

## HCOD Meeting Minutes for 20898

The Houston Commission on Disabilities met on Thursday, January 08, at the Houston Metropolitan Multi Service Center (MMSC), 1475 West Gray, Houston, Texas 77019.

Commissioner Benigno Aceves will conduct the meeting today. Benigno said congratulation to all the new commissioners.

Roll Call: Commissioner Lesa Jackson

Commissioner Townsend motion to approve Meeting Minutes for January 11, Commissioner Cole 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion to approve the Meeting Minutes from last Month.

Commissioners Present: Benigno Aceves, Lesa Jackson, Michael McCulloch, Maria Palacios, Toby Cole, George Powers, Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi, Sara Freeman Smith, Eileen Edmonds, Shelley Townsend, Asha Dhuka, Erica Fletcher, Mark Potts

Commissioners Absent: Richard Petty, Tina Williams, Khafilat Adesokan

Public Comments:

Mrs. Ellis is a parent advocate. The Greater Houston Chamber of Commerce, all students have a national income. We know systems can improve, we want to bring it all together. We want to bring the local Chambers to see our cause, and there is diversity, that's what the disability Community will bring.

Commissioner Aceves what is the contact info.

Mrs. Ellis will give the contact info at the end of the meeting

Presentations: 1. Federal Emergency Management Agency Local Update (Luis Chen, Branch II – Disability Integration Manager), louis with FEMA live here and work here. Commissioner Petty wanted me to address the FEMA causes.

Ricky, we have worked with FEMA and his crew, for several appointments. Five consumers showed up, and he was really a great help. One customer was successful. Combining his team with Beaumont.

Emmanuel, great work with Ricky and individual work bringing in interpreters. He really appreciates what Louis is doing.

Louis, they have spent over 5million dollars. FEMA is doing a lot of recovery, this is only a starting point. If you part of an organizations who need help.

Commissioner Cole, did you see the people who need the help.

Louis, if their case got locked up, part of the frustration was limited interpreters. also, to meet at the locations. We want to make sure we have equal access.

They have a Facebook live now. They would need the feedback to see if this is the message they are trying to receive.

Maria Town. they are seeing that people are missing documentations, is it a way to correct that.

Louis, there is a way to check that.

Presentation: 2. Harvey Recovery Neighborhood Strategy (TaKasha Francis, Director, City of Houston Department of Neighborhoods), good afternoon everyone, thank you Benigno and Maria t., take some time to focus on some of the problems. Harvey came in august. Mayor turner wanted to focus on building back. Appoint Mr. Odom to create the Steering Committee. Co-chair the respiration department. Also dealing with their immigrant committee. Department of neighborhoods, looking at community's individuals. Partnered with 8 resolution centers. Case managers on site. 90million to do the work.

Locations of the current Resolutions centers:

Questions: Maria Town, are the centers open on the weekend.

TaKasha Francis, not on the weekend, still trying to handle location.

Commissioner Eziashi, we should be able to set up any accommodations to have that type of accessibility.

TaKasha Francis what would you suggest?

Commissioner Eziashi, would we go, probably a video phone, or have a deaf person working there.

Commissioner Cole, what do you handle or what do you hear. task

TaKasha Francis, hearing about home repair, clothing, food, legal assistance appeals, several things.

Commissioner Aceves, will there be open positions, hiring someone with a disability.

Takasha, Case Managers, volunteer opportunities.

Commissioner Fletcher, public and local resources. Is it a light hand off?

Takasha, getting info from the nonprofit also, and the supper neighborhood. Trying to match. Also trying to get case management from nonprofit.

Audience: Ricky Harris, what do you offer, I have problems with getting there, are you providing transportation.

Takasha, we are making it accessible to everyone. No not at this time, now we know it is something we must consider.

Audience: Ricky can you provide interpreters

Takasha, we do want to make it friendly for everyone, I will also check for sign languages.

Maria Town. said it does provide sign languages...app languages lines.

Audience, how would the deaf get help if they are not speaking English, how would you interpret to them, from different languages. How can we as a diversified city.

Takasha, how are you currently meet that challenge.

Presentation: 3. ReelAbilities/Film Festival, Max Castile, thank you for having me, ReelAbilities Film Festival will run February 12- 22, 2018. Edwards Greenway Grand Palace Stadium 24 & RPX, 3839 Wesleyan St., Houston, Texas 77027. Information at [www.reelabilitieshouston.org](http://www.reelabilitieshouston.org).

