

## **Connecticut State Interpreting Standards Board**

### Meeting Minutes

May 4, 2026

Location: BESB Conference Room, Windsor, Connecticut.

Board Members Present on Site: Dr. Harvey Corson (Chair), Nick Dionne (Secretary), Sue Pedersen, Linda Pelletier, Cherry Byrnes, Lisa Flaherty-Vaughn.

Board Members Present Online via Zoom: Doreen Simmons, Kimberly Ofori-Sanzo, and Belinda Heller-Koval. Belinda was present for half of the meeting.

Members of The Public Present On Site: Jean Morrison (Bureau Director), Luisa Gasco-Soboleski, Richard Gasco-Soboleski, Alvin Chege (Bureau Human Services Advocate), Michael Fiorino, Yvonne Brown, and 8 additional Interpreters supporting communication.

\* Dr. Harvey Corson, Chair, called the regular meeting into order at 10:07am \*

#### **I. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes**

##### Inaugural Meeting Minutes (January 30th, 2026)

- Linda Pelletier noticed her name was missing under item #4.
- Lisa suggested that the ISB consider sending out future meeting minutes to board members and suggested the board members take the time to review future meeting minutes before upcoming quarterly meetings to ensure no oversights and errors occur.
- Lisa suggests the meeting minutes (for review) font size be changed to 14 font and bold for easier reading, and to be more inclusive of the DeafBlind members of the board and the community who may read them.
- MOTION: Sue moved to accept the meeting minutes as corrected, Lisa Seconded. In Favor: 6 (in person), 1 (online). Opposed: 0, Abstentions: 1. MOTION CARRIED.

##### Approval of Special Meeting Minutes (March 30th, 2026)

- Linda noted that her name was present on the minutes but misspelled.
- Nick added some discussion on how the Inaugural Meeting Minutes and the Special Meeting Minutes were previously taken by a different person (who he believed worked for the state of Connecticut but never got their name) during the first meeting, and he noted some utilization of AI for the minutes that were produced, which may have led to some minor errors.

Nick would like to propose the board consider utilizing AI for online meetings to lessen the burden of notetaking and to allow everyone to participate in the meeting fairly - to be discussed further.

- MOTION: Sue moved to accept the Special Meeting Minutes as corrected, Linda seconded, In Favor: 6, Opposed: 0, Absentions: 2.  
MOTION CARRIED.

## **II. Report of Board Officers:**

The Chair's Reported:

- Bylaws Draft: The Bylaws Committee (Harvey, Sue and Nick) met 2-3 times since the Special Meeting to complete the bylaws draft submitted a week before this meeting.
- Completed Proposed Bylaws were then submitted to ADS' legal team, feedback was provided by their legal team on Friday May 1st, but the ISB Bylaws Committee still needed a little more time to implement their changes.
- Harvey noted that Article 6 needed more discussion and the concepts/rationales within that Article to be further explained to the full ISB. The recommended "legal language" from ADS' legal team can be implemented with the concepts remaining intact. Once they are implemented fully by the Bylaws Committee we will re-send the final draft to the full ISB for a final two week review and approval by email vote..

## **III. Public Comment**

- Michael Fiorino explained that he continues to struggle with inconsistent Interpreter coverage for his medical appointments. He outlined his routine of calling to request an Interpreter well ahead of the appointment, then later calling the offices again to check to see that an interpreter is confirmed (he said he believes there is no standard or seamless protocol for confirming interpreters, in his experience).
- Harvey responded by emphasizing how the ISB proposed Bylaws (if approved) can address things like this, specifically the "Interpreting Services Provider Standards Committee", in addition to the "Grievance Committee".
- Nick responded with an idea: he encouraged Michael (and all consumers of Interpreting services) to ask their medical offices the name(s) of the Interpreting agency(ies) they contract with, then Nick offered to provide Michael with the contact information for our state's 3 most frequently used agencies. The goal would be to encourage consumers to then contact the corresponding Interpreting Agency so they can ask their important

questions directly to the agencies, then to request any changes or last minute cancellations be communicated directly to the consumer(s). This will help consumers develop a rapport with the agencies contracted to provide services for their appointments and a possible way for them to provide a list of “preferred” and/or “non-preffered” interpreters to help agencies make informed decisions when choosing interpreters.

