



Athens City Commission on Disabilities

YEAR END REVIEW – WORK, ACCOMPLISHMENTS, AND ASKS

Commission Update

- ▶ 11 Members
 - ▶ 3 Vacancies
- ▶ Full Meetings
 - ▶ Once a month at Community Center
- ▶ Committee Meetings
 - ▶ Once a month at various locations

Member

Brigante, Robin (on leave)

Brooks, Douglas (Secretary)

VACANCY

Dennis, Scott

Dikis, Rose

Dilley, Berry

VACANCY

VACANCY

Lewis, Carolyn

**McGee, Patrick (City Council
Representative)**

McNelly, David R. (Acting Chair)

Prusinski, Cheryl

Trembly, Noah (Treasurer)

Non Voting Members

**Rantane, Maxine (Mayor's
designee)**

Powers and Duties

- ▶ Make recommendations to the Athens City government on city services related to the needs of persons with disabilities
- ▶ Act as liaison between members of the community and local government
- ▶ Respond to questions from the public, local government, and community
- ▶ Consult with Athens city officials, council, and citizens
- ▶ Inform the city of grant opportunities
- ▶ Submit activity reports and recommendations to the Athens City Council



Key Changes this Year

- ▶ Most work gets done in committees
 - ▶ Executive
 - ▶ Accessibility
 - ▶ Advocacy
 - ▶ Communications
 - ▶ Education and Outreach
- ▶ This keeps our full Commission meetings to an hour
- ▶ Involves many more community members in the process
 - ▶ Over 20 Committee Members outside of the Commission
- ▶ We invite you to attend!



Key Changes



- ▶ Updated our By-Laws to reflect current work
- ▶ Discontinued “Challenged by Choice” to focus on Athena Award and Commission work
- ▶ Meeting quarterly with Dr. Carey Busch for Ohio University partnership
- ▶ Letter to ARTS/West and Parks and Recreation to advocate for accessible stage at ARTS/West after many years of talk
- ▶ Letters to media outlets asking for news stories on accessible voting accommodations
- ▶ Parking Study grant submitted to The Athens Foundation
- ▶ Parking renovations completed at the County Building

What we need to make Athens more Accessible

- ▶ Your involvement
- ▶ We would like the City to compile a five-year report each year on necessary City improvements for accessibility:
 - ▶ Improvements that can be made this year
 - ▶ Improvements that can be made within five years
 - ▶ Long Term changes and a plan on implementation



Audit Success Story

- ▶ Door Bell at the Accessible Entrance
- ▶ Wider Pathways
- ▶ Braille Menus
- ▶ And More



Park Study

- ▶ **STUDY SCOPE:**
- ▶ I. **A comprehensive inventory of publicly accessible parking**
- ▶ a. Where is accessible parking located throughout the City of Athens?
- ▶ b. Identify how many spaces are van accessible vs car accessible?
- ▶ Are the spaces identified ADA compliant? Describe what needs remediation.
- ▶ c. How many spaces are public vs private?
- ▶ What are the enforcement mechanisms for public and private parking?
- ▶ How often are the accessible spaces used?
- ▶ And much more!



Working with More City Officials



Education and Outreach and 2019 Athena Award Committee

Goals

- ▶ Increase awareness of and greater community participation with the Athens City Commission on Disabilities
- ▶ Seek opportunities to educate the community about the work of the Commission by reaching out to individuals, agencies, organizations and media on a regular basis
- ▶ Recognize individuals, organizations, or agencies for outstanding service on behalf of people with disabilities

Committee Members

Berry Dilley and Carolyn Lewis, Commission Members
Co-Chairs

Joan Butcher, WOUB Program Manager

Rose Dikas, Commission Member

Samorra Dower, Counselor, Nelsonville York

Claire Gysegem, Public Relations Manager, HAPCAP

Patricia Ercolino, Community Member

Cheryl Prusinski, Commission Member

Maxine Rantane, Commission Member (Mayor's Designee)

Awareness

Civic Clubs

Civitan

Rotary

Lions

Media

WOUB's Conversation from Studio B

WATH/WXTQ's *Party Line*

The Government Channel

Athena Award promotion and features in The Messenger and The Athens News

Print Pieces

- ▶ Talking Points
- ▶ Leave Behind Card
- ▶ Calling All Artists
- ▶ Commission Contact List

Created a comprehensive, yet evolving, document which includes: Contacts and email addresses for 11 media outlets, social media, officials, agencies, organizations, health services, the Chamber of Commerce, Transportation, Civic Clubs, and 23 places of worship and ministries – nearly 50 contacts. Makes use of Chamber and agency listservs, and e-newsletters.

The Athena Award

July 1	Publicity began
September	Ceremony planning; Commission's 15 th year
October 1	Nominations closed
October 9	Committee reviewed, discussed, and ranked nominees
October 16	Commission voted; recommendation to the Mayor
October 18	Nominees contacted; invitations sent; nominee visuals
October 28	Ceremony finalized; make media coverage contacts
November 5	Technical rehearsal
November 6	Recipient announced; Award presented

Future Projects and Issues to Address

Oral History of the Commission to commemorate its 15th year
2004-2019

Aging and Disability

Accessible housing

Consulting for new schools

Workshop for architects and builders with the possible development of an
informational video specifically to Athens

Reminder

Athena Award Ceremony

- ▶ Wednesday, November 6
 - ▶ ARTS/West
 - ▶ 5:00-6:00 p.m.
 - ▶ Reception to follow
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- ▶ RSVP Deadline: TONIGHT! – lewisc3@ohio.edu