



Commission on Child Care
Full Commission Meeting: Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2025-Approved
Location: Virtual Meeting Hosted on Microsoft TEAMS

Members Present: Jennifer Arnaiz, Tracey Clay, Allison Fialkov, Elka Forbes, Brandon Howard, Melissa Jordan, Maya Massey, Eden Medhanie, Laurie Moran, Bill Polman, Nagwa Rizk and Lesley Romanoff

Members Absent: Niambi Heyward, Yvonne Iscandari and Tara Philips

Guests Present: Kimberly Pena-Molina (COA), Carley Beres, Amaya Cook, Rossana Thordahl-Espinoza, Kayleigh Lawson, Fartoun Mohamed, Melvin Villatoro, Vikas Patel, Sharon Friedman and Joanne Hurt

Staff Present: Erin Stilwell (DHHS)

Meeting Called to Order: Brandon Howard, CCC Co-Chair, called the February 26th meeting to order at 6:34 pm

Roll Call and Introduction of Guests

Introduction of Guest Speaker (Elka Forbes, CCC Co-Chair)

Ms. Joanne Hurt and Ms. Sharon Friedman, Montgomery Moving Forward Leadership

- *Joanne Hurt, Executive Director, Wonders Early Learning + Extended Day*
- *Sharon Friedman, Principal of Friedman Strategies, LLC, and founding partner of Spark FFS, LLC*

Presentation of Montgomery Moving Forward's Early Care and Education Workforce: Issues and Recommendations

Review and Vote of January 22, 2025 meeting minutes

Action: Motion to accept the January 22, 2025 meeting minutes as written: Allison Fialkov

2nd: Tracey Clay

All in Favor; minutes accepted as written

Commission Updates:

- Report out from ECS/ECEI, **Jennifer Arnaiz, Sr. Administrator, Early Childhood Services**
 - ECS' podcast entitled, **Elevate**, will be launching soon
 - County FY26 Budget will be released in March; State budget concerns that there will be cuts to early intervention programs and child care scholarship
 - ECEI presented to County Council on February 5th
 - WPA-currently examining ways to reimagine this program
- Report out from ***Evening In Annapolis***
 - Rossana shared that 21 members from the Latino Care Assoc of Maryland attended and had the opportunity to speak with some of the delegates; Kimberly Pena-Molina shared that COA in cooperation with Montgomery College provided transportation and took 60 ECE stakeholders to the event; Tracey Clay shared that a number of staff from Hope Grows attended and were learning how to advocate at the State level

Policy Priorities Work: Lead by Elka Forbes & Brandon Howard

- Reviewing notes from past guest speakers and April 17th forum; identifying shared themes around workforce
- Next Steps: How to elevate the “lessons learned” from these speakers/events to unify as one voice?
- COA is working on Common Agenda—consider asking Kim Pena-Molina to review highlights to see possible collaboration
- For March meeting: Review the notes from guest speakers/forum and brainstorm ideas to unify voice around workforce

Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm