

## § 9-2404. Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (September 7, 2018)

First Quarterly Meeting  
September 7, 2018

Present:

Council Members: Chair Larry Gray, Vice Chair Marny Helfrich, Secretary Vikki Porter, Dakota Burgees, Janet Moye Cornick, Jason Corning, Spencer Dove, Lisalee Egbert, Tanya Green, Greg James, Eddy Laird, Gordon Outlaw, Karunya Samuel, Victoria Wilkins.

ODHH Staff: Kelby Brick, Katherine Millios, Jacob Salem, and LaToya Plummer

Absent: Mary Lynn Lally and Stephanie Summers

Call to Order: 2:12 PM

Meeting Minutes:

Minutes from March 2018 and June 2018 not accepted due to needed corrections.

MACDHH Chair Gray's Report: Chair Gray wanted to set up community town halls that especially encourages people of color, LGBTQ+, and other marginalized populations to give feedback and share concerns about issues impacting Deaf Maryland citizens. Two areas in mind are Baltimore and Prince George's County. Details haven't been finalized yet, but once they are, details will be sent out. Chair Gray announced that he is the emcee for the Legislative Awareness Day (LAD) taking place on October 8th, and a panel is being finalized. Awards will be given out and he encouraged people to make nominations.

MACDHH Vice Chair Helfrich's Report: *Connections Beyond Sight and Sound* is a partnership between the Maryland State Department of Education and the University of Maryland, College Park. This project supports DeafBlind Maryland and DC children from birth to 21 years of age in their homes, schools, and communities by providing consultation, training, special programs, resources, and technical assistance to children and their families and care providers. The project provides training to professionals and to families who have children who have dual sensory needs and other complex support needs. Operating on a 5-year grant, the project is currently in the process of applying for a renewal. Vice Chair Helfrich looked forward to that project being funded and moving forward.

MACDHH Secretary Porter's Report: None.

ODHH Director's report: Director Brick announced a vacancy in the community position/council member position, which was formerly held by Tayer Mayer. Director Brick also announced several town hall meetings taking place. One will be on September 20 at the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), which will have a performance by Quest Visual Performance. In October, two town hall meetings requested by Chair Gray are slated—one in PG County, the other in Baltimore—designed to reach out to some of the more underserved populations. The morning of September 25<sup>th</sup>, the Governor will be hosting a cabinet meeting. October 8 is LAD, which falls on Columbus Day. Finalized plans for LAD include speaker Suzy Rosen who would be presenting on the legislative process and how citizens can become more involved, and a panel. To wrap things up, an awards ceremony from the Governor's office will take place. This month is Deaf Awareness Month, so Katie Millios has been developing and sending out different media materials profiling Deaf leaders specific to the state of Maryland and spotlighting historical events that happened in Maryland having an impact on the Deaf community. Plus, Director Brick noted that the De'VIA art contest last year was very successful and there have been requests to host it again this year, and expect an announcement in the next few months. He hoped more schools and students will be involved this time around.. Director Brick mentioned efforts by the state to recruit up to 1,000 correctional officers, and the office is working to ensure that some of these officers have sign language capabilities and that the recruitment process is accessible. In terms of increasing Deaf employment opportunities, there is a grand opening this afternoon for a business in Hyattsville that was founded by three Deaf partners. Along with the Lieutenant Governor and other public officials, Director Brick will be participating in a ribbon-cutting ceremony. Last but not least, the emergency service management retreat will take place next week. National Governing Agency (NGA) will be using Maryland as a starting point—doing several-day analysis of emergency management processes and procedures. NGA hopes to use the information gathered as a model and apply it to other states in the country. Director Brick will be giving a presentation that emphasizes accessibility in terms of emergency announcements and scenarios.

Council Member Moye Cornick's report and discussion: Council Member Moye Cornick interviewed several state troopers after a recent council discussion about communication issues Deaf people have in regards to traffic stops. Troopers all agreed that there is often confusion with motorists not being able to

communicate verbally, but it would be helpful if the motorist had something to write on to alert the trooper they are Deaf or hard of hearing. Troopers have their own writing tablets that they can offer the driver if none is available. Council Member Samuel asked how that information can best be disseminated to the Deaf community. He suggested perhaps an ASL video. Council Member Laird stated that in some states, cards that identify a person as Deaf are readily available. Staff member Millios explained that the state of Maryland used to have those cards, but stopped when it was apparent officers thought the cards were good enough for communication. Instead, the general feeling is that writing back and forth ensured 100% communication. Council Member Laird clarified that he is interested in a card that simply identifies that he's Deaf, not instructions on how to interact. Council Member Moye Cornick also stated that a lieutenant from the Howard County barracks would be interested in coming to one of MACDHH meetings, where he can give a presentation. Vice Chair Helfrich concurred, and suggested reaching out to the lieutenant to see his availability.

