

## Knoxville Mayor's Council on Disability Issues

March 13, 2024, Meeting Minutes - via Zoom

**I. Meeting was called to order at 3:08 pm.**

**II. Roll Call:**

**Members:** Barber, Brooks, Cain, Carter, Childress, Eldredge, Lowe, Mathison, Maxwell, Mull, Robertson, Shimmin-Orr, Simmons, Spangler, Villanueva, Welch, Ziegler

**City of Knoxville Staff:** Cook, Dziubak

**Present:** Barber, Carter, Lowe, Maxwell, Mull, Robertson, Shimmin-Orr, Villanueva, Welch, Ziegler

**Absent:** Brooks, Cain, Childress, Dziubak, Eldredge, Mathison, Simmons, Spangler,

**Guests:** Marianne Wildgruber (Oak Ridge Advocate), Mary Jo Costello (AARP), and Nathan Stewart

**Interpreter:** Antonio Banner

**III. Approval of February Minutes:** Mull made first motion, Maxwell seconded motion, motion carried.

**IV. Presentation – Sertoma –** Not able to be present at the meeting, will reschedule for next month.

**V. Member Advocacy and Information – (Karen Lowe) – Healthcare Accessibility**

- Healthcare matters because everyone will need a doctor at some point.
- Doctors are in “practice,” however they do not know everything.
- It is the law that healthcare is accessible, not necessarily affordable.
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504 makes sure that doctor’s offices, clinics, and medical equipment are accessible to people with a disability. (various sources)
- Resources in TN: Disability Rights TN(DRT), Tennessee Disability Pathfinder
- The average annual cost for a person with a disability (\$13,492) is significantly higher than for a person without a disability (\$2,835) including out of pocket costs which are more than twice as high (\$1053 v. \$486). The Affordable Care Act has helped ease the affordability issue with 21.2% of people with disabilities, down from 26.9%. source: <https://nationaldisabilitynavigator.org/2018/01/11/chril-article-examines-health-care-coverage-and-costs-for-people-with-disabilities/>
- A study done in partnership with NDI, UTK, Stony Brook University, and the Oxford Institute of Population Aging, estimated that a household containing an adult with a disability that limits their ability to work requires an average of 28% more income (or an additional \$17,690 a year) to obtain the same standard of living as a similar household without a member with a disability. There are also direct costs and indirect costs that add up quickly. Source: <https://www.nationaldisabilityinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/extra-costs-living-with-disability-brief.pdf>
- Being a Self-Advocate:
  - Believe in yourself (you know you the best)
  - Prepare (write things down, including what you are wanting to accomplish)

- Communicate effectively (politeness, kindness, stay calm, listen)
- Get the facts (ask for things in writing so you can go over it with someone you trust)
- Keep your own records
- Follow up
- You have the right to leave if you are not being listened to or feel uncomfortable, I have done it.
- You can tell the doctor that you are not doing tests again if they are just going to share the same information that is already done, I have done this too, as an extra test costing more money to not learn anything new is not good).
- Assertive Vs. Aggressive
  - Assertive is being forthright with your wants and needs while still considering the rights, needs, and wants of others.
  - Aggressive is doing what is in your own best interest without regard for the rights, needs, and feelings or desires of others.
- Sometimes it is easier to advocate for others, but you also have to speak up for yourself.

#### VI. Committee Reports:

- a. **Bylaws: - Did not meet**
- b. **Membership: – Will meet April 3, 2024**
- c. **Transportation: - Will meet April 8, 2024**

#### VII. Strategic Plan Reports:

- a. **Livability: - Did not meet**
- b. **Universal Design: (Villaneuva reported)**
  - Missing middle housing was the focus of discussion. Great ideas – consider where there is parking, street parking, close to housing?
  - Neighborhood amenities - are they close? (schools, grocery stores, pharmacies, etc.)
  - Determine definitions of “Accessible” and “Affordable.”
  - Next Step: bring in a realtor and/or builder to discuss further.
  - What kind of incentives could be offered to increase the amount of affordable, accessible housing in Knoxville?

#### VIII. New Business:

- Cook shared information about a recent meeting she attended with the Equity Plan consultants. The City of Knoxville and Knox County are working on a landlord, owner/developer conference/summit at a date yet to be determined.
- April is National Fair Housing Month

#### IX. Announcements & Public Forum:

- Last night there were over 40 people in attendance at the public meeting at the Cansler YMCA to discuss “All Things Equity in Housing” – great meeting!

- Costello: guest visiting from AARP. Great meeting. This conflicts with another meeting but will be back!
- Stewart: just a guest; listening. Appreciate CODI and I will definitely be back!
- Wildgruber: shared her experience of participating in Disability Day on the Hill in Nashville and was grateful for the advocacy and being able to join in

**X. Meeting was Adjourned at 3:41 p.m.**