

Pennsylvania Telecommunications Relay Service Advisory Board

**Commonwealth Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

**June 1, 2022 Meeting Minutes
Conducted via Teleconference**

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| <p><u>Board Members Present</u> Kay Tyberg, Chair; Hearing Loss Association of America, Pennsylvania State Office (HLAA-PA), HLAA-Blair County Chapter Hearing Loss Association, National Council of the Deaf, and Association of Late Deafened Adults. Public member.</p> | <p><u>Visitors/Guests:</u> Melissa Derr, Public Utility Commission (BTUS)</p> |
| <p>Amy Goldman, Secretary; President, US Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication. Public member.</p> | <p>Kim Singleton, Director of TechOwl, Institute on Disabilities, Temple University Laura Grassia, Institute on Disabilities, Temple University, TDDP Manager</p> |
| <p>Melissa Hawkins, Director, PA Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing</p> | <p>Laura Jarvie, PUC Office of Special Assistance</p> |
| <p>Eric Jeschke, Public Utility Commission (BTUS)</p> | <p>PUC Office of Communication: Denise McCracken, Thomas Charles, and Lori Shumberger Erin Laudenslager (PUC BTUS)</p> |
| <p>Christa Cervantes Pennsylvania Account Manager, CapTel and TRS, Hamilton Relay</p> | <p>David Screven, Deputy Chief Counsel, Law Bureau, PUC Colin Scott, Assistant Counsel</p> |
| <p>Matt Hrivnak (PUC BTUS)</p> | <p>Joe Witmer, Office of Chairman Gladys Brown Dutrieuille</p> |
| <p><u>Board Members Absent</u> Sandi McNally, Assistant Director, Institute on Disabilities, Temple University</p> | <p><u>Sign Language Interpreters:</u> Jessica Bentley-Sassaman Imanni Jones</p> |
| <p>Steve Samara PA Telephone Association</p> | <p><u>CART/Real Time</u></p> |
| <p><u>Legal Advisor to the Board:</u> Alphonso Arnold, Jr., Public Utility Commission Office of Special Assistants, Staff Attorney and counsel to the TRS Advisory Board</p> | <p><u>Board Vacancies</u> Vice Chair (Public Member) Public Member Public Member Public Member</p> |

Call to Order

Chair Kay Tyberg convened the meeting at approximately 9:36 AM.

Welcome/Introductions

Attendees and guests introduced themselves and were welcomed.

Chairperson's Report

Kay reviewed ground rules for the meeting and emphasized her priority to recruit new public members.

Secretary's Report/Approval of the Minutes

Minutes of the March 30, 2022 meeting were approved as corrected.

Old Business:

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

Kim reported the satisfactory resolution of issues regarding funding of administrative costs. Laura provided updates on activities of the TDDP, and mentioned that 98% of outreach is now conducted in-person. Kim mentioned the launch of Connect with Tech, a new tablet distribution program implemented by the Institute on Disabilities, and described how they coordinate with the Affordable Connectivity Program and TDDP. Laura reported multiple devices are being discontinued, and upgrades to wireless devices are expected to be announced this summer. As a result, the catalog will need to be updated. The trend of wireless applications far exceeding landline applications continues, as well as the number of older people opting for wireless through the program.

Hamilton TRS Outreach Report and Hamilton CTRS by Christa Cervantes

Christa provided data on outreach events, mentioning that like TDDP, these are now mostly in-person although virtual webinars are also available. The plan is to reach every region of PA. The awardee for the Hamilton scholarship was announced.

Hamilton CTRS Report by Christa Cervantes

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. The Condition of the CTRS was presented to the Board members with an opportunity for members to ask questions. Christa mentioned Hamilton is having challenges recruiting for a replacement for their CTRS Outreach, but others are filling in. and asked

Advisory Board members for their assistance in the search. In the interim, other outreach coordinators are filling in to cover planned and new events.

RTT Trial by Hamilton conducted in Pennsylvania

The report on the RTT trial in PA has been submitted to Hamilton, although the number of trialists was disappointing. Hamilton is waiting for results from the California trial, and then they will determine their final recommendations.

TRS Advisory Board Member Recruitment

Recruitment remains a priority for the future operation of the Advisory Board. The application is on the PUC website. Denise was asked to follow up with creating an attractive flyer (hopefully by the next meeting of the TRS Advisory Board) and distributing it via PUC social media. Other members and stakeholders are willing to “share” and circulate on their respective social media accounts.

Bylaws

The amended bylaws, with the insertion of page numbers, were approved unanimously. Eventually they will need to be posted on the PUC website.

New Business:

David Screven, Deputy Chief Counsel, presented the PUC’s intent to align the operations of the TRS Advisory Board with other external advisory bodies, particularly as it pertains to interaction with the PUC. This will entail restructuring the composition of the TRS Advisory Board, and, as a result, modification to its by-laws. It is likely that these changes will happen and be made permanent. Point of contact for administrative logistics between the TRS Advisory Board and PUC will change. Members will be informed of who will handle what, and their emails.

2022 Meeting Dates

Meetings will start at 9:30 AM if they are by videoconference and 10:00 AM if they are in person. The Advisory Board decided to continue with virtual meetings until there is official guidance regarding in-person meetings. The remaining calendar for 2022 is as follows:

September 14, 2022
December 7, 2022

Meeting Adjourned

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy S. Goldman, Secretary