



City of Salisbury
DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
March 11, 2021

Committee Members Present

Timothy Meagher, Chairperson
Gregory Tyler, Citizen
Michael Dyer, United Needs & Abilities
Stephen Bullock, PT Job Coach
Dr. Katherine Jones, Bay Area Center for Independent Living
Amy Crouse, Blind Industries
Dominique Sessa, Citizen (New Member)
Adith Thummalapalli, Citizen (New Member)
Michelle Gregory, City Council Rep
Jeremy Wolfer, Wicomico County Board of Education

In Attendance

Julie English, Mayor's Office Administrative Assistant
Julie Christopher, Optimal Health Care
Johannah Cooper, Social Work Inters for Mayor's Office
Julia Glanz, City Administrator

The Disability Advisory Committee met at 3:00pm virtually via Zoom.

Call to Order

The Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting was called to order at 3:06pm by Mr. Meagher.

Introductions and Welcome

The meeting began with brief introductions of all in attendance. We were happy to welcome Johannah Cooper and Julia Glanz.

Last Meeting Minutes Review

The minutes from the December 10, 2020 meeting were approved by Mr. Dyer and seconded by Dr. Jones. All were in favor.

Nomination and Election for a 2021 Chairperson

A nomination was made by Miss Sessa to reappoint Tim Meagher. The nomination was seconded by Mr. Dyer, with a unanimous vote in favor of the reappointment. Mr. Meagher graciously accepted after ensuring there were no further nominations or objections.

Salisbury's Social Equity Strategic Initiatives Presentation

Johannah Cooper, intern with the Mayor's Office, presented an early draft of the City's Social Equity Strategic Initiatives. The presentation includes goals for the City as an organization, team, and also for external organizations and citizens within the City. The goal is for this to serve as a "roadmap" to help guide decision making. A more detailed document will be distributed to all DAC members for review. Members were asked to send thoughts, comments and questions to Ms. English no later than Friday, March 19th to be forwarded to Miss Cooper and Mrs. Glanz.

Progress Reports

Video Update – Mr. Thummalapalli shared that Mr. Demone, the City’s Public Information Officer, is more than willing to help, shoot the content for the video, etc. The committee should put together a list of 2 or 3 buildings that have inclusive spaces we would like to feature in the video. We should also submit a list of businesses we would like to highlight. Some of the immediate thoughts and locations included: downtown restaurants, visitor’s center, zoo, library, Boundless Playground, A&E, River’s Edge. Mr. Thummalapalli will share a google doc with the committee after the meeting to allow everyone to contribute to one document.

Social Media Page – It was determined that the committee does want to move forward on creating a page on Facebook and Instagram. Miss Sessa, Mr. Thummalapalli, and Ms. Gregory discussed their thoughts on the pages. All members will assist with creating or contributing content for the pages. This content would be stored on a shared drive and can range from links to physical content. Ms. English will get confirmation from the Mayor’s Office to move forward with this, as well as emailing the Social Media Guidelines to all members for review and approval. Mr. Thummalapalli will share examples of possible content at the next meeting. Advocacy efforts, legislation, events, general information, business shout outs, statistics, and quotes were mentioned. This will be a topic of discussion in June.

Agency Updates

Dr. Jones shared that Bay Area CIL is looking to expand their services to an additional location. There are a couple locations they are looking into now. The goal is to have the new center built by 2022.

Mr. Dyer shared that UNA is still doing the best they can. CVS came on site to provide vaccinations. Individuals are starting to go back to some of the day programs now.

Mr. Bullock discussed that schools will be opening back up. The hope is that schools will be back to ‘normal’ for the next school year. Mr. Wolfer gave his opinion that the students who are able to come back to school are getting more out of the lessons. There are students who, for different reasons, are not able to return to school yet. Employers have been able to speak to the students virtually in an effort to continue that partnership.

Ms. Christopher, a member of the public working for Optimal Health as a Community Coordinator, informed the committee of the growth of her employer.

Ms. Crouse stated that Blind Industries has been unable to have students come in for learning. They have done braille over the phone as a result. Referrals have come in so they call and sign up for whatever programs are available. Goodie bags are being prepared for seniors and will be distributed to cheer them up for the holiday season. They are looking forward to the seniors getting vaccinated.

Ms. Gregory shared her experience on the Environmental Task Force. They are looking to recommend more bike pathways, green transport, and public transport. Those recommendations will go in front of the City Council for review and approval. Council is currently prioritizing things for the new fiscal year.

Mr. Tyler explained the idea of a floating bus stop.

Vulnerable Populations

Dr. Jones announced that there are a few scholarships left for those in need of housing.

Mr. Bullock shared about the One Stop events and the giveaways they offer. Habitat and the Local Management Board are assisting those struggling to pay their rent.

Downtown Video

We discussed doing a video of the downtown changes that are beneficial to the disabled community. Mr. Meagher added that there are numerous businesses that would benefit from us highlighting these changes. Dr. Jones offered

for her business to fund the video if we choose to go with a small-scale outlet such as Delmarva Life. Ms. Christopher mentioned that she has connections to some of the businesses downtown that may be on board with this idea. Optima may also assist financially with this idea. Ms. Gregory agrees with bringing in the businesses downtown.

A target time for this video and possibly doing an event is July. This will help to highlight Disability Pride Month. In addition to raising awareness of those who are disabled in the community, this would also bring awareness to the business owners that changes need to be made to accommodate those with disabilities.

Mr. Tyler added that bringing in someone like Delmarva Life would produce a good quality video. Ms. Gregory added that the City has a fantastic media team that would be able to highlight the structural changes and also visit the businesses that have good accessibility. We can also highlight this during the National Folk Festival.

The video would also help to promote the committee itself and let people know we exist and are available if needed. Ms. Gregory added that putting the committee out on social media would assist in letting others know we are here. Once we get a decent group of followers, the businesses will be more likely to assist. Miss Sessa, Mr. Thummalapalli, Ms. Christopher and Ms. Gregory would like to manage a social media page for DAC. Ms. English will connect with Chris about the video downtown and report back to the group.

Meeting Schedule for 2021

The committee agreed to continue meeting quarterly and on Thursday's. All 2021 dates were recorded. Mr. Meagher added that calling him is the best way to connect with him.

Next Meeting

The next meeting was set for Thursday, March 11, 2021 at 3:00pm. The location will be determined based on the Covid situation at that time.

Adjournment

The DAC meeting was adjourned at 4:38pm.

Minutes Recorded By: Julie English, Mayor's Office