

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

## **Commission Meeting**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Date of meeting: Wednesday, September 13<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	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 William 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**

- I. 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
  
- II. [Signature Event Update: National Disability Employment Awareness Month \(NDEAM\) Celebration.](#)
  - All events are hybrid, CART and ASL interpreters have been requested.
  - [Thursday, October 5, 2023](#), 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.](#)
  - Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 1pm: [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](#)
- Thursday, October 12, 2023, at 11am: [System Failure: The Workforce Crisis' Impact on Persons with Disabilities, their Families and Caregivers panel discussion](#)
- 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.

### III. 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.

#### IV. 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.

#### V. 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=IwAR0hflkZ0Xh0163qEkPH65brLb3U8KLMzs0f>

[GCtOxO20iNiM-kTLgIpO5aY](#) and an editorial with the Boston Globe titled “Don’t make it impossible for people with disabilities to save 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](#) 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\\_rcDMtLvALQ7Nxgn9F1F2zo23MZY](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_rcDMtLvALQ7Nxgn9F1F2zo23MZY)

## VI. Adjournment