

COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Meeting minutes – January 2024

Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024, at 7 pm.

Location: City Hall, 301 King Street, Chet & Sabra Avery Room 2000

Members present: Jeff Pool, Alex Sprague, Amy Forster, Rachel Dixon, Jeff Pool, Tom Valluzzi, Dianne McNulty, and Anna Forster (Huayra).

Robert Ludke and Lawrence Lewis joined via conference call.

Members excused: Nathan Toews, Kristen Towes, Megan Prince.

Members absent: Justin Beland

City Staff: Namood Khan, (OHR).

Guest speakers: Amy Posner, Electric Vehicle Planner.

Public comment: Alex Radt, Katherine Radt, Karen Forsten, Lia Winnard (via phone).

- Alex Radt shared her concerns regarding the need to identify accessibility-friendly businesses.
- Caren Forsten from the “Prevention of Blindness Society of Metropolitan Washington” shared that she is attending the meeting to learn about the Commission’s work. Chair Pool invited her to share her organization’s work at the February Commission meeting.

Approval of Agenda: Commissioner Sprague made the motion, seconded by Commissioner McNulty, and approved by the Commission body.

Approval of December Minutes: The December minutes were taken by Commissioner Prince. She was not present at the meeting. Namood Khan will ask her to submit the minutes.

Introduction of new Commissioners: Chair Pool welcomed the newly sworn commissioners: Deanne McNulty and Anna Forster (Huayra).

Guest Presentation: Amy Posner, the City’s Electric Vehicle Planner presented the proposed Pilot Program that aims to bring electric vehicle (EV) charging into the right-of-way. She shared that there are components to the program:

- **Sidewalk charging** – Allowing residents to cross the sidewalk with a Level 1 EV charging cord, covered by a highly visible ADA-compliant cord ramp.
- **Curbside charging** – Vendor-installed Level 2 chargers at the curb, with all electrical equipment installed underground.

She answered questions and sought input from the Commission.

Chair's report: Chair Pool had nothing to report.

Formation of Alex Chambers of Commerce subcommittee: There was a discussion on revisiting the idea of labeling Accessibility friendly businesses, or creating some initiative that informs the public about accessibility-friendly businesses. After a brief discussion on the topic, Chair Pool formed a subcommittee named "Alexandria Chambers Outreach Subcommittee," which will be led by Commissioner McNulty and Commissioner Forster.

Chair Pool advised Commissioner McNulty to read the Bylaws and reminded her about Robert's Rule and instructions regarding communication policy for Boards and Commissions. Namooode will help Commissioner McNulty get in touch with the Chambers and other relevant parties.

Committee reports:

- **Legislative committee:** Chair Pool shared that Commissioner Toews is leaving the Commission, and there is now a need for a volunteer to lead the Committee.
- **Housing committee:** Commissioner Creighton was not present.
- **Human Rights Commission:** No report- Vice Chair Prince was not present.
- **AHAAC:** Nothing new to report. Commissioner Sprague expressed their concerns about the building of a stadium in their neighborhood and shared that They are exploring avenues to oppose it.

Members Reports:

- Commissioner Sprague will share some important legislative bills with Namooode, and she will share them with the Commission. (Action Item – done)
Commissioner Sprague shared that Absentee voting starts in nine days and encouraged members to vote.
- Commissioner Valluzzi suggested that the Commission should invite someone from the Alexandria Fire Department to talk about tips on how to rescue persons with disabilities in case of a fire in the home.
- Commissioner Lewis shared a proposed rule by the Justice Department regarding improvement in health standards at hospitals ([Feds Move To Enforce Accessibility Standards For Medical Equipment - Disability Scoop](#)).
- Commissioner McNulty shared that later this month passes for buses will be free for seniors.
- Commissioner Dixon talked about the fire at Jeffery's Catering and encouraged Commissioners to donate to the business as they serve the vulnerable in the community. Commissioner Dixon also shared her experience with Adaptive

Adjournment: Motion: Commissioner Sprague made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Dixon and approved unanimously by the Commission.

The meeting concluded at 9:15 pm.

