

Knoxville Mayor's Council on Disability Issues

February 14, 2024 Meeting Minutes

12:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Cansler YMCA Community Room

I. Meeting was called to order at 12:18 pm.

II. Roll Call:

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

City of Knoxville Staff: Cook, Dziubak

Present: Barber, Cain, Carter, Lowe, Maxwell, Mull, Shimmin-Orr, Simmons, Spangler, Villanueva, Ziegler

Absent: Brooks*, Childress*, Eldredge, Mathison*, Robertson*, Welch*

Guests: None

Interpreter: Antonio Banner

III. Approval of January Minutes: Simmons made the first motion, Ziegler seconded the motion, all in favor with none opposed, motion carried.

IV. Member Advocacy and Information: Monica Shimmin-Orr

- Pro-tactile ASL: A New Communication Technique for DeafBlind People – by Monica Shimmin-Orr
- Pro-tactile Communication is a fairly new method of tactile communication that supplements communication in ASL.

- Pro-tactile defined: a language of touch is used by DeafBlind people using tactile channels on their body, preferably their upper backs, arms, hands, front thighs and knees.
- It all started in 2007 in Seattle, Washington. Compare this with ASL – ASL is more visual. So when combined, both pro-tactile and ASL is used simultaneously when DeafBlind people interact with each other and with others who can see and know ASL.
- Pro-tactile gives much more information about facial expressions, visual cues like head nods/shakes, room environment, etc. You can read more about this on the Wikipedia website here:
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protactile>
- Key scenarios where pro-tactile is used
 - One-on-one between DeafBlind person (may use volunteer) and Deaf sighted (like Monica)
 - Three or more DeafBlind individuals chatting as shown on PBS video “A Language of Touch” – may need at least 2 volunteers. Please watch this video later to fully understand:
<https://www.pbs.org/video/protactile-a-language-of-touch-1u5hgv/>
 - Most common scenario is when a DeafBlind is a presenter on stage to a large audience – please see this video for more in-depth understanding: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uxZ4u6nses>
- Other links for further reading/viewing
 - Pro-tactile: Touch Language Technique
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YhDtqtd1CZY>
 - National Center on DeafBlindness <https://www.nationaldb.org/>
 - Discussion of Pro-Tactile ASL
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUf22TO83E>
 - TED Talk: Blind But Not Blind by Jenny Lynn Dietrich
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uxZ4u6nses>

V. Member Sign Ups:

- Livability Survey

- Please make sure to make a calendar or other reminder for the month you have signed up to complete a survey. If you are unsure of how to go about completing your first survey and you would like more information on how to do so or would like to request a member who has already completed theirs to go along with you, please reach out to Mull prior to the month you are scheduled.
- Member Advocacy & Information
 - A reminder will be sent to you by the first of your month. Please make sure to send your topic to Dziubak no later than the first Monday of the month for inclusion of your topic in the agenda.
- Dziubak passed around a sign-up sheet for members to fill out months for their accessibility surveys and month for five-minute advocacy and information.

VI. CODI Resignations/Nominations:

- Resigned on January 29, 2024:
 - Daniel Alexander
- Current potential nominations that we are still waiting on documents from include:
 - Dr. Kelly Martin, YMCA and Sheryl H. McCormick.
 - Dr. Martin is interested in joining CODI and becoming more active in the disability community.
 - Ms. McCormick is a former CODI member and is now "retired" from working at Peninsula and with individuals who live with mental illness—she is also a certified peer support individual.
- New Member Nominations
 - There are currently four available seats on CODI, however, Shimmin-Orr's second term expires at the end of June, which means we will have a total of five seats to fill.
 - Please send any nominations you have to Dziubak no later than March 25, 2024

- Printed nomination forms available after the retreat today, however these will need to be made accessible before they are uploaded to the CODI webpage.

VII. Committee/Strategic Plan Group Reports:

Updates and Reminders:

- Bylaws – Received the Executive Order of Bylaws separation this morning just after 9:00 a.m., Dziubak has not had a change to look at it in comparison with our other Bylaws, or speak with George Shields in law yet, but as soon as that happens, a poll will be sent out to set a date for Bylaws committee to meet.
- Membership – Will meet at 2:00 p.m. on April 3, 2024 to discuss absences, nominations, and upcoming nominee interviews.
- Livability – Will meet at 3:00 p.m. on March 6, 2024.
- Universal Design – Will meet at 2:00 p.m. on March 11, 2024.

