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| ​​Minutes​ | |
| Digital Accessibility and Equity Governance ​​Board Meeting (DAEGB)​ | |
| **​​DATE​** | ​ 2/5/2025 |
| **​​TIME​** | ​2:00 PM​ EST. |
| **​​MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY​** | ​​Ashley Bloom, CIAO, EOTSS |

1. **Introduction and Roll Call**

Jason Snyder, Secretary, Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (present)

Ashley Bloom, CIAO EOTSS (present)

Mark Fine, Assistant Secretary for Administration, Executive Office of Administration and Finance (present)

Heath Fahle, Assistant Secretary for Finance, Executive Office of Economic Development (present)

Antoine Harrison, SCIO, Executive Office of Education (absent)

Greg Martin, SCIO Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (present)

Brian Chase, Executive Office of Health and Human Services (present)

Paul Franzese, COO, Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (absent)

Maria Michalski, SCIO, Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (present)

Dave Bedard, SCIO, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (present)

Yarlennys Villaman, Governor’s Office (absent)

Dan Sionkiewicz (present)

Dr. Opeoluwa Sotonwa, Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (present)

John Oliveira, Commissioner, Massachusetts Commission for the Blind (absent)

Olufunke Adenodi, Interim Secretariat CIO, Executive Office of Veterans Services (present)

Mary McCauley, Massachusetts Office on Disability (present)

Minh Ha (present)

David Kingsbury (present)

Larry Goldberg (present)

1. **VOTE TO APPROVE july and october board MEETING MINUTES**

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Ashley Bloom proposes motion to vote on both sets of meeting minutes, Dan Sionkiewicz Seconded.

A roll call vote is taken as follows:

1. Sec. Snyder: approve
2. Chair Bloom: approve
3. Heath Fahle: approve
4. Marc Fine: approve
5. Antoine Harrison: absent
6. Greg Martin: approve
7. Paul Franzese: absent
8. Maria Michalski: approve
9. Dave Bedard: approve
10. Brian Chase: approve
11. Yarlennys Villaman: absent
12. Dan Sionkiewicz: approve
13. Dr. Sotonwa: approve
14. Commissioner Oliviera: absent
15. Mary Mahon McCauley: absent – arrive later
16. Minh Ha: approve
17. Larry Goldberg: approve
18. David Kingsbury: approve
19. Olufunke Adenodi: approve

Motion passes.

1. **WORKING GROUPS PRESENTATIONS/UPDATES.**

Working groups: Accessibility and Equity Policy Update; Community Outreach; Public Reporting; and Accessibility Training.

**Accessibility Training.** David Kingsbury and Ashley Bloom.

Primary objective: Put together a training plan by the Central Accessibility Training team and training resource center for Commonwealth employees to be trained on digital accessibility awareness, industry requirements and standards as well as specific trainings for those who work in procurement, digital software designers and developers and those who work in leadership so they know how they contribute to the area of digital accessibility as well as their responsibilities and requirements. Developed trainings for accessibility fundamentals and accessibility for leadership. Trainings being developed are leading into training plan documents that are being written to include our colleagues at the Human Resources Division which oversees all of HR for the Commonwealth and collaborating with HR department at EOTSS to make sure we can deliver accessibility content and requirements into mandatory annual trainings. Training is a requirement per the executive order, value of accessibility training for employees, workplace culture, equity and inclusion to the workplace, increasing opportunities for employment and advancement, overall great working environment for everybody. Upskill employees; how it will upskill employees and how it is going to benefit our constituencies both internal and external. Proposed training plan: providing an awareness training plan to provide the basics of digital accessibility to level set everyone. Then, based on employee’s role, create an additional 20-minute modules for employees in specific areas such as procurement, document creation, content creation, social media. We will have training modules which will stream down from leadership and management for employees to take (based on their specific role). Self-paced trainings, as well as additional resources available. Training Resource Center is live on mass.gov. Targeted trainings, resources for documents, accessibility requirements, color contrast, coding, content creation, live trainings, accessibility fundamentals, working with word and pdf, interactive practice modules and content.

Comments/Questions?

Secretary Snyder asks about lessons learned thus far- notes that prior to him being at EOTSS, mandatory security training was introduced with enormously successful results/impact. Are there any lessons from that effort we can apply? He anticipates this effort to hold similar gravity/impact.

Ashley Bloom notes that our friends at HRD and HR are leveraging the process that they used for the security training and replicating it for accessibility, doesn’t anticipate there being any barrier to having this training rolled out the same as it was for security.

