

April 26, 2024

REGULAR MEETING OF THE ILLINOIS LICENSURE BOARD OF INTERPRETERS

The Illinois Board of Interpreters held its regular meeting on Friday, April 26, 2024, at the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission, 528 S. Fifth Street, Suite 209, Springfield, IL.

Call to Order

Chairperson Laura Braucht called the meeting to order at 10:40 AM.

Members Present

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Ayanna Dowd	No	Teri Hedding	Yes	Amy Miller	Yes

IDHHC Staff Present

Benro Ogunyipe, Director
Tonia Bogener, Legal Counsel

Public Present

None.

Approval of Minutes

Amy Miller moved to accept the September 29, 2023, minutes as presented; Seconded by Teri Hedding. Motion Passed.

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Teri Hedding	Yes	Amy Miller	Yes		

Chairperson Report

No report.

Interpreter Coordinator Report

Tonia Bogener presented the Interpreter Coordinator report:

- Barbara Pawlica has resigned from the Board. Currently, two board members serving on expired terms and a vacant position for a Deaf Consumer.
- An announcement coming soon on the new Interpreter Coordinator. IDHHC completed 4 interviews and has received permission for CMS to extend an offer.

- Interpreter Licensure Statistics from year to date:
 - 833 Licensed Interpreters
 - 27 Provisional License Interpreters
 - 230 Intermediate Licensed Interpreters
 - 331 Advanced Licensed Interpreters
 - 244 Master Licensed Interpreters
 - Licensed Interpreters by region:
 - Out of State: 282
 - Southern: 15
 - East Central: 17
 - West Central: 76
 - Northwest: 60
 - Northeast: 172
 - Cook County: 212
- FY24 and FY25 Interpreter Program and ISBE Grant Spending Authority and Expenditures: Once the Interpreter Coordinator position is filled, there will be more expenditures from Fund 449. The ISBE Grant will fund the online Professional Development workshops planned for July & August 2024.
- Illinois BEI Testing Applications year to date:
 - TEP
 - 34 Administered
 - Tests Scheduled – 35
 - Pending Applications – 1
 - Performance
 - 31 Administered
 - Tests Scheduled – 21
 - Pending Applications – 1
- **Strategic Plan/Priorities**

Director Benro Ogunyipe proved an overview of the Commission’s 5 Year Strategic Plan & Priorities starting July 1, 2024. From August 2023 – March 2024, the Commission conducted a community survey, receiving approximately 500 responses. On March 21-22, 2024, Commissioners met in Chicago reviewing the survey responses and identifying barriers within the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing Community. The areas discussed related to sign language interpreters included but not limited to concerns of interpreter shortages, closure of Interpreter Training/Preparation Programs (ITPs/IPP), barriers related to certification and licensure.

Old Business

None.

New Business

- **Vacant Secretary Position**

Nomination for replacement Secretary was accepted from the floor for Amy Miller. Amy Miller accepted the nomination. Amy Miller is appointed as Secretary by acclamation.

- **FY25 Meeting Dates**

Laura Braucht moved to accept the proposed FY25 meeting dates of October 4, 2024; January 24, 2025, and March 28, 2025; Seconded by Kimberly Berger. Motion Passed.

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Teri Hedding	Yes	Amy Miller	Yes		

Hershella Ashford moved to add an additional date of July 15, 2024, to the FY25 meeting dates; Seconded by Kimberly Berger. Motion Passed.

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Teri Hedding	Yes	Amy Miller	Yes		

Laura Braucht moved to recess for lunch break; Seconded by Teri Hedding. Motion Passed.

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Teri Hedding	Yes	Amy Miller	Yes		

Meeting recessed from 12:46 PM – 1:35 PM.

- **Restoration Request (expired/inactive 5+ years)**

The Commission received a restoration request for an individual whose license has been expired more than 5 years. The applicant provided proof of current certification, evidence of licensure and practice in another jurisdiction, and proof of the required continuing education hours as required under Licensure Rules, Section 1515.120(b). IDHHC recommended to restore the applicant’s license.

