

**§ 9-2404. Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (September 22, 2017)**

First Quarterly Meeting  
September 22, 2017

Present:

Council Members: Chair Stephanie Summers, Vice Chair Erin Buck-Skees, Secretary Charm L. Smith, Dakota Burgess, Janet Moye Cornick, Jason Corning, Larry Gray, Tanya Green, Marny Helfrich, Eddy Laird, Gordon Outlaw, Lisalee Egbert & Vikki Porter

ODHH Staff: Kelby Brick, and Allysa Dittmar

Absent: Spencer Dove, Mary Lynn Lally & Victoria Wilkins

Call to Order: 2:07 PM

Meeting Minutes:

Minutes from March 2017 read and approved

MACDHH Chair Summers:

Discussed Interpreter Licensure Bill and series of forums hosted by the ODHH to gather input from different sections of the community including the Maryland Association of the Deaf and the Potomac Chapter of the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf. The Chair also reported that there is a workgroup working on drafting the bill.

Discussed Language Deprivation workgroup. Referred to LEAD-K and the importance of this matter.

Discussed some error in existing language in the Bylaws in reference to when bylaws can be reviewed and amended. Current language states that the bylaws will be reviewed and amended in the third meeting of the *calendar year* when in fact, it should be *fiscal year*. Will need to wait until third meeting of the calendar year before amending it to reflect fiscal year.

Discussion on line-item budget focused on interpreter costs but many agencies are unaware and may streamline funding for interpreter along with translation services so the Office is pushing for a dedicated line-item budget for interpreting costs only to help the State of Maryland government, the Governor's Office, and the Office (ODHH) to study on how interpreting services are utilized in the State of Maryland

Discussion on how to ensure that every event that the Governor attends or is a part of has a sign language interpreter and the answer to this is a little complicated especially given that some events are planned under the Governor's Office and others are not so it is hard to create a system that addresses all eventualities.

ODHH Director's report: See attached.

General Discussion:

Council had a discussion on MCCR and whether it is possible to have MCCR post videos in ASL showing how to file a complaint. ASL video exists under ODHH and its previous administration.

Council had a discussion on opioid crisis in the State of Maryland and how the State is hoping to address limited supply of pills; MSD has been supplied with NARCAN to ensure that they can address opioid emergencies that may occur on campus including adding to school curriculum and instruction about opioids

Council had a discussion on increasing employment opportunities for deaf and hard of hearing; DORS has set up a program called Rehab Communication Services (RCS) to employ deaf individuals to help others get jobs including how to request for interpreters and how to better communicate with supervisors and they help with resumes as well.

ODHH Director provided additional reports on a variety of issues being addressed by the Office:

Statewide EHDI office on expanding awareness about toddler programs in the State of Maryland

Maryland Health Connections on making their videos available for deaf/hard of hearing consumers interested in acquiring health insurances

Allysa Dittmar is currently the Chair of the Behavior Health Advisory Committee and the committee is looking into improving services in the area of mental health and substance abuse

DORS and other State departments in improving services for DeafBlind as well such as SSP, telecommunications for DeafBlind, and others critical services

State-wide e911 program (Issue being addressed on another advisory council: Governor's Advisory Board on Telecommunications Relay; Council Member Corning shared about GABTR's work on this including

iPad distribution program  
Department of Transportation on making their services and programs accessible to all deaf and hard of hearing consumers  
Interpreting issues in the State of Maryland including working with a variety of stakeholders including making certain that emergency announcements are available in ASL (via deaf CDI) as well; Secretary Smith added that MDAD and PCRID has set up a workgroup to draft a bill to address this; Council Member Gray asked about increasing cultural competency for all interpreters and service providers and creating a minimum level of inclusion for underrepresented groups in which Council Member Laird responded that policy implementation and changes need to be about inclusion, not tokenism; the Governor's Office has requested that his coordinating offices study on how services can be better provided to underrepresented groups especially of the minority groups  
Governor's Office in increasing funding for substance abuse and expanding resources for deaf and hard of hearing substance abusers; Working with DASAM and GOCCP; Council Member Gray inquired about expanding funding for transportation to AA/NA meetings and ODHH will look into this  
Closed Captioning in public areas per request from one of the state legislative committee chair to look into this including working with a variety of consumer organizations to expand access to closed captioning in public spaces and establishments  
Legislative Awareness Day will be on October 9th and ODHH will be giving out awards to a variety of individuals/businesses in recognition of their services to deaf and hard of hearing in the State of Maryland  
Office shared that the State of Maryland government has an all-day conference on grants but it costs \$100 to register and Secretary Smith is asking if it is possible to de-fray registration costs to allow for greater participation from deaf and hard of hearing individuals and deaf and hard of hearing minorities as well

#### Council Inquiry:

How is Diversity and Inclusion addressed at agencies:

MSD has a created a position called Diversity and Inclusion Specialist

MSDE has a position called Equity Officer

Department of Aging will provide training but unsure of specifics just yet

Department of Housing and Community Development has Diversity and Equity Officer and works with EEO Office

Council Member Corning is asking if ODHH is involved in helping set up deaf-owned businesses and the response is the Office is not responsible for supporting creation of deaf-owned business but can connect interested individuals to different agencies or resources who can provide assistance in this area. Some discussion on whether deaf and hard of hearing would qualify under minority business and the answer is yes and no (the natural answer would be yes but given the current federal and state definitions and guidelines, the answer is deaf and hard of hearing would not qualify as a minority business/owner); Secretary Buck-Skees and Council Member Porter are looking into creating a training that would equip deaf minorities with necessary skills and knowledge to advance career-wise especially in the field of education; Council Member Gray would like the Council and the Office to look at the Texas University System and see how they can create a grant to encourage minorities to get into universities and colleges

Some inquiry on whether interpreters and/or CDI will be visible whenever there is an emergency announcement broadcasted and the Office has worked with the Governor's Office in developing a clear set of guidelines requiring that the interpreter/CDI be visible at all times

#### Council Reports:

Council Member Egbert shared about the Egbert-Morales bill that they drafted in hopes of expanding existing services for parents of deaf and hard of hearing infants including providing ASL classes and others

Council Member Burgess shared that the Department of Aging is gearing up for open enrollment for Medicare between October 15th - December 7th

Old Business: NONE

New Business: NONE

Announcements: NONE

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 pm