

**Office of Equity & Civil Rights
Mayor's Commission on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2023**

Voting Members:

1. Aloma Bouma (Chair) – National Federation of the Blind
2. David Greenberg – League for People with Disabilities
3. Janice Jackson – Commissioner - Consumer Advocate
4. Kimberly (Michelle) Grade – Sinai Hospital
5. Michael Trentadue – Citizen – Accessible Tech Pro
6. Willie Fields – Citizen

Non-Voting Members:

1. Brenda P. Haynes – Community-Mount Pleasant
2. Byron Pugh - Baltimore City Health Department
3. Erin Kelly – Enoch Pratt Free Library
4. Jack Elam – Housing Authority of Baltimore City
5. Keina Overton – Baltimore City Department of Transportation
6. Laetitia Gardener – Baltimore City Department of Transportation
7. Yojinde Paxton – Baltimore City Public Schools

Office of Equity and Civil Rights staff:

8. Viola Woolums – Legal Counsel
9. Terrie Lewis – Complaint Advocate
10. Robin Drummond – Special Assistant

Guests

11. Chip Woods, Executive Director – St. Peter's Adult Learning Center
12. Christopher Mason-Hale, MCDD Community Advocate – Kennedy Krieger Institute
13. Nikki Stokes, Resource Center Coordinator– Pathfinders for Autism
14. Stephen DaRe, CEO – Chimes

I. Welcome/Call to Order

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Aloma Bouma at 1:05 pm.
- b. Chairperson Aloma requested a rollcall and welcomed everyone.
- c. Introductions were made.

II. Opening Remarks

- a. Opening remarks were given by Chairperson Aloma Bouma.
- b. She noted that a return to in-person meetings should be tabled due to Covid numbers.

III. Director's Report

- a. The Director's report was given by Viola Woolums.
 - i. OECR's disability-related Civil Rights Week events – October 31, 2023, from 3:00-7:30 pm.
 - ii. Ms. Woolums thanked everyone who completed the MCD email list membership survey! This will be used as a general listserv sign-up moving forward and will be posted to the OECR website soon.
 - iii. Legislative updates:
 - 1. OECR continues to work with the MCD to review and update its governing statute. A final internal review meeting is currently pending scheduling.
 - 2. The next meeting is scheduled for October 25, 2023, at 1:00 pm.
- b. The following meetings are listed below:
 - i. November 22, 2023, 1:00 pm
 - ii. December – no meeting

IV. Approval of the minutes

- a. David Greenberg moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Janice Jackson. The May 24, 2023, minutes were approved without objection.
- b. David Greenberg moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Janice Jackson. The June 28, 2023, minutes were approved without objection.
- c. July 17, 2023, Commission Development Committee minutes were accepted.

V. MCD Chairperson Update

- a. Agenda: Viola Woolums gave an overview of the afternoon events for Civil Rights Week (CRW).
- b. Comments/recommendations from MCD Members
 - i. Mr. Greenberg had concerns about the event being on Halloween and excluding family members with children.
 - 1. He wanted to focus not only programming but on attendance.
 - 2. Mr. Greenberg suggested hosting events at the ALF or other buildings that serve individuals with disabilities.
 - 3. HASA and WTC did not work out.
 - 4. Chip Woods suggested churches and community locations in the future.
 - 5. The number one way to increase attendance is to get the word out through press releases and news.

- ii. Ms. Jackson spoke about Miss Wheelchair America (Chandra Smith) and would like her to be involved in CRW. Ms. Jackson will give Ms. Woolums the contact information.
- iii. Chair Aloma stated that we will not need an ADA session next year during CRW.
- iv. Mr. Greenberg, Mr. Wood, and Mr. DaRe discussed mobility planning in the future for CRW. Additional suggestions to increase attendance:
 - 1. Not on Halloween
 - 2. Programs should end before 3 pm.
 - 3. They will be able to increase attendance in the future.
 - 4. Participants weighed in on spaces to accommodate parking.
 - 5. Ms. Woolums stated that MCD could host a series of smaller events to include a smaller Committee.
 - 6. Mr. Greenberg suggested press releases, eblasts, and flyers of the event. He would like to see what the community has to say about disabilities.
- v. Mr. Willie Fields spoke about food desserts in the City that disproportionately effect people with disabilities and seniors. Kimberley Grade spoke about a farmer's market at various hospitals. Mr. Greenberg and Mr. Woods weighed on this discussion.
 - 1. Suggestions
 - a. What about the business perspective
 - b. City Government
 - c. Supermarkets
 - d. Add to the Agenda: food deserts –November 2023 meeting.

VI. Committees Discussion

- a. Commission Development – Committee Chair, David Greenberg
 - i. thanked the guests for attending and commented on good ideas presented.
 - ii. overview of how he reached out to various CEO's and Directors and those providing services in Baltimore City.
 - iii. would like to see more substantive issues addressed.
 - iv. asked about how to onboard commissioners.
 - 1. Currently, a resume and letter of interest for membership is submitted to Viola via email and the applicant goes through an administrative process. Viola is developing a formal application.
 - 2. Chair Aloma - flyer for recruiting along with the applications. Viola is working on pending approval.

VII. Open forum

- a. Ms. Woolums would like input on a recent complaint.
 - i. She spoke about the investigation of a grocery store and solicited member feedback.

- ii. Mr. Woods spoke about the types of carts that can be provided for security. Ms. Woolums will follow-up with grocery store.
 - iii. Members weighed in on the process and alternatives for cart use for disabilities vs. those without disabilities. What are the barriers and how to remove the barriers. What are the trends?
- b. Chair Aloma announced that the Baltimore running fest on October 15, 2023. NFB will be managing. She welcomes all to come.

V. Closing

- a. Next meeting is scheduled for November 22, 2023, via Zoom.
- b. There being no further business to discuss, Mr. David Greenberg moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Willie Fields at 2:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond
Special Assistant
Office of Equity and Civil Rights