

The Special Online Houston Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes for June 11, 2020 (Conducted Online to Support Social Distancing Guidance in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic)

The Houston Commission on Disabilities met on Thursday, June 11, 2020. Social distancing guidance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic prompted to Commission to meet online through Zoom.

Chair Petty called the meeting to order at 4:14 pm with a quorum present and welcomed attendees to the meeting. Chair Petty made a statement about the death of George Floyd, events that proceeded and issues that need to be addressed. Next Chair Petty asked Commissioner Potts to proceed with the roll call.

Roll call of the Commissioners:

Present	Position 1: Ismael Garcia Cantu
Present	Position 2: Ricky Don Harris
Present	Position 3: Ann M. Bacon
Absent	Position 4: Toby Cole
Present	Position 5: Raul A. Gallegos
Present	Position 6: Richard Petty - Chair
Present	Position 7: Tina Williams
Present	Position 8: Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi
Present	Position 9: Sara Freeman Smith
Present	Position 10: Benigno Aceves Jr.
Present	Position 11: Eileen Edmonds
Present	Position 12: Mark J. Potts
Absent	Alternate 1: Asha Dhuka
Unfilled	Alternate 2: Vacant
Unfilled	Alternate 3: Vacant
Absent	Alternate 4: Khafilat Adesokan
Present	Ex-Officio: Gabriel Cazares, Director, MOPD
Present	Ex-Officio: Marshall Watson, Administrator Coordinator – ADA, City of Houston, Human Resources Department, Civil Service & EEO Division
Present	Legal: Rebekah Wendt

MOPD Staff:

Present	Amanda Boyd
Present	Alex Chau
Present	Angel Ponce-Trevizo

Multi Service Center Staff:

Absent	Charles French
Present	Hannah Walker

Approval of Minutes

Chair Petty called for a motion to approve the April minutes. Motion by Commissioner Eileen Edmonds and seconded by Commissioner Ricky Don Harris. The HCOD minutes for May 14, 2020 were approved.

Public Comments

Chair Petty explained the process of public comment.

Ric Atkinson with Family to Family asked about CERT coordinator training programs for those that want to help the community after a natural disaster. Jackie Miller stated that classes will begin in the fall though a class can be arranged prior to. Commissioner Harris asked that a liaison be established for the deaf community.

Chair Petty thanked everyone for their public comments.

First speaker for today

Jackie Miller, Community Preparedness Programs Manager, Mayor's Office of Public Safety & Homeland Security spoke about the Disaster Preparedness Houston program.

With hurricane season upon us a four-step check list may be used to plan accordingly:

1. Make an emergency plan
2. Have an emergency kit
 - 2.1. Go bag
 - 2.2. Stay at home kit
 - 2.3. Pet emergency kit
 - 2.4. Unique family needs
 - 2.5. Medications
3. Be informed about disasters
 - 3.1. Emergency information
 - 3.2. Alert Systems
 - 3.3. Wireless Emergency Alerts
4. Help members of your community prepare themselves
 - 4.1. Meet your neighbors
 - 4.2. Prepare your community
 - 4.3. People with functional of access needs:
 - 4.3.1. Build a support system
 - 4.3.2. Access state of Texas Emergency Assistance Registry

Natural hazards include:

- Hurricanes
- Tropical storms
- Thunderstorms
- Lightning
- Flooding
- Tornados
- Heat
- Cold

Public health threats:

- COVID

Human Caused Hazards:

- Hazardous materials
- Chemical, biological and radiological threats

Solutions include:

- Shelter in place
- Evacuation

Questions were asked by commissioners and answered, and Commissioners made comments.

Questions were asked by the public and answered.

Chair Petty thanked everyone for their public comments.

Chair Petty called for a motion to extend the meeting past the 6:00 end. Motion by Commissioner Eileen Edmonds and seconded by Commissioner Ricky Don Harris. The motion was approved.

Second speaker for the day

Gabriel Cazares, Director, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, and Charles French, Administration Manager, Houston Parks and Recreation Department shared Safety and Reopening Recommendations for the Metropolitan Multiservice Center.

