

NEW YORK DENTAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION

Mission

- Supports the *advancement of the art and science of dental hygiene* in order to ensure access to and delivery of quality preventive and therapeutic oral health care services to all New Yorkers in a cost-effective manner.
- Through education and outreach to the public, strives to increase awareness of the benefits of preventive dental hygiene services.
- Promotes the highest standards of dental hygiene education, licensure, practice and research
- Seeks to integrate dental hygiene as a component of interdisciplinary health care to improve the public's total health

Board of Directors Meeting

SATURDAY, APRIL 18, 2026 – 9 a.m.

Virtual Meeting

Welcome, introductions and board procedures

President Belangie Perez Torres called the meeting to order at 9:01am and briefly reviewed meeting policies and procedures. Board members shared personal stories of how we are advocating as NYDHA members and high functioning board members.

Roll call

Board:

President	Belangie Perez Torres	Present
President-Elect	Audra Haynes	Excused
VP Govt Affairs	Donna Hickey	Present
VP Mem. Dv. & Engt.	Shaquantia Wyche	Present
VP Prof Dev	Janine Love	Present
Treasurer	Jeff McMinn	Present
Secretary	Jen Baker	Present
Immediate Past Pres	Marlyce James	Present

Directors:

NYC	Vermell Ford	Present
Westchester/Mid-Hudson	Kristin Hofer	Present
Adiron. /Cap. Region	Jeff McMinn	Present
Central Region	Tiffany Kerns	Present
Rochester/Finger Lakes	Bridget Turkington	Present
Buffalo	Melisa Devaney	Present
Long Island	Jean Hall	Present
Executive Director	Beth Krueger	Present

Additional Attendees

Guests	Harold Jennings, Elizabeth Simpson, Allison Mancari, Doris Stockton, Robin Grasso
--------	---

Review of and action on agenda

Jean Hall made a motion to approve today's agenda (**Motion 4-18-26,1**) and Tiffany Kerns seconded. With no discussion, the board voted to approve today's meeting agenda.

Review of and action on January 10, 2026 board minutes

Donna Hickey made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26,2**) to approve last meeting's board minutes and Jean Hall seconded. With no discussion, the board voted to approve last meetings minutes.

Financial reports

a. 2026 financial report

Treasurer Jeff McMinn reviewed trends seen in our most recent financial statements; at this point in the year, overall, our income is higher than the previous year, and expenses have decreased. More student dues were received during the first quarter, and conference expenses are less when compared to first quarter last year.

Treasurer McMinn also discussed the decrease in sponsorship dollars due to the ending of our agreement with onDiem. Right now, we are in particular need of

sponsorship dollars as our Empire Conference approaches. President Perez Torres proposed the idea of nonprofit sponsors paying a lower fee to participate in our Empire Conference. Donna Hickey made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26,3**) to accept Jeff's report and Jean Hall seconded. With no discussion, the board voted to accept Jeff's report.

President's report

President Perez Torres discussed how our agreement with OnDiem is coming to an end, and we will no longer have an exclusive relationship with them in terms of partnerships with job placement agencies. OnDiem also had provided us with a significant monetary sponsorship as reflected in our budget, which will now be lost due to the ending of our agreement. The group discussed possible new sponsors for the upcoming Empire Conference.

President Perez Torres has been sharing our mission statement through various in-state and out-of-state events, and speaking to governmental leaders about our pending legislative efforts.

Annual Session/Empire Conference

a. Planning –Belangie Perez Torres, Robin Grasso, Jean Hall, Beth Krueger

i. Courses: As of now, there are only three speaker slots remaining. We will have a fully sponsored hands-on laser course this year. Robin Grasso is still securing and scheduling the final speaker slots. Board member Kristin Hofer will be doing a continuing education course on PTSD, and other topics include autoimmune diseases and saliva as an indicator of oral-systemic health.

ii. Engagement and social events: This year we are workshopping a plenary opening event on Friday instead of going immediately into our course schedule. Long Island will be sponsoring the President's Dinner this year, which is planning a new event this year similar to a murder mystery in a custom show created for us. President Perez Torres discussed a possible event for board members the night before conference begins.

iii. Exhibits and sponsorships: Robin Grasso is continuing to obtain exhibitors and sponsorships for this year's conference, and the idea was discussed to have nonprofit sponsors possibly pay less than corporate participants for our exhibit hall, and perhaps have RDHs exhibit their non-dental businesses.

iv. Strategies for promotion and attracting attendance: President Perez Torres encouraged the board to “talk up” details as soon as they become public, and share social media posts.

Component structure and organization update

a. Governance and operation survey

NYDHA leadership has participated in an operation survey recently sent by ADHA, and last week NYDHA component presidents were sent a survey for completion by May 7.

b. Strategies: Increasing engagement

President Perez Torres emphasized the importance of engagement and local component resources. She asked for ideas on how we can increase engagement from the component point of view. Component presidents highlighted what their components are working on, events being planned and engagement efforts. More details can be found in component reports included following these minutes.

