



Public Meeting (Virtual) of the Howard County Commission on Disabilities  
6:30 to 8:30 PM

## MEETING MINUTES August 24, 2020

### PRESENT

Heidi Burghardt  
Cynthia Coburn  
Nicole Czarnecki  
Elliott Finkelstein  
Arthur Gold  
Joshua Hirsh  
Andrea Kolp  
Doug Lea  
Randy Murbach  
Marian Vessels

### EXCUSED ABSENT

Riffat Ashai, MD  
Karen Wood  
Mia Williams

### STAFF

Michelle Henry  
Erica Lewis  
Terry Zeigler

### INTERPRETERS

Brenda Kelly-Frey  
Becky Frey

### GUESTS

Dr. Calvin Ball  
Jennifer Jones  
Jackie Scott  
Stephanie Adibe  
Cheryl Mattis  
Jarrett Carter  
Monica Yates  
Dominick Collins

**1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Welcome**

**2. Old Business**

- I. Meeting with County Executive Calvin Ball to discuss status of 23-2018 report recommendations.

The Commission presented to the County Executive a report regarding implementation of the recommendations contained in its 23-2018 Report on the Status of People with Disabilities in Howard County.

**Education**

The Commission provided an update regarding, and reaffirmed, the following recommendations:

- Implement DSE's Strategic Plan
- Ensure HCPSS Funding Adequacy
- Expand Mental Health Services
- Implement New Outreach Targeting Bullying
- Adhere to Idea
- ASL -Expand Language course options and peer relationship opportunities
- Create a Disability Awareness/Education Campaign
- Address Interpreter needs
- Ensure Website Accessibility

## **Employment**

With regard to its employment recommendations, the Commission continued to recommend:

- That County Administration encourage departments to provide worksite opportunities (including virtual opportunities while most employees are teleworking)
- That consideration be given to legislation that provides non-competitive hiring for people with disabilities in Howard County government jobs. (Similar to the model that exist in the Federal government and Montgomery county)
- That, as funding becomes available, the Department of Public Works and other departments consider expanding apprenticeship opportunities to include students with disabilities.
- That the Office of Human Resources revise, where appropriate additional job descriptions for Howard County Government by eliminating the high school diploma as the minimum education requirement; and to expand entry-level employment opportunities for students with disabilities who are transitioning to employment, inclusive of transitioning youth who may have training certifications and certificates of completion.
- That the Office of Human Resources track information on the hiring of individuals with disclosed disabilities who are hired through hiring preference procedures and the County's participation in County-sponsored disability related employment initiatives.

## **Housing**

With regard to education, the Commission recommended:

- That through a concerted effort, the offices on Aging and Independence and Community Partnerships, the Housing Commission and Housing Department establish a transparent mechanism for providing and tracking home modification and assistive technology funding to low income renters.

## **Peer Relations**

- The Commission recommended that as the Department of Public Works constructs new buildings and renovates existing buildings, it continues to evaluate the feasibility of installing adult changing tables.
- Recommends that Howard County consider supporting the adult changing legislation that is pending in the General Assembly.

## **Transportation**

- The Commission recommended that the Department of Public Works conduct a full evaluation of all PROW elements and develop a detailed transition plan.

## II. ADA30 Commemoration Ideas – Discussion with Jarrett Carter, Manager, DCRS Communications

- The Commission agreed to proceed with the art contest to celebrate the 30 year anniversary of the ADA, as approved by the commission earlier this year.
- Cyndi, Elliott and Marian volunteered to be part of the Art Awards Committee.

## III. Approval of June 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes

- Correction Randy Murbach not present at June 22, 2020 commission meeting as listed in the June 22, 2020 minutes.
  - Approved as written
- IV. Letter to County Executive regarding Sign Language Interpreter Competencies has been submitted.
- V. 2019 Annual Report was sent to the County Executive and is now posted on the Commission's webpage.

**3. New Business**

II. Access Committee

The next Access Committee meeting is scheduled for September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and will be held via WebEx.

III. The next Provider Committee meeting is scheduled for September 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020

The meeting will be held via WebEx.

The meeting will feature a presentation by Susan Potts of Recreation and Parks on virtual programs created to serve residents during the Covid-19 pandemic.

IV. Announcements

**4. Adjournment**

Commission meeting adjourned at 8:30pm

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