

# Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities

## Commission Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

Date of meeting: Wednesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023

Start Time: 10:00 am

End Time: 11:25 am

Location: B2 Hearing Room and Zoom

Members Present	
1	Gyasi Burks-Abbott – LEND Faculty, Boston Children’s Hospital/UMass Boston Institute for Community Inclusion
2	Charles Carr – Disability Policy Consortium
3	Representative Denise Garlick – House of Representatives
4	Nancy Garr-Colzie – Member, Worcester Disability Commission; Board Chair, Center for Living and Working
5	Craig Hall – Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council
6	Representative Kay Khan – House of Representatives
7	Andrew Levrault – Disabled Persons Protection Commission
8	Ann Lynch – Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office
9	Reginal Marshall – Advocates
10	Oswald Mondejar – Spaulding Network (MGB)
11	Representative Mathew Muratore – House of Representatives
12	Bridget Murphy – Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth William Francis Galvin
13	Angela Ortiz – Massachusetts Pediatric Home Nursing Campaign
14	Kathy Petkauskos – University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School
15	Carl Richardson – State House ADA Coordinator

16	Meghan Todd – Wellesley College/ Framingham Disability Commission
17	Christopher White – Road to Responsibility, Inc (RTR)
Members Not Present	
18	Melinda Troy
19	Representative Gerard Cassidy
20	Felix Martinez
21	Senator Patrick O'Connor

## **Proceedings**

### I. Welcome, Intern Introduction, Roll Call

### II. Riverside Employment Collaborative (REC) [Presentation](#)

Speakers: Stephanie Marks Director Employment Collaboratives, Kristianne Widman Assistant Director of the Employment Collaboratives, Charles Powderly Sr. Project Coordinator for the Metro West Employment Collaborative.

- Chair Garlick commented that the Metro west area wasn't previously served but is now included in the line-item budget.
- Questions/Answers:
  - REC will share the Commission's nomination forms for the Fall signature event.
  - How many small to mid-size businesses do you work with?
    - REC partners with larger enterprises but would like to create a discovery process for small/mid-size businesses.
  - What do you need most at this point? What would be most helpful to further the collaborative?
    - REC could use more staff to serve more people and regions, including the Berkshires and Cape and Islands. We are 35% under reported. There may be several job developers that attend Job Developer Networking series (J.D.N) but it doesn't get communicated that someone has been hired. Cross communication and cooperation with other state agencies is

imperative. We should share the financial obligations and more cooperation between the state agencies. We are all trying to increase employment and training outcomes for people with disabilities.

- How do you respond to people who would say what you're doing is a duplication of vocational rehab mission and job?
  - REC does a finite piece in the middle that is incredibly labor intensive such as connecting with employers. Being a job developer is time consuming, we don't duplicate, we speed it up. We are a tool in the toolkit. We are here to support job seekers through their job developer and coach.
  - Does MRC or MCB make referrals to the job developer network?
    - MCB is extremely involved. REC supports MCB internship program which has been a game changer for many people supported by MCB.
    - MRC partners with REC in different ways. There have been challenges such as their different terminology of what a job placement or an offer accepted look like. They have different reporting responsibilities based on their funding streams. Charlie suggested the Commission reaching out to MRC regarding this. Chair Garlick recommended Kathy Petkauskos from the disability employment subcommittee to reach out.
- Chair Garlick thanked Riverside Collaborative and made a comment on the presentation slide with logos that agencies that receive considerable state funding weren't included. She shared that considerable funding is being poured into MA hospitals, there have been a myriad of jobs in those hospitals and our municipalities.
- Chair Garlick didn't hear any discussion about the community and day employment programs. She shared the opportunity that the regional employment collaborative could take on a training program for employees in local communities and day employment programs to teach them how to better market their individuals and to seek jobs.
- REC works with organizations like JVS Jewish Vocational Services, ROCA, UTEC.

### III. Subcommittees Reports

- Kathy P. (Disability Employment Subcommittee)

- Subcommittee has been meeting regularly with strong attendance. Reviewing topics such as employer engagement and education, focus on small, mid-size businesses, transportation, and the WorkAbility Report.
- Three speakers have presented: Nicole LeBlanc to speak about Maryland Buy-In Program; Joe Belil from MRC to speak about the Disability Employment Tax Credit (DEITC) and how we can raise awareness amongst the business community; Becky Curran Kekula spoke about disability inclusion benchmarking tool called DEI from Disability:IN, and have an MRC speaker in August to discuss recent work with Accenture and barriers to employment related to benefits.
- Looking to focus on benefits, employers, staffing challenges and unemployment rates for persons with disabilities.
- Oz added the DEI presentation is a great review to use as a benchmark tool.
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- Charlie C. (Legislative and Budget Subcommittee)
  - Paul Spooner had a grand vision which was to create an ADA for MA. We decided that the Legislative & Budget subcommittee will serve as a clearing house for legislative and budgetary issues and highlight certain ideas. We hope other organizations will feel they are worth in advocating and can take it to the next level.
- Angela O. (Workforce Supports Subcommittee)
  - This subcommittee has been asking stakeholders what the scope of the problem is from their vintage point, impact they are seeing on how it is impacting their operations, causes of the workforce crisis and ask what their short term and long-term strategies are in addressing the problems. They are looking to see where we can make a dent, led by data although there's limited data available,
  - The next committee meeting will be in July.

#### IV. October 5 Signature Event Update

- Planning committee includes Chris White, Carl Richardson, Meghan Todd, Oz Mondejar, and Angela Ortiz. We have met several times to discuss the tentative programing for our event.
- Logo and nomination forms
- The Planning Committee has been intentional in retaining diversity suppliers.
- Oz will be facilitating an employer panel to speak on barriers for employment.

## V. Commissioner Announcements

- Meghan now works for the City of Framingham. The city is having a Flag Raising in July and everyone is welcomed.
- Chris- ABC network of Massachusetts.
- Charlie Carr and Craig Hall are putting together a young leadership program for persons with disabilities, hosted by MDDC, DPC and BCIL. More to come.
- Chair Garlick mourned the loss of several folks in the disability community.
- Chair Garlick asked subcommittee members to continue reaching out to her and Imene. DEI is vitally important for the future. Chair Garlick and Imene are still available for Commission members visits.

## VI. Adjournment 11:25