



CITY OF SALISBURY
DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 13, 2025, 3:00 p.m. Virtual ONLY

Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87883359772>

Committee Members Present

Virginia Bender

Greg Tyler

Shanda Ward

Jessica Cook

Brandon Theriot

Amy Crouse

Katherine Jones

Jeremy Wolfer

Ron Pagano

Members Absent

None

In Attendance

Michele Gregory, City Council Liaison

Adith Thummalapalli, Project Engineer City of Salisbury

Call to Order

- The Disability Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting was called to order at 3:08 pm by Katherine.

Introductions & Welcome

- All active members introduced themselves and Ivy announced her resignation from the DAC.

Last Meeting Minutes Review

- Motion by Ron and seconded by Jessica to review and approve the meeting minutes from January 2025. The minutes were reviewed and approved unanimously.

Event Announcement: Disability Ethics Discussion from the REACH Initiative at Salisbury University

- Ron announced an event that was going to be held by the REACH Initiative at Salisbury University, a research endeavor that was being undertaken to understand the needs of disadvantaged groups in our local community and address those needs in an ethical manner. Ron stated that the disability community was one of great interest to the researchers and that a listening session would be forthcoming to have a conversation with members of the disability community to understand their needs, sometime later in the year. More details would be forthcoming as the date and time of the session were confirmed, but most likely would not occur until the 2025 fall semester at Salisbury University.
- A lengthy discussion about the needs of the community occurred amongst the members of the DAC, covering topics including education, community support, state and local agency supports, healthcare access, and housing issues faced by the disability community and how many community members felt as if they do not have the needed support to live full lives here on the Eastern Shore, compared to communities across the bridge. Healthcare access and agency supports were two of the major concerns discussed by committee members.
- Ron urged members to attend this listening session held by REACH and voice their concerns there as well.

Active DAC Projects – Progress Reports

City Provided Ramps for Downtown Businesses

- The Mayor was unable to join this meeting either, but communicated through Jessie that the DAC had his approval to proceed with the ramp project. Ron and Jeremy offered to survey downtown businesses to determine what length ramps would be necessary and to reach out to all downtown businesses to gauge their interest in receiving a ramp. Jessie provided a sample liability waiver that could be used to ensure that the City and Bay Area CIL would not be held responsible for any issues occurring with the ramps once they were handed over to business owners and the ramps were being used on their properties. The Mayor was particularly concerned about anything blowing back on the City, and the waiver seemed to satisfy his concerns.
- Lengthy discussion occurred about how to spread the word about this initiative and get businesses to sign on. Several DAC members offered solutions, including a social media campaign, a press release, news and tv media coverage, and

announcements sent out by the City's communication department, as well as word of mouth and social media posts on members' private accounts.

Creation of an ADA Transition Plan for the City

- Adith mentioned that his department, Infrastructure and Development, was discussing the need for an ADA Transition Plan for the City. Someone in his department would be getting assigned the task of creating this plan, and Adith said he would try to get the task assigned to him, as City Liaison to the DAC and given his experience with the ADA for a number of years. This plan is still in the idea phase and Adith hoped to have more information in the coming months. This item was noted to be added to the agenda for a later DAC meeting, once more concrete information was available.
- However, the DAC still had a lengthy discussion regarding how an advisory committee like it could serve as a bridge to connect the City to the community of people with disabilities to ensure their voices were heard and their priorities were addressed effectively in any Transition Plan that would be forthcoming.

Agency Updates

- No significant agency updates were shared, due to members having to leave the call by 4:00 pm and there being no quorum.

Open Discussion/Concerns for DAC to Address

- No concerns were brought up for discussion, again, due to members having to leave the call by 4:00 pm and there being no quorum.

Adjourn

- Next Meeting (5/15/2025 at 3:00 pm)
- A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Jeremy and seconded by Virginia. The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Adith Thummalapalli

Adith Thummalapalli, City Liaison