The reopening will occur in stages:

- **MMSC Stage 1 Reopening:** Coincides with Category 3/4 of the Mayor's plan and beginning with the July runoff election.
 - Hours of operation:
 - Friday, June 26 – Early Voting Set Up
 - Tuesday, June 29 – Thursday July 2 – 6:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
 - Sunday, July 5 – 9:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
 - Monday, July 6 – Friday, July 10 – 6:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.
 - Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities Programs and Operations:
 - Full-time staff reporting to MMSC.
 - In-person constituent services and referrals by appointment only.
 - HCOD virtual monthly meetings
- **MMSC Stage 2 Reopening:** After the runoff election, a complete facility cleaning and sanitation will occur before reopening the MMSC to our citizens with a disability.
 - General Facility:
 - Only the main entrance in the front and back will be open.
 - In the main lobby and hallways: Furniture will be arranged for social distancing.
 - All restrooms should have no more than two persons at a time.
 - Restrooms and desk areas will be cleaned every 2 hours Locker Rooms and Showers will not be available.
 - The MMSC Pool will remain closed through Phase 2.
 - Jay's Room:
 - Historically, Jay's Room is the participant waiting room/social gathering space.
 - Half of the gymnasium will serve as our waiting area.
 - If total number of participants exceeds safety guidelines they will move into the main hallways/lobby.
 - MMSC Fitness Room:
 - The fitness room will be divided into two sections utilizing the fitness area and one half of the gymnasium.
 - Gym wipes dispensers are stocked in fitness rooms.
 - Staff will rotate to cover both areas and will sanitize hourly.
 - Fitness classes/groups may be revisited using reservation.
 - Partner Programs:
 - Partner programs can return on a limited basis.
 - Partner programs will be expected to clean and sanitize their activity space after every use.
 - Supplies will be available in each activity room.
 - Office Tenants:

- Office tenants can return with safety guidelines will be in place. Lease agreements and payments will resume.
 - Adaptive Sports & Recreation Programs:
 - Individual recreation activities can commerce while group/team structured play will be suspended.
- MMSC Stage 3 Reopening: After Phase 2 and Mayoral approval, Phase 3 is anticipated to begin Monday, August 3rd.
 - Complete reopening
 - The MMSC pool will split into two sections for shallow water and deep-water exercise. No more than 10 people will be allowed in each section at a time. Participants waiting to enter the pool will line up along deck walls, 6ft apart from each other, seated in chairs. 45-minute time limits will be enforced for swimmers/participants. Open swim only, no aquatics classes, keeping availability and hours fair for everyone. Pool staff will wear masks unless on the lifeguard stand. Swimmers are not required to wear masks but must put one on as they exit the pool. Pool staff will also rotate more frequently, being utilized in other areas of the MMSC as needed.

Questions were asked by commissioners and answered, and Commissioners made comments.

Questions were asked by the public and answered.

Chair Petty thanked everyone for their public comments.

MOPD Director's Report

Gabriel Cazares, Director, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

- Due to time constraints no report was given

MOPD Staff Report

Angel Ponce, Senior Customer Service Representative, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and Alex Chau, Intern, Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities

- Due to time constraints no report was given

Committee Updates

Community and Transit Access (Tina Williams, Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Disability Unity and Pride Celebration (Ann Bacon, Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Education (Eileen Edmonds, Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery (Vacant)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Employment and Transition to Employment (Benigno Aceves, Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Housing and Tenancy (No Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Law Enforcement and First Responder Response to the Disability Community (Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi, Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Public Awareness (Mark Potts, Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Strategic Planning and Commission Membership (Toby Cole, Chair and Sara Freeman-Smith, Co-Chair)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Metropolitan Multiservice Center – (Chuck French/Hannah Walker)

Due to time constraints no report was given

ADA Update - (Marshall Watson Administrative Coordinator – ADA, City of Houston, Human Resources Department, Civil Service & EEO Division)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Legal – (Rebekah Wendt)

Due to time constraints no report was given

Commissioners' Comments

Due to time constraints no comments were made.

The HCOD meeting adjourned at 5:59 pm.

Minutes submitted by Mark Potts (potts60@hotmail.com, (713) 444-1222).

Please submit any corrections to Mark Potts.

Commissioners' Comments Provided Post June HCOD Meeting

- a. Community and Transit Access (Tina Williams, Chair)

No update

- b. Disability Unity and Pride Celebration (Annie Bacon, Chair)

DUPC Committee is moving forward with a virtual event dated for July 26th, 2020. The sponsorship package was mailed to 15 potential sponsors with the intent to raise money to support the entertainment and production costs. The "Save the Date" flyer has been created and will be emailed to approximately 1,800 constituents in the month of June 2020. Finally, the DUPC Committee will be hosting practice sessions in June and July to ensure a successful event. This concludes the DUPC update.

- c. Education (Eileen Edmonds, Chair)

No update

- d. Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery (Vacant)

No update

- e. Employment and Transition to Employment (Benigno Aceves, Chair)

No update

- f. Housing and Tenancy (Vacant)

No update

- g. Law Enforcement and First Responder Response to the Disability Community (Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi, Chair)

No update

- h. Public Awareness (Mark Potts, Chair)

No update

- i. Strategic Planning and Commission Membership (Toby Cole and Sarah Freeman-Smith, Co-Chairs)

No update