



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2024

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Zoom Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present:

Lee Blinder, Chair
Kijana West, Vice Chair
Joan Bryan
Josie Caballero
August Clayton
Mickey Dhir
Kurt Doan
Debb Dunn
Anthony Fox

Nicole Hollywood
Tina Jones
Jabari Lyles
Paula Neira
Wendy Novak
M Pease
Mark Ridderhoff
Sarah Stern
Joe Toolan

Commissioners Absent:

Nicholas Augustine
Asher Kennedy
Stephen Martin

GOCI Staff Present:

Jeremy Browning, Director, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Guests Present:

Krystal Quinlan, Office of Attorney General

- I. Call to Order: 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: Director Browning completed the roll call at request of the Chair.

- III. Agenda Approval: Vice Chair West made a motion to approve the agenda as presented and was seconded by Commissioner Caballero. Motion carried with all members in favor.
- IV. Opening Remarks: Chair Blinder noted that this has been an especially stressful time for our community with attacks in legislation and violence across the country. Chair Blinder acknowledged the impact of the tragic deaths of transgender community members including Nex Benedict in Oklahoma, Torrence Chevy Hill from Georgia, and Ash Clatterbuck from Pennsylvania. Additionally, Chair Blinder shared that the Maryland Trans Survey data will be coming out soon, the 2022 U.S. Trans Survey Early Insights Report is out now, and reviewed upcoming events for Transgender Day of Visibility.
- V. Administrative updates were provided by Director Browning. Updates included:
 - A. 2023 Financial Disclosures: Commissioners were reminded to complete financial disclosures.
 - B. 2023 Annual Report updates: The report is nearly complete and will wait to include the findings from the Maryland Trans Survey with hopes to publish by the end of March.
 - C. Bylaws Workgroup: The workgroup was not able to meet due to the legislative session and will attempt to meet following session.
 - D. 2024 Commission Calendar: Has been updated with Pride events around the State and commissioners were asked to continue to help keep updated.
 - E. Citation/Proclamation Requests: Commissioners were reminded to submit requests at least 45 days prior to the date needed.
 - F. Commission Email List Sign-up Form: Commissioners were encouraged to share the email sign-up form and it was noted that a process for review and approval of content needs to be determined.
 - G. Resource Collection Form: Commissioners were reminded to share the form within their networks.
 - H. GOCI Legislative Night: Commissioners were reminded of the event to be held on March 12 from 6-8pm at the Maryland Treasury Building in Annapolis.
 - I. Next Commission Meeting: May 13, 2024
 - J. Review of Commission mandates: Commissioners were reminded of the Commission mandates and highlights were provided.
- VI. Approval of January 8, 2024 meeting Minutes: Following a discussion, edits were made to Section IX. New Business, Sub-Section E: Director Pay Equity to clarify what transpired. Commissioner Fox made a motion to approve the amended minutes and was seconded by Commissioner Bryan. Motion carried with one abstention from Commissioner Lyles.
- VII. Approval of Director Pay Equity: Motion prepared by the Policy Committee: Recommend the Commission officially request on Commission letterhead that we approve of Director Browning increase in pay grade pursuant to the Maryland Equal Pay for Equal Work Labor and Employment Article Title 3 Subtitle 3. Commissioner Caballero gave an overview of the agendized recommended motion from the Policy Committee to address director pay equity. A discussion ensued on what the motion means and it was noted that a favorable vote on the motion would result in the

Commission requesting pay equity for the director. Additional non sequitur discussion led to a request for training for the Commission on parliamentary procedures. Motion carried with all members in favor.

- VIII. Discussion: Joint action/statement calling attention to anti-LGBTQIA+ violence and loss of Nex Benedict: Chair Blinder gave an overview of a joint letter, provided in advance, as action the Commission can take. A brief discussion ensued about the letter, authority of the Commission, and other actions the Commission could take. Commissioner Pease made a motion for the Commission to sign-on to the joint letter presented and was seconded by Commissioner Ridderhoff. Motion carried with one abstention from Commissioner Fox who had to leave the meeting early. Following the vote, Chair Blinder assigned the Youth & Education Committee to draft a statement on behalf of the Commission to address violence and discrimination of LGBTQIA+ youth.
- IX. Discussion: Two Spirit and Queer Indigenous Inclusion: The Commission had a brief discussion on how to create an inclusive space that honors Two Spirit and queer Indigenous community members. The Commission discussed potential partnerships and the need to establish a workgroup focused on Two Spirit and queer Indigenous inclusion.
- X. Discussion: LGBTQIA+ Symposium for State Agencies in Fall 2024: Policy Chair, Caballero gave an overview of the idea of the LGBTQIA+ Symposium which would involve all commissioners. The Commission would invite State agency representatives to come and learn about challenges facing LGBTQIA+ communities and recommendations for inclusion. It was suggested to involve the chairs of other committees involved in the conceptualization and planning of a symposium. Commissioner Caballero made a motion for the Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs to move forward to plan and produce the LGBTQIA+ Symposium. Motion carried with one abstention from Commissioner Fox.
- XI. Review: 2024 Legislative Amendment Policy: Director Browning gave an overview of the priority bills and hearings and reminded commissioners they can view the bill tracking document online. It was noted that there are more anti-trans and anti-LGBTQIA+ bills this year than any other year.
- XII. Discussion: Draft Legislative Amendment Policy: The Draft Legislative Amendment Policy was presented by the Policy Committee to the Commission for review and feedback. The purpose is to operationalize how the Commission considers and approves amendments that are favorable or unfavorable. Commissioners were encouraged to review the draft and provide feedback.
- XIII. Open Forum for General Remarks or Comments:
- A. Commissioner Lyles shared that they are coordinating Baltimore Trans Pride which will be held on June 29, 2024.
 - B. Commissioner Stern shared that American LifeLines will be hosting their Annual HIV Prevention Round Dance on March 30, 2024 at Baltimore Center Stage.
 - C. Director Browning expressed gratitude to commissioners for their dedication, time, and hard work to support the Commission and the State of Maryland.
 - D. Chair Blinder thanked Director Browning for his service, focus on equity, and making this work about caring for one another. Additionally, Chair Blinder thanked commissioners for their efforts and looks forward to meeting with all members one-on-one.

- E. Commissioner Toolan noted that Annapolis Pride will be held on June 1, 2024 and the theme launch will be held on the evening of April 25, 2024. Additionally, Annapolis Pride will host a panel focused on queer and trans People of Color on June 6, 2024. .
 - F. Commissioner Doan share that Upper Chesapeake Bay Pride will be held on October
- XIV. Closing Remarks: Chair Blinder shared that it is a pleasure to work with the Commission, Director Browning, and acknowledged that this work is not easy, but is made easier with dedicated and brilliant folks.
- XV. Adjournment: Chair Blinder adjourned the meeting at 7:57pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Director, Jeremy Browning