



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2026
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present:

M Pease, Chair
Tica Torres-Bolivar, Vice Chair
Debb Dunn
Rev. Ali K.C. Bell
Nicole Hollywood
Courtney Mariette
Stephen Martin
Paula Neira
Wendy Novak

Angel Perez
Brandon Russell
Calvin Greyson Ryan
Jeffrey Slavin
Sarah Stern
Anissa "Donny" Truitt
Phillip Westry
Ly Xīnzhèn Zhǎngsūn

Commissioners Not Present

Mickey Dhir
Anthony Fox
Asher Kennedy

Staff and Guests Present:

Jeremy Browning, Director, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs
Taylor Harer, Special Assistant, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs
Maria Martinez, Special Secretary & Senior Advisor to the Governor
Greg Yancy, Chief of Staff - Governor's Office of Community Initiatives

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to Order by Interim Chair Pease at 6:02pm. Housekeeping and Meeting Guidelines were read and acknowledged. Commissioners were reminded to add their pronouns to their Zoom names and instructions were provided.
- II. Roll Call: Roll call was conducted by Interim Chair Pease. Additionally, they provided a review of the voting procedures using the Zoom reaction functions to indicate vote.
- III. Welcome and Greetings - Special Secretary Maria Martinez: Maria Martinez thanks the group on behalf of Governor Moore, praising their work advancing equity and

belonging. She shared a personal connection to the Commission's work and highlighted key contributors while expressing gratitude and optimism for the group's continued work.

- IV. Agenda Approval: Interim Chair Pease presented the agenda for general remarks or comments. Hearing none, the agenda was approved via unanimous consent.
- V. Reports:
 - A. Interim Chair Report: Interim Chair Pease expressed gratitude for staff and welcomed new commissioners, highlighting excitement about collaboration and the commission's next chapter. They emphasized the importance of the upcoming strategic planning process, encouraging full participation to reflect on past work, address challenges, and set future goals to better serve Maryland communities.
 - B. Director's Report: Director Browning shared updates on the new GOCI website, reminded commissioners to complete financial disclosures, and indicate committee preferences. He announced a likely July 12 strategic planning retreat, plans to circulate the 2025 annual report for feedback, and an opportunity for two commissioners to join a Maryland 250 planning committee for an August 8 event at Bowie State. He closed by reviewing the Commission's legislative mandates.
- VI. Approval: March 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes - There were no additions or corrections to the minutes and they were approved via unanimous consent.
- VII. Special Election: Commission Officers - Director Browning presided over the special election process:
 - A. Chair Election: M. Pease was the sole candidate seeking the Chair position. Commissioner Slavin made the motion to approve M Pease as Chair and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Neira. M Pease was unanimously elected as Commission Chair for the remainder of 2026
 - B. Vice Chair Election: Tica Torres Bolivar was the sole candidate seeking the Vice Chair position. Commissioner Slavin made a motion to approve Tica Torres Bolivar as Vice Chair and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Kastner. Torres as Vice Chair was unanimously elected as Commission Chair for the remainder of 2026.
- VIII. Discussion & Approval: Community Needs Assessment Detailed Findings Report - The commission discussed the Community Needs Detailed Findings Report, with Director Browning providing background on its development. Commissioner Hollywood highlighted the methodology and noted the report's strong results despite limitations. Commissioners expressed appreciation for the work and its value for future advocacy. A motion was made by Commissioner Zhǎngsūn to conditionally approve the report to allow minor edits and the motion was seconded by Vice Chair Torres. The motion was approved unanimously.

- IX. Discussion: 2026 Legislative Session Debrief - Director Browning summarized the 2026 legislative session, noting the commission tracked over 50 bills, submitted 29 testimonies, advanced seven priority bills, and opposed all anti-LGBTQIA+ legislation. Key takeaways included improving prioritization, clarifying roles, strengthening partnerships, and developing a long-term strategy.
- X. Discussion: Pride Month Events - Director Browning discussed upcoming Pride Month events, highlighting a public calendar of celebrations and encouraging commissioners to share any updates or additional events. Commissioners were invited to participate in events and represent the commission across the state.
- XI. Open Forum for Announcements or Comments: Commissioners shared upcoming events and resources, including a Pride Month educational program hosted by the Autistic People of Color Fund and expanded in-person services at Planned Parenthood of Maryland. Chair Pease noted their upcoming research presentation and encouraged continued information sharing.
- XII. Closing Remarks: Chair Pease delivered closing remarks, expressing gratitude and appreciation for the commission's trust and emphasizing a commitment to collaboration, support, and open communication. They encouraged members to stay engaged and support one another and their communities
- XIII. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:07pm by Chair Pease.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Special Assistant, Taylor Harer