

§ 9-2404. Maryland Advisory Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH)—June 22, 2020

*Third Quarterly Meeting (Originally scheduled for March, postponed to June due to COVID-19 pandemic)
June 22, 2020 via Zoom.com*

MACDHH Council Members presented and seen via Zoom:

Present: Chair Larry Gray, Vice Chair Marny Helfrich, Secretary Vikki Porter, Dakota Burgess, Janet Moye Cornick, Jason Corning, Veronica Davilla-Steele, Spencer Dove, Lisalee Egbert, Gregory James, Mary Lynn Lally, Jed Miller (interim MDH representative, non-voting), Norma Moran, Gordon Outlaw, Dawn Padon, Erin Buck Skees, Michele Westfall, and Victoria Wilkins.

Absent: Alena Troxel

Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (ODHH) Staff: Kelby Brick, TraciAnn Hoglind, and Jacob Salem.

Call to Order: 1:07 PM

Introduction of new Council Members: Chair Gray introduced the newest additions to the Council: Veronica Davila-Steele, Norma Moran, Dawn Padon, and Michele Westfall.

Meeting Minutes: Minutes from December 2019 were accepted without corrections.

Chair Gray's Report: Back in February, Chair Gray was invited to attend a Maryland Deaf Community Center meeting by Linda Stoltz, President. He was unable to attend. During that same month, the Council was asked to provide support for an education interpreting licensure bill affecting deaf and hard of hearing students in the school system that was ultimately put on hold because of the novel coronavirus 2019 (COVID). There were concerns shared by state agency council representatives as well as those representing specific private organizations on how to demonstrate support without conflicting with their agencies/organizations. This would be discussed further during new business.

Near the end of February, Chair Gray represented the Council at the Howard County Association of the Deaf townhall focusing on the status of the interpreting licensure bill in Laurel, Maryland. The townhall participants showed an overwhelming support on getting the interpreting licensure bill passed. Chair Gray requested that ODHH provide updates regarding implementation of the E911 (text-to-911) system across Maryland. He also recognized Governor Larry Hogan for hosting several press conferences about COVID, and providing Deaf interpreters to ensure communication access for those who use American Sign Language (ASL). With the interpreters garnering national attention, *The Baltimore Sun* contacted him requesting his official statement regarding the interpreters as MACDHH Chair. Chair Gray stated it was a well written article and hoped that everyone had the opportunity to read it. Chair Gray commended ODHH for providing information about COVID and safety precautions (wearing masks and washing hands) to Maryland Deaf citizens via a series of vlogs in ASL. COVID wasn't the only subject in these ASL vlogs. ODHH also touched on the topic of Census 2020, helping reduce confusion on what it's about, what to do, and other valid concerns, which Chair Gray mention ODHH doing a fantastic job regarding that topic.

Chair Gray also pondered about how Maryland Deaf citizens can get in touch with their legislative representatives, and suggested that ODHH create some type of flyer with listings of these various representatives. In May of 2020, Chair Gray participated in a virtual town hall discussing telehealth and the Deaf community. Great discussions were marred by the video streaming constantly freezing, which the irony was not lost on the participants. The freezing brought the point home regarding Deaf people's reliance on technology in order to access the interpreters. In a medical situation where video streaming is needed in order to access interpreters, serious considerations need to be given regarding backups or solutions to address this issue.

Before the official meeting today, Chair Gray, MACDHH officers, and ODHH staff performed a virtual test run on the Zoom platform with the new Council members, providing a brief orientation and the welcome kit. He announced that there will be a election for Chair taking place and notified members that he will not be running. Chair Gray reflected on his tenure, appreciating the amount of information he learned about the inner workings of the state government. He relished opportunities to share what he learned with the Deaf community.

Vice Chair Helfrich's Report: Vice Chair Helfrich stated that the Maryland State Department of Education has been supporting the local school systems in their efforts to conduct distance learning across the state. Focusing on accessibility issues, MSDE issued a series of technical assistance bulletins—guidance on a variety of topic related to special education services during the extended physical school closure. One of the technical assistance bulletins contained considerations, recommendations, and resources pertaining to Deaf and hard of hearing students, and those with blindness and low vision.

Secretary Porter's Report: Secretary Porter announced that she is running for Secretary again. As for her report, she followed up with her county regarding the text-to-911 rollout, and encouraged others to do the same with their counties. Secretary Porter also praised ODHH's efforts in keeping the Deaf community informed with the pandemic, and has heard the same from the community.

