

Frederick County Commission on Disabilities (COD) Minutes

Monday July 8, 2019

Winchester Hall

The meeting was called to order by Chair Karen Duffy, who recognized the existence of a quorum and called for the approval of the meeting agenda, which was done by unanimous vote.

Attendance

The following members were present: Karen Duffy, Marsha Flowers, Amy Crehan, Barb Trader, Jenn Tousey, Evan Evans, Karen Rushing and Theresa Posthuma

Steve McKay, County Council Liaison

April Rosenfeld, ASL interpreter from We Interpret

Miles Ward and Pat Fleet, County Staff

The following member of the public was present: Andrew Duffy

There were no public comments.

There was a general discussion on the priorities for the upcoming year. It was agreed that 2 officer positions needed to be filled by a vote of the commission members. A Recording Secretary and a Treasurer. Marsha Flowers

nominated Amy Crehan to the position of Treasurer; a second was made by Karen Rushing followed by a unanimous vote in favor. Amy Crehan nominated Evan Evans for the position of Recording Secretary and a second was made by Jenn Tousey, followed by a unanimous vote in favor. Both of these positions will sit on the Executive Committee along with the Chair and Vice Chair. A time will be set up for the executive committee to meet prior to the next COD meeting.

A list of priorities for the commission was discussed among the members; they included:

- Updating the Keys to Independence resource guide; with the assistance of County IT, evaluate web traffic and determine how often it is being used.
- Emphasizing Community Outreach and Engagement.
- Applying to the County for a direct funding request when the COD creates a worthy project. If the County says no, the COD could pursue a Community Foundation Grant.
- Pursuing the creation of a Deaf Community Center.
- Prepare a flow chart of information for students with disabilities to get the testing and other assistance for college entry.
- The lack of employment opportunities remains a major hurdle to people with disabilities.
- How to relieve isolation and loneliness among people with disabilities.
- Doing more to meet the transportation needs of people with disabilities; more commuter buses are needed.

- Create more opportunities for community engagement.
- A general evaluation of some sites and resources. For example, does the FMH Emergency Room have wheelchairs available to assist people of all sizes?
- Enhancing the COD's Social Media presence.
- Create and distribute surveys at community events about programs and resources for people with disabilities.
- Advertise speakers at commission meetings; get more people to attend COD meetings.
- Can COD members work with state, county and city traffic engineers to get strobe lights installed on traffic lights to alert people who are deaf or hard of hearing of the presence of emergency vehicles?
- A COD booth or table at the Frederick County Fair.
- Enhance the COD's Facebook page; consider paying for targeted email advertising to reach people in our community that we're not already reaching.
- Reaching out to Partners in Care to assist with transportation needs.
- Communication in group homes – what is needed; could the COD find volunteers to make life in group homes more fun?
- More inclusion for isolated individuals.
- Work with businesses to develop internships for persons with disabilities.
- Discuss with Steve Horn the creation of visitability residential construction requirements in the County Code, in order to produce more units that are accessible

to people with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.

- COD Video – Marsha Flowers and Evan Evans have volunteered to work with Miles Ward and Pat Fleet, and the County video staff, to create a short video about the COD and local efforts to promote disability employment awareness. October is Disability Employment Awareness Month, and it is hoped the video can be completed by then.

It was determined that the following committees would be established, and members were asked to contact Miles Ward by Monday July 15 to let him know what committee they would like to participate on.

- Keys to Independence – Will evaluate and analyze the use and impact of the Keys to Independence resource guide, and determine whether this is still a high priority item for the COD
- Outreach and engagement – Arrange speakers for COD meetings; invite and engage other members and groups that serve the community of people with disabilities.

A vote was held on approving the Commission's June 2019 minutes, and approval was unanimous. Discussion was held about approving the May 2019 minutes. Because many members had not received them electronically ahead of the

meeting, they were not prepared to vote, so the vote was tabled.

Karen Duffy volunteered to complete and submit the application to the Chamber's Leadership Frederick, Leaders on Loan program. The application is due July 19. Karen Rushing volunteered to be the contact person if the application is accepted.

The meeting was adjourned.