

Athens City Commission on Disabilities
November 17, 2021, 5:00 – 6:00 pm
Athens Community Center and via Zoom

MINUTES

Call to Order

- Davey McNelly called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

Establish Quorum

- Dianne established quorum, six of nine members present.
- Present: Dianne Bouvier (in person), Rose Dikis (zoom), Carolyn Lewis (zoom), Davey McNelly (zoom), Cheryl Prusinski (in person), Lisa Simpson (in person); Guests: Ally Hughes (zoom), Tiffany Beals (in person), Joe Brumefield (zoom); Nico Fuentes - ASL interpreter (zoom)
- Guests: Ally Hughes, Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine; Tiffany Beals, member of the Accessibility Committee, skilled in Accessible Technology; Joe Brumefield, 15 year resident of Athens County. Welcome!

Commission Mission

- Read by Carolyn Lewis

Approval of Minutes

- Davey noted we were unable to meet in August-October, due to restrictions outlined in the Ohio Open Meetings Act. Law Director Lisa Eliaison has approved members virtually for disability reasons. Lisa Simpson made a motion to approve the July 2021 minutes, seconded by Cheryl, all in agreement, minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report

- Carolyn reported that the budget started with \$3000. \$1800 went to the Athena Award for six sculptures, \$100 to certificates and printing; \$230 for added expenses in sculpture production.
- Dianne reported that the Exec Team felt the purchase of some technology would assist with hybrid meetings. Tiffany Beal helped identify a chromebook and speakerphone device to be purchased before the end of the year. Carolyn made a motion to accept the technology expense, Cheryl seconded. All in agreement. Motion passed.

New Business

- ADA Transition Plan for City of Athens
 - o Davey and Dianne talked about Exec Team and Accessibility Committee each met with Paul Logue and a grad student intern, Dakota Fox about the City's plan to conduct an ADA Transition Plan. An ADA Transition Plan identifies barriers to accessibility and establishes priorities, timeline and budget allocation for remediation. Gives opportunity for Commission to have input on setting priorities. ADA TP also requires single point of accountability for ADA compliance, which is in line with anticipated Diversity Equity and Inclusion/ADA Coordinator position. Plan to invite them to full commission meeting in the winter.
 - o Important for city to looking at physical and virtual space. Requirement to focus on where services provided and include voice of people with disabilities.
- Membership Changes and Thank You
 - o Davey reported that members Samorra and Claire are moving from Athens, Noah stepped down from the Commission, and Arian Smedley has decided to step down when her role ends with the City Council. The Commission wishes

them well and Davey will write letters thanking them for service. Commission members are invited to send letters to outgoing members, particularly Noah due to his many years of service. Thank you to Claire, Samorra, Noah and Arian! We will miss you!

- o Please send ideas for new members to the Exec Team.
- Officers for next year
 - o Davey announced a partial slate of officers for next year: Davey will continue as Chair, Dianne will serve as Vice Chair and Carolyn will continue as Treasurer. Due to Covid there wasn't reason to wait 30 days since no one else expressed interest. Cheryl made a motion to accept the slate of officers. Lisa seconded. Commission voted to accept the slate of officers, understanding that a Secretary still needs to be identified. Dianne and Carolyn will rotate taking minutes until a Secretary is identified.
- Athena Award celebration review
 - o Carolyn reported that we successfully held a second virtual award ceremony. Carolyn reviewed the process for year-round nominations with people who do an outstanding job of supporting people with disabilities. Barbara Conover was selected as the award recipient for 2021. Berry Dilley worked with artist Luke Hawk to shepherd design to fruition.
 - o Cheryl noted that the interpreter was often not present when slide changes were made, so the ceremony was not as accessible this year as last. Every time there was a screen change, the interpreter was gone. Usually, the interpreter would come early to test, but this year the interpreter had a previous engagement who couldn't arrive until the ceremony was starting. Discussed importance of having interpreter present to do a run-through, for future on-line events. The Commission appreciates Cheryl's feedback. Cheryl is looking forward to having the event in person next year and commented how heart-warming it was to see Barbara Conover receive recognition.
 - o Carolyn commented that Luke Hawk was ecstatic about everything. Committee member Michael Rodrigues is interviewing him about how the award created, which will be posted on-line.
- Letter endorsing ADA Coordinator position with City
 - o Dianne reported that during the most recent Mayor's Designee meeting, the mayor mentioned the upcoming City Council review to create a new position, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/ADA Coordinator. He asked the Commission to draft a letter of support, which was sent to Commission members prior to being sent to the Mayor and City Council.
 - o The position would give voice to the City on a day-to-day basis about the importance of integrating ADA and DEI into every day City processes and policies.
 - o The position would report to the HR Director. A job description has not been published.
 - o Cheryl discussed importance of integrating the DEI and ADA roles.
 - o Davey recommended that the endorsement letter be amended as a letter to editor to show support.
 - Could modify letter to be directed to community and why having an ADA Coordinator position with DEI –
 - We need someone in city government to follow up on our suggestions
 - Davey, Cheryl, and Dianne will work on letter to editor. Carolyn will be the contact person to send to media. Davey will take first stab and send on to Cheryl. Cheryl suggested using a google doc. Davey will create a google doc.
 - o Joe asked how the City has done in the last 8-9 years in meeting goals that the Commission has set.
 - Davey said that the Commission makes sure we are being listened to and is focused on having both tangible and intangible impact. The City

has been responsive and is more aware of accessibility issues through things like walk and rolls, the City Source App for reporting issues. The app is available as a download on a phone or issues can be reported through the City website portal.

- Maybe we need an annual report which could be uploaded to the website. Current annual powerpoint could be reformatted into word doc report.

Old Business

- Brochure for Chamber of Commerce – Status needs to be checked with Arian.

Committee Reports

Executive Team

- Committee Chairs met with Exec Team in July/August. The overall goal is for other people to feel comfortable taking on leadership roles.

Accessibility

- Davey reported that the Committee met with Paul Logue, City Planner. David Riggs in City Code has sent initial five letters to businesses about fixable ADA issues. Davey has not heard from any yet and will follow up with David Riggs.
- This coming Friday, November 19, at noon, the committee will visit Stimson Ave. Meeting starting/ending location is Jackie O's. Friday's meeting is replacing December's meeting.

Communications

- No report

Education & Outreach

- Carolyn reported that with the Athena Award completed for the year, there will be no meeting in December and that the committee will resume meeting in January.

Advocacy

- No report; (DB Note – not reported in meeting: Advocacy Committee is on pause. Most committee members are stepping off the Commission. The Exec Team will create ad hoc groups to respond to issues that arise that require advocacy.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Davey announced there would be no full commission meeting in December and that we will resume in January.
- Tiffany noted that the meeting is listed on the City website to start at 5:30 and the agenda said 5:00. Thanks for letting us know that. Meeting time changed during pandemic when member relied on library internet. Commission decided to move in person/hybrid meetings back to 5:30.
- Carolyn – has lots of news clips about the Commission, gathered over the years, which need to go somewhere. Davey suggested the historical society - maybe having an historical society or library exhibit.
- Carolyn has completed her new book, *Love and Loss: The Storied Nature of Nursing Home Care*. And will be doing a recording of her reading it. Congratulations Carolyn!

Adjourn

Dianne made a motion to adjourn, Lisa seconded. Commission voted to adjourn at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Bouvier

Secretary, Athens City Commission on Disabilities

November 18, 2021