ODHH Director Brick's report: Director Brick extended a warm welcome to the four new Council members, detailing their various backgrounds and contributions. He stressed the importance of diversity on the Council, in terms of perspectives and experiences.

Regarding COVID pandemic, Director Brick emphasized that various states' numbers across the nation continue to rise, but because of Governor Hogan's leadership and his stay-at-home order, that trend was the opposite in Maryland. As of now, there are 64,603 COVID cases, and almost 3,000 individuals who passed away because of COVID. Looking at hospital/Intensive Care Unit (ICU) statistics regarding COVID, the number of 80% back in April is now hovering around 5% in June.

As a result of the pandemic, many individuals have either lost their jobs or faced reduced hours. To assist in offsetting certain economic ramifications due to the sudden loss/drop of income, Governor Hogan put in motion several executive orders. One order is that evictions be suspended, so no one can legally be thrown out of their home for nonpayment. Plus, utilities such as electricity and cable cannot be shut off. These orders helped with the stay-at-home directive, so people can actually be safe staying at home despite not having a job. Another order given by the governor is that open enrollment for health insurance commence now. This order is a potentially life-saving option for those who may not have current health insurance, and they no longer have to wait for the typical annual open enrollment period happening later in the year around the fall season. In relation, those health insurance premium payments are suspended for those without employment, with the understanding that payments will be due in the future. Governor Hogan also issued an executive order regarding early release for inmates who are high risk, are senior citizens, and have preexisting conditions. ODHH has been working with the Department of Corrections regarding Deaf inmates in the prison system, which went into lockdown shortly after the pandemic hit Maryland. Deaf inmates still need access, so interpreters were allowed access to continue providing communication access to them. Because issues have come up related to inmates with disabilities during the lockdown, various organizations and departments successfully petitioned that this category of inmates be added to this particular executive order.

To better facilitate access to COVID testing for everyone in Maryland, Governor Hogan received 500,000 test kits from South Korea. ODHH has worked to provide communication access for these tests by ensuring that sign language interpreters provided were professionals, not going the route of volunteer signers as many other states have done. Relative to that, Director Brick also reported that Governor Hogan has declared sign language interpreters and Support Service Providers (SSP)—supporting DeafBlind citizens—as essential workers in the state of Maryland. The status meant that they are excluded from the stay-at-home order—free to travel without restrictions towards providing much-needed services in a timely manner. In addition, the governor proclaimed that patients with disabilities (i.e. developmental disabilities) are allowed to have access to their support people while they are in the hospital. Previously, the support people were not allowed to enter the hospitals. ODHH appreciates these critically important distinctions and recognition that the governor has given.

Concurrently, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement has been picking up steam, and Director Brick revealed that ODHH has provided support to various organizations and individuals. Despite the case numbers trending downward for the community at large, the same cannot be said for the Black and Hispanic/Latino communities, which collectively have 36,000 of COVID cases compared to just 12,000 for the white community. Those numbers are not acceptable, Director Brick said, and illustrated that these numbers demonstrate racism and inequality, which indicate a systemic issue pointing at white supremacy. The LGBTQ community is also impacted, he added, and these inequalities and barriers need to be torn down, little by little. Director Brick reiterated his personal lifelong passion in advocating against discrimination in all forms, particularly racial and systemic, while supporting marginalized individuals.

Director Brick recognized the issue of police brutality as well as other issues and concerns regarding the police system, which disproportionately affect people of color, people who are Deaf, and individuals with disabilities. There have been protests in the streets over the years, with one happening back in 1968 in Salisbury, Maryland, where a Black Deaf man named Daniel Henry was shot by police after walking away from an altercation. Police shot him in the back because Mr. Henry wasn't following instructions, not realizing he could not hear. Several weeks of turmoil happened after the incident. Now, a situation similar to Daniel Henry happened last week in Atlanta, Georgia. These stories are not the only ones nor unique, whether it's 1968 or 2020. Director Brick emphasized a need for a better system and more role models, especially individuals of color. He recalled ODHH hosting a room naming ceremony involving ODHH's office suites and conference room in September of last year, honoring Dr. Ernest Hairston and Dr. Gertrude Galloway. Dr. Hairston was one of the co-founders of the National Black Deaf Advocates, which will soon be celebrating its 40th anniversary. Dr. Galloway was the first female president of the National Association of the Deaf, which has been in existence for almost 150 years. These influential people were looked up to and cherished for their significant contributions to the Deaf community. Director Brick recognized that more needs to be done. ODHH has been spotlighting different members of the Deaf community, particularly people of color and marginalized individuals, as well as communities and businesses within the Maryland Deaf Ecosystem. He stressed the importance of children from these communities having people that look like them for them to aspire to. In that vein, ODHH has been working with the Governor's Office of Small, Minority, and Women Business Affairs in ensuring access to resources (information, workshops, etc) are accessible for Deaf-owned small businesses, with a focus on those in marginalized communities. This joint effort continues to be a work in progress.

