**Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Commission Meeting**

**Meeting Minutes**

Date of meeting: Wednesday, September 13th, 2023

Start Time: 10:00 am

End Time: 11:25 am

Location: B2 Hearing Room and Zoom

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| Members Present | |
| 1 | Gyasi Burks-Abbott – LEND Faculty, Boston Children’s Hospital/UMass Boston Institute for Community Inclusion |
| 2 | Representative Denise Garlick – House of Representatives |
| 3 | Craig Hall – Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council |
| 4 | Representative Kay Khan – House of Representatives |
| 5 | Andrew Levrault – Disabled Persons Protection Commission |
| 6 | Ann Lynch – Massachusetts Attorney General’s Office |
| 7 | Reginal Marshall – Advocates |
| 8 | Oswald Mondejar – Mucho Gusto Consulting |
| 9 | Representative Mathew Muratore – House of Representatives |
| 10 | Bridget Murphy – Office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth Willian Francis Galvin |
| 11 | Angela Ortiz – Partners for Youth with Disabilities |
| 12 | Kathy Petkauskos – University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School |
| 13 | Carl Richardson – State House ADA Coordinator |
| 14 | Rachel Stanton – State Treasurer’s Office |
| 15 | Meghan Todd – City of Framingham |
| 16 | Christopher White – Road to Responsibility, Inc (RTR) |
| Members Not Present | |
| 17 | Charles Carr – Disability Policy Consortium |
| 18 | Representative Gerard Cassidy |
| 19 | Nancy Garr-Colzie – Member, Worcester Disability Commission; Board Chair, Center for Living and Working |
| 20 | Felix Martinez |
| 21 | Senator Patrick O’Connor |

**Proceedings**

1. Welcome, Roll Call, Introduction of new Commissioner Rachel Stanton, Harry Weissman from Disability Policy Consortium is attending on behalf of Charles Carr, Approval of 6.14.23 meeting minutes
2. [Signature Event Update: National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) Celebration](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/national-disability-employment-awareness-month-event-series-schedule-registration-links-and-recordings).
   * All events are hybrid, CART and ASL interpreters have been requested.
   * [Thursday, October 5, 2023](https://www.mass.gov/news/national-disability-employment-awareness-month-celebration), Great Hall of Flags Main Event
     + We received a total of nine nomination forms for small-mid size organizations and large organizations to participate in receiving the 2023 National Disability Employment Awareness Month Employer Award. The awardees are:
       - MicroTek, Inc. for small to mid-size organization
       - Liberty Mutual for large organization
     + Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh confirmed as the Keynote speaker
     + Governor Healey, Senate President Spilka, Speaker of the House Mariano, Representative Josh Cutler have been invited
     + We will be honoring an Employment Supports Direct Service Provider who helps people with disabilities find, succeed at, and keep jobs in the community.
   * Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 11am: [About Us and With Us: a conversation on Being an Employee with a Disability in MA](https://www.mass.gov/news/about-us-and-with-us-a-conversation-with-thelma-williams-patti-menzel-brad-steele-and-kerry-thompson).
   * Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 1pm: [Opening Doors to Employment for Persons with Disabilities panel session](https://www.mass.gov/news/opening-doors-to-employment-for-persons-with-disabilities-panel-session)
   * Wednesday, October 11, 2023, at 11am: [Work is Possible: SSI and SSDI Myths Debunked panel presentation](https://www.mass.gov/news/work-is-possible-ssi-and-ssdi-myths-debunked-panel-presentation)
   * Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 11am: [System Failure: The Workforce Crisis’ Impact on Persons with Disabilities, their Families and Caregivers panel discussion](https://www.mass.gov/news/system-failure-the-workforce-crisis-impact-on-persons-with-disabilities-their-families-and-caregivers)
   * Recommendations and best practices for outreach:
     + Create compilation of digital and printed fliers for all the events
     + Have a social media strategy
     + Share that there will be subject matter experts, it’s a free opportunity for employers, job seekers and members of the community to open hearts and minds
     + Share these events to all networks beyond the disability community for farther outreach
     + Deliver direct invitation to legislators
     + Invite major organizations and news outlets
     + Share through the Treasurer’s office’s weekly newsletter, word of mouth and Disability, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging committee
     + MA Developmental Disabilities Council (MDDC) has been sharing these events on their social media
     + Reaching out to all Chambers of Commerce, local Disability Commissions
     + Harry will be sharing through the Disability Policy Consortium’s monthly column
     + Keep in mind to spell out acronyms for accessibility purposes
     + Send out a Press Release
     + Each commissioner to call their own local chamber of commerce
   * Recognize past Legislative and Budget Subcommittee Chair, the late Paul W. Spooner at the main event on October 5.

