DDSC Meeting
Thursday, April 17, 2025
Evans Park Community Center
Attendance: 28

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by President Allen Talbert at 1:16pm.

Reading/Correction/Approval of Minutes from March 16, 2025
Dennise Scott (Keith Robertson) moved to approve the minutes of 3/20/25 as read. Approved.

Officers' Reports

President – Allen Talbert

a. Sorry for the last minute confusion when DDSC announced the change of meeting place. It will happen again on May 15th due to conflict with Town Hall plans.

b. DDSC officers election on May15th

c. Chairperson for DDSC Appreciation Day Picnic?

d. Chairperson for Labor Day Picnic?

e. Numbers of DDSC website viewers - Joseph Stanislow, Webmaster

f. Membership dues to South Bethany Chambers of Commerce?

g. Upcoming presentation - Ben Bahan, ASL Literature, Audism, Deaf Culture, Deaf Community, Deaf Identity, Story Teller on Thursday, May 8th at 1:00 pm

h. Cancer Screening Survey Interview (Gallaudet Public Health)

i. Any fundraising projects? Our own auction? Bethany Blue Restaurant?

j. Martha Sheridan, DDSC affiliate, serving on the Delaware Association of the Deaf (DAD) board will share updates

Vice President - Mark Alford

a. Bylaws- Change the number of meetings

Mark explained that the old bylaws mentioned 8 meetings per year. We voted during the last meeting to 12 meetings per year. So the bylaws changed to reflect the 12 meetings per year.

Secretary - Mary Ann Richmond

a. Edits made to the draft minutes for March 16, 2025 - Thanks to some members for their help.

b. Library books/ Photo Shoot at the Milton Public Library (Mary Ann Richmond and Martha Sheridan)

Martha Sheridan shared how we came up with this project. Milton Public Library sent an invitation to DDSC to participate in their children's book fair by sponsoring a booth. Martha proposed that instead of paying for a booth, we donate books for deaf children equal to the cost of the booth. That would be more worthwhile and contribute to access and literacy for deaf children. Martha met with the librarian. The librarian created a list of potential books they wanted DDSC to purchase. Martha asked Mary Ann to review the list because of her professional background in early childhood education. Mary Ann made some changes, including adding books written by Deaf authors. The library ordered and received the books, mostly geared for birth to age 5. When the books arrived, President Allen, Vice President Mark Alford, Secretary Mary Ann Richmond, and Martha

Sheridan went to the library for a photo shoot and to see the books. Martha created a press release. The release was sent to newspapers, libraries, schools, and posted on Facebook to reach parents of deaf children across the state. The books are on the shelf in the Milton Library, but are available by request through all Delaware libraries. These books focused on birth to five. Perhaps in the future, we can donate books geared to deaf children over age 5.

Jerald Cohen asked if the library accepts used books related to deafness. Martha indicated that Mark Alford asked the Milton Librarian that question during our visit, and the response was that it depended on the condition of the books and how recently they were published. Martha said that public libraries generally don't accept academic books published by universities, but university libraries do. She encouraged him to check with his local library and with Gallaudet.

Beth Benedict inquired if itinerant teachers of the deaf (TOD) are aware that such books are available now at the Milton library. Martha Sheridan said the press release is being sent to different places to inform them of the book collection, including DSD, Mindi Failing, and that the library sent the information to their network, which reaches all of the Delaware libraries and schools in the state.

c. National Academic Bowl at Gallaudet University April 17-21, 2025

Mary Ann Richmond wanted the DDSC members to be aware that the Delaware School for the Deaf academic bowl team is competing now at the Gallaudet University National Academic Bowl. She encouraged the members to follow this event via Gallaudet University Youth Programs link. Beth Benedict mentioned that there are 16 teams competing, four teams from four different regions. Delaware School for the Deaf team came in fourth during the regional competition last month.

Treasurer - Paul Haring (absentee) Mike Childs, Auditor

March 2025 Treasurer Report and 2025 PB Report

Mike Childs was asked to take our treasurer Paul Haring's place to share the treasurer report for March.

The March 2025 treasurer report was audited by Mike Childs and Jeff Leach.

Beth Benedict (Fred Hartman) moved to approve the treasurer report for March 2025. Passed.

