

Mayor's Council on Disability Issues
December 15, 2022 - Meeting Minutes
Small Assembly Room, City County Building

I. Meeting called to order at 3:08 p.m.

II. Roll call:

Members: Alexander, Barber, Childress, Colebrook, Cox, Jenkins, Landfather, Lowe, Maxwell, Mull, Nesmith, Shimmin-Orr, Ross, Simmons, Spangler, Villanueva, Welch

City of Knoxville Staff: Cook, Dziubak

Present: Alexander, Barber, Childress, Colebrook, Landfather, Lowe, Mull, Shimmin-Orr, Simmons

Absent: Cox, Jenkins, Maxwell, Nesmith, Ross, Spangler, Villanueva, Welch

Guests: Keith Kirkland, Property Development and Construction Manager for Public Building Authority (PBA)

Interpreters: Erin Talley & Jesse Johnson from Knoxville Center for the Deaf (KCD), and Monique Johnson from Learn, Play, Sign, LLC (LPS)

III. Presentation: City of Knoxville ADA Self Evaluation & Transition Plan

Dziubak and Cook presented an overview of the City's ADA Transition Plan that was updated in December 2019.

- Dziubak started with an introduction and explanation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and Title II of the ADA, which requires all programs, services, and activities (PSAs) of public entities to provide equal access for individuals with disabilities.
- Cook explained about physical space and elements that are continually evaluated for barriers to accessibility such as:
 - Physical Barriers: parking, restrooms, drinking fountains, etc.
 - Programmatic Barriers: building signage, customer communication and interaction, non-compliant sidewalks or curb ramps that affect citizens traveling

within the city such as sidewalk closed signs being posted at the end of blocks so that it is clear to anyone that it is not currently accessible before the person continues down.

- The DOJ considers sidewalks a program of local government and several barriers fall under the Parks and Recs department of city government such as after school programs, where there is an opportunity for accommodations these must be viewed in entirety as accessible.
- The Transition Plan is a general roadmap for the City and there are short-term goals and long-term goals. Some priorities can change due to citizen involvement, and the plan is looking at senior citizens and citizens with disabilities. The City will apply the ADA's "working document" concept to the process of identifying accessibility barriers.
- Dziubak continued with the explanation of the city of Knoxville self-evaluation process. Each Self-Evaluation will be complete within one year of its initiation. Phase one began on January 1, 2020, and was to include all remaining barrier removal identified in the previous survey of 21 parks, recreation, and other facilities.
- Cook discussed the City of Knoxville public outreach program, which includes CODI. One of the major initiatives of CODI is the "Disability Friendly City Survey." Using the "eight domains of livability", in partnership with the University of Tennessee, the City created a survey to determine what are the topmost issues facing people in the senior and disability communities.
- Dziubak continued with a brief overview of pages 18-19, which discusses improving website accessibility within the City's website and the Harassment Policy and the City's Workplace Violence Policy, which is set forth in the City's Administrative Rules at Rule 107.

- Cook continued with pages 25-26, which discusses Boards, Commissions, Committees, and Council Reviews and discussed how this ties in to CODI's Universal Design goals to effect change in the codes of the city building codes.
- Cook then discussed sidewalks and right of ways, and mentioned that there have been improvements since she came to the city in 1998 such as the 3-1-1 and MyKnoxville app that are available to help with reporting accessibility issues, and increase overall communication with the city.
- Dziubak wrapped up by discussing signalized intersections and reporting that all new signal installations now come equipped with countdown pedestrian signals and audible pedestrian push-button detectors. She then mentioned that this is a large document with all of the appendices and that members only received the plan so if any CODI member would like to access the appendices they can contact her to schedule a time to view it on her computer at the City County building. Dziubak then introduced Keith Kirkland the Property Development and Construction Manager for the Public Building Authority (PBA).
- Kirkland has been with the Public Building Authority (PBA) since January 2018, and his department works together with architects, engineers, and construction crews all over the City. During his time with PBA, he has created a maintenance manual to show where continual improvements can occur, such as replacing hand dryers bathrooms to follow ADA code.
- One recently completed project was Sam Duff Park, which is not yet completely accessible, but huge improvements have been made to critical items such as accessible parking, accessible trails, and the dog park.
- PBA completed a walk-through of Milton Roberts, which was partially funded with ADA money and will be fully ADA compliant when it opens.

- The John T O'Connor Center is now fully accessible, Suttree Landing is fully accessible, and Sharps Ridge has been made partially accessible.
- Lakeshore Park was funded through the Lakeshore Conservancy but PBA has been consulting to make sure that the park is meeting ADA compliance.
- Kirkland has worked on assessments on four other locations including designs, but these locations are waiting for funding from the City.
- Cook shared that a couple of months ago she was approached by Parks and Recreation to upgrade 3 playgrounds to make them fully accessible, and that she used ADA funds in the amount of \$210,000 to help complete these projects. She also mentioned that projects can change in priority, that citizens can call the office to find out which projects are upcoming, and that the City tries to make sure that improvements are equitable to all people within the city and not just focus on one part of the city.
- Kirkland explained the process of the ADA improvements and "collateral damage," for instance; fixing a restroom can not only involve ADA codes, but also building codes, wiring codes, and fire codes. Once they touch a project, they have ownership and must make decisions and have the funding to finish projects. Every incremental step leads to the end goal. Often, the public is using the facilities while improvements are made which may also lengthen the process.
- Landfather, Childress, Simmons, and Mull all made comments about improvements, "collateral damage," and how things are fixed. Specifically mentioned were Lakeshore Park and Fort Dickerson Park that are funded privately, but the city is monitoring these facilities so they can step up if needed.

IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- Simmons made a motion to approve October minutes, Barber seconded; all were in favor, no one opposed.

V. Announcements and Public Forums:

- Barber mentioned that Target has Adaptable Sports Barbie in a sit-ski and wrapping paper showing people with disabilities.
- Cook mentioned that Jenkins grandfather had passed away as had past CODI member Dr. Rupy Sawhney.
- Dziubak mentioned that there will be quarterly in person meetings in 2023 with the first being the half-day retreat in February.
- Landfather asked about an update on the Membership committee, Dziubak informed us that they are holding interviews the following week with nominated candidates and would be reporting these at the January CODI meeting.
- Simmons shared a book from AARP about Accessible Dwellings and mentioned that Cook is trying to get more copies for CODI members.

VI. Meeting adjourned at 4:14pm

Respectfully submitted by: Karen Lowe, secretary and Misha Dziubak, CODI Liaison

Upcoming 2022 Meetings/Reminders:

- January 11, 2023 meeting via Zoom
- February 10, 2023—in Person CODI half-day retreat (12-4, American Job Center)