



**Montgomery County, MD
Commission on People with Disabilities
January 13th, 2016**

Welcome and Approval of December, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes:

Seth Morgan, Chair, convened the meeting. A motion was made to approve the December, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the December, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd.

Montgomery County Parks Program Access Office – Marybeth Dugan, CPRP, Program Access Coordinator, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC); Genevieve Jennai, Inclusion Specialist, M-NCCPC; Bob Green, ADA Compliance Project Manager, Montgomery County Department of Parks

PowerPoint presentation: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/MontParksPresentationJan2016.pdf

The Montgomery Parks Program Access Office (PAO) was launched in February 2015. PAO coordinates, provides and manages modifications for individuals with disabilities to successfully be included in County-wide parks and leisure programs. Five staff members comprise the Department's ADA Access Team that monitor, research and interpret the ADA ensuring that the Department is in compliance with the law as it relates to program management.

Genevieve Jennai, Inclusion Specialist, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCCPC), noted that they will be conducting 25 trainings over the course of next year in order to educate all Montgomery Parks (MP) employees as well as training employees within the Planning Department and the Planning Board. Part-time staff, who typically have a background in therapeutic recreation or are studying the field and want to gain experience, are trained before they provide services to individuals. Staffers are trained in behavioral management, customer service, person first language, the ADA, visibility characteristics, sensibility awareness, documentation, CPR and first-aid, and trends. MP can also provide companions that are volunteers. Genevieve went through the six-step registration process, which includes fields for an individual to indicate whether or not they will require a reasonable modification. The registration form is confidential and only shared with those on an as-needed basis. Based on the intake form PAO determines how best to provide the reasonable modification requested. Evaluations are conducted after the program.

Since April 2015 PAO has identified that 23% of individuals with disabilities received direct support services such as sign language interpretation, adaptive activity equipment and/or supplies, and use of companions; 26% of individuals received indirect services such as staff rearranging seating or repeating directions; and 51% of individuals did not need any reasonable modification to attend the program or class.

The following ADA welcome language is included on all promotional materials: "Montgomery Parks, part of the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, encourages and supports the participation of individuals with disabilities. Please contact the Program Access Office to request a disability modification." Betsy suggested changing the phrase 'disability modification' to 'reasonable modification' or 'reasonable accommodation' as to not label the request.

The floor was opened to questions.

Kathy Mann Koepke, Commissioner, asked about volunteer opportunities. Individuals interested in volunteering with MP can contact the Volunteer Services Office at 301-495-2504 (V); Jayne Hench, Senior Volunteer and Community Partnerships Coordinator - Jayne.Hench@MontgomeryParks.org. Individuals are matched up to volunteer services based on their skills and the need at individual facilities.

It was asked what types of programs MP offers. Activities include ice skating, tennis, camping, boating, hiking, biking, fishing, and bird watching. They also offer educational and recreational classes and programs as well as nature centers, public gardens, historical sites, playgrounds, athletic fields and lakes. Charlie Butler, Department of Recreation, added that MP offers classes and programs that are typically outdoors while Recreation offers classes at recreation centers, senior centers and swimming pools. Hilary Kaplan, Commissioner, asked for a clear diagram showing the division between MP and the Department of Recreation as well as the role of the M-NCPPC.

Carl Prather, Commissioner, asked about accessibility at MP facilities. Bob Green, ADA Compliance Project Manager, Montgomery County Department of Parks, stated that in 2011 Montgomery County signed a settlement agreement with the Department of Justice (DOJ). In the agreement MP was asked to perform an audit on all parks, sites and facilities, which includes 460 parks on over 34,000 acres of parkland. MP is a year ahead of schedule and has completed the audit report. Based on the audits there are approximately 15,000 barriers MP must address that will cost between \$30,000,000 and \$40,000,000. MP has been conducting a study to analyze each park and strategize the best way too bring all parks into compliance. Bob noted that he and his team will be presenting before the Commission next month to discuss the Department's strategy for bringing the entire park system into compliance. The plan will be available online in two weeks. He also noted that parks located down County in higher density areas will be slated to receive improvements first.

You can find more information about this office at: www.montgomeryparks.org/about/program_access.shtm. For questions please contact 301-495-2477 (V), e-mail ProgramAccess@montgomeryparks.org.

Commission Priorities for FY17 Operating Budget:

Betsy asked for all Ex-Officio members to send her an e-mail with suggestions, ideas or requests for consideration for the upcoming operating budget. The Commission will be discussing this issue at the next Steering Committee meeting.

Chair and Vice-Chair Report:

Seth Morgan, Chair, reported that he will be meeting with several Council members later this month to discuss the issue of the Commission having their Charter altered to allow lobbying at the State and Federal level.

