



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2026
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present:

Lee Blinder, Chair
M Pease, Vice Chair
Joan Bryan
Josie Caballero
Mickey Dhir
Kurt Doan
Nicole Hollywood
Courtney Mariette
Paula Neira

Wendy Novak
Brandon Russell
Jeffrey Slavin
Sarah Stern
Joe Toolan
Tica Torres-Bolivar
Phillip Westry
Ly Xīnzhèn Zhǎngsūn

Commissioners Not Present:

Debb Dunn
Stephen Martin
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

- I. Call to Order: The meeting was called to Order by Chair Blinder at 6:03pm. 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 Chair Blinder. Additionally, Chair Blinder provided a review of the voting procedures using the Zoom reaction functions to indicate vote.
- III. Agenda Approval: Chair Blinder presented the agenda for general remarks or comments. Hearing none, the agenda was approved via unanimous consent.

- IV. Welcome and Tribute to Outgoing Members: Special Secretary, Public Engagement & Community Initiatives, Y. Maria Martinez - Special Secretary Martinez thanked the commission for its work, highlighted its impact, and emphasized the personal importance of the work the Commission does. Secretary Martinez honored outgoing commissioners: Lee Blinder for historic trans leadership, Joan Bryan for longtime advocacy, Josie Caballero for policy and governance leadership, Kurt Doan for education and rural advocacy, and Joe Toolan for foundational leadership as inaugural chair. Outgoing commissioners reflected on the personal nature of the work and the importance of representation, with the meeting closing in gratitude for their service and lasting impact on LGBTQIA+ equity in Maryland.
- V. Reports:
 - A. Chair Report: Chair Blinder reflected on their tenure, highlighting the Commission's accomplishments and the importance of representation, including their personal experiences with systemic barriers. They emphasized the commission's advocacy on policy, incarceration inequities, and support for marginalized communities, while calling for stronger allyship amid broader political challenges. They closed with expressing pride in the commission's impact, confidence in its future, and a continued commitment to advancing equity and liberation.
 - B. Vice Chair Report: Vice Chair Pease expressed deep gratitude to outgoing commissioners, highlighting their individual contributions. They gave special thanks to Chair Blinder for centering trans voices and modeling values-driven leadership. They reflected on the commission as a meaningful, community-centered space that fostered learning, collaboration, and care, emphasizing the importance of aligning actions with values to support marginalized communities.
 - C. Director's Report: Director Browning thanked Special Secretary Martinez for her leadership and support, and expressed gratitude to commissioners for their dedication. He provided administrative updates, shared a digital Commissioner Manual, stated the upcoming financial disclosure deadline (April 30, 2026), and plans to resume committee meetings. He also highlighted the next commission meeting on May 11, 2026, which will include a special chair election and review of the community needs assessment report. Director Browning closed by reminding members of the commission's mandate to assess challenges, provide policy recommendations, and support legislative testimony.
- VI. Approval: February 9, 2026 Meeting Minutes - There were no additions or corrections to the minutes and they were approved via unanimous consent.
- VII. Updates: 2026 Legislative Session - Chair Caballero and Director Browning reviewed the Policy Committee process, highlighting ongoing efforts to improve responsiveness to bill amendments and ensure timely input from commissioners. The committee has been meeting regularly and has submitted testimony on more than 27 bills, working to balance broad member engagement with the fast pace of the legislative session.
 - A. The Commission reviewed and approved the final set of legislative priorities, including additional bills identified by the Policy Committee. A motion was

made by Chair Caballero to approve the recommendations of the Policy Committee for this session. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Doan and the motion was passed unanimously.

- B. Director Browning invited the Commission to attend LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Day on March 16, 2026, as an opportunity to engage with legislators and advance the Commission's priorities.
- VIII. Discussion: International Transgender Day of Visibility - The Commission discussed upcoming International Transgender Day of Visibility events on or around March 31, 2026. Commissioners were encouraged to share local events and Pride celebrations with Director Browning to maintain a comprehensive statewide calendar.
- IX. Open Forum for Announcements or Comments: Chair Blinder invited commissioners and members of the public to share announcements, including upcoming Trans Day of Visibility and community events. Anissa "Donny" Truitt, a member of the public and incoming commissioner, introduced themselves, sharing their background as a nonbinary community advocate, founder, and technologist focused on creating inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ and BIPOC communities. They expressed interest in contributing to the Commission's work.
- X. Closing Remarks: Chair Blinder expressed gratitude to the Commission, reflecting on the honor of serving as chair and the meaningful collaboration among members. They encouraged everyone to take care of themselves and one another, acknowledged the challenges of the current moment, and shared optimism for the Commission's future.
- XI. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 7:20pm by Chair Blinder.
- XII. Minutes respectfully submitted by: Special Assistant, Taylor Harer