

**Maryland Association of the Deaf
Board Meeting at New Carrollton Library
Saturday, October 26, 2024**

Present: Tina Joyner (President), Tiasha Bera (Secretary), Thelma Schroeder (Senior Citizens), Blaise Delahoussaye (DeafBlind), Meredith DeSomma (Board Member at Large), Philip Mecham (Appointed Board Member)

Absent: Jacob Leffler (Vice President), Allysa Dittmar (Treasurer), Vikki Porter (Board Member at Large) & Tori Reeves (Youth)

President Tina Joyner called the meeting to order at 10:39 a.m

Previous Minutes

ThelmaSchroeder moved to approve the meeting minutes from July 24, 2024 Board Meeting.
Meredith DeSomma Seconded.
CARRIED

President's Report

President Tina Joyner had been meeting with the Governor's Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing (GODHH) Director about establishing a good relationship between MDAD And GODHH. The Legislative Training presented by Jacob Salem on October 14, 2024 went well and everyone enjoyed the training. During that event, GODHH hosted the Legislative Awareness Day and GODHH honored MDAD with an award recognizing their commitment. President Joyner was invited to the proclamation on September 30, 2024 that was dedicated to Alice Hagemeyer. Tori Reeves is no longer on the board due to excessive absence.

Vice President's Report

Vice President Jacob Leffler is unable to attend however he still has a report. Vice President Leffler has been meeting with the board liaisons to set up goals for the rest of the administration. Vice President Leffler also testified at the Maryland State Court along with President Joyner regarding a proposal to allow solo interpreters to interpret for up to four hours in court. It is a concern of MDAD for ASL Sign Language interpreters regarding mental fatigue and physical exhaustion which President Joyner and Vice President Leffler emphasized during the testimony.

Secretary's Report

No Report.

Treasurer's Report

As of September 30, 2024

Cash and Bank Account: \$53,332.23

Investment Accounts:

\$79,831.35 SSG investment account

\$35,486.36 Merrill Lynch

Total - \$168,649.94

Treasurer Allysa Dittmar will have a more accurate total when we update access to Merrill Lynch, and currently working on it due to security measures.

MDAD hosted a Deaf Awareness Day at the Sapwood and had a fundraiser and it was very successful as MDAD raised a total of \$1,240.

Board Members' Report

Appointed Board Member (Senior Citizens) Thelma Schroeder's report:

Board Member Thelma Schroeder and Vice President Leffler met several times to discuss concerns affecting the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing community with the Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA). After receiving a positive response from the Secretary of Aging, Carmel Roques, MDAD invited Secretary Roques and GODHH Director, Usherla DeBerry Maryland Deaf Seniors Citizens, Inc. President, Janet Weinstock and Senior Community Enhancement, Alfred Sonnenstrahl to the town hall.

On September 28, 2024, Vice President Leffler, Board Member Schroeder, MDSC Senior Community Enhancement Sonnenstrahl and GODHH Outreach and Interpreters Manager, Tanéa Brown who represented Usherla DeBerry met with Secretary Roques and her staff, Barbara Sigler, Director of Communications and discussed about the insolation and communication in various places.

Appointed Board Member (DeafBlind) Blaise Delahoussaye's Report:

Board Member Blaise Delahoussaye will revisit the Co-Navigation Bill after the Commission Workgroup presents their report which is due in June 2025.

Committee Report:

Finance Committee:

Treasurer Dittmar is still looking for one person to join the finance committee.

Legislative Committee:

President Joyner mentioned that there are several bills we are working on such as the LEAD-K Bill and Open Captioning Movies Bill that gives more access across the State while MDAD is supporting four local organizations who are leading on this effort.

Hospital Committee:

Secretary Tiasha Bera has been working on the survey for the public to answer. President Joyner, Vice President Leffler, and Secretary Bera met with the Maryland Hospital Associations on October 4, 2024 and discussed the importance of standardized policies regarding accessibility.

Mental Health Committee:

President Joyner sent a letter to the Department of Health - Behavioral Health Department regarding the accessibility issues, resources, and needs for the Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing community when receiving the mental health services and also to seek if we should create a new position focusing on our community. MDAD received very vague answers. The committee is looking into the next steps of action and possibly to meet with the certain State Agencies/Departments.

Scholarship Committee:

Board Member Blaise Delahoussaye and Board Member Thelma Schroeder met and reviewed the scholarship criteria that was approved by the Board in July 2024. They decided to put the college scholarship portion on hold and focus on the summer camp initiative. They made revision to the scholarship criteria and had a discussion whether the fund should be transferred from the general fund to an investment account to accrue interest.

MDAD's Seats

Social Work Licensure Work Group

Dr. Judy Mounty reports that the workgroup is working to modify the social worker license examination in the State of Maryland.

Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Advisory Council

Dr. Thomas Horejes is currently the vice chair of the EHDI Advisory Council. He will begin to assume the role of the Chair of the Advisory Council shortly.

Deaf Culture Digital Library Committee

Tiasha Bera has no report.

New Business:

Thelma Schroeder moved that MDAD covers the cost of a pizza lunch for \$650 for the Town Hall on Senior Citizens Issues on November 21, 2024.

Seconded by Tiasha Bera

CARRIED

Blaise Delahoussaye moved that MDAD covers the polo shirts for Phillip Mecham and Meredith DeSomma.

Seconded by Thelma Schroeder

CARRIED

Thelma Schroeder moved that MDAD appoints Meredith DeSomma as the 2025 MDAD Biannual Conference Chair.

Seconded by Blaise Delahoussaye

CARRIED

Meredith DeSomma moved that MDAD switches the bank account from Capital One to Bank of America.

Seconded by Thelma Schroeder

CARRIED

President Joyner adjourned the meeting at 12:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by

Tiasha Bera

Secretary