Another pertinent issue affecting the Deaf community that Director Brick underlined is the rise of child abuse and domestic violence cases partly due to the pandemic. There is not enough resources to help Deaf victims of these crimes. ODHH has referred people to the Deaf Abused Women's Network (DAWN), which is a Deaf-run organization that helps not only women, but also men across all

demographics including the LGBTQ population. DAWN has been providing services to Deaf people from all over Maryland, including the eastern and western parts, despite only receiving money from the District of Columbia, not Maryland, to operate. ODHH is working to address the funding discrepancy by working with other offices and agencies in Maryland in order to better support DAWN and expand the program. However, Director Brick cautioned against one program being enough to meet the Deaf community's needs in the state of Maryland.

In other non-pandemic updates, Dr. Jennifer Reisman, of the Early Hearing Detection Intervention Council, has resigned as Chair. She has been a longtime advocate for the Deaf community, and always pushed for accessibility to all programs, screenings, early identification, and so on were possible regardless of anyone's background and affiliations. ODHH is looking forward to working with the new Chair of the council. ODHH has been working with the Frederick County Department of Health and Human Services on a variety of issues. Recently, their Executive Director position was available, and ODHH recommended knowledge of American Sign Language be one of the preferred qualifications in the job description. Director Brick pointed out that this is a good example of working from the top down from state to local government, providing access and affecting change... bit by bit, piece by piece. Maryland legislature passed a law that moved Maryland Relay from the Department of Information Technology to the Department of Disabilities. The law had two amendments—that the Director with oversight over relay must be a Deaf/hard of hearing or speech disabled, and a relay user; and that there be access for DeafBlind with the call facilitator program. For a long time, DeafBlind individuals were not able to take advantage of traditional relay and make telephone calls like sighted Deaf individuals. ODHH has been an ardent supporter, and is pleased that these are now legal requirements. Maryland Relay announced a new contract with Hamilton Relay, under Hamilton Communications, for providing relay services. Part of that contract includes relay conference captioning (RCC). When anyone accesses a meeting during work or personal time, access to RCC will be available. Information on RCC access and usage will be shared with the public at a later time.

ODHH staff have been hard at work. Jacob Salem has been involved with the behavioral health conference that will be hosted next month. As Chair of the cultural competency committee, Jacob has been recruiting speakers from various backgrounds and organizations that provided direct services to Deaf individuals. ODHH is looking forward to a successful conference. TraciAnn Hoglind is collaborating with different financial and nonprofit organizations in developing financial literacy workshops, providing education to Deaf constituents regarding financial empowerment, and informing about Deaf Ecosystem in Maryland. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, a large portion of this incentive has been put on hold, and alternatives are being worked out, including providing videos.

Since the pandemic, ODHH, with only three staff members, has been extremely busy—working day and night to provide services, not only in addressing COVID, but also completing daily tasks and regular work assignments. ODHH's COVID policy priorities were initially two-fold: help save lives of Deaf and DeafBlind Marylanders by providing access to critical information via vlogs, captions, and transcripts; which led to the second priority: reducing the number of people impacted by COVID. Quickly, ODHH realized that the two policy priorities needed a third addition: providing support to other states on how to better communicate with their Deaf constituents, despite having larger staff/commissions/offices, or more resources. While providing technical assistance to other states' Deaf and hard of hearing organizations and offices, ODHH realized the urgent need for signing volunteers in various capacities in topic areas such as health care, food banks, etc. ODHH then put out a call for action in the Deaf community, and volunteers stepped forward to help out. Dr. Nancylynn Ward coordinated volunteers on behalf of ODHH. Over 70 volunteer-led FAQ videos were released—ranging on topics from face masks to COVID testing expectations. There are more videos waiting to be released, Director Brick mentioned, and ODHH thanks Dr. Ward for her service.