Standing/Special Committee's Report

Pickleball at the Beach Tournament- Asst. Chairperson Rosemary Balzer

Rosemary Balzer had created a flyer for this event. Scott McIndoe will help us with choosing which software to use. There are 12 courts at the tournament site across the Clayton Elementary school. She asked the committee members who were in the attendance to stand up.
Committee members: Dave Staehle Chair, Rosemary Balzer Assistant Chair, Eric Beer, Billy Bowman, Paul Haring, Jeff Leach, Louis Lapides, Scott McIndoe, Mary Ann Richmond, Shahryr Shilati, Barbara and Richard Simpson and Lou Volpinesta
The committee will start sending out announcements in May with more details. This tournament will accept up to 100 players.

DDSC Officers Nomination- Chairperson Sherry Duhon (absentee)
Beth Benedict shared what Sherry Duhon wanted to tell us.
Potential candidates for these offices:
President - Dave Staehle
Vice President- ?
Secretary - Mary Ann Richmond
Treasurer - Paul Haring

Presentation Planning- Workshop Chairperson Billy Bowman

Billy Bowman has Fred Hartman and Martha Sheridan serving on his committee. Our first presentation will be on May 8th. He is very excited to have Dr. Ben Bahan. Dr. Ben Bahan requested a few of his students to attend his presentation. He waived the honorarium. Billy Bowman wants to invite Deaf Independent Living Association (DILA), DSD students and mainstreamed deaf and hard of hearing students.
Beth Benedict asked Billy Bowman to invite the Hands and Voices parent organization to come to Ben Bahan's presentation.

The next workshop may be scheduled in June or July. It will be about estate planning. Stephen Hlibok is the presenter.

Since we have 12 meetings a year, we can provide workshops more often. He has 12-15 potential topics. He will send out and use Monkey survey to assist his committee to prioritize which topics to cover in order.

Billy Bowman mentioned that DDSC does not have the designated funding in place to help us to plan for future presentations that cost money.

Billy Bowman shared his situation dealing with defective smoke detectors. He eventually contacted his local fire department and had the Chief to assist him in finding which smoke detectors were defective.
The Chief offered to do an annual inspection for the deaf residents in Millville.
Billy Bowman will talk with the DDSC board to address this issue because not all of us live in Millville.

Delaware Association of the Deaf (DAD) Affiliate Representative
Martha Sheridan (DDSC Affiliate Representative) and Keith Robertson (DAD Vice President)

Martha Sheridan reported that the DDSC Affiliate Representative is a new position on the DAD board. The DDSC board asked her to serve in this role. The position involves sharing information from DDSC at the DAD board meetings, bringing information from DAD to DDSC, and working on collaborative projects. She has been sharing information from DDSC with DAD. Board members Keith Robertson, DAD Vice President, and Billy Bowman, DAD Past President, have a long history with DAD and have been great about sharing important DAD information with DDSC. She, Keith Robertson, and Billy Bowman will work together on sharing information at DDSC meetings.

Martha Sheridan said that DDSC meets monthly, but DAD meets quarterly. She asked that DDSC be sure to put DAD on the agenda for quarterly reports.

She reported that DSD has several employment opportunities for teachers, interpreters, and a school psychologist.

Keith Robertson has been heavily involved in HB53 and other DAD projects. She asked Keith Robertson to share updates on HB53, Funding for the Deaf mentor program, an interpreting bill, and the DAD bylaws.

DAD Vice President Keith Robertson informed us that there is nothing in the DAD bylaws indicating statewide meetings have to be done in May. We will have the statewide meeting in the fall.

-HB53: Equipment Distribution Program (EDP) passed the House and is awaiting a Senate vote. Likely to pass the Senate. If passed, the program will be housed in ODHH and will provide funding for an EDP coordinator position.

President Feta Fernsler reported on the FDA approved over-the-counter generic hearing aids for people 18 and over with mild to moderate air

conduction hearing loss. He clarified they are only for this type of hearing loss, are available without a prescription, and are not customized for people with severe or profound hearing loss.

Equipment: Visual alerting system for carbon monoxide and baby crier, hearing aids for people with mild hearing difference (similar to those sold at drug stores). They are just the examples of devices that will be provided. When a new installed coordinator writes up a guideline or policy covering all the adaptive assistive equipment available to our community for safety purposes. Due to limited funding, there will be a cap or a limit on spending and distributing the adaptive assistive equipment on a quarterly basis or annual basis.
All this will be spelled out in a policy or guideline for ODHH to follow after HB53 becomes a law.

