

Mayor's Council on Disability Issues (CODI) Dec. 14, 2016 Minutes

(5:00 p.m. John T. O'Connor Senior Center)

NOTE: Public meeting was held to introduce the "Disability Friendly City" survey from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Chair M. Johnson called the meeting to order at 4:41 p.m.

Members Present: Allan, Austin, Booher, Brookshire, Davidson, Dockery, M. Johnson, Jones, Lemak, Moore, Neely, Newman, Secrest and Shipley

Members Absent: Hector, Houston, R. Johnson, Loebner, Sawhney, Shilling and VanDyke

Guest: Miss Aftyn Behn

Approval of October Minutes: Allan made a motion to approve; Neely seconded, and motion carried.

Employment Committee - M. Johnson reported that CTV "Employment Matters" tapings have concluded. We completed ten short videos regarding employment of people with disabilities, with two being "on site." Most recent taping was with an employer and an employee at Menchie's. Another two tapings were devoted to "what an employer or employee wants to know about the ADA, but is too afraid to ask."

The KAEC sticker program to recognize businesses who are committed to a diverse workforce and hiring people with disabilities is in full swing. KAEC will send stickers to businesses who are nominated by the community (KAEC, CODI, etc.) and whose track record is one of inclusion. Stickers will be distributed along with a letter that explains why the business is receiving one. Anyone who has a business or company to nominate, let M. Johnson or Cook know.

Transportation Committee – Secrest reported the KAT Community Advisory Committee is being dissolved, but the duties of hearing the communities' needs regarding transit will be given to the Knoxville Transportation Authority (KTA) board. Specific FTA requirements to have a body to hear issues of passengers with disabilities will be taken on by the CODI Transportation Committee. Booher was appointed by Mayor Rogero to the KTA to serve as the disability representative. As a result, CODI needs a new Transportation Committee Chair. After some discussion, Secrest volunteered to be the Chair of this committee. Good news: KAT staff will likely be more regularly involved with CODI going forward. CODI welcomes KAT to the discussion!

Secrest provided information on the phases of autonomous vehicles. There are several test phases and it will take 10, 20 or 30 years before this technology is truly functional. There is one "super-duper" camera in Knoxville that assesses the area – it's at the corner of Kingston Pike and Northshore.

Cook relayed that information was received from the U.S. Access Board about new technical specifications for accessibility on vehicles coming out soon. Some of the items covered are: the slope of the ramps, types of securement devices, etc.

Awareness/PR — Lemak reported from the meeting in Nov. that the committee noticed little flaws in the logo, (character alignment and letter color,) and that those were fixed and the committee was proud of the end result. Expression of gratitude was made for Newman and her husband for his work on this logo for CODI.

The committee has created some communication cards for people who are deaf or hard of hearing to better communicate with first responders. Because the template for the card was found in Wisconsin, Cook is double checking that there are no issues with copyright or permission to use the card. She has reached out to Wisconsin to get this answer.

Regarding next steps for the work of this committee, Cook indicated that a press release would happen to announce that CODI now had a logo and the communication card would be available both for download from our website and laminated printed versions that go out to the all law enforcement officials. Cook reported that there is an in-service training in the spring to make sure that law enforcement/first responders know how to use the cards. Lemak volunteered to help with the training if needed.

A suggestion to share the communication card with hospitals/H R departments, etc. was made. Cook stated that anyone who would like a copy will be able to download it off our website, and copy as much as needed. Plus, the reality is that CODI doesn't advise the community at large, but rather the City, so planned, coordinated sharing of the communication card will likely be limited to City of Knoxville first responder staff.

Most Disability Friendly City – survey launch to the broad community was today; electronic and hard copies will continue to be distributed

January taping – since the topics were not selected at the retreat, it was agreed that a taping on the subject of CODI, its purpose, role and impact on the City would be the topic. This is an opportunity to “toot CODI’s horn” for all the hard work they have done over the last year or so, as well as educate the community about the great work of CODI.

New Business -- given the recent devastating wildfires in Gatlinburg, the property destruction, the loss of life and need to communicate important information quickly to the community, it was noticed that there were no sign language interpreters during the earliest press conferences . As a result, some folks called the City of Gatlinburg to request interpreters at the media briefings and Gatlinburg provided them. The question came up about the City of Knoxville. Cook stated that she would make sure that providing interpreters during emergent news conferences, etc., was on the radar of our first response contact folks.

It was asked if there is a way to get needed medical supplies or equipment to people with disabilities in Gatlinburg. Cook was not aware of a specific drive to collect equipment, but related that East TN Technology Access Center (ETTAC) has an equipment loan program and that, after the Nashville floods of a few years ago,

Meaghan attended a refugee coalition meeting and the guest speaker was someone from the police department and the officer shared that several of the officers speak other languages, including sign language. Craig reminded us that there is a difference with having signing ability and being fluent, or able to interpret.

Discussion of city buildings and areas that need to be repaired or improved for accessibility came up – if a problem is noted, please report it to Cook or call 311. Staff in 311 handle forwarding calls to the appropriate department or agency –and usually checks back to see if the problem was addressed.

Announcements -- None

Public Forum -- None

With no further business, Brookshire made a motion to adjourn. Lemak seconded it and the motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 5:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Judi Brookshire, Secretary and Stephanie Cook, City Liaison