Adam G. expands on that; the cybersecurity training is something that went out to all employees, we are making sure that the information we are putting into a required training for our employees is something that will be useful for everyone. We are going to offer targeted training that the recommendation has been to communicate out to team leaders, which team should take that sort of content to make sure that it is appropriate to not, forcing hundreds or thousands of people who would never build a pdf for the Commonwealth to learn the technical details of doing so, we’re making sure we’re getting to the right audience. Partnering with HRD to make that happen.

David Kingsbury asks if the access team, has considered doing outreach to agencies that aren’t strictly state employees like MBTA, Massport, municipal, county governments etc so people could take advantage. Not necessarily live trainings, but some of the auto-pace trainings because it seems like a great set of resources that a lot of people could benefit from beyond state government.

Adam G. responds: that is something we have in the roadmap, right now the content and the trainings we have been doing have been intended as a soft launch to reach folks immediately in EOTSS while we collect feedback on how we can improve. The roadmap has outreach to municipalities as well as resources for schools and educators that would benefit from this information. We are even planning to include them in the live trainings. Currently the live trainings can host up to 500 people but we do have the ability to expand that in the future and we do also plan on doing some outreach and road shows to municipalities and schools in the coming year.

Devyn Paros shares that Jim Canavan, EOTSS HR Director, is familiar with how the cybersecurity training was rolled out and was able to give some good guidance on mandatory training at the outset and on the diverse roles at the Commonwealth. Regarding outreach, EOTSS also has an office of municipal and school technology that has a lot of good communication channels with schools and municipalities, so that is another outlet for us to communicate what the team is doing and get those resources to broader consumption and broader awareness and use.

Ashley Bloom shares that she is plugged in with the Municipal team and will make sure we share all our resources for digital accessibility on the current shared SharePoint site (and Mass.gov). Ashley has been receiving lots of great feedback, including from other states who are finding those resources online. Adam is doing a really great job of putting this together. We’re looking forward to seeing what he has in store for additional trainings.

Marc Fine asks for clarification on scope of training and if it is annually or one-time. Ashley explains that the training will be part of the annual training stack.

Next steps for training group: Continue internal meetings with HR. As more trainings are being created, we are going to present them to the working group members to get their feedback and pilot them out to get additional feedback from attendees. Present training planning document to HR in the next couple of weeks to get feedback and put together the process for what we need to do get it in the required training set. Adam G., HRD folks, and learning coordinators will continue to work on the initial training that is going to go into the stack for accessibility awareness requirements; the working group will then go over it and provide feedback.

**Policy Updates group.** Mary Mahon McCauley and Larry Goldberg with Julia O’Leary presenting.

Larry Goldberg presenting with Julia O’Leary.

The group has been reviewing updates to the enterprise accessibility policies. The new policy draft is designed to align with the new title II that the DOJ filed last year as well as industry standards. The group reviewed the accessibility testing matrix that set forth minimum testing accessibility requirements for operating systems and assistive technologies and browsers. Larry Goldberg adds that the group is looking very carefully at roles and titles and making it crystal clear for each secretariat and agency who will be in charge of ensuring these policies are carried through. The other issue is to make sure that we have alignment across all the different departments, make the department and agencies, can and have addressed the policies. Discussion regarding review of procurement policies, general policies and procedures inventory, audit and enforcement of policies and procedures.

**Community Outreach group.** Minh Ha and Yarlennys Villaman. Minh presents.

Minh Ha discusses feedback flyer and survey form drafting. Next steps will be getting feedback from the group members, confirm language for the headline and discuss the different channels we can use to publicize.

Ashley adds that they are looking for a robust external constituent pool, as well as an internal employee pool for feedback. Ashley calls for everyone’s help in trying to get more people interested in participating. Ashley discusses potential areas where feedback would be beneficial and wants to make sure we’re not only providing an opportunity for people to give their feedback in a live session but also in a survey format. Once this survey is developed in conjunction with the data team and the research team for EOTSS, people would be able to provide agency/secretariat specific feedback and that would be collected by the accessibility officer or any other person in charge of collecting such feedback in order to make such enhancements to their programs, services and activities.

Mary Mahon McCauley discusses more targeted outreach than the Newsletter. Suggests identifying certain job titles in the Commonwealth who would then be able to disseminate within their agencies.

David Kingsbury asks for clarification on scope of who will take the survey. Ashley discusses some examples beyond commonwealth employees including independent living centers, DDS, Mass Accessibility, etc. We’re looking for as many internal participants and as many external participants as we can to get a wide swath of different representations and perspectives from various disability communities as well as people who may not use assistive technology.