1. Subcommittees Reports
   * Disability Employment:
     + This subcommittee has met seven times.
     + Focus has been on educating its members on the barriers to employment for persons with disabilities and best practices and resources that are available in the community.
     + There have been 3 guests speakers.
     + Future goals will be on
       - engaging and educating employers with a focus on small to mid-size employers.
       - Strategy of a meaningful and sustainable change and impact from a policy or legislative perspective on how work income affect’s people’s public benefits.
       - Overlap with the other subcommittees and would like to identify ways to collaborate.
       - Leverage resources and initiatives that are already aligning in MA.
   * Legislative and Budget:
     + Harry Weissman, Director of Advocacy at Disability policy Consortiums is temporarily filling in for Charlie Carr.
     + Members met earlier, will vote on a co-chair in November.
   * Workforce Supports:
     + Listening tour of experts and hear about what is going on in the Commonwealth from diverse pool of stakeholders.
     + FY24 goal would be to establish objectives using information we have received and learned this past year.
2. Annual Report Review
   * October 18 meeting will be postponed to a later date, new date will be circulated.
   * Annual report will be released after all Commissioners have been given the opportunity to provide feedback.
   * Subcommittees chairs have been asked to send their individual report to include in the annual report.
3. Commissioner Announcements
   * Oz- the Health Equity Compact will be testifying at the State House on September 20, 2023. <https://healthequitycompact.org/bill-hearing/>
   * Craig- MDDC will be hosting the Paul W. Spooner Summit on September 29 and 30. <https://www.paulspoonergenerationalleadership2023.org/>
   * Gyasi wrote a blog post for the Association for Autism and Neurodiversity (AANE) on the intersection of race and disability: <https://aane.org/autism-info-faqs/library/looking-both-ways-standing-at-the-intersection-of-race-disability/?fbclid=IwAR0hflkZ0Xh0163qEkPH65brLb3U8KLMzs0fGCtOxO20iNiM-kTLgIpO5aY> and an editorial with the Boston Globe titled “Don’t make it impossible for people with disabilities to sabe money” <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/08/06/opinion/ssi-benefits-asset-limit/>
   * Kathy- back in July attended a press conference where Governor Healey signed [an executive order](https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-healey-signs-executive-order-establishing-digital-accessibility-and-equity-governance-board) to make the Executive Branch digital footprint accessible. MA is leading the way in tech accessibility.
     + Carl- each secretariat will have its own Chief Accessibility Officer and there will be a Governance Board, and a public facing dashboard. <https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-healey-signs-executive-order-establishing-digital-accessibility-and-equity-governance-board>
   * Last week the White House announced a new proposed rule change to Section 504 that strengthens disability rights and prohibitions against the discrimination of people with disabilities: <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2023/09/07/hhs-issues-new-proposed-rule-to-strengthen-prohibitions-against-discrimination-on-basis-of-disability-in-health-care-and-human-services-programs.html?fbclid=IwAR0Sd8643yBpcjneYbGYWh2n7PAoIg_rcDMtLvALOQ7Nxgn9F1F2zo23MZY>
4. Adjournment