- Luisa commented: Marielle Daniels is a former ADA Coordinator who once helped to support the former state Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired (CDHI). Luisa said she would like to loop in Marielle again to see if her services can be utilized to advocate for these types of needs.
- Morrison commented: Alvin and Morrison will be meeting with the Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) on May 14th to discuss these recurring issues. Kat Northup (from ASD Interpreting) will also be attending and they will update the ISB after that meeting.
- Alvin commented: He requested for the ISB to send a summary of discussion points that they would like Morrison, Alvin and Kat to bring up and address during that meeting.
- Cherry commented: She shared her experience when calling medical offices and noted how often their staff are unsure if an interpreter is confirmed or not. She said that Hartford Health Care (HHC) then provided her with their ADA Coordinator’s contact information. Cherry provided the contact info for 2 HHC ADA Coordinators shortly after the meeting concluded (shown below) and emphasized how much of a positive experience she had working with both of them.

Elizabeth Begley MS, RN, LNC, CPXP

Senior Director Customer & Patient Relations/Language Services

ADA/Civil Rights Coordinator - Hartford Health Care

Mobile: 860-214-6238

Office: 860-696-1246

Jessica Mancini, MPH

HHC Manager, Customer Relations

Phone: 860-696-1242

#### **IV. Selection of ISB Vice Chair**

- Harvey briefly discussed the role and responsibilities of the Vice Chair and asked if any ISB members would like to have an interest in becoming the Vice Chair. Belinda and Sue said each of them would be interested and volunteered to assume this role.

- Harvey politely asked both individuals to leave the room for 5 - 10 minutes so a discussion could take place with remaining ISB members before voting..
- After discussion, Voting was conducted via secret ballot. Votes collected and counted by both the ISB Chair and Secretary.
- Votes for Sue: 5, Votes for Belinda: 4.
- **Sue was elected as the ISB Vice Chair.**

## V. Bylaws Draft Proposal

- Each “Article” section was briefly summarized by Harvey.
- Harvey recommended that the ISB should clarify the duties of the Secretary and determine the best way to disseminate important information to the public and other ISB Board Members in a timely manner.
- Harvey highlighted a section that was added later in the Bylaws development process that takes into account the availability / lack of availability of Interpreters when choosing quarterly meeting dates.
- Nick summarized an anonymous comment shared to him by an interpreting colleague from the community: their comment was expressing frustration that they (and many others in the community) only received notice about the ISB’s Board Meeting open to the public just a few days ahead of the scheduled date, and how the ongoing quarterly meetings (which aim to be midday on Mondays) are right in the middle of the work day for most Interpreters. They expressed their wish to see a few dates and important meetings open to the public be scheduled on occasional dates and times when more people from the public could attend.
- Harvey and Morison responded and reminded the ISB that the members need to keep in mind the cost of interpreters that could impact the ability to host any additional meetings, which the current fiscal year’s budget does not account for and more funds cannot be allocated at this time (not until the next fiscal year or biennium). Additionally, Morrison reminded the ISB that the BESB office is closed on Fridays and in the evenings, which would make it hard to host meetings at a different time.
- Article 6. Harvey considered editing terminology: “Interpreting Settings Standards Committee” can be changed to “Interpreting Standards Committee” as it pertains to that section as “settings” is already covered in that section.
- Article 7. Harvey outlined the process of amending the bylaws and how this can happen during regular or special Board meetings as long as the process outlined in Article 7 is followed properly.

- Nick: reiterated a suggestion that has been brought“ up in past ISB meetings - For the establishment of different committees Nick recommended utilizing the list of names and resumes from individuals who originally applied to be members of the ISB (who were later not selected) and reach out to them to ask if they would be interested in joining one or more of the various ISB committees. Nick suggested it may be worth utilizing their wisdom and experiences, and how the ISB is already aware of their interest in these subjects, given their willingness to apply to the ISB in the first place. Nick asked Morrison if it would be permissible for the ISB to gain access to the list of ISB applicants and their resumes for the ISB’s consideration - Morrison said they will check with the state department’s legal team to see if this is an allowable option and they will follow up with the ISB upon the legal team’s response.
- Grievance Committee: Harvey asked if the board can contact the Connecticut Department for Consumer Protection to see if there is a formalized Grievance Procedure used within this state department that could be used as a framework for the ISB and adapted to suit the needs of Grievances submitted to the ISB.
- Nick: suggested the state of Connecticut create a state email account (@ct.gov) as the “general inbox” for the ISB, which can be managed by the ISB Executive Committee. Additionally, the ISB will need to create a storage account for important ISB related state documents (similar to Google Drive) possibly in the form of “Sharepoint” access granted by the corresponding ISB state email address. He added, the ISB Bylaws committee emphasized the importance of this account being tied to the state of Connecticut (for consistency and protection of information. Nick asked Morrison if we can utilize state access to create an “@ct.gov “ email account, Morrison said they will check with the state’s IT department to ask if it’s possible and will get back to us.
- ISB Bylaws Proposed Draft was preliminarily approved by the ISB board, pending the finalization of review by the ADS legal team.

