recorded and shared publicly. This would allow for initial feedback. Following this, the candidates could be brought to an actual board meeting to give a presentation and answer questions from the board and the public. Commissioner Kidd suggested tabling the discussion as Brian needed to leave the meeting, and the group did not yet have a clear date for the event as finalists have not yet been selected.

ACDHH Staff Feedback

Commissioner Kidd suggested an informal staff survey to gauge opinions on the next ACDHH Director. A discussion followed. Commissioner Herron suggested using the previous survey format ACDHH staff used last year. The group decided that this would be the best approach. **Commissioner Herron moved to use last year's staff survey to gather ACDHH staff feedback on the finalists; Commissioner Kidd seconds the motion, the motion carried unanimously.**

Future Meeting Schedule

Commissioner Bolmarcich expressed concern that Commissioners Swenson and Cohen have missed recent meetings, stressing the importance of their representation for the DeafBlind and Interpreter communities. Chair Sienko acknowledged the concern,

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understanding that unforeseen circumstances can prevent attendance. She emphasized the importance of consistent attendance for agency leadership and community guidance, especially for Governor-appointed Commissioners. Chair Sienko plans to speak with the absent Commissioners to determine their schedules and find a meeting time that works for everyone. She also encouraged anyone with attendance concerns or schedule conflicts to contact her directly, assuring support and collaboration in scheduling future meetings. Chair Sienko will work with Chyla to create a poll for the next meeting, and get that out to the Search Committee soon.

Adjournment

Commissioner Kidd moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:56 PM; Commissioner Bolmarcich seconded, the meeting concluded at 5:56 PM.

Dated this 3rd day of October, 2025 at 5:00 pm by Chyla Dalton-Nava, Assistant to the Executive Director.