

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2024

7:00 P.M., City Hall
301 King Street, Room 2000
Chet and Sabra Avery Room

Members Present

Kristen Creighton
Rachel Dixon
Huayra Forster
Jacob Griffin
Mike Kamin
Lawrence Lewis
Deanne McNulty (participated by conference call)
Megan Prince, Vice Chair
Alex Radt
Alex Sprague (participated by conference call)
Robbi Woodson
Tom Valluzzi (participated by conference call)

City Staff Present

David Miller, Acting Director

Members Excused

Jeff Pool, Chair
Bob Ludke
Caitlin Fitzsimmons

Members Absent

Guest speakers

None

1. **Call to Order/Introductions by Vice Chair Prince**

Vice Chair Prince called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Woodson, the Agenda was approved. All Commissioners present voted aye.

3. **Approval of Minutes of the September Meeting**

Upon a motion by Vice Chair Prince, seconded by Commissioner Griffin, the September minutes were approved. All Commissioners present voted aye.

4. **Chair's Report**

None

5. **Discussion**

The Commission discussed outreach and events that they may partner with the Human Rights Office. David explained that HRO has met their obligation under the EEOC contract for outreach for this year. The Office plans its outreach events based on the EEOC's enforcement priorities. David explained that the OHR attends different outreach events depending on staff availability and EEOC priorities. The Commission may attend any event

that members feel are important; a brochure will be developed and reviewed by Commissioner Griffin. Formal events sponsored by a City agency must go through the Event & Activities process through the City Manager's Office for approval. Commissioner Griffin talked about having a platform for the Commission to hear from the public. Commissioner Griffin asked about an email address for the Commission: acpd@alexandriava.gov. The emails go to Miladis Martinez-Gutierrez and will be forwarded to the Chair and Vice Chair for appropriate action. Commissioner Dixon said that the website is pretty good and that it has the contact email information for each commissioner.

Commissioner Woodson said that it would be helpful for Police or Fire to come to a commission meeting to talk about emergency services for persons with disabilities. David explained that the new Police Chief does not start until November 25. Commissioner Griffin said that he thought that the CIT person should come to the meeting. Commissioner Griffin discussed putting ACPD information on City information material, such as notices for trash pickup. Also, QR Codes were discussed. David discussed the City's process for putting out information. Commissioner Radt discussed inviting Fire to talk about how they assist people with disabilities in an emergency, due to concerns voiced over emergency response at ACPS.

Commissioner Forster requested inviting a representative of a financial institution to provide information about financial health for people with intellectual disabilities. Commission Woodson spoke about the resources provided by banking institutions. Commissioner Woodson will reach out to financial institutions and coordinate through David.

David provided a brief history of the Office of Human Rights' support for the ACPD and the future plans to provide a dedicated staff person to the ACPD.

Discussion on scheduling of guests for 2025.

6. **Public Comment**

Dorris Ray, Director of Advocacy and Outreach for ENDependence Center of Northern Virginia, Inc. (ECNV). ECNV is a disability resource center run by people with disabilities for people with disabilities. ECNV services Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun Counties and Cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, and Falls Church. Ms. Ray gave a brief history of ECNV, and the services provided. Also, Ms. Ray explained her role as an advocate and thanked the Commission for fifty-years of service to the disability community. Ms. Ray raised concern of the use of high intensity lightening in government buildings. On February 4, 2025, ECNV will take all 17 center staff members down to Richmond to support funding bills, and bills that support amendments to the building Code that will make building more assessable for persons with disabilities. This upcoming year will be the 35th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the 40th for the Virginia Disability Rights Act.

7. **City Manager's Letter**

The Commission discussed the CMO's letter and the commissions response. On a motion by Commissioner Dixon, seconded by Commissioner Woodson, and approved by all Commissioners, it was decided that Vice Chair Prince will write the Commission's response, and it will be edited by Commissioner Griffin.

- Accessibility for street scape.
- Affordable housing.
- Program accessibility - library.
- Addressing food insecurity, specifically accessibility to food hubs.
- Accessible shuttle services.
- Increased funding for ACPS for training (neurodiversity, accessibility) and special education teachers. Program to support most vulnerable population.

8. **Committee Reports**

- **Legislative Committee:** None
- **Housing Committee:** See above for information
- **Accessibility-Friendly Businesses Committee:** None
- **Human Rights Commission:** Discussed new rainbow crosswalks, legislative package, and strategic health plan for the City.
- **Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC):** Nothing to report
- Rachel Dixon volunteered to take on this assignment. Tabled for later.
- **ACPS 2030 Strategic Planning Committee**

9. **Member Report**

- Commissioner Ludke- Thanked the commission for its work
- Commissioner Prince – None
- Commissioner Sprague – Keeping All Students Safe Act (emailed to commissioners)
- Commissioner Griffin – Requested to pull Alex311 data on disability-related issues. Discussed a business on King Street, “BEST” which employees’ people with disabilities. The BEST (Building Employment Solutions Together) employment program is a new employment bureau for adults with disabilities located at 919 King Street in Old Town Alexandria.
- Commissioner Sprague – Updated Commission on efforts to restore 509 and federal and state support for education for students with disabilities and Keeping All Students Safe Act.
- Commissioner Dixon & Robbi Woodson were accepted to a 9 months of Civic Engagement experience. Shared documentary Unseen.
- Commissioner Fitzsimmons –
- Commissioner Woodson – Melwood is taking on initiative to employ more people with disabilities and to provide more housing. Miracle on 34 street food drive in Arlington.
- Tom Valluzzi – Four Mile Run Park update

Action Item

David will contact the Fire department, T&ES, Events Coordinator, and CIT trainer.

Vice Chair Prince will submit to David a list of questions to provide to the Alex311 Director, Commissioner Griffin will provide a list of points to Vice Chair Prince.

10. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Sprague motioned to adjourn, seconded by Vice Chair Prince. All Commissioners present voted aye. Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm. The next meeting is scheduled for November 13, 2024.