Transportation:

- Met on February 12, 2024
- Vehicle free Gay Street – no updates currently
- Downtown Parking Study – no updates currently (*may have some information in a few weeks*)
- ECU Survey – Perceived Accessibility to Public Transit – (Discuss)
 - How does disability impact your daily travel?
 - What are some features in your environment that help you use public transit?
 - Maxwell: Transit App
 - What are some features in your environment that prevent you from using public transit?
 - Dziubak: Lack of sidewalks, terrain
- Mobility Plan 2050 – long range plan for all modes of transportation
www.knoxmobility.org

- Spearheaded through Knoxville Transportation Planning Organization
- Public meeting workshops – Several coming up, one this evening at KAT station downtown, community room 4-7, and one tomorrow at the same time at Blount County Public Library
- Public feedback also available online at website (survey and an interactive map): Survey takes approximately five minutes to fill out.
- KAT updates:
 - Proposed changes for April 8, 2024
 - All Sunday service returns to pre-Covid service spans, with service from 8:15 a.m. – 8:15 p.m. (service currently ends at 5:15)
 - Extend the following routes in the evenings on weekdays and Saturdays to the final 11:15 p.m. trip:
 - Route 17 - Sutherland
 - Route 20 – Central
 - Route 23 – Millertown
 - Route 32 - Dandridge
 - Route 33 – MLK
 - Route 42 – Ft. Sanders/UT Medical Centers
 - Returning Route 42 – Ft. Sanders/UT Medical Centers to 30-minute service on weekdays
 - Extend Route 34 – Burlington in the evenings to a 10:15 p.m. trip on weekdays and Saturdays
 - Return Route 13 – Beaumont to regular service levels on weekdays
 - Adjustments to South Knoxville routes:
 - Adjust the Routing on Route 41 – Chapman Highway
 - Departing and returning to downtown via the Gay Street Bridge, using Hill to State Street to the platform. The proposal also includes adjusting the first outbound time-point by one minute earlier to allow additional time in the route.

- Changing the routing at Majestic Grove Shopping Center to all right turns, allowing for more consistent service.
- Removing a one-block diversion on Route 45 – Vestal along Flenniken.
- Route 40 – South Knoxville and Route 45 – Vestal also proposed to depart downtown via Gay Street bridge, and return the same way, using State Street to Church Avenue in hopes of avoiding traffic and routing directly to the platform.
- Return the last inbound trip on Routes 40 and 45 on weekdays and Saturdays, which was removed during workforce shortages
- Making the demonstration routing on Route 34 – Burlington the official routing. You will recall that the board approved a demonstration detour for this route in August of last year, due to issues with on-time performance. KAT proposes that this demonstration routing become the formal routing.
- KAT Reimagined – will launch August 2024

Six Month Check-In:

- Since our last retreat, Committees and Strategic Plan Groups have been meeting every other month.
- How do members feel this has been working for their groups?
- Maxwell motioned for a vote on either monthly or every other month committee and strategic plan meetings. Spangler seconded the motion, motion passed.
 - Members participated in roll call vote on either continuation of every other month or going back to monthly meetings. All members present, with the exception of Cain who had stepped out of the room, voted unanimously for continuation of every other month.

VIII. Universal Design Update:

- Members of the Universal Design group, as well as Katherine Moore and Matt Davis from disAbility Resource Center, met with Community Solutions Collaborative (CSC) Representative Rick Sander, a UCLA law professor, at the public works building from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 1, 2024 to discuss how to further Fair Housing and Equity from the perspective of the disability community.
- CSC will be developing an assessment of the City of Knoxville Furthering Fair Housing/Equity Plan, as required by HUD, that will identify and describe fair housing issues, including the circumstances and factors that cause, increase, contribute to, maintain, or perpetuate those fair housing issues. Once the assessment is completed, a draft Equity Plan will be developed which will be open a public comment period before the final plan is submitted to the City. Submission to the City is expected by June 3, 2024.
- Prior to the discussion, members Simmons, Villanueva, Welch, Barber, Eldredge, and Robertson created brief presentation materials highlighting certain areas where accessibility could be increased to ensure greater equity. Also included in discussions that day were Shimmin-Orr, Cook, and Dziubak.
- Bullet points for presentation included:
 - There is currently not enough accessible housing.
 - Housing not currently created to easily age in place.
 - When a person needs accessible features, they are often to the point they are depending on others such as friends, family, and such for assistance.
 - Request to increase number of required units of basic accessibility through full accessibility.
 - Impress upon CSC how much this team has focused on housing, gathered information, spoken with community members, and know the needs are there and trying to educate those in power what a visitable home is, and what minimal access would be like.

