



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Meeting Minutes

November 13 2023

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present:

Joe Toolan, Chair
Debb Dunn, Vice Chair
Nicholas Augustine
Lee Blinder
Joan Bryan
Josie Caballero
August Clayton
Mickey Dhir
Kurt Doan

Anthony Fox
Nicole Hollywood
Tina Jones
Asher Kennedy
Jabari Lyles
Stephen Martin
Paula Neira
Wendy Novak
M Pease
Mark Ridderhoff

Commissioners Absent:

Sarah Stern
Kijana West

Staff Present:

Jeremy Browning, Director, Maryland Commission on LGBTQ Affairs, GOCI

- I. Meeting was called to Order by Chair Toolan at 6:01 PM. Director Browning gave a welcome on behalf of the Governor's Office and expressed gratitude to all new and reappointed members. Chair Toolan reviewed meeting housekeeping and meeting guidelines and encouraged new members to provide feedback and suggest additions to the meeting guidelines.
- II. Chair Toolan completed the roll call and combined with welcome and introductions. Commissioners shared their name, pronouns and affiliations.
- III. Opening Remarks: Chair Toolan thanked everyone for joining and welcomed new members. Chair Toolan reflected on his time as Chair, reviewed the accomplishments of the Commission, and announced that he would not be running for Chair in 2024. Additionally, Chair Toolan acknowledged committee work and participation in October LGBTQIA+ History Month activities.

- IV. Opening Remarks: Vice Chair Dunn reflected on her time as Vice Chair, acknowledged the progress the Commission has made, and announced that she would not be running for Chair or Vice Chair in 2024. Vice Chair Dunn shared that she has been working with the Maryland Department of Health on implementation of the Trans Health Equity Act. Additionally, Vice Chair Dunn shared that she has been working with the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Corrections medical staff to ensure they have training and cultural humility to support transgender folks in care of the State.
- V. Administrative updates were provided by Director Browning. Updates included:
- A. A confidential commissioner contact list will be updated and shared with all commissioners.
 - B. The Commission is a public body and subject to the Maryland Open Meetings Act.
 - C. A review of the legislation that created and altered the Commission, HB130 and HB141 respectively.
 - D. The Bylaws were shared in advance of the meeting and noted that amendments require a 30 day advance notice to the full Commission before a vote to amend can be conducted.
 - E. Commissioners were notified that they would need to complete 2023 financial disclosures in the new year.
 - F. On-boarding of new commissioners will be scheduled.
 - G. Reviewed the Commission mandates established in the legislation.
- VI. Approval of September 11, 2023 meeting minutes. Vice Chair Dunn made the motion to approve the September meeting minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Ridderhoff. Motion carried with 10 members in favor. Nine members abstained (Commissioners: Fox, Neira, Caballero, Kennedy, Hollywood, Pease, Clayton, Jones, and Novak).
- VII. Old Business:
- A. Director Browning provided an update on the progress of the 2023 Annual Report and requested all commissioner bios, headshots, along with recommendations, best practices, data, and information for the report to be provided by December 1, 2023. Goal is to have the annual report published prior to the beginning of the legislative session on January 10, 2024.
 - B. Website updates are ongoing and commissioners will be notified when there will be another website workgroup meeting to discuss future website updates.
- VIII. New Business:
- A. 2024 Meeting Dates: Commissioner Augustine made the motion to approve the 2024 meeting schedule as presented below and was seconded by Commissioner Fox. Motion carried with all in favor.
The Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs will meet every other month starting in January on the second Monday from 6-8pm via Zoom.
 - January 8, 2024
 - March 11, 2024
 - May 13, 2024
 - July 8, 2024
 - September 9, 2024
 - November 4, 2024*
(*November 11, 2024 is Veterans Day)

- B. 2024 Policy Priorities, Recommendations and Best Practices: Commissioner Blinder gave an overview and provided background of the 2024 Policy Priority document that was voted unanimously by the Policy Committee for review and adoption by the full commission. Commissioner Doan made the motion to approve the 2024 Policy Priority document and was seconded by Commissioner Jones. Motion carried with all in favor.
- C. 2024 Chair and Vice Chair Elections:
 - 1. Chair: Commissioner Blinder ran for 2024 Chair unopposed. Commissioner Blinder shared their background, experience and vision for the role. Chair Toolan called for the vote to approve Commissioner Blinder. Commissioner Blinder was elected as Chair for 2024 with all in favor.
 - 2. Vice Chair: Commissioner West expressed her desire to be considered as Vice Chair in advance of the meeting, but was not able to attend the meeting. Commissioner West ran for 2024 Vice Chair unopposed. Chair Toolan read Commissioner West's bio and called for the vote to approve Commissioner West. Commissioner West was elected Vice Chair for 2024 with 11 members in favor and eight abstentions (Commissioners: Lyles, Doan, Ridderhoff, Dhir, Neira, Caballero, Jones, and Novak). Following the vote there was a discussion on why there were so many abstentions. Chair Toolan speculated that the high number of abstentions was likely because many folks had not had a chance to meet Commissioner Wes. Additionally, Chair Toolan noted that Commissioner West had hoped to attend, but was unable due to a loss in the family. Correction: Director Browning incorrectly stated during the meeting that the vote was 10 in favor and eight abstentions. The accurate vote results were stated above.

- IX. Open forum for general remarks or comments: Time allowed commissioners the opportunity to share more about their backgrounds and connections to the work. Chair Toolan facilitated the discussion and also encouraged commissioners to share their favorite fall beverage.

- X. Closing Remarks: Chair Toolan reflected again on the progress made and expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve as Chair for the last two years.

- XI. Adjournment: A motion was made by Commissioner Fox to adjourn the meeting and seconded by Commissioner Doan. Motion carried with all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:54pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Director, Jeremy Browning