

The Baltimore County Commission on Disabilities  
Monthly Meeting  
January 18, 2017

**Welcome and Introductions:** Jerry Bullinger, Mike Bullis, Chad Casserly, Benjamin Dubin, Philester Ealy, Mike Gahagan, Julie Gaynor, David Greenberg, Brad Kressman, Elizabeth Lazzaro, Angela Manning, Calvin Mitchell, Stephen Morgan, Kathleen O'Brien, Terri Parrish, Dr. Jay Schein, Jo Anne Schneider, Mary Scott, Paulette Spriggs, Karen Volz, Santa Wallace, Karl Weber, Lois Pusinsky

**Staff:** Hal Franklin, Colleen Nevy

**Report of the Executive Committee**

- With lots of changes across the country and new people coming into the government, we are looking to use the September 2017 Commission meeting as a strategic planning session. The last time the Commission had such a planning session was in 1999. Mr. Franklin will speak with Ms. Van Arsdale about hiring a strategic planner to run the session.
- As a result of suggestions made by Bill Frank (Deputy Director of the MD Department of Disabilities) at the last Alliance of Commissions meeting, we would like to take a look at how to lobby effectively during the Maryland General Assembly. In November we plan on having someone from the MD legislature as a speaker to discuss effective lobbying.
- Also at the Alliance of Commissions meeting the Employed Individuals with Disabilities Program (EID) was discussed. The EID Program, allows people with disabilities on Medical Assistance to keep their benefits when they begin working.
- Mr. Franklin suggested the Commission take a survey to get input on how to make the Commission more meaningful. Such surveys were conducted in 2003 and 2009.
- The group discussed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a Federal law that requires schools to serve the education needs of eligible students with disabilities. IDEA ensures students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education, just like all other children. Schools are required to provide special education in the least restrictive environment.
- Council Representatives on the Commission:
  - District One: Tom Quirk, Recommendation for Kathleen O'Brien
  - District Two: Vicki Almond, Representative Jay Schein
  - District Three: Wade Kach, Representative Dave Ward
  - District Four: Julian Jones, Representative Larry Hughes
  - District Five: David Marks, Recommendation for Sally
  - District Six: Cathy Bevins, Representative Julie Gaynor
  - District Seven: Todd Crandell, Representative (none at this time)
- A letter will be sent out to the Council Representatives with resources guides, HAMP brochures, etc., to remind them that we are hear as an advisory people and that these materials are available to people in their areas.

## **Discussion:**

This month's Commission meeting was devoted to the 2017 Maryland Legislative Session. Areas of discussion included legislation affecting individuals with disabilities, and the budget of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

### Independent Living

Legislative Day is on Thursday January 26, 2017 at 8:30. Opportunity to talk about power of independent living services and what they are doing in the local community to get to know their local legislators and discuss bills.

### DDA Budget

The Governor announced that there will be no cuts to services. However:

- His budget includes a rate increase for providers of community services at 2%, instead of the 3.5% that was mandated as part of the Minimum Wage Act of 2014. This is a critical issue for DDA community service providers which are already in the midst of a recruiting crisis for qualified direct support professionals who deserve to be paid more than minimum wage.

The Governor also announced a bill to "reign in spending" called the Common Sense pending Act of 2017. There is a concern that it will not include funding for critical services such as those provided to people with disabilities.

### Earned Sick and Safe Leave

MACS supported with amendments last year.

- Seeks to give community mental health and DD providers flexibility to manage leave that would cause a disruption in services to a person with disabilities who is being supported by a provider.

