

COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Meeting minutes – September 2023

Date: Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 7pm.

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

Members present: Alex Sprague, Jeff Pool, Nathan Toews, Kristen Creighton, Michael Kamin, Jen Wiser, Rachel Dixon.

Members excused: Robert Ludke, Lawrence Lewis, Megan Prince.

Members absent: Naufal Kulam, Justin Beland, Sue Picerno.

City Staff: Namood Khan, (OHR).

Guest speakers: None

The Meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM. After the roll call, Chair Pool reminded each commissioner of their term expiration dates.

Approval of the agenda: Commissioner Wiser made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Sprague, and approved (as amended) by the Commission body.

Approval of August minutes: Commissioner Wiser made the motion, seconded by Commissioner Kamin, and approved unanimously by the Commission.

Public Comment: Alex Radt shared that she is attending as an observer.

Chair's report: Chair Pool talked about the Proclamation (Disability Voting Rights Week) that was read out last night and commended commissioners who were in attendance, and reiterated the importance of being visible as commissioners as this opens up opportunities to work with others on issues that are important for this Commission. He said that if ACPD is having a milestone anniversary soon, we can use it to recognize an organization, a person or issue related to ACPD. Chair Pool shared that he needs to do some research first about the history of ACPD first and then come back to the Commission.

Chair Pool shared that he intends to have a meeting of the Executive committee, however, Commissioner Picerno's status is still unclear, which means there is some type of administrative hurdle. The executive Committee is comprised of the Chair Pool, Vice Chair, Commissioner Prince.

Commissioner Creighton asked about communication: Chair Pool responded that we are limited by FOIA rules, even though it challenges the ease of the work, but we should not worry about it. The best way for a committee to meet is to let Namood know three business days before the meeting so that she can post it on the City's calendar. Commissioner Creighton asked about the rules of email communication according to the FOIA rules. Chair Pool gave her a brief

description and encouraged committee members to meet in public. Namooode shared that there is no restriction on where the committees can meet, and if the committee desires, she can also reserve a room for them.

Commissioner Creighton requested a roster of the Commission with email addresses. Namooode will share it with the Commission (action item).

Committee Report:

- **Executive Committee:** nothing to report, did not meet.
- **Legislative Committee:** Nothing to report.

Liaison Reports:

- **Human Rights Commission:** Commissioner Prince was not present but had shared an email with Namooode with information about a public forum on the Supreme court decisions and implications for the community, hosted by the Human Rights Commission. Namooode forwarded the information to the Commission.
- **AHAAC:** Commissioner Sprague shared that they had some struggle with their own apartment forcing them to move to a more expensive apartment. They shared that they have been advocating for the city to lower rental prices. There is a city council town hall scheduled for September 24 about zoning, and encouraged Commissioners to attend and express their concerns.

Formation of a Zoning Committee: Commissioner Creighton expressed interest in the Zoning for Housing initiative that the city has launched and is currently conducting several town halls. Chair Pool said that the Commission can advocate on behalf of the ACPD community and perhaps draft a letter to the city council.

Motion: to move a housing subcommittee: Commissioner Sprague moved to form a housing subcommittee, seconded by Commissioner Kamin, and approved unanimously by the Commission. Commissioner Creighton will serve as the chair, with Commissioner Toews and Commissioner Dixon as committee members. Commissioner Creighton will attend the meetings and draft recommendations to Chair Pool.

Commissioner Dixon suggested that the Commission invite someone from the Equity Index tool Project to shed light on this issue. Chair Pool advised Commissioner Creighton to reach out to Doris Ray from the Endependence Center.

Member Reports:

- Commissioner Sprague shared that this July, they were able to host their first annual Disability Pride celebration. It will take place in July every year. They also shared that they are starting a non-profit dedicated to helping spread word about autism acceptance and getting rid of seclusion and restraint policy and behavioral policies within schools and prisons. They also intend to advocate for adult changing stations.
- Commissioner Creighton shared that she is attempting to become the special ed liaison for special needs for the high schools to voice concerns of parents of children with disabilities. Chair Pool advised her to keep him in the loop if there are any opportunities for collaboration.
- Commissioner Valluzzi suggested that the Commission invite a speaker from the assistive technology Program from GMU.

Adjournment: Commissioner Sprague made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Dixon, and approved unanimously by the Commission body. The meeting concluded at 8:30 PM.