



Commission on People with Disabilities

March 13th, 2019

Welcome and Approval of February 2019 Meeting Summary Minutes:

Seth Morgan, Chair, convened the meeting. A motion was made to approve the February 2019 Meeting Summary Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken, and the February 2019 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd.

Discussion of Interests and Goals

Commissioners were asked to share what brought them to the Commission and about their interests and goals.

Seth Morgan, Person with a Disability Rep.: Seth is interested in transportation as well as accessible parking and abuse of that system.

Deena (Day) Al-Mohamed, Person with a Disability Rep.: Day is interested and concerned about the increased development occurring all over Montgomery County and at a relatively fast pace. She does not know how much consideration is given to accessible housing and accessible transportation as this development continues.

Angelisa Hawes, Ex-Officio Member: Angelisa represents Montgomery County Public Libraries. She attends Commission meetings to receive feedback and input on MCPL services and programs as well as accessibility refresh projects and new facility construction. MCPL strives to ensure their facilities are accessible and welcoming to everyone.

Susan Hartung, Parent Rep.: Susan has two adult children with multiple disabilities. She has degrees in therapeutic recreation and special education. Prior to being on the Commission she served on the County-Wide Recreation Advisory Board for seven years representing the disability community. She is interested in making Montgomery County a welcoming and inclusive community for people with disabilities. She is also interested in affordable housing and looking at every path of life.

Jenn Lynn, Person with a Disability Rep.: Jenn currently serves as Executive Director of Upcounty Community Resources. One of her main interests is law enforcement. She has a son who has Autism that is the County's Autism Ambassador and helps train the Montgomery County Police Department. Jenn is also interested in housing and equal opportunities.

Hilary Kaplan, Person with a Disability Rep.: Hilary is interested in awareness, advocacy and universal access. She noted that she is anti-artificial intelligence as it is developed for the mean population and she is an outlier and does not fit the mean profile. Through her employment, Hilary has been involved with ensuring training materials are accessible and comply with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. She added that it is important to make the accessibility available whether the individual looks like they need it as there are invisible disabilities.

Joel Snyder, Agency Rep.: Joel represents Audio Description Associates. He is interested in audio description services for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. He would like to see more audio description services available at art and cultural events in Montgomery County. Joel also discussed ways to increase Commission membership of individuals who are blind or have low vision and provide outreach to that community.

Emily Lucio, Ex-Officio Member: Emily is the ADA Title II Compliance Officer for the County under the Department of General Services (DGS). Part of her role and responsibility is to attend Commission meetings to receive feedback and to see how the Commission can partner with her office on projects.

Karen Morgret, Agency Rep.: Karen represents the Treatment and Learning Centers (TLC) Outcomes Service. She is interested in employment, advocacy, and community inclusion.

Marcia Rohrer, Agency Rep.: Marcia represents the Maryland State Department of Education Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS). She would like to see more employment opportunities for people with disabilities in the private sector.

Scott Hunger, Person with a Disability Rep.: Scott is an attorney and is very interested in ADA compliance and inclusion.

Carl Prather, Person with a Disability Rep.: Carl's interests are in accessible and affordable housing as well as transportation and inclusion. He said Commissioners should be part of other organizations and to be a voice for people with disabilities.

Luis Hurtado, Person with a Disability Rep.: Luis is interested in making information technology more accessible and would like to get more involved.

Neal Carter, Person with a Disability Rep.: Neal is interested in having the Commission and Commissions be better advocates and to make sure the disability community is represented. Neal will be focusing on legislative issues at the local, state, and federal level.

Tom Liniak, Agency Rep.: Tom represents the Jewish Social Services Agency (JSSA). He is interested in employment programs for people with disabilities. It is important to educate policy makers and to be advocates.

Teri Roe, Parent Rep.: Teri has a son with severe multiple disabilities. She joined the Commission to learn more about Montgomery County services. She has been able to connect with many people and organizations. Since she started with the Commission, she has started her own business to support other families. Teri is interested in accessibility issues.

Larry Bram, Agency Rep.: Larry represents Easter Seals and serves as Senior Vice President of Innovation & Program Development. He has a daughter with a disability and knows Montgomery County systems first-hand. His interests are in early education and accessibility and services for older adults with disabilities including individuals who have age-related disabilities on top of developmental disabilities.