MOPD, Division Manager: Maria Town MOPD Director,

Maria, welcome the new commissioners and all commissioners, great to see everyone.

Danielle Bartz, Director, Boards and Commissions,

We appreciate your services. There are several openings with the Workforce Development Board, work on putting people together, business, labor, great connections, and the Planning Committee. We would love help in the Planning Commission, meetings are every Thursday at the Mayor's office. A person who care about, civil services all boards need help.

.

Maria Town, MOPD Director, update on absent, Commissioner Emmuanuel Eziashi is out of the hospital and present today. Commissioner Tina Williams is out of the hospital and at a Rehabilitation Center, and Commissioner chair, Richard Petty is still in the hospital.

Also, Amanda gave birth to a baby boy.

Major weather, couple of deaths and they were people with disabilities. How important it is to consider, inclusive. Check on people who are with disabilities. Matt Russell came to update us on the resource.

Employment committee, 115 youth attended the Leaping into Employment event.

Deaf and Hearing Student Fair, Maria Town and Angel attended, provided the resources, and they also received a reward for the MOPD

Intercontinental airport is using IRA...technology.

The Steering Committee, worked with Harvey and learn what went wrong with emergency needs.

MOPD: Angel Ponce, Amanda receive the calls, but it falls on the volunteers. I am glad Amanda got all the numbers in for the Monthly Report.

United Way of Houston ask the Mayor Office (MOPD) to set on the Committees. It meets every week on Thursday.

Disable citizens can put in for a request for home repairs, they will be put at the front of the list. Angel is normally the person who goes out. It could take 6 to 24 months.

Ex Officio: Matt Russell, ADA COORDINATOR, not present

Legal Present: Tiffany Evans, stated she was from the Legal Counsel Dept, she makes sure everything run well.

Committee Updates:

Disability-Related Issues in Public Education- No Updates

Disability Unity and Pride Celebration- (Maria Palacios, chair)-. 3<sup>rd</sup> year being a part of the committee. We know how fast the month goes. Working on the theme, and we have a lot of celebration. HCOD is turning 30 anniversaries, and 25 years of MOPD. We have a lot to celebrate, invite you to come out and join the committee. Conference calls.

Emergency Preparedness (Shelly Townsend, chair)- busy attending meetings with Maria Town. Homeland, meetings to hear Stakeholders, and how can they help. I commend director town for that meeting. Saturday June the 2<sup>nd</sup>. On the emergency event. It is important to be there at the table.

Employment (Benigno Aceves, chair)- Employment Planning Committee-thank everyone who was involved with the committee. The partnerships, MOPD staff, Angel was there helping also. It is more about the connections between the parents and the youth. 115 youth and parents came out. Exhibitors were there and workshops for the families, separate the parents from the youths. Yearlong event, and it is get for all commissioners to get involve.

HARP – MOPD Director Maria Town-NO Update

Housing & Tenancy Issues (Lesa Jackson, chair)- I am currently stepping down from being the chair over the Housing & Tenancy Committee and open the door for another Commissioner to take on this mission, still willing to assist as time permit.

Marketing- No Update

Metro/Transportation/Parking & Parks & Accessibility (Tina Williams, chair)- No Update

Police Response to Persons with Disabilities (Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi, chair)-thank you for your prayers. I had to go to the doctors, and I went to FEMA. The Bay City unity, police and working with and one of the police had called me. Everything I have been working on business as usual.

Strategic Planning (Toby Cole, chair)- I think it is soft skills, and there are no soft skills. New Commissioners, we are tasked with the focus to make sure on all areas. I will be recruiting people for the Committee. We received the Lex Award from Austin.

Metropolitan MSC Update (Chuck French / Hannah Walker)- Youth basketball team is number one. New ranking came out, they are number one. Houston strong, good tur out, Rugby plays fourth, great ranking. Shooting here at the center, Pasadena have the trophy with bocce. February in door rowing. Facility updates, standing out there in the rain, it is fixed now.

Commissioners Comments: Commissioner McCulloch, attended the Metro Task Force, a third of metro employees, and metro riders and clients. They now have connections for USB, for smart phones.

ADA Update, (Matt Russell, COH ADA Coordinator- not present/no update

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Jackson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Commissioner Edmonds.

The HCOD meeting adjourned at 5:56pm

Minutes submitted by Lesa Jackson-Lazard ([lesajackson2010@yahoo.com](mailto:lesajackson2010@yahoo.com)) 281-690-9912