



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2025
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present:

Lee Blinder, Chair
M Pease, Vice Chair
Ali K.C. Bell
Joan Bryan
Josie Caballero
Mickey Dhir
Kurt Doan
Debb Dunn
Anthony Fox
Nicole Hollywood

Tina Jones
Asher Kennedy
Stephen Martin
Paula Neira
Wendy Novak
Brandon Russell
Sarah Stern
Joe Toolan
Kijana West
Ly Xīnzhèn Zhǎngsūn

Staff Present:

Jeremy Browning, Director, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs
Taylor Harer, Special Assistant, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs
Krystal Quinlan, Assistant Attorney General

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to Order by Chair Blinder at 6:03 PM. Housekeeping and Meeting Guidelines were read and acknowledged. Additionally, meeting attendees were reminded to add their pronouns to their Zoom names and instructions were provided.
- II. Roll Call: Roll call was conducted by Chair Blinder and they provided a review of the voting procedures using the Zoom reaction functions to indicate vote (green "check" to indicate "yea" and the red "X" to indicate "nay" and no action to abstain).
- III. Agenda Approval: Chair Blinder presented the agenda for the meeting. Commissioner Jones made a motion to approve the agenda, which was seconded by Commissioner Doan. The agenda was approved, with an abstention from Commissioner Bell.
- IV. Chair Report: Chair Blinder acknowledged the unprecedented challenges facing the community due to the incoming administration. They expressed awareness of the concerns shared by community members, loved ones, and leadership. They emphasized the importance of relying on the ways in which the community has

historically supported one another, highlighting the need for empathy, connection, and strategizing during this stressful time. They urged everyone to reach out to one another, particularly if they don't know each other well, and to ensure self-care amidst the broader societal strain. They commended the Commission for their vital work in the community and expressed gratitude for the positive change being pursued and acknowledged the hard work required to achieve it.

- V. Director Report: Director Browning reviewed the Senate Confirmations process, and updates were shared regarding the 2024 Financial Disclosures. It was noted that a Doodle poll will be sent out to facilitate scheduling for the upcoming Strategic Planning Retreat. Committee assignments were also addressed, and the Commissioners were reminded of the 2025 Commission Calendar. The next Commission meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2025. Lastly, a review of the Commission mandates was provided.
- VI. Approval - Previous Meeting Minutes: Chair Blinder presented the minutes from the Commission's December 2, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Fox made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, and Commissioner Bryan seconded the motion. The floor was opened for discussion with no additional commentary. The minutes were approved with abstentions from Commissioners Martin and Bell.
- VII. Discussion and Approval - iConsultancy, University of Maryland Report: Director Browning provided an overview of the report and a brief discussion followed. Commissioner Hollywood made a motion to approve the report pending minor edits and corrections and was seconded by Commissioner Doan. The motion was approved, with an abstention from Commissioner Zhāngsūn.
- VIII. Vice Chair Report: Vice Chair Pease expressed deep gratitude for being part of the Commission, acknowledging the challenging moment the community is facing. They thanked everyone for volunteering their time, expertise, and compassion to improve the circumstances for those experiencing intersectional marginalization. They highlighted the upcoming release of reports from the 2023 Maryland Trans Survey, which will provide data on the needs of the transgender community in Maryland and inform policy decisions. They emphasized the importance of not only interpersonal care but also structural change to create a world where the community can thrive, rather than just exist. They also encouraged everyone to take care of themselves and each other, finding moments of gentleness and connection to sustain the work ahead.
- IX. Discussion and Approval - Post Election Community Insights Report: Vice Chair Pease provided an overview of the report. Commissioner Hollywood made the motion to approve the report pending minor edits and corrections and was seconded by Commissioner Novak. The motion passed with all in favor.
- X. Discussion - 2025 Legislative Policy Priorities: Policy Chair Caballero provided an overview of the 2025 Legislative Policy Priorities and shared updates from the policy committee. Policy Chair Caballero made a motion to approve the updates to the 2025 Legislative Policy Priorities and was seconded by Commissioner Kennedy. The motion was approved, with an abstention from Commissioner Zhāngsūn.
- XI. Discussion - National Defense Authorization Act Statement: An overview of the statement was provided by Commissioner Caballero. Following a brief discussion Commissioner Neira made a motion to approve the statement and was seconded by Commissioner Fox. The motion passed with abstentions from Commissioners Dhir and Zhāngsūn.

- XII. Discussion - Know Your Rights Event with the Baltimore City LGBTQ+ Commission: Chair Blinder introduced the potential for a "Know Your Rights" event with the Baltimore City LGBTQ+ Commission.
- XIII. Open Forum for General Remarks or Comments: Commissioners and staff provided various updates on events and activities.
- XIV. Closing Remarks: Chair Blinder expressed deep appreciation for the time, energy, love, and attention everyone is dedicating to their work and the well-being of the communities they serve. They acknowledged the impact of these efforts and mentioned several initiatives being supported for the 20th, hoping that whatever actions are taken on that day bring comfort, empowerment, engagement, and connection. They encouraged the group to seek the support they need from those they work with and from their broader communities

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Special Assistant, Taylor Harer