

ALEXANDRIA COMMISSION ON PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
MEETING NOTES OF WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2024

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

Members Present

Megan Prince, Vice Chair
Rachel Dixon
Caitlin Fitzsimmons
Huayra Forster (participated by phone)
Robbi Woodson
Alex Sprague
Tom Valluzzi (participated by phone)

City Staff Present

David Miller, Acting Director

Members Excused

Jeff Pool, Chair
Deanne McNulty
Lawrence Lewis
Kristen Creighton
Alex Radt
Bob Ludke
Howard Weiss

Members Absent

Jacob Griffin

1. **Call to Order/Introductions by Alex Sprague**

Commissioner called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m. Introductions were made. A quorum was not established.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

No Commission business was undertaken due to not establishing an in-person quorum.

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

No Commission business was undertaken due to not establishing an in-person quorum.

4. **Guest speakers**

None

5. **Meeting Notes**

Due to the commission not being able to establish an in-person quorum, minutes were not taken. A summary of the meeting is as follows:

Commissioner Prince explained that at the last Human Rights Commission meeting they had a guest presenter from Homes Not Borders a non-profit group that has a mission to provide

refugees and other forced migrants in the DC area with what they need to thrive and feel at home in the United States. They help with resettlement of refugees by basically furnishing their home with more than just the basics. They express the concern with what might happen with the new administration. Also, additional members of the public came to the meeting to speak about the situation in Gaza and to express their frustration with the City Council not acting on the cease fire resolution and is pushing forward with their efforts to get the City to divest from all Israeli related companies in Alexandria.

Commissioner Dixon shared information about an affordable, accessible home at the Bloom. Commissioner Dixon will send an email with the information about the available unit to David, who will share it with the commission.

Commissioner Forester spoke about divestment from APAC and the suffering war has on humanity.

Commissioner Fitzsimmons states that she was at an event where Senator Warner spoke about concerns with affordable housing and diversity issues because of increased tax on this region. The tax base is an issues because we may be required to send more money to the public school, which may have an adverse impact on the disabled community.

Commissioner Sprague stated that they will continue to work in 2025 to support the Keeping All Students Safe Act. Commissioner Sprague will be traveling to Richmond to lobby support.

Vice Chair Prince thanked commissioner Sprague for stepping up and stepping in while she was in route to the meeting. She expressed her excitement for the New Year and is looking forward to the new ideas and the work that the commission will take on in 2025.

A question was raised about emotional support animals vs. service animals in a university setting. David provided an explanation of what constitutes and emotional support animals under the Fair Housing Act, and what the ADA determines is a service animal, the ADA only recognizes dogs and miniature horses (in narrow situations) as service animals.

Commissioners present celebrated the holiday and the 50th anniversary of the Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities and all the meaningful work that the commission does for all Alexandria.

The next meeting is scheduled for January 8, 2025.