-Deaf Mentor program (DMP)
DAD Vice President Keith Robertson informed us that the funds for Deaf Mentor program have depleted. Deaf Mentor Program funding may be paused due to upcoming state legislative elections.
There are about 20 Deaf mentors working for the DMP in the state of Delaware. He believes he is the only Deaf mentor working in Sussex County.

-Interpreter Bill
Putting it back on the table at DAD for discussion to consider reintroduction.
DAD Vice President Keith Robertson mentioned there is a DAD committee working on the interpreting bill. This DAD will revisit this bill with a new committee for further discussion on this. We had an interpreter bill that fell through several years ago. Now DAD has a new committee working on this bill.
Billy Bowman shared the background of the Delaware interpreter bill that was written in the past. The DAD had a committee who wrote the bill.

The Department of Disability wrote a separate bill. The biggest problem they had, there were people serving on the committee who had vested interest in interpreting business. That bill doesn't need to be supportive of the interpreting business and interpreters. The bill did not go through. The new committee members should not have vested/conflict of interest. The old interpreter bill is still good, only needs some minor changes.

-DAD Bylaws
DAD VP Keith Robertson plans to have a law committee to go over the Bylaws for any edits or amendments or changes. He is hoping to have a zoom meeting sometime in May ahead of the statewide meeting in the fall. In the past, we normally had a statewide meeting in spring every two years. The last two meetings were held in the fall for two consecutive years. There is no language in the Bylaws that requires us to host a statewide meeting in spring exclusively.
The recent changes to the DAD bylaws were to reflect all wordings “DEAF” to “D/deaf”.

DSD has several positions open for teachers, interpreters, and a school psychologist.

Billy Bowman thanked Martha Sheridan for her work as our representative serving on the DAD board.

Webmaster- Joseph Stanislow
President Allen asked our webmaster Joseph Stanislow to share the statistics and numbers of DDSC website viewers using a powerpoint presentation. (See appendix A)
Joseph Stanislow shared the data collected based on the viewing of the DDSC website during this period, April 2024 to April 2025. The Blue Host runs the DDSC website. The highest number of the viewers were during the months of August, September and January. The possible reason why we had more viewers in August and September is due to the DDSC Pickleball Tournament. There were foreign viewers, from different countries. We have plenty of storage to feed our meeting agenda,

minutes, treasurer's reports and more. We only used 2% of our allotted storage space.

Billy Bowman informed us that the Guidestar is the important publication for 501(c)3 organizations to help them to get potential donations from companies. January tends to be the month the companies are looking for non-profit companies to donate money.

Barbara Stanislow suggested for DDSC president and secretary to have their business signature with details including the DDSC email, FB page and website.

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

a. Chairperson for Appreciation Day Picnic

Billy Bowman volunteered to be the chair of the Appreciation Day Picnic
It will be on June 5th at the John West Park.

b. Chairperson for Labor Day Picnic (hold until next month)

c. Chamber of Commerce

Barbara Stanislow (Dennise Scott) moved for us to renew our membership with CC. Barbara (Dennise) moved to withdraw her motion.

Beth Benedict (Jerry Buyas) moved for us not to renew our membership with CC. Passed.

Announcements

Cancer Screening Survey Interview (Gallaudet Public Health) Beth Benedict

They are looking for people who have not been screened for cancer for the last two years. They will send Beth a flyer. DDSC will share the flyer via email. If some of us want to be involved they can contact Gallaudet Public Health.

Potential Deaf Night Out (DNO) and Lewes Walking Tour in October
Eddie Burchette shared information about an event in Lewes that he wanted to host a DNO in October. He contacted to see if they can organize an interpreted walking tour in Lewes in October when they have the Lewes Legends Walking Tour during that month. We can have the DNO prior to the walking tour then we join the Walking Tour. This walking tour will share about the beginnings/ history of Lewes. We can have up to 40 people. They are willing to get interpreters for us. It will be $15 per person. He wanted to know which day in October would be good. Oct 2nd?? Since we have the DDSC 10th Anniversary Dinner on October 16th. Billy Bowman, the chair of DNO, asked Eddie to talk with him, and he will help him to make the announcement via WhatsApp DNO group sharing the information for the place for the DNO and the walking tour.

Billy Bowman (MikeChilds) moved to adjourn the meeting.. The meeting adjourned at 3:21 pm.

50/50 Raffle winner: Fred Hartman $28. He donated his winnings to the DDSC.