

Athens City Commission on Disabilities
Minutes
July 20, 2022
Athens Community Center and via Zoom for those exempt

Chairperson Davey McNelly called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m.

Vice Chairperson Dianne Bouvier established the quorum.

Present: Tiffany Beals, Dianne Bouvier, Micah McCarey, Davey McNelly, Treasurer Carolyn Lewis, Cheryl Prusinski, Lisa Simpson, and jw Smith. ASL Interpreter Nico Fuentes.

Davey read the Commission's Purpose and Mission Statement.

The motion to approve the June 15, 2022, minutes was made by Dianne. Seconded by Tiffany. The motion carried.

Carolyn presented the Treasurer's Report. There have been no new expenditures since June. The balance remains \$1,118.81.

The motion to approve the Treasurer's Report was made by jw. Seconded by Dianne. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

The Mayor was unable to attend and will be invited to a future Commission meeting. Dianne gave a Pedestrian Accessibility update. The Sidewalk Committee has received over 400 responses to the survey so far. Dianne wants to have the Committee include a structure with matrix to help the City with a system in addition to a priority list of current issues.

OLD BUSINESS

All Commission and Committee meetings will be in person unless someone has an exemption for an ADA accommodation.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

•*Executive*

We are in the process of adding one new Commission member and Davey approached Annah Korpi, a member of the Accessibility and Advocacy Committee. Annah will complete the membership application which will be forwarded to the Mayor and to City Council. Discussion centered on the value of a person with a child who has a disability being on the Commission.

Stroud's Run – A grant to address community health issues for access to the beach has been received. Davey, Joe, and other Accessibility and Advocacy Committee members who might be interested in serving are on the Stroud's Run Committee. The Committee and consultants will visit the beach on August 3rd.

Tiffany mentioned a community member who had difficulty finding the accessible route at the Richland Avenue tunnel that goes under the South Plains Road at the Richland Avenue

roundabout. Davey contacted Katherine Ann Jordan who worked with City staff to review the area. Although there is a sign there, Tiffany will check with the person who had difficulty to see where we might need alternate signs. The community member sent thanks to the Commission and to the City for getting it completed so quickly. Adding a light inside the tunnel was suggested. Tiffany will meet with the person in the next couple weeks and ask them to fill out the Sidewalk survey. Dianne will forward a link to Tiffany to send the Sidewalk survey to the community member. Davey said Katherine Ann Jordan got the right people with Parks and Recs and Engineering and Public Works to work on this.

Discussion: The Commission believes, based on the job description sent out, that City's DEI position is not an ADA coordinator position. We need to make sure there are larger committees with more diversity on them in City searches. There are some ADA training components in the position, but it's frustrating for people with disabilities because there is not one person responsible for decision making and accountability. We need to hold people accountable. We give a lot of feedback as a Commission on how to improve accessibility, but we don't always know what the City will address. The City needs to have that ADA point person who has some authority to hold the City accountable on the ADA. It's disappointing that we did not have input into the process.

Davey will request a meeting with Ron and the Mayor to address our concerns. jw offered to be a part of that meeting.

Micah moved that the Commission reach out to Mayor Patterson and Ron Lucas. Seconded by Dianne. The motion carried.

•Accessibility and Advocacy

The pilot project for Accessibility Consultation with Jackie O's is going well. The business is looking better with regard to accessibility. The Athena Grand had been added to the consultation list. Davey informed us about the MAT Act – Mainstreaming, Addiction, and Treatment – to help doctors prevent overdoses. We have been asked to sign on with our support. Davey will send the details and we can say yes or no via email. Reply all or sender.

Davey moved that we will if we get a quorum, we will support the MAT Act. Seconded by jw. The motion carried.

The next Accessibility and Advocacy Committee meeting will be Friday, August 12 at noon, City Building, Front Conference Room or via Zoom for those who are exempt.

•Outreach and Communication

Carolyn shared the Communication Plan for the 2022 Athena Award nominee process, ceremony details, and presented COVID protocols of masks, proof of vaccinations/boosters, or proof of a negative test. The nomination process was outlined and promotion/media opportunities. We encourage all Commissioners to attend and to participate in some way. A rehearsal is planned for program participants on Friday, October 28, at ARTS/West from 5-6 p.m. The ceremony will be Wednesday, November 2 from 5-6 p.m. at ARTS/West.

jw said we have great support from the new editor of the Messenger and the Athens News. Carolyn confirmed with how Allan Brown communicates via email to thank us for what we send and when it will be published. We plan to invite Allan to a future Commission meeting. Kayla, who is working on social media, encourages Commissioners to forward announcements and articles, plus any ideas you might have.

The next Outreach and Communications Committee meeting will be Tuesday, September 13 at 5:30 p.m., City Building, Front Conference Room or via Zoom for those who are exempt. There will not be a meeting in August.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- jw asked Carolyn to talk about her speaking engagement and book signing which will be August 16 in Upper Arlington, Ohio.
- Davey is meeting with Department of Transportation officials, State and Federal Senators, and Congresspeople about legislative items at the National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) in Washington, D.C. next week. We should get any legislative items to him to bring up.
- jw questioned whether the SOCIL opening was delayed. Davey explained the process is still held up on a Federal level and should be answered soon.
- **The next Commission meeting is Wednesday, August 17, 2022, at 5:30 p.m., Community Center or via Zoom for those who are exempt.**

ADJOURNMENT

The motion to adjourn was made by Dianne. Seconded by Cheryl. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Carolyn Lewis, acting secretary for Ally Hughes
July 20, 2022

