

Frederick County Commission on Disabilities (COD) Minutes

Monday, November 14, 2019

Winchester Hall

12 E. Church Street, Frederick, Maryland

- I. 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.

- II. Attendance
The following individuals were present: Karen Duffy, Nadine Autry, Amy Crehan, Evan Evans, Marsha Flowers, Jenn Tousey, Karen Rushing and Theresa Posthuma.
Landon Morrison, ASL interpreter; guest speaker David Drezner, Director of The Freedom Center; and County staff member Miles Ward were also present.

- III. Guest speaker David Drezner, Director of The Freedom Center in Frederick, spoke about many programs and services it provides to help people with disabilities. The Freedom Center actively helps people, reduces barriers, and tries to increase participation in employment. Federal and state funds help pay for some of the overhead costs,

and The Freedom Center operates as a Center for Independent Living. All services are free, and there are 200 active client cases. Its five core functions are: providing information and referrals, peer counseling, advocacy, independent living skills training, and transition services. “We meet with people in person. Listen to their wants, needs and desires. The more things that people can do independently, the better their lives are.” Vice Chair Nadine Autry works at The Freedom Center and helps many people.

IV. Business

- A) Upon motion and vote, the minutes of the October 14, 2019 COD meeting were approved.
- B) Discussion took place concerning the Proclamation issued by County Executive Jan Gardner on October 29, 2019 that recognized and honored Disability Employment Awareness Month. Over 40 people attended. The video produced by the County and shown at this Proclamation ceremony was exceptional and very well received. Many of the people featured in the video attended the ceremony and spoke.
- C) The Outreach Committee reported on its efforts to update the COD trifold brochure, and place them in various facilities.
- D) It was proposed that speakers be arranged for COD meetings beginning in January, with someone from the Frederick Center to speak about mental health services, suicides, and the LGBTQ community. It was hoped that in February a speaker from the African American community

might speak about disability discrimination, since February is African American history month. In March a speaker could be invited to speak about the Deaf Abused Women's Network. And in April, someone from FCPS could speak concerning disability accommodations being provided to students. In May, mental health awareness and actual experiences could be the topic, and in June the focus could be on disability issues in housing. Jenn Tousey will be in charge since she is the chair of the Outreach Committee, and Karen Duffy will assist.

- E) It was suggested that other topics of interest would include transportation issues for people with disabilities, and youth suicides.
- F) It was generally agreed that the COD should continue to meet at Winchester Hall through the end of June 2020. Efforts will be made, though, to find other rooms in Winchester Hall for consideration.
- G) It was unanimously agreed that the COD annual report prepared by Chair Karen Duffy was accurate and well written. She was thanked for her hard work, and asked to send it on to the County Executive and members of the County Council.

V. The meeting was adjourned.