2026 initiatives and committee engagement

a. Membership engagement and development – report of Shaquantia Wyche

i. Current statistics and the renewal report were reviewed.

ii. New member outreach

Outreach to prospective members was discussed. There also will be a national ADHA membership campaign April 15th – May 14th. There is a member benefits PDF available for dissemination. We are rebranding our membership outreach in terms of emphasizing “protecting your profession.”

Three potential taglines:

1. Protect your Profession. Join NYDHA today.
2. Your license. Your Livelihood. Your responsibility.
3. If it matters to you, it needs your voice. Advocacy doesn’t happen without you.

Jean Hall made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26,4**) to accept Tia’s report and Donna Hickey seconded. The board asked clarification questions of Tia, and then voted to approve Tia’s report.

b. Professional development – report of Janine Love

i. Town Hall

NYDHA held a virtual “town hall meeting” Sunday April 12th, there were over 100 registrants and 57 attendees. It was an informational session on NYDHA initiatives including advocacy, with updates on new collaborative practice law, and the importance of NYDHA.

ii. Committee meetings and other plan

The professional development committee is going to be focusing on spotlighting ADHA CE courses relevant to NYS RDHs and creating a subcommittee on the collaborative practice update.

iii. Leadership development

The committee will be creating a local component template with leadership information for prospective leaders.

Donna Hickey made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26,5**) to accept VP of Professional Development Janine Love’s report, and Tiffany Kerns seconded. The board voted to approve with no further discussion.

c. Governmental affairs and public policy – report of Donna Hickey

i. NYDHA advocacy

The updated collaborative practice law will go into effect June 2027 and regulations are being prepared by the Office of the Professions along with the state board. The state board created a committee on Collaborative Practice chaired by Maureen Hankin. Executive Director Beth Kruger, VP of Governmental Affairs Donna Hickey and Karen Palleschii are serving on this committee on behalf of NYDHA. Resources and communications will be developed as the time for the law to come into effect approaches.

Block anesthesia is our priority legislative item for this session. It is currently in the Ways & Means committee in the Assembly and Higher Education Committee in the Senate.

NYDHA is supporting dental therapy, but has contacted the NYS bill sponsors to urge changes to update the language of the legislation to include CODA and other developments. NYDHA continues to express opposition to proposal seen in other states that would create oral preventive assistants or similar positions to

do scaling and related functions without the extent of education of an RDH, as well as proposals to create alternative pathways for foreign-trained dentists to become hygienists. There is currently no legislation in NYS for these proposals.

NYDHA continues to be invited to be at the table for organizations promoting access to oral health, including the NYS Oral Health Coalition and the NYS Partnership for Dental Therapy. The NYS Dental Association House of Delegates is coming up in June, which VP Donna Hickey will be attending at their invitation.

ii. Advocacy educational programs: VP Hickey continues to present a CE on advocacy at components and schools. She will present Current Issues at the Empire Conference.

Janine Love made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26,6**) to accept Donna's report and Jean Hall seconded. With no discussion, the board voted to accept Donna's report.

d. Social media/technology – report of Tiffany Kerns

The social media/technology committee has started a "Meet your NYDHA Board" project and is continuing to repost ADHA posts, develop NYDHA posts, publicize our legislative agenda. Our post on the governor's initiative for the expansion of access to preventative health care services for children garnered the most views, over four thousand. Upcoming posts will detail the Empire Conference, student awards, and a call for nominations for NYDHA awards.

Janine Love made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26, 7**) to accept Tiffany's report, and Donna Hickey seconded. With no further discussion, the board voted to approve.

e. Workforce Issues – report of Shaquantia Wyche

The new ADHA strategic plan does address workforce issues, which the committee will be using in conjunction with our previous workforce survey results to create a toolkit. Further information on NYS in particular is needed before the toolkit is developed; hopefully a preliminary toolkit will be available by Empire Conference.

Donna Hickey made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26, 8**) to accept Tia's report, and Janine Love seconded. With no further discussion, the board voted to approve.

ADHA matters

a. Governance – annual member meeting, governance structure, policies: Instead of the previous delegation structure of a House of Delegates, now proposals and testimonies will be accepted year-round. States, including NYDHA, will no longer have to elect delegates to ADHA. The new ADHA strategic plan details are posted on ADHA website and are being discussed in ADHA events and publications.

b. ADHA conference: The ADHA conference will be held in Fort Worth, Texas Sept 26-28, 2026. Registration will be opening soon, with early bird pricing ending in August.

Submission of component reports and report highlights

There was no unfinished or new business today.

Adjournment

Marlyce James made a motion (**Motion 4-18-26, 9**) to adjourn the meeting, and Tia Wyche seconded. With no discussion, the board voted to adjourn at 12:30pm.

CRDHA Report

We have been engaging with members thru social media and newsletters. We have Donna Hickey coming to Binghamton for a CE. We are hoping to have another event in the fall in the Syracuse area.

Tiffany Kerns

New York Dental Hygienists' Association Central Region Component Director