

Knoxville Mayor's Council on Disability Issues

September 13, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Zoom

I. Meeting was called to order at 3:03pm

II. Roll Call:

Members: Alexander, Barber, Brooks, Cain, Carter, Childress, Eldredge, Lowe, Maxwell, Mathison, Mull, Robertson, Shimmin-Orr, Simmons, Spangler, Villanueva, Welch, Ziegler

City of Knoxville Staff: Cook, Dziubak,

Present: Alexander, Barber, Brooks, Cain, Carter, Cook, Lowe, Maxwell, Mull, Robertson, Shimmin-Orr, Simmons, Villanueva, Welch

Absent: Childress, Dziubak, Eldredge, Mathison, Spangler, Ziegler

Guests: Nick Harrell (disAbility Resource Center), Regis Borsari, Sarah Davidson (Enable All Oak Ridge), Marian Wildgruber (Enable All Oak Ridge)

Interpreter(s): Marsha Coles Felix

III. Approval of August Retreat Minutes: Motion by Simmons, seconded by Cain – motion carried.

IV: Member Advocacy and Information (5 minutes)

a. Conya Mull – Enabling Technology:

Mull spoke on “smart items” such as smart lights, light switches, plugs, lights on outlet covers, and even a smart stove (motion sensor and timer combination).

- Most of these smart items can be accessed by using an app on your phone or computer; settings can be managed online and do not need to be activated by voice.

- Mull will share a video on how the I-Guard Stove works with members via email:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=iguard+stove&docid=603486516211626953&mid=895A0533F8B38CB9B4CF895A0533F8B38CB9B4CF&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>

b. Jessica Villanueva – September is Deaf Awareness Month

Villanueva provided information and resources on Deaf Awareness Month.

- There is a newsletter from GLAD- Greater Los Angeles Agency on Deafness (<https://gladinc.org/>) dedicated to deaf awareness featuring virtual seminars almost every day with various topics.
- World Federation of the Deaf also has interesting topics such as the International Week of Deaf People <https://wfdeaf.org/iwdeaf2023/>

- Saturday Sept 23 is the International Day of Sign Languages – “Shine A Blue Light on Sign Language” – Villanueva asked if we could ask the CoK about lighting up the Downtown Knoxville pedestrian bridge for the occasion?
 - Cook commented that Dziubak has already sent an email to the City to inquire.
- TN specifically passed a bill in 2019 to change the wording of “hearing impaired or hearing impairment” to “deaf or hard of hearing or hearing loss”; it is out of respect for the *cultural and linguistic community that is our Deaf community and removes the stigma of impairment or brokenness from all our Deaf and hard of hearing community*.
 - A lot of people are not aware of this and continue to use hearing impaired.
- Villanueva will send out the links she mentioned.
 - Shimmon-Orr commented that on Saturday, Sept 23, in honor of Deaf Awareness Day, Anakeesta in Gatlinburg will be hosting the Deaf Community, and there will be about 150 folks there with interpreters.

V. Presentation - Public Health Inequities, Nick Harrell, disAbility Resource Center

- Presentation:
 - Newly hired about 3 weeks ago – his title is Social Supports Specialist.
 - He is currently researching healthcare equalities for people with disabilities.
 - They will be creating a survey to take to approx. 100 different clinics in the Greater Knoxville Area to gather information on what they may need to do better to serve people with disabilities, such as where they are failing in serving people with disabilities?
 - They will also interview people with disabilities to see what trouble they have experienced in healthcare, (i.e. high desks at medical offices are hard for wheelchair user to reach)
 - This is in hopes of identifying all the different inequities – are there commonalities of the troubles faced?
- Discussion:
 - What questions will be on the survey?
 - What problems have you experienced or what positive things have you experienced?
 - Possibly make the survey similar to the dRC’s Accessible Survey, but related to healthcare experiences.
 - How will the information be used?
 - For education and dissemination
 - Possibly create a pamphlet on the top eight common mistakes seen in healthcare. Do you serve individuals with disabilities? Is your clinic doing this? – This is how it affects those with disabilities.
 - Once he has the survey created, he will share with the CODI group

VI: Committees

Bylaws:

- Did not meet this month, will schedule meeting once Dziubak hears back from CoK Law department regarding changes and can meet with them to discuss separating bylaws into the two documents, one overarching that should not need to change much, and the other that may change when CODI feels it should. City Council met on September 5, 2023 and approved no longer confirming members, officers, and bylaws so it will now be at the Mayor's discretion.

Membership:

- II. Did not meet this month. Next meeting is scheduled for December 6, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. Membership is now listed on the CODI webpage as meeting bi-monthly rather than quarterly for 2024 after speaking with current chair Monica Shimmin-Orr. Members of the committee will discuss this possible change from quarterly to bi-monthly at the December meeting and vote on it. This will still occur the Wednesday before our regular CODI meeting from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Transportation:

- III. Next meeting is scheduled for October 9, 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

VII: Strategic Plan Group Reports

- a. Livability – met on 9/6: reported by Lowe.
 - Discussed the Chamber blast which generated one interested business, Hope Springs Adult Day Care.
 - Mull met with Hope Springs and they passed their checklist on July 13, 2023.
 - The window cling has now been mailed to them.
 - In August no checklists were completed – Mull will reach out to members Childress and Shimmin-Orr who were scheduled to complete a checklist during that month.
 - At the retreat we discussed letting folks pick a restaurant and who would they want to go with.
 - These do not have to be restricted to Market Square, it can be any restaurant in the city, which may be more accessible for some.
 - Let Dziubak know when you are scheduled to do one. Make sure you give all the details to Dziubak and get the contact information filled out correctly.
 - Dziubak is still working on getting the accessibility checklist completely accessible on tablets.
- b. Universal Design- met on 9/11: reported by Simmons.
 - Reaffirmed that Dinner and Design may not be a good option to explore at this time.
 - Have been discussing reaching out to Greater Knoxville Homebuilders and the Realtor Association, and have come to the conclusion the Homebuilders just meet amongst themselves to help one another out.
 - Have also been talking about ADUs (Accessible Dwelling Units)