- With rising costs of purchasing a home, or renting, costs and accessibility can be a barrier to someone coming back to their home from rehab or for aging in place.
- Looking at ways to incentivize developers, such as for increased accessibility in units, such as adding elevators for multiple levels.
- Request to go above and beyond minimum standards and build that into programming and equity plan.
- Providing increased stock will meet today's needs and changing needs as time goes on.
- Other discussion included:
 - CSC is currently analyzing micro data from the Census American Community Survey
 - Lack of adherence to current accessibility requirements and potential for an audit to find out where compliance is lacking.
 - Visitable Type C Units
 - Accessibility features for those who may be Deaf/Hard-of-Hearing, and those who are blind.
- Sander suggested that another meeting with the members of the Universal Design Committee and any other members of CODI who would like to attend occur after approximately sixty days in order for CSC to give updates on progress and gather additional information from members regarding accessibility as needed.

IX. January Weather Event Update:

- Snow related weather event like this has not been seen since the Blizzard of '93, and while all calls were answered, more personal and familial preparedness is key.
- How it affected people with disabilities: Issues were reported regarding dialysis patients being able to access their treatments effectively. Many patients from the fourteen counties were asked to call 311/211 for help with getting to their appointments, however these numbers only serve Knoxville and not surrounding counties.

- What we learned from the SAFE team regarding emergent and ongoing weather events:
 - There were a number of domestic incidents.
 - Some individuals perished during this event.
 - QRV's and those with Jeeps that volunteered were deployed through the Police/Fire 911 system.
 - While ambulances could get patients onto stretchers, they sometimes could not get the stretcher back over to their vehicle.
 - There were a number of emergency vehicles which became stuck in ditches.
 - Volunteers were obtained to continue delivery of Mobile Meals.
 - Though the mail ran when able, those who subscribe to medicine delivery, such as for chemo treatment, may have been left without their medicine for several days.

X. 40th Anniversary of CODI:

- Dziubak has looked through the 30th Anniversary Celebration materials to get a better idea of what the Disability Services Office (DSO) and CODI Members will need to do in order to have a successful event.
 - Event occurred Thursday May 14, 2015 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. with expected total number of attendees ranging from 100-150.
 - 2015 event coincided with the 25th Anniversary of the ADA celebration in Market Square which included DisABILITY Resource Center's (DRC) Spirit of the ADA Awards.
 - Katherine Moore from disABILITY Resource Center (DRC) believes that CODI could combine this event with their yearly ADA Celebration, which many of you attended last year. We have not yet discussed potential dates or locations with DRC.
 - Discussion of members on when to hold event:
- Costs of the 30th Anniversary CODI Celebration Event

- Event space rental of the Square Room and catering came to a total of just under \$5,000.
- Additional expenses included programs, other printed materials, accommodations, and miscellaneous expenses totaling just under \$450.
- Dziubak reached out to Spaces in the City to inquire about event space and catering pricing.
 - Current pricing for rental of event space the Square Room on Sunday through Thursday evenings after 4:00 p.m. is \$1,250. and requires a catering minimum of \$750.
 - Monday through Friday daytime rates are \$500. event rental and catering minimum of \$250.
 - Friday evening and Saturdays are \$1,500. event rental and catering minimum of \$3,500.
- If anticipated attendees for the 2024 40th Anniversary Celebration event are kept to less than 150 people, food costs would vary from a minimum of \$1800. to \$3600. dependent on choices.
 - Prices above do not include any janitorial fees, service personnel, or gratuities.
 - Because of inflation since the 2015 event and increases in pricing, CODI will need to plan to obtain sponsorship of at bare minimum \$6,000.
- In 2015 in addition to having several CODI members act as individual sponsors with donations of \$25. to \$100, we had several companies act as \$100 or \$500. Donation level sponsors, and had an anonymous \$2500. sponsor.
- Planning and Organization:
 - Event Logistics
 - Location
 - Catering
 - Public Transportation
 - Maxwell mentioned that KAT may be able to provide a shuttle.
 - Parking

- Structure:
 - Contact List Upon Entry
 - Mull and Spangler volunteered to sit at the entrance to ensure the list is filled out by participants.
 - Refreshments from entry time to 15 after (or prefer only after Keynote?)
 - Keynote 15 – 30/45 after
 - Additional refreshments/mingling
 - Any door-prizes drawn 15 minutes before close of event
- Time and Day
 - Members would prefer a weekday, Monday through Thursday for the event.
 - Members would like to visit whether to hold the event during the day or the evening at the next meeting, and mentioned that having the Mayor there would be very important so we may need to defer to her scheduling availability.
- Marketing:
 - Press Releases / Media Advisory
 - Knoxville Community Media
 - Recording and Airing of partial event (speakers, not mingling)
 - Potential to put together brief highlights of past meetings
 - Potential to tape and put together remarks from past mayors, others who cannot attend in person
 - New Outlets / Radio / Disability Organizations / Newsletters
 - WATE/WBIR/WVLT
- Securing Keynote Speaker:
 - Mayor?
 - Other ideas for Keynotes

