



Monday, December 6, 2021
Public Meeting (Virtual) of the Howard County Commission on Disabilities (CoD)
6:30 – 8:30 PM
Meeting Minutes

- PRESENT:** Beth Benevides
Heidi Burghardt
Nicole Czarnecki
Joshua Hirsh
Doug Lea
Karen Wood
- STAFF:** Erica Lewis
Michelle Henry
Terry Zeigler
- GUESTS:** Steve Towne
Greg Schuckman
- INTERPRETERS:** Brenda Kelly Frey
Becky Frey
- ABSENT:** Adeniyi Michael Adekoya
Arthur Gold
Marian Vessels
Mia Williams

I. Opening of Meeting (Call to Order, Roll Call, Welcome)

Doug Lea, Chair, opened the meeting by welcoming commission members and guests. Roll was taken, and Doug declared the Commission was in quorum and brought the meeting to order.

II. Review of CoD Virtual Meeting Rules

Erica provided a summary of the Virtual Meeting Rules. It was noted that exceptions need to be made to the rules if virtual meeting platform features are not accessible. Example: If a participant is unable to access a feature, such as the WebEx chat or raise hand features, the participant will have to be accommodated. No further action needed.

III. New Business

A. 2021 Annual Report

Commission is required by County Code to submit an annual report.

Commission discussed possible recommendations, including those detailed in the CR 23-2018 report. Suggestion made to include updated demographic/statistical information on Howard County residents with disabilities and schedule a presentation on this topic for a future meeting. The Commission discussed re-visiting the strategic plan and goals. Further discussion to take place at February meeting.

B. 2022 Meeting Dates

Proposed Commission meets six times per year every other month on the 4th Monday from 6:30pm to 8:30pm except for December. Meetings will continue to be virtual. Commission moved to approve 2022 meeting dates – all in favor – passed unanimously.

C. Committee Reports

Access Committee met in November. Virtual tour of the Bain Center was provided. Accessible parking was one of the recommendations that needs to be addressed. Michelle has forwarded the recommendation to the Office on Aging and Independence.

Provider Committee held their final meeting on November 17, with a presentation on funding resources for home modifications.

Motion made to disband the Provider committee. Motion passed unanimously. Future events and presentations will be facilitated by the Commission.

IV. Old Business

A. Approval of October 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve – passed unanimously, without further discussion/comments.

B. Updates – Elliott Finkelstein’s Memorialization.

Commission will continue with “Elliott’s haikus. “ At a meeting with the County Executive and Director, Michelle informed them that the Commission had approved a park bench and plaque in memory of Elliott and had requested that it be located in Font Hill Wetlands Park. The County Executive and Director expressed support for the endeavor. Next step, Michelle will consult the Director regarding next steps. Michelle will inform Elliott’s family of the memorialization plans.

C. Adoption of CoD Rules of Procedures

Motions made to approve Rules of Procedure; passed unanimously. No further discussion/comments.

D. Commission’s Onboarding Process

Suggestions:

- Implement a mentor/buddy system to pair up new members with more seasoned members
- Mini video clip on website
- Short Bio of each current Commission members to be included on CoD webpage
- Include bio and picture in report

- Commission members provide a brief introduction of themselves at the beginning of each meeting

D. Update on HCPSS 2-Way Communication Systems at School Entrances

The issue remains unresolved.

Motion made to create an Education Committee to focus on education and school system issues, at all grade levels. Passed unanimously. Beth agreed to chair this new committee.

V. Announcements

There were no announcements.

VI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned 8:30 p.m.