

PINELLAS COUNTY COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
MEETING MINUTES

March 7, 2022, at 10:00AM
Clerk of the Court, Large Conference Room, 4th Floor
315 Court St., Clearwater FL 33756

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Armstrong called the meeting to order by Chair Armstrong at 10:08 am.

ROLL CALL

Present

Jody Armstrong, Chair (Disability Achievement Center)
Kerry Carlisle (Peters)
Michelle Detweiller (PARC)
Jack Humburg (Boley Center)
Aubrey Posey (Seel)

Not Present, absent excused

Harriet Crozier (Area Agency on Aging)
Keli Mondello (Gerard)
Ross Silvers (Eggers)

Unexcused absence

Steven Cleveland (Florida Dream Center)
Deborah Figgs-Sanders (Flowers)
Linsey Grove (Justice)
Richard LaBelle (Family Network on Disabilities)
Angel Overly (PVA)

Others Present

Betina Baron, Pinellas County Office of Human Rights Compliance Manager
Abhishek Dayal, PSTA, Director of Project Management Office
Greggory Milam, Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR)
Lynda Morrill, Pinellas County Business Technology Services (BTS)
Daniel Schutzsmith, Pinellas County Communications
Carol Strickland, Pinellas County Office of Human Rights
Keiah Townsend, Pinellas County Assistant County Attorney

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Armstrong tabled September 3, 2021 and December 6, 2021 minutes due to lack a of quorum.

OLD BUSINESS/PENDING ACTION

COUNTY WEBSITE UPDATE- Ms. Morrill (PC-BTS) stated that she has submitted the first draft of the ADA Transition regarding the digital technology space and was waiting to hear back from Mr. Lorick (Director, Office of Human Rights). She also noted that most of the PDFs on the website have been remediated through their third-party vendor; the website should be in pretty good shape. There is an opportunity to test the sites; if you would like to assist in that part of the project, please let them know.

Mr. Schutzsmith (PC-Communications) noted that the target for the website is to read at an 8th grade level, and in some cases a lower grade level, realizing that some things need to remain at a more collegiate level, depending on the service. The boards, councils and committees' websites are also being transferred over. He states there are 200 people screened to test the website. Some of the testers include those with English as a second language. The notations to date have been font size (increase) and dark mode. The testing is to begin on March 21, concluding the end of May and done in waves. The point of the waves is to see how one interacts within the site, what is working well and what isn't. The testers will be able to provide information on what to do both pre-launch and post-launch. The new website is scheduled to launch this summer. There is no specific deadline, so they want to be sure it's done right.

MOBIMAT UPDATE- Chair Armstrong stated that Madeira Beach received their permit, and within 48 hours had their mat ordered. She was hoping that later in the week, they will have received the mats. She also stated that St Pete Beach should be next. Mr. Milam (PC-PCR) talked about the Parks & Conservation Resources Department has been in the process of obtaining a Purchase Order (PO) for the MobiMats for all the parks at once. He stated that Howard Park and Sand Key will be first. He anticipates the permit for Sand Key should be approved within the week. He stated that once the PO has been obtained, they can start going through the permitting process for the other parks. Once the permits have been pulled, they can complete the work. Chair Armstrong stated that Forward Foundation wanted to do a ribbon cutting, that it was pretty important to them. Mr. Milam noted this. She also encouraged any of the Council to attend the ribbon cutting ceremonies since it was the birthplace of this project. Redington Shores, Dolphin Village and Ft DeSoto are on the list to obtain MobiMats (Pinellas County locations).

Ms. Detweiller (PARC) asked to be brought up to speed on the topic, since she is new to the Council. Chair Armstrong provided the background information.

Mr. Milam continued, stating the permit process includes the Department of Environmental Protection.

Mr. Humburg (Boley Center) asked about the maintenance for the mats. Mr. Milam stated they're ordering the wide mats in 50' sections and are posted into the ground. This biggest

issue will be the need to remove them for a pending hurricane. Other than that, there is little maintenance. The mat that will be in St Pete will be 500' and will be well used; Forward Foundation wanted to be sure to get one there.

ADA TRANSITION PLAN- Ms. Baron (Office of Human Rights) stated that the Office of Human Rights has connected with most County departments. They are receiving feedback in different formats (spreadsheets, Word documents, graphs, etc.). The next step after receiving the information is to contain it into one report.