Notwithstanding the availability of these vlogs and videos being seen via social media over the internet, there are a few groups—i.e. underprivileged and senior citizens—that typically have limited or no access to the internet in the first place. Collaborating with various organization, ODHH set up a phone tree. Volunteers were recruited to contact these individuals, via phone calls and one on one socially distanced meetings, to discuss topics including, but not limited to, unemployment, insurance, and healthcare access. One of the resources is the meals program, in which millions of dollars have been invested. Many people are on uncertain financial footing and struggle to provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner for their children, loved ones, and families. Through the school program and various meal delivery services in the state, ODHH has worked closely with Maryland School for the Deaf (MSD) in ensuring students have access to education and food while being at home. MSD has also worked diligently in providing technology and equipment to better facilitate communication between students and teachers. ODHH thanks David Bahar for his support of MSD. On another note, ODHH is working with various group homes to make sure staff there are safe, with enough personal protection equipment and the like. Again the focus is on the underprivileged, which is a work in progress, and much more needs to be done.

ODHH's imperative in providing resources and information (i.e. obtaining financial support) and increasing collective community safety awareness to underprivileged communities has been fruitful. Schools have used these videos in educating students about current world events, and fostering important discussion. Unfortunately, despite large amounts of information being published in the newspapers and broadcasted on TV and the internet, the majority if not accessible in sign language, and ODHH has been tirelessly filling in the gaps as much as possible. Director Brick relayed that this work has not gone unnoticed—Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recognized ODHH's efforts and requested guidance on effective and efficient ways in communicating to Deaf communities all over the country. FEMA is disseminating ODHH's examples in providing training towards this effort. ODHH's handiwork is becoming a model. With the previously quoted numbers of 36,000 people of color being impacted

compared to 12,000 people who are white, it shows the need for these communities to be safe and access to both communication and testing be provided.

Back in April, Maryland hosted ASL Recognition Day, with various individuals being celebrated for their contributions by Governor Hogan. With primary elections already taking place two weeks prior, Director Brick urged Deaf Marylanders to continue to go out and vote. There are several ways to participate in voting: absentee ballots, mail-in ballots, and in-person voting. Based on feedback gathered from various organizations, particularly those representing Black and Hispanic/Latino Deaf communities, of not seeing people of color in positions of authority, ODHH collaborated with Lieutenant Governor Boyd Rutherford in developing a vlog that would resonate with not just these communities, but all Deaf communities. Lieutenant Governor Rutherford, paired with a Certified Deaf Interpreter, relayed important information about COVID and other important information. This effort was important in building rapport and trust with the communities and providing a salient connection to politicians and vice versa. Director Brick commended Chair Gray for playing an important part towards making this vlog happen.

Director Brick touched on video streaming technology for the first ever MACDHH virtual meeting. The State of Maryland banned use of Zoom due to various security and other issues. In turn, the ban created barriers to communication access for the Council, which not only need sign language interpreters, but closed captioning, and ability to customize and control individual video screens as seen in real-time today. After comparing other video platforms, Zoom was determined to be the best fit, and an exception was made for certain meetings, including Council meetings. ODHH has maintained a pool of interpreters that were utilized for the State of the State press conferences, and working to expand the list. Director Brick thanked those interpreters (both Deaf and hearing) who have been providing access for the office. Interpreting is not an easy job--oftentimes being called into various situations at the last minute with no advanced warning or preparation.

Director Brick thanked Governor Hogan and his office for his support. He also expressed gratitude to ODHH staff Jacob Salem and TraciAnn Hoglund for their hard work. Director Brick showed appreciation for MACDHH officers Chair Gray, Vice Chair Helfrich, and Secretary Porter for their help in making the difference in how much impact and reach ODHH can have. There have been various call to action, especially BLM. Director Brick pointed out that not only conversations that open doors needed to take place, but actionable items should be implemented such as closely examining civil issues for underprivileged communities and providing role models of people of colors. He recalled that growing up, one of his mentors was Dr. Robert Davila, the first Latino graduate from Gallaudet University to receive a graduate-level degree. Dr. Davila was very well known and a published author, and he served as president of Gallaudet. Director Brick stressed the importance of placing people of color in positions and becoming role models for those like them. Without role models, no one would follow and aspire to become great. Director Brick ended his report by stating he hopes he will follow Dr. Davila's example in leadership and excellence.