- Area Disability Organizations that would like to share their memories and experiences since CODI was created in 1984
 - Length 15-30 minutes, dependent on speakers
 - Talking Points:
 - Opportunity for people to share a memory or milestone related to CODI
- Day of Event:
 - Obtain City Seal for event
 - Plants from City Special Events for beside Podium
 - AV/Microphone/Technical Assistance
 - Acknowledgment of all sponsors/donors
- Printables:
 - Event Program
 - Letter from Mayor
 - List current membership
 - List committees/activities/initiatives of CODI
 - Event Schedule
 - Sponsor Appreciation
 - Banners
 - Posters
 - Invitation Letters
 - City covered postage for 30th event
 - All former and current CODI members
 - Ask for past photos they may have
 - Former and current Mayors Rogero and Kincannon
 - Potentially other former Mayors
 - If cannot attend in person, submit 3-5-minute video remarks to be compiled by KCM
 - Possibly CODI Guests/Presenters
 - Event sign-in and information capture sheet
 - RSVP Requirement?
 - Someone to “Staff” table to capture information

- Thank you Cards for Sponsors
- Sponsorships:
 - Monetary
 - Item Donation (Door-prizes/Giveaways)
 - DSO speak with Law regarding 2015 Sponsorship form being used again, and corresponding rules regarding such.
 - Gather logos for inclusion in Event Program/Marketing
 - Reach out to City Council for potential donations
 - Reach out to 30th Anniversary Sponsors
 - University of Tennessee
 - Camp Koinoina Foundation
 - Regions Bank
 - Cerebral Palsy Center
 - Autism Breakthrough
 - Disability Rights Tennessee
 - Publix Super Markets
 - KAEC
- Other:
 - Memorial Tribute for Past CODI Members no longer with us
 - LED Candles (Dziubak can loan these)
 - Photos in Frames
 - Poem/Quote for Memorial
 - Looping PowerPoint presentation on impact of CODI on Knoxville's Disability Community over the last 40 years.
 - Gather photos from DSO/CoK, Others
 - Verbal Presentation of the top ten impacts CODI has had on the City of Knoxville.
 - Creation of a magnet was mentioned for 30th anniversary, but I don't believe it was carried out.
 - CODI could potentially have 40th Anniversary shirts made
- Potential Ad-Hoc Committees
 - Fundraising/Sponsorship

- Program/Presentation
- Invitations/Media
 - Barber suggested adding a fourth committee for Logistics.
 - Simmons motioned to vote to accept the four committees mentioned, Mull seconded the motion, all were in favor with none opposed, motion passed.
- Discussion of the upcoming 40th Anniversary event took place:
 - Rothchild's was mentioned as a possible location, as was the Foundry.
 - Holding the event during lunchtime was mentioned.
 - One idea presented included having an information fair to draw more people out.
 - Discussion occurred whether to hold a joint event with disABILITY Resource Center (DRC).
 - DRC typically holds their event in July, Cain mentioned that July feels like it would not be enough time to plan and execute the event, and members were in agreement.
 - CODI would prefer to not hold event in July or October.
 - Barber would rather have the event late August or early September, and Simmons agreed.
 - A majority of members expressed that this event might be more beneficial to keep to CODI without any other partners so as to keep the focus on the council.

XI. Announcements & Public Forum:

- O'Connor Senior Center is having their Pancake fest and Senior Expo from 7:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. on Friday, March 22, 2024. Tickets are available for \$5.00 at the O'Connor Senior Center, CAC Office, or online at KnoxSeniors.org
- Dziubak and Cook attended the 19th Annual Black Issues Conference "Access and Advocacy- Shaping a More Inclusive Tomorrow" at the

University of Tennessee (UT) on Saturday, February 3, 2024 as panelists to answer questions on advocacy and disability resources in the Knoxville Community. Other panelists included Dr. Emma Burgin, Coordinator of the FUTURE Program, Katherine Moore Executive Director of disAbility Resource Center, and David Ndiaye, Director of UT Student Disability Services. Attendance of this event was good, with an estimate of at least 75 people, and Dziubak let everyone know that CODI was currently looking for new nominations and gave out several of the wallet cards to attendees who came up afterwards to ask questions.

- Next in person meeting is scheduled for May, 8, 2024, location TBD.

XII. Meeting was Adjourned at 3:39 p.m.