**Public Reporting Group**

The public reporting working group is charged with creating a public reporting dashboard. Dave Bedard and Ashley are co-leading.

Dave Bedard states that the working group discussions have been robust, and the work is headed in the right direction. The group decided that a maturity model that is more quantitative versus qualitative, should be the focus. There are a number of different models out there. The group has explored a few and the ones that seems most suitable are federally adopted. There are similarities as you would expect in the different maturity models, some have five levels of maturity, some might have four but they all cover the typical spectrum of maturity from initiating the very basics, to what you might consider very mature or optimized. The group will look at the maturity models and determine which dimensions we would be looking to report on. The dimensions are very robust, for example in one model we were looking at, there are 10 different dimensions ranging from status of training, staffing model, procurement processes, governance. The group is meeting next week to start to refine all of those.

Ashley Bloom shares an example of a model. Ashley explains what dimensions are (everything from staffing to policies and standards, governance, procurement, technology life cycle activities, testing and validation for our software, communications, document accessibility, training, culture and leadership collaboration), these dimensions serve as a coverage area for an accessibility program. Ashley is going to have the working group members review the tracker document for its applicability for secretariats and agencies. The tracker will be the culmination of all the work we’re doing and then some so identify where we are on the spectrum of maturity and can grow and develop from there to increase our maturity score over time.

Dave Bedard goes over next steps including the review of the tracking scoring document (prioritizing certain metrics and dimensions). Determine what guidance we give the secretariats. Discuss the dashboard tool options. Lastly, establish what the first iteration will be and implement it.

Ashley Bloom asks Secretary Snyder to offer input based on his experience with the rollout of dashboards for the state: Jason I’m going to call out on you given we have precedence on rolling out dashboards for the state. Secretary Snyder offers that there are measures of progress that go beyond maturity model (for example the information we get from the survey pools), so there are some elements we can capture and then measure over time for progress. And my advice would be, look across the workgroups, work with the workgroup leads and identify what else beyond the maturity model, using the survey as an example, to include and continue to measure over time.

1. **CIAO UPDATE /DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY PROGRAM UPDATES.**

Ashley Bloom gives updates on the items below:

1.Strategic plan for digital accessibility and equity has been completed internal to TSS.

2.Digital accessibility 3-year roadmap for TSS has been created (2024-2028).

3.Accessibility Officers hired at Brian Chase at EOHHS (transfers from Veteran Services began in October) and in process of hiring at EOAF and sourcing for Officer at Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretariat. We are putting together a plan for TSS to fill in those gaps at secretariats that do not have accessibility officers at this time due to limitations in funding. Some secretariats are eager to hire their own secretariat officers. Lots of great things happening on the staffing front to get accessibility leads at the secretariats to start implementing and developing their programs and planning.

4.Digital accessibility office hours have been created and are held twice weekly and trainings held weekly. It’s going to very well, lots of people asking accessibility questions.

5.Digital accessibility for artificial intelligence training and resources provided to student cohorts and developers. We are working with our cohorts from our university partners on the AI projects as well as the Center for Excellence for Artificial Intelligence. We have been offering trainings and we’ve come up with an Accessibility AI page for people to use as a resource to develop their particular projects.

6. ITS61 Accessibility Vendor Services contract update meetings – soon to be ITS82. About to release an RFR for vendors and will be scoring those vendors in the next couple of months. Hopeful to have that contract released by the end of June or within the first month of July FY 2026.

1. **BOARD NEXT STEPS.**

1.Continued involvement and engagement with board working groups

2.Decide on FY26 board working groups at next meeting

3.Review and provide feedback on Enterprise Accessibility Policy

4.Review and provide feedback on annual Digital Accessibility Board report.

1. **BOARD REMARKS.** None.
2. **PUBLIC REMARKS.** None.

Ashley Bloom acknowledges Mary Mahon McCauley who is retiring at the end of the month. Special thanks on her contributions to the Board and the Commonwealth.

Mary offers her thanks and commentary regarding her career at the Commonwealth.

Secretary Snyder offers his thanks and congratulations to Mary on her service and contributions to the Commonwealth.

Thanks to Julia O’Leary who is also leaving her role at MOD. She offers her thanks and commentary regarding her time at MOD and the Board.

Motion to Adjourn by Ashley, seconded by Mary.

**Meeting ended 3:41pm.**