

Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS) Advisory Board

Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120

December 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes Conducted via Teleconference

<u>Board Members Present</u> Kay Tyberg, Chair; President, HLAA-Blair County Chapter; member, National Association of the Deaf (NAD), Pennsylvania Society for the Advancement of Deaf (PSAD), and Association of Late Deafened Adults (ALDA). Public member.	<u>Visitors/Guests:</u> Eric Jeschke, Public Utility Commission (PUC) (BTUS) Melissa Derr, PUC (BTUS) Denise McCracken, PUC Office of Communications Lori Shumberger, PUC Office of Communications Aaron Margolis, PUC Office of Communication David Screven, PUC Law Bureau
Amy Goldman, Secretary; President, US Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication. Public member.	Laura Grassia, TDDP Manager, Institute on Disabilities, Temple University, Kim Singleton, Director, Assistive Technology Programs, Institute on Disabilities Temple University
Sandi McNally, Assistant Director, TechOwl, Institute on Disabilities Temple University	Amy Strawser, Outreach Coordinator, Hamilton Relay Thaddeus Graham, Outreach Coordinator, Hamilton Relay
Christa Cervantes, Pennsylvania Account Manager, CapTel and TRS, Hamilton Relay	<u>Legal Advisor to the Board:</u> Tiffany Tran, PUC Law Bureau
Melissa Hawkins, Director, PA Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing	<u>Sign Language Interpreters:</u> Jessica Bentley-Sassaman Kathy Zimmerman Morgan Shimer (student)
<u>Board Members Not Present</u> Steve Samara, PA Telephone Association	<u>CART/Real Time</u> Archive Reporting and Captioning

Call to Order

Secretary Amy Goldman convened the meeting at approximately 9:58 AM. Chair Kay Tyberg experienced technical issues and joined late, participating via chat and CART.

Welcome/Introductions

Attendees and guests introduced themselves and were welcomed.

Chairperson's Report

At Kay's request, Eric reviewed Kay's correspondence of November 25, 2022, in which she summarized TRS/PUC related concerns and priorities.

Secretary's Report/Approval of the Minutes

Minutes of the September 9, 2022 meeting were approved as submitted.

Old Business:

Changes by the PUC Order

Tiffany Tran from the PUC Law Bureau reminded attendees that the PUC has determined that no PUC employees will have voting privileges on the TRS Advisory Board, in order to maintain impartiality and prevent any appearance of Commission employees influencing the decisions of the Board. Accordingly, existing TRS bylaws will need to be amended to reflect the Order. Tiffany volunteered to lead this effort, offering to provide a preliminary draft of revisions by the end of the year.

Review of Issue Regarding Administrative Costs for TDDP

At the request of Chairman Tyberg, Sandi McNally reviewed the resolution of the issue regarding administrative costs for TDDP.

Report of the Telecommunication Device Distribution Program (TDDP) including Wireless (WEI) by Laura Grassia

Laura distributed a detailed report of equipment distribution and support services, providing a summary of activity for the quarter. Laura entertained any questions about her report.

Hamilton TRS Outreach Report by Amy Strawser

Amy provided data on outreach events for Telephone Relay Services (TRS) for which Hamilton is the contracted provider. She highlighted information on presentations to seniors and Philadelphia health center staff, as well as CareerLink, and provided an opportunity for any questions on her report. Amy announced Hamilton is searching for a nominee for their Deaf Community Leadership Award.

Hamilton CTRS Report by Thad Graham

Hamilton Telephone Company d/b/a Hamilton Telecommunications is the contracted Captioned Telephone Relay Services (CTRS) provider throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. CTRS is similar to its counterpart traditional relay service with an added feature that allows consumers to receive captions on their phone as well as being able to hear what the caller is saying. Thad was welcomed as the new Outreach Coordinator for CTRS. He presented information on behalf of Rinata, who provided CTRS outreach coverage during

August, September and October. Programs included addiction services provider agency staff (webinar) and staff of the Veterans program at Valley Health (in person). Christa mentioned people are switching from analog to internet-based CapTel due to changes in phone service.

TRS Advisory Board Member Recruitment

Denise McCracken reviewed the need for the TRS Advisory Board to create a memo to the Commissioners offices as to why they think there should be more members, the challenges of recruitment and what we are requesting from staff to achieve the goal. The TRS Board should consider how many members and from what constituencies. Denise volunteered to assist in developing the memorandum and providing a template to expedite the process.

RTT Trial

A motion was made to recommend to the PUC that (1) RTT phones purchased for the RTT trial but not distributed and currently housed with Hamilton be transferred to TechOwl's reutilization program and made available to individuals who do not qualify for a phone through the TDDP and (2) individuals who received a phone for the trial can keep the unit. Public members Tyberg and Goldman voted for the motion, however, due to abstentions resulting in lack of a quorum, the motion did not pass.

New Business:

Certification by FCC:

Eric reviewed the process by which the Commonwealth applies for five-year certification of the TRS program. Tiffany reported receiving confirmation the FCC has received Pennsylvania's application and it is available on the FCC website for public review.

2023 Meeting Dates

Meetings will start at 9:30 AM if they are by videoconference and 10:00 AM if they are in person. In 2023, the following dates were proposed:

March 1

June 7

September 6

December 6

Meeting Adjourned

The meeting at approximately 11:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy S. Goldman, Secretary

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[Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority - PA Department of Community & Economic Development](#)