Charlie Butler, Ex-Officio Member: Charlie represents the Department of Recreation (DR) and has been on the Commission for over 20 years. He attends Commission meetings to provide information and to receive feedback. Therapeutic Recreation is not very common and many agencies and counties

within Maryland do not have a separate Therapeutic Recreation department. DR is interested in making opportunities available to everyone such as the indoor skydiving facility that is now open in Rockville.

Marybeth Dugan, Ex-Officio: Marybeth represents Montgomery Parks (PM) in Program Access and Inclusion Services. MP and DR work together on many partnerships and share a registration platform. Marybeth has degrees in therapeutic recreation and special education. Her brother had a disability and she learned advocacy and inclusion from her family and growing up with him in the 1960s. The Program Access office provides staff training as well as training to other municipalities within the County. Marybeth serves on various committees throughout the County and sees that oftentimes information is only being shared between the same people. She would like to see more outreach, inclusion and connection on related projects and goals.

Denise Isreal, Ex-Officio Member: Denise represents the Department of Transportation (DOT) and her main job is to provide outreach to seniors and people with disabilities. Her primary goal is to listen to the Commission and learn what accessibility improvements are needed in the community. Denise also shares information about DOT programs, services and projects.

Okianer Christian Dark, Ex-Officio Member: Okianer represents the Human Rights Commission (HRC), which receives and investigates complaints of discrimination, and conducts educational programs to promote equal rights for all. HRC works on issues regarding housing discrimination against people with disabilities and other protected classes and educate landlords and homeowners on fair housing laws. The Office of Human Rights will investigate complaints of housing discrimination. HRC works to educate people on Federal and State employment laws as well as special Montgomery County rules such as the "Ban the Box" law that restricting employers from asking applicants about their criminal history during the application process. Two other issues HRC works on are excessive police force and an increase in hate crimes throughout the County. Okianer asked to be a liaison to this Commission due to her work as a U.S. attorney that enforced the ADA. She would like to be an ally for all persons with disabilities.

Cindy Buddington, Person with a Disability Rep.: Cindy has been on and off the Commission and has worked with Betsy Luecking, Staff, for 27 years. She noted that sometimes it can take a long time to accomplish a goal, but this Commission is always making progress. Betsy has been a wonderful advocate for this Commission, always fighting, creating and brainstorming to get things done. When Cindy first joined the Commission, she was interested in building accessibility, curb cuts and accessible parking spaces. Since she has started using public transportation, her focus has shifted to accessible buses, sidewalks, bus shelters, and MetroAccess. She is also interested in accessible housing and employment. Betsy added that the Commission, as part of state law with the Maryland Accessibility Code, reviews building waivers for builders that did not want to make ADA modifications to new construction or renovations. In the 1990s this Commission reviewed hundreds of waivers over a 10-year period. Betsy, Cindy and several other Commissioners would make a site visit. Many places Cindy could not even enter the building and the waiver was denied. Today, the Department of Housing and Community Affairs typically denies the waiver on new construction.

Asha Clark, Agency Rep.: Asha represents the Arc Montgomery County. She also has a son with a disability. Asha would like to see improvements made to transportation and accessibility of facilities. Accessible housing is a big issue as there are always so many people on waiting lists. She asked how we can educate the people who don't know about the services and programs that are available. With the new Medicaid Waiver regulations and the closing of shelters and institutions it is important that the community be welcoming and accepting of the disability community. Asha noted that she has to educate her own family and the Indian community about persons with disabilities.

Trish Gallalee, Person with a Disability Rep.: Trish's passion is employment issues including employment of persons with disabilities at all levels from the mailroom to the CEO. She is also interested in housing and service animals. She noted that she made a presentation to this Commission about service animals over 20 years ago which is when Betsy recruited her to apply for the Commission. She is also deeply concerned about the placement of bike lanes and their negative impact on people with disabilities.

Kathy Mann Koepke, Person with a Disability Rep.: Kathy works as a Lifecourse Developmental Cognitive Neuroscientist at National Institutes of Health and looks at cognitive disorders across all age groups. She has always been professionally engaged with the disability community, but her own disability has increased her own awareness. Kathy also has an adult son with a disability. She noted that medical textbooks give a medical definition and perspective of a disability type, but do not give the lived perspective. She is interested in issues regarding employment of persons with disabilities as well as health equity and health access. Kathy is increasingly aware of how many places are legally inclusive, but not genuinely inclusive. She has been an advocate at the national level, but this Commission allows her to advocate at the local level.

