

## The Houston Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes for September 12, 2019

The Houston Commission on Disabilities met on Thursday, September 12, 2019, at the Houston Metropolitan Multi-Service Center (MMSC), 1475 West Gray, Houston, Texas 77019.

Commissioner Edmonds called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm with a quorum present and welcomed attendees to the meeting. Next Commissioner Edmonds asked Commissioner Potts to proceed with the roll call.

### Roll call of the Commissioners:

#### Present:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

#### Absent:

- Benigno Aceves Jr.
- Khafilat Adesokan
- Toby Cole
- Asha Dhuka
- Eileen Edmonds
- Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi
- Michael McCulloch
- Maria Palacios
- Richard Petty
- Mark Potts
- George Powers
- Sara Freeman Smith
- Shelley Townsend
- Tina Williams

### MOPD Staff:

#### Present:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- 

#### Absent:

- Annie Bacon
- Amanda Boyd
- Alex Chau
- Jess Faerman
- Angel Ponce-Treviz

### Ex-Officio

#### Present:

- 
- 
- 

#### Absent:

- Director, MOPD
- Marshall Watson, Administrator Coordinator – ADA, City of Houston, Human Resources Department, Employee/Labor Relations Division

### Legal

#### Present:

- 

#### Absent:

- Angelie Thomas

Commissioner Edmonds asked the Commission to approve the August minutes. Motion by Commissioner Shelley Townsend and seconded by Commissioner Emmanuel Arizona Eziashi. The HCOD minutes for August 8, 2019 were approved.

### Public Comments

Angel Ponce explained the process of public comment. Angel Ponce introduced the following speakers.

- Jesus spoke with Angel and decided to comment offline.
- Ismael asked about Metro's thoughts on accessibility at bus stops and the requirements. Commissioner Palacios offered to pass the question on to Commissioner Williams.

Angel Ponce stated that there were no more public comments.

Commissioner Edmonds thanked everyone for their public comments.

### **Speakers for today**

Sasha Marshall, Senior Planner for the Housing and Community Development Department shared information about two initiatives from the Stakeholder Focus Group.

- HCDD is reaching out to the community to create a five-year strategic plan to improve housing, public infrastructure, public facilities and the quality of life for low- and moderate-income Houstonians.
- HCDD has completed an analysis of impediments to Fair Housing Choice.
  - Reviewed public and private policies, practices and procedures to identify barriers to fair housing choice.
- Stated that input from the community is vital for creation of the five-year plan and implementation of the analysis. Surveys (Community Needs Survey, Express Survey), community meetings (Mobile Meetings and Open Houses) and Stakeholder Engagement (Fair Housing Ambassador Program and Focus Groups) are in the process of being implemented.
  - Vital discussion questions include:
    - What are the three things you like about your neighborhood?
    - What are the three things don't you like about your neighborhood?
    - What are the top three concerns related to housing in Houston?
    - Have you or anyone you know experienced discrimination in housing in Houston?

Commissioner Eziashi volunteered to introduce Ms. Marshall to the deaf and hard of hearing community and to discuss their challenges.

Commissioner Freeman-Smith encouraged HCDD to set up a booth at the upcoming Disability Unity and Pride Celebration.

Questions were asked by the public and answered.

Dishajoyti Nath, Community Liaison for the Houston Health Department discussed a program called Immunizations Across a Lifespan.

- Ms. Nath made a presentation that illustrated the importance and effectiveness of vaccinations.
  - Community Immunity or herd immunity is when a critical portion of a community is immunized against a contagious disease. The community is protected against that disease because there is little opportunity for an outbreak.
    - If members of the community are not immunized, then the entire community is at risk of preventable disease.
    - Myths that the MMR vaccine and the preservatives used in the creation of the vaccine lead to autism have been debunked by sound science.
  - Texas will provide vaccines to children for free. Adults can also receive free vaccines through the Adult Safety Net Program.

- DTaP, Tdap, TD and DT are tetanus related vaccines that were discussed in detail.
- PCV13 and PPSV23 are pneumonia related vaccines discussed in detail.
- MMR: Measles, Mumps and Rubella
  - Recently, there have been outbreaks of measles because of parent's fear of the MMR vaccination.
- Hepatitis A vaccine was discussed in detail.
- Influenza vaccine was discussed in detail.
- Bacterial meningitis vaccine was discussed in detail.
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) was discussed in detail.
- ImmTrac2 is the Texas Statewide Immunization Registry. It serves as a repository of immunization histories for all ages.

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

Chair Petty, following a delayed arrival, thanked Ms. Nath for the presentation.

Chair Petty updated the commission on the hiring of a New Director of the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities.

- Chair Petty explained the interview process. Two candidates were presented to Mayor Turner who chose Gabe Cazares. Mayor Turner will make the official announcement.

### **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

- Angel Ponce & Alex Chau shared the updates for services provided in August.

Chair Petty thanked the MOPD Staff for their reports.

### **Committee Updates**

#### **Community and Transit Access (Tina Williams, Chair)**

Chair Petty provided an update on MetroNext and encouraged the community to stay involved by voting in the next election.

#### **Disability Unity and Pride Celebration (Maria Palacios, Chair)**

Commissioner Palacios shared details about the Disability Unity and Price Celebration and made a request for volunteers.

#### **Education (Eileen Edmonds, Chair)**

Commissioner Edmonds announced a Legislative Listening Forum on October 5 at the Harris Center and the Positive Futures Conference on October 11 and 12 at the United Way.

#### **Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Recovery (Shelley Townsend, Chair)**

No update.

#### **Employment and Transition to Employment (Benigno Aceves, Chair)**

No update.

#### **Housing and Tenancy (No Chair)**

No update.

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

Commissioner Eziashi attended police training on July 11. Training with cadets is upcoming.

**Public Awareness (Mark Potts, Chair)**

No update.

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

No update.

**Metropolitan Multiservice Center – (Chuck French/Hannah Walker)**

Mr. French announced that accessible top of the line Cybex workout equipment has been added to the center.

- A divider wall has been added to room 2.
- HVAC work is underway.
- Room 3 to undergo a deep cleaning.
- Fall sports is starting with the help of TIRR.
- The Gateway to Gold event will take place on October 12 at The Zone at 10731 Stella Link Road.

**ADA Update - (Marshall Watson Administrative Coordinator – ADA, City of Houston, Human Resources Department, Employee/Labor Relations Division)**

Mr. Watson introduced senior superintendent of aquatic Leroy Morrow and assistant superintendent of maintenance Wash Sellers to discuss the status of chair lifts throughout the city pools. Chair Petty asked that they return for the next MOPD meeting due to time constraints.

**Commissioners' Comments**

The HCOD meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.

Motion to adjourn: Commissioner Michael McCulloch.

Seconded: Commissioner Maria Palacios.

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

Please submit any corrections to Mark Potts.