Kimberly Berger moved to restore the license for Interpreter A; Seconded by Hershella Ashford. Motion Passed.

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Amy Miller	Yes	Teri Hedding	Yes		

- **Deaf Interpreter**

Board members discussed the Deaf Interpreter shortage and the need to support aspiring Deaf interpreters. Director Benro Ogunyipe and Dana Craig, IDHHC Program Coordinator presented at the recent Statewide Rehabilitation Counselor for the Deaf Meeting on Careers for the Deaf as Licensed Sign Language Interpreter. The presentation outlined the process of how to become a Deaf Licensed Sign Language Interpreter. The Commission is exploring hosting the workshops related to being a Deaf Sign Language Interpreter which will meet the pre-requisites to take the Illinois's Deaf Interpreter Knowledge-based Test (DIKBT). This will provide an opportunity for those interested to pursue becoming a licensed Deaf Sign Language Interpreter.

Public Comments

- None.

Open Discussion

Professional Development Opportunities & Annual Interpreter Conference

Board members inquired whether the annual professional development workshops will continue online or return to an in-person conference. Director Benro Ogunyipe indicated the format of the 2025 professional development workshops will be discussed with the Interpreter Coordinator once planning begins. Board members suggested the possibility of partnering with the college/university to host in-person conference to attract ITP/IPP students and veterans on the campus.

Illinois ITP/IPP Programs

Due to concerns related to the closure of ITP/IPP programs in Illinois, Chairperson Laura Braucht requested to keep this topic be an ongoing discussion under Open Discussion during future board meetings. During the November 17, 2023, quarterly Commission meeting, Teri Hedding made a special presentation entitled: *The ASL Interpreter Shortage in Illinois How the Lack of Data is Impacting the Deaf Community and Interpreter Education*. To gain a better understanding of the individual ITP/IPP programs and barriers to keeping the programs active, Director Benro Ogunyipe held individual meetings the following: College of DuPage, Illinois Central College, Waubensee Community College, Moraine Valley Community College, and John A. Logan College. Additionally, IDHHC is working to establish sources of reliable data.

Due to the concerns relating to interpreter shortages, the Minnesota Commission of the Deaf, DeafBlind and Hard of Hearing (MNCDHH) has started a new initiative "Interpreting Forward 2030". The Commission will continue to follow this initiative and keep the Board updated.

Liaison Between the Commission and Board of Interpreters

Board members expressed more communication between the Commissioners and Board of Interpreters. Director Benro Ogunyipe indicated this can be part of the responsibilities of the Interpreter Coordinator. Additionally, issues discussed by the Board will be incorporated as part of the Director's report during quarterly Commission meetings.

Licensure Act Scheduled to Repeal January 1, 2028

Board members noted the Interpreter for the Deaf Licensure Act of 2007 is scheduled to repeal on January 1, 2028. Tonia Bogener explained this is referred to as a sunset provision. Each year the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations introduces legislation to extend the date for all the professions which are due to sunset. The ability to introduce changes to the Licensure Act can occur any time.

Ad Hoc Committee

Board members discussed the establishment of an ad hoc committee. It was discussed the activities of any committee must comply with the Open Meetings Act. This will be added to the agenda under New Business for the next meeting. Members requested IDHHC to create the following shared documents:

- Actions Items expected to be completed for the next meeting; and
- Recommended changes to the Interpreter for the Deaf Licensure Act of 2007 & its Rules.

Adjournment

Amy Miller moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:09 PM; Seconded by Teri Hedding. Motion Passed.

Hershella Ashford	Yes	Laura Braucht	Yes	Kimberly Berger	Yes
Teri Hedding	Yes	Amy Miller	Yes		

(Signature on file)

Chairperson

Date

(Signature on file)

IDHHC Open Meetings Act Designee

Date