Susan Smith, Ex-Officio Member: Susan represents the Housing and Opportunities Commission as the Program Coordinator for disability services. She has been a member of this Commission for over 20 years. Prior to working for HOC she worked in various programs for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. With the Commission she has worked on projects such as Design for Life Montgomery and MetroPointe. Even though HOC is the housing authority for Montgomery County, the agency receives their budget from Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Susan also serves on the Maryland Association of Housing and Redevelopment Agencies's (MAHRA) Disability Oversight Committee. MAHRA is an association of all of Maryland's housing authorities. Susan reported HOC has started a new initiative called Community Homes that will make 30 HOC properties available for rent for individuals receiving SSI. Susan noted that one of her biggest challenges is training staff at HOC due to staff expansion and turnover. She still sees issues regarding reasonable accommodations including lack of sign language interpreters when requested.

Francie Gilman, DGS: Francie was the MCPL representative for many years prior to retirement. She currently is a contractor working with the ADA Title II Compliance Office. She suggested that County departments hold monthly or quarterly meetings or conference calls to share information on disability issues and questions. Francie is interested in public outreach to persons with disabilities to let them know what services are available as well as accessible housing. She noted that the MCPL Accessibility Advisory Committee is discussing developing a Human Library Program where you can check out a person for five or ten minutes and listen to their experiences. She suggested Commissioners sign up to be a part of the program.

Anil Saini, ADA Compliance Office: Anil works with County departments and agencies on making facilities, programs and services accessible and inclusive.

Carly Clem, Staff: Carly has worked with Betsy and this Commission for almost 13 years. One of her main job duties is to maintain the Commission's website and Facebook pages as well as the Commission's Disability Network Directory and Transportation Network Directory.

Seth ended the discussion by stating that this Commission's purpose is to educate and advise the County Executive and County Council on issues relating to people with disabilities. He gave Commissioners an assignment to suggest issues and concerns that County government should be

made aware of. Suggestions will be discussed at the upcoming Steering Committee meeting on March 20th.

Seth made note that housing conferences held in Montgomery County discuss affordability and not accessibility. By not talking about accessibility they are cutting out a large population. Susan Smith said she will send an email to HOC's head of public relations.

Legislative Discussion:

Neal sent an e-mail to Commissioners that highlighted several items from President Trumps FY2020 budget that make cuts to several programs and services related to persons with disabilities including but not limited to eliminating Special Olympics, eliminating Supported Employment, cutting funding to research at NIH, cutting funding to ODEP as well as cuts to housing and Veterans programs. Susan Hartung added that President Trump has proposed to make major cuts to Medicaid. Neal stressed that these budget cuts are in the millions of dollars. He suggested that Commissioners contact their Federal legislators as individuals about these funding issues and let them know what is at stake.

Announcements:

Asha announced the Arc Montgomery County, in collaboration with the Montgomery County of Health and Human Services, is hosting a Respite Resource Fair for family caregivers on Saturday, March 23rd from 10am to 2pm at the Activity Center at Bohrer Park, 506 S. Frederick Avenue, Gaithersburg. The Fair will feature 65 vendors.

Next Full Commission Meeting: **Please Note Location** Wednesday, April 10th, 2019 from 6pm to 7:30pm at Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue, 2nd Floor Meeting Room, Rockville, MD 20850

Steering Committee Meeting: **CANCELLED**

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist I
Betsy Tolbert Luecking, Community Outreach Manager

**Montgomery County
Commission on People with Disabilities
April 2019 Meeting and Events Calendar**

**Monday, April 8th
MD Alliance Meeting**
12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Annapolis
(Morgan / Luecking)

**Monday, April 8th
Developmental Disability Advisory Committee**
4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
HOB – 401 Hungerford Drive, 1st Floor 1A Conference Room, Rockville

Wednesday, April 10th

****PLEASE NOTE LOCATION****

Full Commission Meeting

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Rockville Memorial Library, 21 Maryland Avenue, 2nd Floor Meeting Room, Rockville

Wednesday, April 17th

CANCELLED - Steering Committee Meeting

Accommodations upon request.

Questions? Staff Contacts:

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