**Maryland Commission on Disabilities**

Meeting Minutes –June 23, 2020

**Attendees:**

Rowan Powell  
Nancy Jenkins

Michael Aronin

Jose Sanchez

Riley Williams (for Senator Zucker)

John Gretz

Kelly Dempsey

Dave Drezner

Seth Morgan

Dan McIntyre

Ronza Othman

Janice Jackson

**MDOD Staff:**

Carol Beatty

Elizabeth Hall

Yesheva Kelly

Christian Miele

Kim McKay

**Guests:**

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| **Welcome and Approval of Minutes -** *Dan McIntyre- Chair* |

Dan Mcintyre welcomed the attendees. Minutes were approved without changes.

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| **MDOD Updates -** *Secretary Carol Beatty* |

**Commission Member Updates**

* Carol welcomed Zosia Zaks the commission. Zosia is the Manager of Programs and Education at Hussman Center for Adults with Autism at Towson University.
* Bob Sweeney and Don Rowe are at the end of their terms. The Department of Disabilities thanks them for their service to Marylanders with disability.

**Legislative Update**

* The TAM transfer bill was passed and brought into law. Beginning July 1st, TAM will be transferring to the Department of Disabilities.
* Legislation that was passed for the creation of a Deaf line communication program. David Bahar (TAM) will be working with his advisory board to establish the size, scope, and the goals of that program over the next year.
* The state coordinator for autism strategy and advisory stakeholder group bill did pass and was let into law by the governor. The implementation of that bill is on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic, that we've been dealing with and also the current hiring freeze that is statewide.
* The MBA records voluntary disclosure of developmental disabilities bill did pass and goes into law. There's a work group that's developing language for the developmental disabilities self-disclosure regard and consists of members from the Arc Maryland, the disabilities council, the MBA, our department, and the state police.

**COVID-19 Update**

* Governor Hogan appointed Secretary Beatty to the Maryland Coronavirus response advisory team.
* MDOD’s IT Accessibility Coordinator has been working with other partner agencies to ensure websites and electronic documents issued during the pandemic are accessible.\
* Cecilia Warren (MDOD Emergency Preparedness Director) has been deployed to MEMA and working with state partners to provide support. She has worked with the state hospital surge teams and the drive-through testing site teams as well as ensuring that patients with disabilities have access to necessary accommodations and communication strategies. This included ensuring that the registration process captured any needed accommodations, including ASL, materials in braille, or any other needed accommodations.
* MDOD has worked throughout this pandemic to assess human service agencies providers of support for people with disabilities to access PPE, which is personal protective equipment, such as masks, gloves, and other needed supplies.

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| **State Disabilities Plan Presentation -** *Christian Miele/Elizabeth Hall* |

**Highlights *(See attached for full presentation)***

* The Maryland State Disabilities Plan is a 4-year plan that provides for a coordination of support services and policies that ensures compliance with state and federal civil rights and are necessary for individuals with disabilities to achieve maximum participation in the community in the most integrated setting possible.
* The State Disabilities Plan is approved by the Interagency Disability Board chaired by MDOD and has representatives of a lot of different state agencies that work with disabilities
* The plan focuses on community living, employment, healthcare, accessible technology, education, family supports, housing, transportation, and crime control, public safety, and -correctional services.
* A survey was sent emailed to the Commission for I emailed you to hear all the feedback we can in order to create a plan that is most reflective of Maryland's needs.

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| **ADA Celebration Update –** *Kim McKay, MDOD Director of Communications and Outreach* |

* Due to COVID-19, the original ADA celebration will be changed. MDOD is going to take the speaker series and do it on an online format so people can hear the speaker series. That will be turned into a monthly.
* The online speaker series, monthly podcasts, will begin on Friday, June 26th, and will kick off 30 days of celebrating 30. There will be an email campaign, and newsletter coming out, and will highlight some aspects of the ADA and how it's changed in the last 30 years.
* The governor is doing a proclamation for to celebrate the 30th anniversary.

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| **Commission Member Updates** |

**KIM BURTON**: MHAMD has been working on a anti-loneliness projects, and one is called the connections project, in Baltimore County. Currently doing training to volunteers to provide some level of peer support. The purpose of the project is to ratchet down on some of the isolation and loneliness older adults in particular are experiencing right now.

In Baltimore City the Baltimore Neighbors Network and makes calls to people over 65 to see if they have resources they need. If they need support or some kind of resource, there's a handoff that's given, but also, finding out if they are feeling like they need some companionship and a friendly visitor on a regular basis.

**NANCY JENKINS:**  Wanted to bring awareness that individuals in the deaf community are having a hard time with isolation. Many contact others by phone and people are wearing masks.

**DAVE DREZNER**:

* The State Plan on Independent Living is a three-year plan and the Commission for Community Living nationally. It should be listed on any Centers for Independent Living's website or any of our social media Facebook pages after today.
* The Maryland Centers for Independent Living have been collaborating since the beginning of June to work on a live stream titled Independence Amplified Maryland, or I AM, which focuses on issues important to the disability community. We have guest speakers that usually can speak on a state or at least a regional level that can be duplicated in every area.

Lori Markland from MDTAP was a guess speaker

**RONZA OTHMAN**: Very impressed with the work from the Maryland Department of Disabilities and many of its partner departments in terms of the response to COVID-19. There has been a lot of forethought into how policies are implemented, and there has been a lot of very rapid response when there has been a challenge in terms of access, primarily led by the Department of Disabilities.

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| **Adjournment** |

Meeting adjourned at 5:52p.m.