

On September 13, 2019, the Board of Commissioners held a retreat and meeting open to the public. Consistent with the goal of the Chair to have meetings in varied locations, the Office of the Secretary of State hosted the meeting at 6 St. Francis Street.

1. The Board of Commissioners received the following briefings.
 - Greetings and discussion of shaping Agency culture by the Deputy Secretary of State
 - Agency updates by the Executive Director
 - Greetings by and dialogue with the Secretary of Appointments
 - Presentation on the U.S. Census and the role of some Maryland Agencies in promoting completion of the U.S. Census
2. The Board acted upon or otherwise explored for future action:
 - The Board of Commissioners approved the acceptance of the final candidates for the first of its kind Western Maryland Advisory Council or advisory board and the standing-up of this advisory board.
 - An interesting trivia quiz the Board played as a group team building activity led to the discussion of the official song of Maryland and whether the song needs to be updated. Seemingly, there appear to be interest in communicating with the Maryland General Assembly as to updating the song. A bill? A resolution?
 - The Board wants to collaborate in re-establishing a long-term, five-year, strategic plan for the Agency. The original plan actually generated as a result of a retreat. This will be a focus in coming months.
3. A good discussion as well as team building occurred among the Commissioners. The Chair laid out his goals that involve the following:
 - Leave office having built-in more process and structure for the Board in a statutory authority largely vague on such concerns. This will include possibly a set of charter provisions or operating guidelines as well as an issue calendar for each year.
 - Build, in collaboration with the staff, a voice on public policy.
 - Build more awareness among the Board members as well as by the staff on disability inclusion. The Chair used the example of his cellular to show how technology is opening opportunities by the blind and how it is important that the Agency be up to date on disability concerns.
 - Build more awareness of the Agency, and of note the Board, by having meetings outside of 6 St. Paul when possible and by being very visible.
4. Old Business/New Business:

- The Past Chair emphasized the need for transparency with the staff. Her term has officially retired but will remain on the Board until a new member will have been appointed.
- The Chair requested that, as part of the on-going dialogue, each member ask – why – they are on the Board and think on the goals they want to achieve.
- The Board or the Board Chair and Vice Chair agree in having another reception in Annapolis during the session.