

Office of Equity & Civil Rights
Mayor's Commission on Disabilities
Meeting Minutes
October 25, 2023

Attendance:

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. Adam Levine – Law Department

Non-Voting Members:

5. Byron Pugh - Baltimore City Health Department
6. Jack Elam – Housing Authority of Baltimore City
7. Laetitia Gardener – Baltimore City Department of Transportation
8. Martin French – Baltimore City Department of Planning
9. Yojinde Paxton – Baltimore City Public Schools
10. Carole Young - (absent)
11. Erin Kelly - (absent)
12. Nikki Stokes – (absent)

Office of Equity and Civil Rights staff:

13. Caylin Young – Deputy Director
14. Viola Woolums – Legal Counsel
15. Terrie Lewis – Complaint Advocate
16. Robin Drummond – Special Assistant

Guests

17. James Orman – Kennedy Krieger Institute
18. Elizabeth Eby – Chief Executive Officer – Creative Options Inc
19. Christopher Mason-Hale, MCDD Community Advocate – Kennedy Krieger Institute
20. Chip Woods, Executive Director – St. Peter's Adult Learning Center

Guest Speaker Presentation: Mr. Taylor LaFave

- a. Food Deserts – Baltimore City Food Policy and Planning
- b. Chief of Food Policy and Planning with the City's Department of Planning
- c. Team – the work is interagency collaboration.
- d. Food policy Action Coalition (Food PAC)
- e. Resident Food Equity Advisors
- f. Health Food Priority Areas Map was shown.
- g. Urban Agriculture, Local Food and Farmers Markets

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 introductions.

II. Opening Remarks

- a. Opening remarks were given by Chairperson Aloma Bouma.
- b. She thanked all new people for attending the meeting and thanked David Greenberg for sending out invitations.

III. Office of Equity and Civil Rights Program Report

- a. Report was given by Viola Woolums.
 - i. Administrative Updates
 - 1. OECR's disability-related Civil Rights Week events – October 31, 2023, from 3:00-7:30 pm.
 - a) Morning: ADA-focused event exclusively for City employees
 - b) Afternoon: Introduction by Chandra Smith, Ms. Wheelchair America 2024
 - c) Forum: Public is invited to ask questions of City agency representatives and express their concerns
 - 2. Membership Survey: Members are asked to complete as soon as possible.
 - 3. October is National Disability Employment Awareness Month.
 - a) Virtual discussion hosted by Coppin State on October 26, at 6pm
 - b) The roles of Black & Disabled individuals in the Social Justice Movement.
 - c) Shelly Smith, representative of the Baltimore City Fire Department Office of Emergency Management will be participating.
 - 4. Commission Development Committee, OECR has received 3 new applications for MCD membership.
 - 5. Reminder of MCD attendance requirements
 - a) Per ordinance, members missing more than 25% of meetings in any 6-month period will be considered to have resigned.
 - b) A member will be resigned after 2 absences in a rolling 6-month period.
 - 6. Next meeting is scheduled for November 22, 2023, at 1:00pm.

- a) December – no meeting
 - ii. Legislative Updates
 - 1. OCER continues to work with the MCD to review and update its governing statute.
 - 2. A final internal review meeting was held on October 17.
 - 3. OECR is working through its legislative liaison to have the amendments considered.
 - iii. Accessibility Concerns
 - 1. OECR is investigating new accessibility concerns.
 - 2. Circuit Court for Baltimore City and the DPW website interface.
 - 3. Adam Levine gave Viola Woolums a reference regarding accessibility to the Court House.
- IV. Approval of the minutes
- a. David Greenberg moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Janice Jackson. The September 27, 2023, minutes were approved without objection.
- V. MCD Chairperson Update
- a. Chair Aloma Bouma spoke about Article I and the Charter. She thanked everyone who worked on the Charter. There are areas that have not been finalized.
 - i. Mr. Levine wanted to know when the Charter would be introduced to the City Council.
 - 1. Chair Aloma Bouma stated that once the final language is confirmed it will go to 1) OECR, 2) Law Department, and 3) City Council.
 - 2. Deputy Director Young spoke about legislation.
 - a) He said that the Mayor is aware of the need to have a conversation.
 - b) Deputy Director Young noted that it will be a report out.
 - c) He said that it is appropriate to keep bringing up the request for timeline.
 - b. Chair Aloma Bouma attended a public forum and gave highlights about setting priorities for sidewalks, curb cuts, transportation, etc. She mentioned that a system was put in place for the City.
 - i. She added that it is important to discuss food deserts as requested in the last meeting.
 - c. Reminder: October is National Employment Disabilities Month.
 - i. Chair Aloma Bouma spoke about the water stop that was led by the National Federation of the Blind.
 - ii. She said that if anyone would like to participate, please let her know.

- d. She spoke about volunteers for the Civil Rights Week specifically for MCD event on October 31, 2023.
 - i. Ms. Jackson asked if there could be a resource table for MCD.
 - ii. In addition, Ms. Jackson asked if there will be nametags for the volunteers.
- e. Mr. Greenberg commented on the lack of approval of documents and flyers that say what MCD does. He stated that he was feeling disrespected. He also commented on the scheduling of the MCD event and Halloween on the same day as it interferes with children and families.
 - i. Ms. Jackson agreed and asked if the Director and Mayor will be attending the MCD event. Ms. Woolums stated the Director Moore will be giving the opening remarks and the Mayor had been invited.
 - ii. Yojinde Paxton agreed and commented about the scheduling conflict with the Civil Rights Breakfast and another big event.
 - iii. Chair Aloma would like MCD to be more of a part of the planning process for Civil Rights Week in the future.
 - iv. Deputy Young stated that OECR will commit to improving. He apologized and welcomed feedback from MCD. He hopes to have more forward facing and he will do better next year.
- f. Ms. Jackson mentioned an email she had received about the Director of Mobility.
 - i. She would like David Greenberg to speak about the email.

VI. Committees Discussion

- a. No reports

VII. Open forum

VIII. 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 Yojinde Paxton. The meeting was adjourned without objection.
- c. Meeting adjourned at 2:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Drummond
Special Assistant
Office of Equity and Civil Rights