NEW BUSINESS

PSTA BUS STOP ACCESSIBILITY- Chair Armstrong introduced Abhishek Dayal, Director of Project Management Office, PSTA. Mr. Dayal provided a presentation of general information and upgrades to bus stops around Pinellas County. There are approximately 5000 bus stops. Some have shelters, benches, etc., and this is based on stop usage. The threshold to determine shelters is 25+ ridership that wait at that stop throughout the day. He states that there are 266 stops that meet that threshold, but 106 of them have no shelter. There are certain additional challenges to building a shelter: limited right-of-way; permitting; roads; construction costs; and complimentary sidewalk improvement, etc. They are constantly looking for partnerships with Pinellas County, the cities, and FDOT.

The priority system in place from the Shelter Deployment Plan (2015). The placement criteria to consider: ADA requirement (the space, slopes, sidewalks, etc.); drainage and Utilities; a 10' x 15' area for a 4' x 8' shelter (for wheelchair access, bicycle riders, pedestrians; and permitting). Some of the municipalities have offered to share the expense for the new or upgrading shelters through a shelter match program.

Additional technological things are coming. Autonomous Vehicle Advantage (AVA) has launched very successfully in downtown St. Petersburg and is also being used at Clearwater Beach. A question was asked if there was an attendant on the vehicle. Yes, used primarily for observation, but also if the need to go manual arises. A question was asked about the Match Program and whether it was a 50/50 program. Mr. Dayal answered yes, for the shelters that don't quite meet the 25+ ridership. However, they're open to most anything: partnership to handle the sidewalk construction while PSTA does the shelter, etc. Another question was asked if problem areas could be suggested to move up on the priority list. Mr. Dayal stated they rely greatly on community feedback. Send those requests to him to get them going. Mr. Milam (PC-PCR) stated they're working on an all-inclusive playground in Lealman, north of 46th, which may be a perfect spot for a bus stop/shelter.

PINELLAS COUNTY PARKS & CONSERVATION RESOURCES- Mr. Milam (PC-PCR) talked about refurbishing playgrounds at County parks. There are 9 parks to start with that are not ADA accessible (they are at least 15 years old and high traffic parks): Ft DeSoto, Anderson, Taylor, Howard and Walsingham to name a few. The refurbishing includes ADA compliance to accommodate not just kids, but their caregivers as well. He

stated Mr. Cozzie (Director, Parks & Conservation Resources) is committed to having all playgrounds all-inclusive.

COUNCIL REQUEST TO AMEND ORDINANCE TO PERMIT ALTERNATIVES- Ms. Townsend, Assistant County Attorney, talked about having a quorum and how important it is to attend the meetings, especially since they're only quarterly. She went on to talk about potential solutions so that business can move forward. Whatever the decision, it will have to go through the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) for amendment of the ordinance. She suggested lowering the quorum number from 7. There are currently 13 council members: 7 from outside agencies, while 6 are appointed from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), Pinellas County. Another suggestion was to have an alternate as a substitute/proxy with voting rights. Chair Armstrong suggested that maybe the agencies have a proxy, while the appointed do not, and asked the council for their opinions. A suggestion was made that perhaps the location is the issue; that it was so much nicer at the County Extension's Magnolia Room, and easier to get to. Ms. Baron (Office of Human Rights) answered that this meeting's absentees were due to scheduling conflicts (vacation, etc.). Another agreed with the Magnolia location, stating downtown Clearwater was difficult to get to, along with parking issues. Ms. Morrill (PC-BTS) suggested the Palm Room at Marketing & Communications (333 Chestnut St, Clearwater) is a new room the BCC is now using instead of the Magnolia Room and offered that as a potential location as well.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS- tabled due to quorum.

COUNCIL OPEN DISCUSSION / ANNOUNCEMENTS- Office of Human Rights will look into the availability of the Magnolia Room for the remaining meetings in 2022.

Ms. Baron (Office of Human Rights) asked about the Clearwater ADA Committee. Chair Armstrong stated she's talked with several potential candidates, as well as the mayor, city manager and city attorney. She is hopeful that something gets drafted by the end of the year.

Ms. Baron (Office of Human Rights) gave kudos to Mr. Lorick in creating a slide deck on the ADA Transition which is being presented to departments identified in the plan. It's a brief overview of the plan. A question was asked if the plan is updated, or new. Ms. Baron states the original plan is dated 1991.

The two council members that were not notified about December's meeting have asked the minutes to be amended to reflect that reason for their absence.

NEXT MEETING- June 6, 2022

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10 am.