Old Business: Chair Gray discussed the Interpreter Licensure Bill. Back in December 2018, the Council sent a letter to the Governor asking his office to investigate and consider the bill. The bill did not pass through legislative means. Chair Gray, Vice Chair Helfrich, Secretary Porter, and some of the Council members got together and discussed the bill with the Deaf community via townhalls and small sessions. Director Brick reported that ODHH received a formal request that the office submit a report giving policy options on preventing fraudulent and unqualified interpreters by the end of this summer. ODHH conducted a lot of research and did its homework. ODHH will undergo the public process to ensure complete transparency before submitting the report to legislature. In the interest of time, Chair Gray requested, and the Council affirmed, to table the issue of the minimum number of Deaf patients in nursing home or assisted living facilities to the next Council meeting.

New business: Chair Gray wanted to know what priorities in 2020 the Council would like to focus on. This discussion was planned for the March 2020 meeting, but was postponed to today. Council Member Corning asked for the Council's support in establishing a DeafBlind Advisory Board. He noted that other states have similar setups. Director Brick responded that at this point, it's exploratory and that ODHH is willing to look into what the process would be, if the Council gives its blessing. Council agreed to ODHH's fact finding mission on establishing the DeafBlind Advisory Board for the State of Maryland. Council Member Westfall brought up her concern about Maryland only having one person, Dr. Elizabeth Mann, evaluating and certifying all of the educational interpreters under EIPA. She suggested that Dr. Mann consider adding qualified people to help her certify the educational interpreters. Council Member Egbert clarified a couple points of confusion: the educational interpreting bill did not pass, but it is in committee; and Dr. Mann is a proctor who gives the test to prospective candidates, not certify them. The bill is in a holding pattern because of COVID, and it's a wait and see game if the bill goes to the floor for the full legislative session before it becomes law. As for the EIPA test, Council Member Egbert explained that people in Maryland can go wherever they choose to take the test—whether in the local areas such as DC, West Virginia, Delaware, or further away like New York. It's not required to take the test in Maryland. Council Member Egbert also stated that there is another person willing to monitor EIPA testing, along with Dr. Mann and has put in the paperwork. A third person is also willing, but it's contingent on the bill becoming law. Vice Chair Helfrich affirmed Council Member Egbert's explanation about the bill's status, and noted that a lot of legislative proposals got caught up in the legislature. The bill had two options to obtain approval: passing the EIPA exam, or set up another licensure similar to the Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf (RID). Those with RID-like certification would be eligible to work in the school system. Vice Chair Helfrich cautioned against the possible logistical issue of interpreters currently working in the system that do not have certification or EIPA because it's not required at this time. She mentioned that an informal assessment was given to school leaders across Maryland, and the number of interpreters who currently meet the criteria as laid out in the bill provisions is small. The bill does have a time period of up to 5-6 years to meet the

requirements as needed, but she was concerned about the potential backlog. Secretary Porter added that there are people of color who would like to become interpreters but failed testing because of the possible racial/cultural bias of the testers. She would like to see more diverse representation in all areas of interpreting testing, whether educational, general, legal, etc. Moving on to other new business, Council Member Egbert recommended the Council focus on assisting Deaf people who are unemployed or underemployed. There are those who are not working and not collecting unemployment insurance before or during the pandemic. The system has failed quite a number of people, as people are not able to get through to talk to someone about their case. Director Brick encouraged the Council to encourage state-wide dialogue on racism and other societal issues, and with BLM and other movements happening, the time would be now to raise these issues—not in the dark behind closed doors—but open with collaboration across the board. Council Member Moran concurred that now is the time to focus on systemic oppression and marginalized communities. She noted that the state of Maryland has the second largest Hispanic/Latino population, especially in Prince George’s County. While Council Member Moran appreciated ODHH’s efforts in making a variety of vlogs to reach different communities, Deaf Hispanic/Latino members, who may not have a good education or full command of ASL or spoken/written English, are struggling to comprehend the vlogs that are out there. She is fielding requests from these community members to explain and clarify what is being discussed in these vlogs, and requested that ODHH consider making that information more accessible to them. Chair Gray affirmed Council Member Moran’s concerns and urged the Hispanic/Latino community make these concerns known to the Council. In the interest of time, Chair Gray moved to table the rest of the agenda items to the next meeting as old business. Council members agreed and the motion was passed.

