

Mayor's Council on Disability Issues (CODI)
February 8, 2017 Minutes

Chair M. Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m.

Members Present: Allan, M. Johnson, Lemak, Sawhney, Loebner, Van Dyke, Austin, Booher, Secrest, Shipley, Neely, Moore, Houston, Shilling and Brookshire

Members Absent: Davidson, Jones, R. Johnson (City Liaison Stephanie Cook also absent)

Approval of December Minutes: Postponed until next meeting

Presentation by Ms. Aftyn Behn with UN HCR: Ms. Behn presented on the challenges faced by refugees and other displaced people. She discussed the lack of resources for individuals with disabilities in these circumstances and the progress being made.

Presentation by Josh Loebner about Disability in Advertising: Mr. Josh Loebner, a CODI member, presented on the current position of diverse populations in advertising, and how the industry doesn't always include disabilities in their quest to include diversity. Josh has been presenting to groups such as the 4 A's (American Association of Advertising Agencies) to discuss the need to include disability diversity in advertising. He is preparing a white paper on the topic. He also discussed the "Lights, Cameras, Access" program sponsored by the 4 A's which will offer mentorships to high school and college students and provide initiatives for seeing differently. Josh also has had discussions with Doug Mentor regarding Diversity Champions, a local program. He discussed how disability in advertising has been a pendulum from pity on one end to inspiration on the other end and what most people want is to just be included as part of the average people spectrum.

Employment Committee - M. Johnson reported regarding the CTV tapings. We are currently trying to see that closed captioning is completed on the tapes and to see about their accessibility through CODI website. KAEC has scheduled the next Community Conversation for March 27 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Cedar Bluff. Community of Practice is focusing on helping people in retail advance and have more support for success. There was discussion of the need for addressing underemployment, mentoring, and competitive employment.

Transportation Committee – Booher reported on a \$200,000 grant that has been awarded and the City matched with \$50,000 to encourage people to ride KAT buses to medical appointments called "Ride to Wellness". Warren reported that KAT is now WiFi accessible; the Council on Aging is sponsoring a needs assessment in March; funds have been allocated to update Broadway to Fountain City and lights will be sequenced with the buses – this is a 3 year project; Cindy Pickle, who was in the audience, is over customer service for KAT; the volunteer driver programs are now in place in Roane, Claiborne and Cocke counties.

Most Disability Friendly City: Rupy reported that they continue to go through the data and are trying to decide on the process to support data collection. He said they plan to meet with Stephanie to discuss ways the City can help with data collection. He also shared that there will be international engineering students in Knoxville for a month this summer and opened up the possibility of others being involved especially around discussions of employment and disability.

Awareness/PR: committee did not meet but the plan is to continue work on the website and the logo cards. There was a question regarding t-shirts with the logo.

New Business: None

Announcements

Knox County Schools will be hosting a Transition Fair on April 29 from 8:00 – 3:30 at Bearden High School. CODI will be involved with the Fair and anyone who is interested in being on a panel about advocacy should let Meaghan know. Is there anyone comfortable and knowledgeable on ABLE? If so, please contact Meaghan.

Dynamic Softball Expo will be held at the Ridley Helton Ball Field on March 25th. This is an introduction to softball with the hopes to start inclusion softball teams. More info to come!

Students from UT Rec Therapy will be hosting a field day at Victor Ashe Park for children and young adults with disabilities the morning of April 22nd.

Spring Pickleball Tournament April 22 – 23 – more details to come.

Moore reported that there is a volunteer who would like to start a Wheelchair Basketball team in Knoxville. She is looking for any veteran players or new recruits. Contact dRC to learn more.

National Agribility Conference will be held in March in Knoxville.

Push Stop the Pipeline to Prisons board is looking for parents or others who can provide stories.

Nominations for CODI members are due April 7th. The nomination forms are on our website.

The next meeting will be April 12, 2017 at 4:00 in the Small Conference Room.

Public Forum -- None

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Judi Brookshire, Secretary and Stephanie Cook, City Liaison