

PINELLAS COUNTY COUNCIL FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

MEETING MINUTES

March 6, 2023, at 10:00AM

**Pinellas County Extension, Magnolia Room
12520 Ulmerton Rd, Largo FL 33774**

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Armstrong called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.

ROLL CALL

Present

Jody Armstrong, Chair (Disability Achievement Center)

Kerry Carlisle (Peters)

Deborah Figgs-Sanders (Flowers)

Linsey Grove (Justice)

Jack Humburg (Boley Center)

Angel Overly (PVA)

Misti Pollaro (Family Network on Disabilities)

Aubrey Posey (Seel)

Ross Silvers (Eggers)

Not Present

Steven Cleveland (Florida Dream Center)

Harriet Crozier (Area Agency on Aging)

Michelle Detweiller (PARC)

Keli Mondello (Gerard)

Others Present

Betina Baron, Pinellas County Office of Human Rights Compliance Manager

Carol Strickland, Pinellas County Office of Human Rights

Keiah Townsend, Pinellas County Assistant County Attorney

Other interested parties

APPROVAL OF MINUTES- A quorum was met at this meeting. The June 6, 2022, and September 12, 2022, motioned and approved, unanimously approved.

WELCOME MISTI POLLARO- Family Network on Disabilities, mom, special education, parent, trainer. Community representative, care giver to mother.

COUNTY WEBSITE UPDATE- no update provided.

MOBIMAT UPDATE- Chair Armstrong went out to see the mats. Tarpon Springs Sunset Beach: during high tide it goes underwater, lots of parking. Fred Howard Park: nice park, parking a little further, very busy, but mat was nicely laid and in use. Anclote Park: tucked away, mat almost to the water. Rees Park, lake park, nice. Hudson Beach: not yet installed. Pier 60 installed. Rockaway and another to be installed this week. Indian Shores: permit received and installed. Reddington Shores: will be another year due to reconstruction of the park. Madeira Beach installed last march. Treasure Island, St Pete Beach, Upham Beach: ribbon cutting was in December 2022. A comment was made regarding updating signage on how to get to the mats. Finding the handicapped parking spaces helps to find the mats. It was noted that Upham Beach had nice signage, so messages will be relayed to update signage. There does need to be signage at the park notifying that the beach is accessible.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE- In process of submitting ordinance to lower the quorum and also have an agency proxy allowed to vote. This needs to go to advertisement, circulation in the news, and then on the board agenda to for approval. It would be advisable to have a member attend the BCC meeting to answer any questions.

PSTA ACCESSIBILITY BUS STOPS- A continuation of the discussion of inaccessibility. The purpose was to raise awareness and provide info to PSTA. Mr. Silvers sits on the amenities committee and needs to know what may be needed (trash cans, benches, or shelters, for example). There are 5,000 stops throughout the county, and the cost is prohibitive of updating all stops, so updates are prioritized based on ridership and requests. Homelessness is an issue that affects those who have accessibility issues. A balanced approach is what they look at, not just completely accessible.

TD Tampa Bay received a grant to provide cross-county trips between Pasco, Hillsborough and Pinellas for people who are transportation disadvantaged (don't have access to their own transportation for life sustaining trips). Qualifiers for rides include disability, senior or low income. There were about 1300 trips in January from all three counties, curb-to-curb support. Pretty positive feedback. Securing another provider, with a higher level of support for those who need it due to their disability, door-to-door support. PSTA enrolls you into the program and provides a code to use (Lyft, Uber, Wheelchair Transport Service, etc.).

Angel Overly commented on the phenomenal customer service she received in the Office of Human Rights when she called inquiring about the City of Clearwater marina event parking. The office provided information and she was able to contact the marina parking. There was a misunderstanding with the marina on how to apply handicapped vehicles

during a holiday and event. Response was immediate and accurate. Shout out to Linda Santiago.

GUEST SPEAKER- Scott Swaengen, Looking for help/blessing in memorializing public on street ADA accessibility parking space distribution in downtown Palm Harbor. There is a lot of downtown parking already. The master plan for the area has been updated, including public parking. They looked at streetscape and took a parking inventory to understand any problems. There are accessibility spaces nearby stores, but not every store has one. 1 space for every 25 was required, some have 20 or 30% accessible parking. A map was provided with suggested 293 spaces, 16 of them are ADA accessible, which is more than the 1/25 requirement. (NOTE: 77 spaces at Harbor Hall was not included.) A recommendation for signage will help, especially with the accessible spaces distributed like they are on the map. Mark Esparza, Office of Human Rights, spoke about how the office investigates parking in the county through public accommodation complaints. Business owners have an obligation by law for accessible parking. That legal approach will still apply. Another comment was to consider more spaces, or a drop off area for businesses if there isn't a close space. Another comment is there can be signage to not park if you're not doing business with that establishment, or there may be a time limit on the space. Scott stated that one of their big drives is to park and leave the car parked, rather than re-park at another location downtown when visiting several establishments. An additional comment was to have a resting area or meeting area(s).

APPOINTMENTS- Ms. Baron asked those appointed by the commissioners if they have had any conversations with them about staying on the council. About 50% of the Council are up for re-appointment. A motion to have Jody continue as chair, a second, voted and passed unanimously. Harriet Crozier was Vice Chair but will no longer be representing her organization. Ross Silvers volunteered to serve as vice chair, a motion was given, seconded, voted and passed unanimously. There currently is no secretary. Misti Pollaro volunteered, a motion was given, seconded, voted and passed unanimously. Kerry Carlisle has offered to be a backup secretary. Jody then asked if anyone was wanting to leave the Council. With two new commissioners, we will need to get with them. Those appointed by agencies to continue, motioned, seconded and passed. Next meeting will cover those appointed by the commissioners.

FUTURE MEETINGS- Meets quarterly. The next meeting is June 5th.

OTHER BUSINESS- Pinellas County Sheriff's Office is promoting Respond With Care, a sticker to put on one's vehicle, alerting first responders of potential accommodations when interacting with individuals in the vehicle. There is a need, but this may not be the right way to handle it. It's definitely voluntary, and probably not a violation of the ADA. They will be asked to speak at a future meeting.

The Disability Achievement Center has been partnering with the City of Largo to offer Adaptive Family Night in Largo – the next one is March 16, 2023, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm. Also partnering with Area Agency on Aging on balance – need a couple more people before they can launch the program.

Paralyzed Veterans of America – just came back from DC, accessible hotel bed heights is an under addressed area in ADA. There are heights for booths in restaurants and park benches, but the height for beds is outside that range. Call your senator to advocate.

There is a Fair Housing Event on April 20th. All are invited to attend and watch for email to have a table. Fair Housing Symposium on April 27th.

The meeting was adjourned.