Old Business: Chair Gray wanted to recap issues that were brought up in MACDHH minutes from last year. Council Member Egbert requested clarification on whether these minutes were being brought up for the purpose of approval or for review. Chair Gray confirmed it was the latter, as he felt the council needed to look back on previously discussed issues for updates. First up were the minutes from June 2017. Chair Gray asked about any DeafBlind issues. Council Member Corning stated that a meeting was recently held to discuss accessibility in telecommunications for DeafBlind citizens, which a proposal is being drafted and still in the early stages. Chair Gray requested an update about state expenditures on sign language interpreting services, and Director Brick confirmed that a new code was established within the state budget system, efficiently tracking the amount the state is spending for this particular accommodation. Next, September 2017 minutes were presented for review. One of the issues discussed was a video detailing how to file a complaint with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR). Director Brick stated that videos developed by the previous administration are available, and that exposure needed to be increased so people will know where to go and how to file a complaint. Another issue that was reviewed was the interpreting licensure for interpreters. Chair Gray emphasized that concerns were raised in ensuring that not only interpreters were competent, but that efforts are made to include more interpreters of color. Council Member Egbert mentioned that the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID) recently passed a mandate that interpreters must take CEUs (continuing education units) specifically focusing on sensitivity and diversity training. Also, Certified Deaf Interpreters (CDI) will be provided for emergency events and announcements. Chair Gray requested comments on the December 2017 minutes about possibly needing a survey to gauge transportation needs in order to attend Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or Narcotics Anonymous (NA) meetings. Council Member Corning responded that there is a transportation voucher book system in Anne Arundel County that people aren't aware of. Chair Gray addressed another issue that was brought up during the December 2017 minutes: setting up some type of Hispanic/Latino center for parents, children, ASL users to have access to resources. He asked the council if this idea was still worth pursuing. Council Member Samuel suggested that some of these points and specific issues be revisited and then get the community and schools involved. He stressed that strong community involvement is critical to the success of addressing issues. Chair Gray put out the idea of establishing some type of ad hoc meeting, i.e. task force, to address these issues. Staying with the December 2017 minutes, an online portal was proposed with access to websites containing ASL videos, Video Relay Services that didn't go any further. Another issue is Deaf senior citizens in nursing homes and other residences tailored for them not getting qualified interpreters or not getting interpreting services at all. Council Member Buck-Skees spoke up about Council Member Lally making inroads in that area, and Director Brick reaffirmed, stating that Council Member Lally and other interested parties were connected with the Office of Healthcare Quality (OHCQ), which oversees licensures of nursing homes and the like. Director Brick commended OHCQ in aggressively pursuing complaints regarding interpreting services. He also mentioned that Murdoch Henderson is very active in trying to establish a community-based nursing home facility that primarily focuses on the needs of Deaf and hard of hearing individuals. He has been working with the Department of Health and Department of Aging in that endeavor, having meetings and both departments are committed in sharing information and responding.

#### New Business:

Council Member Wilkins suggested that council meetings not take place on Friday afternoons due to traffic issues. Council members then discussed the pros and cons of having meetings in the mornings versus the afternoons. Pros include less traffic and more convenience—especially for state reps. Wednesday was suggested by Council Member Samuel, but was dismissed due to interpreter availability being difficult except for Mondays and Fridays. Major concern about morning meetings is the townhall portion after the advisory council meetings not being convenient to citizens because most work a 9-5 schedule. A poll was suggested to gauge interest for certain days and times. Staff Member Salem noted that the current conference room has already been booked for several future council meetings.

Chair Gray, along with Council Members Egbert and Corning, recommended some type of clearinghouse be set up to disseminate information about happenings and events in the Deaf community. Criteria needs to be established, and methods of publicity explored. Facebook shouldn't be the only option available.

Council Member Laird noted that in the state of Maryland, the verbiage is "teacher of the hearing impaired" for those who are interested in being certified and licensed to teach Deaf and hard of hearing students. He requested a motion that the official terminology in state documents, websites, etc. be updated from "hearing impaired" to "Deaf and hard of hearing." Council Member Egbert seconded.

Announcements:

Council Member Samuel shared that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is working with Deaf, DeafBlind, hard of hearing people in setting up technology and other access (such as interpreters), to ease barriers and increase options for 20 million Deaf and hard of hearing taxpayers. He would like to see ODHH get involved in increasing awareness. A meeting is slated for October.

Council Member Laird announced that the movie, *The Silent Child*, will be shown at McDaniel's College.

Chair Gray shared that ASL trivia night will take place at Anne Arundel Community College on September 27<sup>th</sup>.

Council Member Dove discussed a program called the Maryland equity and inclusion leadership program, (MEILP). concerns about the emergency alerts and media cameras only showing the hearing person speaking, and not the interpreter(s) next to the speaker. Director Brick noted that that a memorandum is in place that w a year-long professional development course that is designed to train individuals, leaders, in the workplace, in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors on best practices in making workplaces more diverse and equitable. Program cost is \$770, but there may be scholarship opportunities available.

Council Member Corning announced that the Metro Washington Association of the DeafBlind board has three positions available: events coordinator, publicity manager, and bylaws. made several announcements: Maryland was represented well at the national EHDI conference by Council Member Green, as well as people from the state. Also, as vice president of the American Association of Deaf Children, they are having their annual conference the last week of June. Delaware is slated for next year's conference, and she hopes to see some robust Maryland representation.

Council Member Burgess shared that June 15 is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. There will be statewide activities and she invited everyone to check out the Department of Aging's website. Local governments will have their own events as well.

Meeting adjourned at 3:59 pm