- In the Choto area (West Knoxville, Farragut) housing developers are wanting to build affordable and accessible housing, but residents are protesting and saying they do not want it in their neighborhood for reasons such as extreme increase in traffic, etc.
- Inskip Flats has now opened up.
- Missing Middle Housing – Welch had discussed that MMH will be a hot topic:
A local developer is trying to get codes amended for this housing venture. There will be a City Council meeting regarding codes on Oct 5th.
 - Will try to gather some information on accessible dwelling units (ADU), the missing middle housing, and put something together on a power point similar to what was put together for the Visible Type-C and present it to bring awareness to these subjects and CODI would be willing to help going forward.
 - Rent has risen to eight times the national rate in July 2023 compared to July 2022 – Knoxville has the largest increase and is forecasted to continue rising. Housing complexes have doubled rent and folks are having to move.
- We continue to have housing shortages, and people cannot afford to live here.
- Can we come up with some solutions as a group?

VIII: Current Business: *(New agenda item)*

- **Ad-Hoc CODI Grant committee status:**
 - The last time CODI Grants Committee met was on July 19th at 11:30 a.m. with Charles Lomax to discuss the possibility of partnering with KAUL. Members of this ad-hoc committee include Villanueva, Barber, and Welch. Ajinkya has resigned from CODI and will no longer be on this committee. If anyone else would like to join in addition, please let Dziubak or Villanueva know.
**Members will need to decide upon a date and time for a meeting to discuss progress and what steps need to be taken.
- **November Social:** In lieu of a regular CODI meeting, members will have a social in which to get to know others on a more personal level in order to foster cohesiveness between members new and old. This will take place at a location to be determined in the Downtown/Market Square area **on Friday, November 3, 2023, from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m.**, ASL interpreters will be scheduled to attend during those times.
 - Discussion of possible locations in Market Square to hold this function, keeping in mind that in early November it could be either warm or chilly and we don't know if it will be raining, and must schedule this in advance with whichever location we choose. Would like members to come up with three accessible options.
 - Options: Tommy Trents (Dziubak), Café 4 (Cook), Downtown Grille and Brewery (Simmons), Additional suggestion was Not Watsons... these places have easy access for all.
- All Secretaries for our committee and strategic plan groups should be listing members present for each meeting and minutes should be sent to both Dziubak and CODI Secretary Welch. If you do not have a template for taking minutes that lists all current members, please email Dziubak.

- All Chairs for our committee and strategic plan groups should be sending out an agenda for each meeting that is held. This has been hit or miss and needs to be routine. These should be sent out no more than a week in advance and no less than 24 hours in advance to give others time to look over it and prepare for the meeting. If any accommodations are needed to facilitate any chairs sending out agendas, please email Dziubak.
- Dziubak's preference for all agendas and minutes that are sent out is Word documents for easy editing and saving for historical records.

IX. New Business:

- Half-day and full day retreats 2024:
 - Half-day retreat will be Wednesday, February 14, 2024, tentatively scheduled from 12:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m., location TBD.
 - Full-day retreat will either be on Wednesday, August 14, 2024, or Friday, August 16, 2024, tentatively scheduled from 8:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.
 - Cook took a vote by roll call for date, majority voted for Friday August 16, 2024.
- Tee Shirts
 - Dziubak has been researching places for Tee Shirt orders and some companies require a minimum purchase order and CODI cannot make that order amount.
 - Dziubak will email details to each member with what you have listed as wanting to order with a reply requested to confirm your purchase – more info to come.

X: Announcements and Public Forum:

- 2024 CODI Meeting schedule is now listed on the webpage at www.KnoxvilleTN.gov/CODI; updates will be made as necessary after the votes on bi-monthly membership committee meetings, and full day retreat.
 - Zoom login links and passwords for meetings will remain the same as this year so members can easily access any CODI meeting with the same information.
- September 23, 2023, is "Shine a Blue Light on Sign Languages" awareness day and Dziubak has reached out to Vreeland with City Communication to make him aware of the event and ask about the possibility of the City lighting up the Henley Street Bridge on this day.
- Marian Wildgruber from Oak Ridge is holding a disability event in Oak Ridge on Saturday, Oct 7th from 11am to 3pm (Access Oak Ridge Fair). It will not just be vendors; it will be so much more. There will be forty vendors, twenty demonstrations, ten speakers, music, art, food, games, and prizes. This event will be to foster disability awareness, disseminate disability information, and learn how to create a community for all abilities. The flyer and program/agenda for the event can be emailed or can be located on their Facebook page/group @Enable All Oak Ridge. A new updated flyer and QR code can be found there as well.
 - A few of the organizations will be: Disability Rights from Nashville, Guide Dogs from Atlanta, and many others.
- Regis Borsari commented that Catalyst Sports is leading hiking in the Smokies.
- Welch spoke about several upcoming events:

- Friday, Sept 22 – Fall Prevention Awareness Event, O'Connor Senior Center, 8:30-11:30
Balance screenings, vision checks, how to make your home safer, etc.
- Friday, Sept 15 – Senior Safety Summit – O'Conner Senior Center, 9am to 12noon
Senior resource fair with over 35 vendors representing emergency services, disaster response, medical resources, etc.
- October 20th – Aging Adult Resource Fair, Carter Senior Center, 10am to 2pm
A medication take-back event, along with document shredding and a wide variety of organizations and businesses will be there with information as well.

XI: Adjourn at 4:17 pm