### 2017 Maryland Legislative Session – Bills that were discussed:

Legislation as of January 18, 2017:

- HB 15 Family Law – Destitute Adults – Extraordinary Medical Expenses for DD and Civil Action. SB 79 Family Law – Destitute Adults – Extraordinary Medical Expenses for DD and Civil Action.
  - Adding the extraordinary medical expenses of a destitute adult child with a developmental disability to the support required from the destitute adult child's parent if the parent has or is able to earn sufficient means to provide the support; etc.
- HB 21 Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Olympic and Paralympic Games Medals and Prizes. SB 53 Income Tax – Subtraction Modification – Olympic and Paralympic Games Medals and Prizes
  - Providing a subtraction modification under the Maryland income tax for the value of certain medals awarded by certain committees and the amount of any prize money or honoraria that is received from a certain committee that is the result of a performance at the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games.
- HB 81 Estates and Trusts – Conditions of Disability and Incapacity – Confinement

- Repealing “confinement” as a condition of disability for purposes of guardianship proceedings to protect a disabled individual’s property as well as a condition of incapacity as defended under the Maryland Trust Act.
- HB 128 State Disabilities Plan and Interagency Disabilities Board – Revision
  - Altering date, from October 1 to December 1 of each year, the Secretary of Disabilities must submit an analysis of the State’s progress in implementing the State Disabilities Plan and related performance objectives to the Governor and the General Assembly.
  - Altering membership of the Interagency Disabilities Board.
  - Altering the required elements of the State Disabilities Plan.
- SB 1 Education – Specialized Intervention Services – Report
  - Requiring certain county boards of education to report certain information relating to the provision of specialized intervention services to the State Department of Education and the General Assembly on or before a certain date each year; etc.
- SB 180 Independent Living Tax Credit Act
  - Allowing an individual or a corporation a credit against the State income tax equal to 50% of the renovation of construction costs incurred during the taxable year to provide specified accessibility and visitability features to or within a home; providing that the credit may not exceed \$5,000; etc.

The Arc Maryland 2017 Public Policy Platform:

The Arc Maryland works to create a world where children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) have and enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

2017 Priorities

- Funding for Community Programs
  - Protect current funding and secure additional funds to ensure a stable, quality system of Community Programs funded by the Developmental Disabilities Administration that supports all individuals, regardless of age and severity of disability.
  - Ensure funds to meet statutory requirements for annual cost of living increase for DDA community programs and direct support professionals.
- Waiting List
  - See funding to meet the needs of individuals on DDA waiting list.
- Transitioning Youth
  - Fully fund all Transitioning Youth (YT) who exit the school system at age 21 so they have the supports they need to participate in their community jobs, and life-long learning and/or higher education to ensure meaningful adult life and opportunities.
- Education & Children’s Services
  - Ensure students with I/DD have access to inclusive, quality, free and appropriate public education and receive appropriate accommodations to participate in all aspects of education life.
  - Ensure children with I/DD are included in neighborhood child care, regardless of the nature or level of their disability.
- Employment

- Increase opportunities for competitive, integrated employment at fair wages with sufficient funding to provide these supports.
- Affordable Housing
  - Increase affordable and accessible housing so people with I/DD can live in the community.
- Civil Rights
  - Close the remaining state institutions and oppose the expansion of the State Residential Centers (SRCs) and new admissions including respite care.

## **Committee Reports**

### Education Work Group

- No update at this time on the Disability Awareness Coordinator. A letter was just sent to Rebecca Rider regarding the position.
- Anti-Bullying campaign – we would like to find out who is in charge of that.
- Office of Special Education and Health working together on the Health Education Curriculum. A survey was sent out and it was brought to their attention that students who are on the certificate track are not getting Life Education. They are working on figuring out how to get teachers trained to be able to teach this course.

### Housing

- Making sure that the things they advocated for in the CDBG plan actually made it into the plan.
- Making sure that there are systems and paying attention to rules for the population who cannot qualify for vouchers, low income programs, etc.
- A group has been meeting by telephone conferences for the past few months. Thinking of speaking with small groups and discuss the myths about the HOME Act.

### **Suggestions for Upcoming Speakers**

- Patricia Mustipher – Coordinator, Related Services
- Rebecca Rider – Director of Special Education
- David Skinner - Department of Planning

### **Adjournment: 1:58**

The next meeting of the Commission on Disabilities is scheduled for February 15, 2017