**VI. Updates & Presentation Re: Connecticut State Interpreter Registry**

- Alvin Chege (Bureau Human services Advocate) reported that:
- He has been “cleaning up” the state’s Interpreter Registry database and created 3 separately categorized Interpreter Registry Lists: 1 in alphabetical order of Registered Interpreters’ last names, 1 in alphabetical order of states in which Registered Interpreters live, and 1 comprised ONLY of Registered Interpreters living in Connecticut with an additional column showing which county they live in.

- Total Registered Interpreters: 806 (by the date of the ISB Meeting)
- 45 additional registration applications completed, total registered will soon increase to 851
- 105 Connecticut Resident Interpreters (1 moved out of state, formerly 106)
- 5 Connecticut Resident CDIs (1 CDI moved out of state, formerly 6)
- 5 Out of state CDIs who work in Connecticut (1 moved to Wisconsin)
- Avlin sent out a survey to all interpreters on the State Registry List to gather more information, 50 responses received by the time of the ISB Meeting.
- Questions asked in the survey:
  - Are you hearing or Deaf?
  - Which county do you live in (not town name)?
  - What Interpreting Settings do you work in?
  - Do you have experience working with DeafBlind individuals?
  - Do you know any Sign Languages other than ASL?
- Survey Results:
  - Hartford County: 23
  - Tolland County: 1
  - Windham County: 1
  - New London County: 8
  - Middlesex County: 4
  - New Haven County: 6
  - Fairfield County: 2
  - Litchfield County: 2
- Interpreting Settings Question:
  - Medical: 40 - 23%
  - Legal: 14 - 8%
  - Education: 40 - 23%
  - Mental Health: 31 - 18%
  - Community: 46 - 27%
- Experience Interpreting for DeafBlind Individuals Question:
  - Yes: 39 - 78%
  - No: 11 - 22%
- Knowledge of Sign Languages other than ASL Question:
  - ProTactile: 4
  - PSE: 2
  - LSM (Mexican Sign Language): 1
  - Trilingual: 1
  - English: 1

## **VII. Sign Language Court Interpreting Collaborative (SLCIC) Update**

- Nick Dionne (President of CRID) briefly reported:
- The initial contact was made in January of 2026 from Michelle Klein (Commissioner of the Rhode Island Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing) inviting Connecticut organizations and stakeholders into the ongoing work of the “Collaborative”, which includes ALL New England states, in addition to New York.
- The goal is to create a pilot training program to increase the number of experienced legal interpreters in each state (ideally 8 - 4 hearing and 4 Deaf).
- Each state is being asked to look into their state’s financial resources to chip in a goal amount of \$30,000 for each state, which would fund the development of this training and to fund all 8 interpreters’ attendance from each state for the first cohort of the program.
- Representatives from CRID, CAD, ADS, and 2 of the 3 primary Interpreter Referral Agencies in Connecticut attended the Collaborative’s most recent online meeting (last month) and we realized how behind our state is in this process.
- The meeting organizer (Cat Dvar from Massachusetts) sent a follow up email to the Connecticut organizational representatives who attended the meeting - she provided (and CCd) the names and contact info for 3 representatives from the Connecticut Judicial Department who were previously in touch with the SLCIC: Roberta Palmer, Richard Loffredo, and Sandra LugoGines. The Connecticut Organizational representatives will need to set up a meeting with these 3 staff of the Connecticut Judicial Department to discuss next steps for our state’s involvement in the SLCIC and what financial resources our state may be able to tap into in order to collect the funding goal of \$30,000.

## **VIII. Meeting Wrap Up & Adjournment**

- Harvey wrapped up the end of the meeting by asking all ISB Board Members to consider their interest for the first three ISB committees in the works and to send their preferences to the ISB Chair and Secretary.
- When committees are fully established, the ISB members will be encouraged to conduct committee meetings (as needed) online, to offer convenience of meeting times (unless DeafBlind committee members need to meet in person, at the discretion of each committee).

\* Dr. Harvey Corson, Chair adjourned the meeting at 12:07pm \*