Elections: Chair Gray turned the meeting over to Council Member Egbert, who is running the election process. Council Member Egbert thanked Chair Gray for his support and leadership over the last two years. Council Member Egbert first tallied whether it would be a public or private vote and if quorum was met. After Council decided on public voting and that quorum was met, Council Member Egbert then discussed the nomination of Secretary, noting that current Secretary Porter has agreed to run again. The position of Secretary can be filled by either a community representative or state representative. With no opposition, Secretary Porter automatically won. Next up, Vice Chair Helfrich indicated she would be willing to continue if no one else steps up. Vice Chair must be a state representative. With no opposition, Vice Chair Helfrich automatically won.

Last but not least, the person who would become Chair must be a community representative. The nomination for Chair became a three way contest with Council Members Corning, Westfall, and Egbert throwing their hats in the ring. Initially, there were a discussion whether Council Member Corning would be eligible to run since both he and Council Member Egbert are on their last terms. Director Brick notified both council members that if one was elected to the Chair position, s/he may be replaced at any time, if another community representative well within their term limits indicated interest in the position. When that happens, another election will need to take place. Council Member Corning asked if ODHH could ensure that when his position as a community representative becomes vacant, that all efforts would be made to replace him with another DeafBlind individual. Both Director Brick and Chair Gray agreed and Director Brick said he would do everything in his power to fulfill that request, but ultimately, he does not make that decision.

With Council Member Egbert deciding to run for Chair, which resulted in her immediately resigning as Elections Chair, Chair Gray took over the election nomination duties. Chair Gray asked the three candidates for their summary of qualifications and why they should become Chair. After the three candidates summarized their qualifications and experiences, Chair Gray called for a vote and requested that all of the video screens on Zoom became visible in order to take down the public votes. Director Brick suggested a roll call vote conducted by ODHH staff. When a council member is spotlighted, s/he indicate which candidate for Chair has his/her vote. The roll call is as follows:

| Council Member, Seat | Roll call vote for Chair, 2020-2022 |
|---|--|
| Spencer Dove, Maryland Commission on Civil Rights | Egbert |
| Erin Buck Skees, Maryland School for the Deaf | Westfall |
| Marny Helfrich, Maryland State Department of Education | Egbert |
| Dr. Janet Moye Cornick, Maryland Department of Transportation | Westfall |
| Gordon M. Outlaw, Department of Housing and Community Development | Corning |
| Dr. Lisalee D. Egbert, Citizen | Egbert (herself) |
| Gregory S. James, Department of Human Services | Westfall |
| Jason Corning, Citizen (DeafBlind) | Corning (himself) |
| Dakota Burgess, Department of Aging | Egbert |
| Vikki Porter, Citizen | Westfall |
| Victoria Wilkins, Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation | Corning |
| Mary Lynn Lally, Citizen (Special Expertise) | Westfall |
| Michele Westfall, Citizen (Parent of a Deaf Child) | Westfall (herself) |
| Dawn Padon, Private Agency | Egbert |
| Alena Troxel, Department of Health | Not recorded (absent) |
| Norma Moran, Citizen | Egbert |
| Veronica Davila-Steele, Citizen | Corning |
| | |
| *tiebreaker* Dr. Larry Gray, Citizen | Egbert |

Council Member Egbert is now the newly elected 2020-2022 Chair, starting from this day forth at the conclusion of this meeting.

Announcements: Chair Gray stated that the next Council meeting will take place sometime in September. The next four Council

meeting dates will need to be confirmed. He also inquired about Legislative Awareness Day (LAD) in October, and how that would look like in a virtual environment, if not meeting in-person. Director Brick confirmed that planning for LAD usually starts mid-summer, but with the COVID pandemic, things will be different, especially with a new Chair and officers. LAD usually takes place on a federal holiday in October at the State House in Annapolis. Awards by the Governor is given to individuals and organizations throughout the state that made significant contributions to the Deaf community in Maryland. Updates on LAD planning will be provided.

Council Member Dove notified that two members recently joined the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights (MCCR). The first member is Mr. James Evelyn, chief administrative officer for the Howard County Government. The second member is Jeffrey Rosen, a Deaf attorney and well known civil advocate and leader. MCCR is pleased to have them both onboard and ready to help advance the mission and vision of the agency.

Meeting adjourned: 3:14 pm