Ex-Officio Updates:

Nancy Greene, ADA Compliance Manager, Department of General Services (DGS), reported that the construction outside of the Executive Office Building is moving along. While the majority of the construction is because of structural issues improvements will be made to the walkway in front of the building. Nancy reported that the Noyes Library Children for the Young will have a wheelchair accessible ramp for the front entrance within the next two to three weeks. The County is also finishing refresh projects at the Twinbrook and Kensington Park libraries. The Potomac Recreation Center ADA improvements are at the punch list stage and the County will soon begin work at the Black Rock Park Center. She noted that significant work has been done at the Pre-Release Center. **Information provided after the meeting:** The DGS has issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a partial renovation of the Council Office Building. The renovation is focused on replacing some aging infrastructure items (HVAC, etc.) and on doing a renovation of the 4th, 5th and 6th floor County Council staff offices. There will be some accessibility improvements as a result of this project including the renovation of the existing first floor auditorium. That auditorium is old and although accessibility improvements were made in the 1990s, the room has very limited accessibility so this will be a great improvement. In addition, all of the restrooms on floors 1 to 6 near the elevators will be made accessible. The existing ramp between the 3rd floor elevator lobby and the 3rd floor hearing room will be improved. The contractor selected from the proposals received will do both the full design and the construction of the project. The County's ADA consultants will review both plans and construction to ensure compliance.

Sue Hartung, Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee, reported that the County's Coordination of Community Services program is now at capacity with 500 individuals. Sue also reported that Bernie Simons, Deputy Secretary for Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), has sent a letter regarding the DDA's recent decision to terminate Community Support Sources or Resource Coordination for those whose eligibility status is "Supports Only" who are on the DDA waiting list. This decision will impact 2,700 people, with some of them in the crisis category, throughout the State and 63 persons in the County, effective January 31, 2016. Seth has sent a letter to the County Executive and the County Council asking them to advocate on behalf of these individuals and for DDA to appeal the decision. Nelson Migdal, Commissioner, noted that he

received a letter this week with information regarding the decision and recipients were given the opportunity to appeal. He encouraged others to do so as well.

Charlie Butler, Department of Recreation, reported that the [summer camps and programs guide is now available online](#). Therapeutic Recreation will be offering 15 summer camps this year including an adaptive kayaking camp program. Camps for youth on the autism spectrum have been divided into three age groups: elementary, middle and high school levels. It was asked if TR offers camps for adults. Betsy noted that SOAR offers recreational opportunities for individuals 55 and older. Charlie also reported that his son was featured in an [article](#) about individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities that work at the National Eye Institute's (NEI) Veterinary Research and Resources Section. NEI has a program to create meaningful employment opportunities for under/unemployed individuals with disabilities.

Faisal Khan, Department of Transportation, handed out new Montgomery County Transit Map brochures. The brochure is available online: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOT-Transit/Resources/Files/Ride%20On%20System%20Map.pdf. To pick up a hard copy of the brochure, please read the press release that lists locations: www2.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgportalapps/Press_Detail.aspx?PrID=15645.

Seth Morgan, Respect the Space (RTS) reported that the Respect the Space workgroup is waiting to hear back from Mike Subin, Special Assistant to the County Executive, about delegation of enforcement authority for striping in parking lots.

Susan Smith, Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC), reported that HOC is investigating different housing opportunities to increase options for people with disabilities. The State of Maryland received funding from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for a newly reformed Section 811 program that provides funding to develop and subsidize rental housing with the availability of supportive services for low- and extremely low-income adults with disabilities. The State has also received funding for the Bridge Subsidy Program, which helps individuals with disabilities choose to transition from institutions and structured services settings, such as group homes, to housing that offers a greater potential for independence and self-sufficiency, such as apartments in the general community.

Rita Gale, Montgomery County Public Libraries, reported that the Twinbrook Library is scheduled to reopen on January 23rd. The Kensington Park Library is currently undergoing ADA improvements and renovations. Accessible parking will be moved to the front of the building so individuals will be able to park directly across from one of the main entrances. The State of Maryland will be issuing to every library in the State a Topaz XL HD Desktop Video Magnifier. The magnifier features a high-definition camera to provide a crisp image that is easy to read at all magnification levels. Each library in Montgomery County will receive one of these magnifiers.

Kim Mayo, Community Support Network, thanked the Commission and the Developmental Disabilities Advisory Committee group for their advocacy efforts. She reported that CSN has approached Maryland DDA about restoring the mechanism to receive funds from the Federal government for the developmental disability supplement. The County historically provides a DD supplement to providers. The County stopped receiving a Federal funding match in 1999. DDA is open to the idea, but cannot move forward with it until after the statewide direct care rate study has been conducted, which is not expected to be completed until February 2017.

Kathy Mann Koepke, Liaison to the Commission on Health (COH), reported that COH is currently in the planning stages of developing their new initiatives. The Chair of COH as well as several members are interested in attending a Steering Committee meeting to discuss collaborative projects.

Karen Maricheau, Liaison, Commission on Aging (COA), reported that COA is currently working on the issue of the Care Act, which would require hospitals and rehabilitation facilities to acknowledge the primary caregiver of a loved one who is hospitalized so they can be involved in the discharged planning. COA is also working on financial fraud for seniors who are vulnerable and giving more accountability to guardians and caregivers.

Roundtable: Betsy reported that the County Executive has posted a [vacancy announcement](#) for the Commission. She encouraged Commissioners to help recruit new members. The deadline to apply online is January 27th, 2016.

Public Comments: None.

Next Full Commission Meeting: Wednesday, February 10th, 2016 – Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Lobby Level Auditorium, Rockville, MD 20850 – 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Steering Committee Meeting: Wednesday, February 17th, 2016 – Health & Human Services, 401 Hungerford Drive, 1st Floor 1D Conference Room, Rockville, MD 20850 – 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

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