

**Meeting Summary**  
**Virginia Disability Commission**  
*<http://dls.state.va.us/disability.htm>*

**October 29, 2004, 1:00 PM**  
**Senate Room A**  
**General Assembly Building**

***Background/Opening Remarks***

Lt. Governor Tim Kaine, Commission chairman, began the meeting by explaining the changes to the Commission in terms of membership and staffing and reviewed the Commission's recent history and current priorities. The Commission was reconstituted as a codified legislative commission during the 2004 General Assembly Session with the passage of [HB 817](#) (Van Landingham) and [SB 381](#) (Puller). Pursuant to state law (§ [30-232](#) et seq.), the Commission membership is twelve, which includes six legislators, five citizen appointees, and the Lt. Governor. After the current chairman's term in office expires, subsequent chairs shall be legislators. Staffing duties are now provided by the Division of Legislative Services. The Commission must be reconstituted by legislation after three years, and it must receive its own appropriations during the 2005 General Assembly Session in order to continue. (Current funding is being provided out of the Clerk of the Senate's operating budget as approved by the Joint Rules Committee.) After the members introduced themselves, they elected Delegate McQuigg as vice chair of the Commission.

***Presentations***

DRS Commissioner, Jim Rothrock, provided a PowerPoint overview of the Disability Commission since its inception, reviewing programs established, priorities of the various renditions of the Commission, and Commission related or sponsored legislation.

Denise Goode, Chair of the Disability Commission Housing Workgroup provided a brief overview of the Housing workgroup efforts and noted that the accessible housing registry would be rolled out at the Governor's Housing Conference, beginning on November 15. Denise also reported that at its last meeting, VHDA agreed to investigate the possibility of VHDA serving as the central agency to collect and maintain information for the public housing agencies in Virginia that administer the Housing Choice Voucher Program. VHDA is in the process of collecting the following data from each voucher agency: number of vouchers allocated to the PHA; number of vouchers on PHA waiting list; number of voucher waiting list consumers that are elderly, homeless, or have a disability.

An update on the needs of brain injured consumers was provided by the Virginia Alliance of Brain Injury Service providers. Harry Weinstock and Anne McDonnell of the Brain Injury Association spoke about the continued need for a brain injury waiver. They discussed their decision last year to support delay of the waiver in favor of ensuring funding for programs that were about to lose funding under the Cognitive Neurotrauma Initiatives. Diana Thorpe from

DMAS responded to questions from Commission members regarding costs and alternative institutional placements. The cost of the waiver, approximately \$65,000/year per person, was developed by averaging the ICF and Nursing home alternative placement costs. The waiver would pay for services in congregate living. Testimony was provided by Rev. Clyde Shelton, the parent of a brain injury survivor concerned that at his advancing age, he will soon no longer be able to care for his son at home. He discussed a home being developed for adults with brain injury, the costs the home would entail and the need for these and other support services for persons with brain injury. Lt. Governor Kaine asked Diana Thorpe to provide some detailed information on costs and other details for the next meeting. The members expressed a consensus that Brain Injury waiver should be a one of the Commission's work priorities this year.

Doug Rueff from the State Board of Elections made a presentation on the accessibility of polling facilities. He discussed the money received under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) and work with the Centers for Independent Living to survey polling places and try to make them fully accessible. Delegate Reese identified the expansion of availability of absentee voting as a potentially cost effective alternative to full poll accessibility.

### ***Member Discussion of Work Plan***

The members settled on some basic issues to be prioritized for the next two meetings. These include housing, transportation, Olmstead, voting, and the Assistive Technology Loan Authority. Mr. Howell suggested that the Commission review the program/funding matrix of past Disability Commission initiatives at the next meeting in order for the members to assess the status of the various ongoing initiatives and identify other priorities for the Commission. Future meeting dates were set for November 15 at 9:30am and December 17 at 1:00pm.

### ***Public Hearing***

A public hearing was held. Several speakers representing the brain injury community spoke about the need for a brain injury waiver and other services.

- ◆ The Virginia Alliance of Brain Injury Service Providers sponsored a reception after the meeting adjourned.