

Athens City Commission on Disabilities
June 19, 2024
Athens Community Center Room A (or via Microsoft Teams with ADA request)
5:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Minutes

Chairperson Davey McNelly called Meeting to order at 5:33 pm

Introductions and Quorum

Present: Deb Burleigh, Lisa Simpson, Dianne Bouvier, Davey McNelly, Michelle Hahn, Carolyn Lewis (via Teams), Annah Korpi (via Teams); Guests: Laurel Nolin, Melissa Kitrick, Wanda Sheard, Noriko Kantake

Congratulations to Davey McNelly for starting a new position as Director of the Athens SOCIL this week.

Purpose of the Commission

Michelle Hahn read the Purpose of the Commission: The Athens City Commission on Disabilities is a committee of city government whose commitment is to provide a means for the concerns of people with disabilities to be heard; to advocate for public policy change; to provide expertise to the community on disabilities; and to tell the community about the strengths and limitations of people with disabilities, as well as how the community can help them improve their quality of life, thereby ensuring equality of opportunity and full participation in community life for everyone.

Minutes – May minutes will be approved at the next month's meeting.

Treasurer's Report – Carolyn Lewis presented Treasurer's Report (at end of Minutes). Lisa Simpson made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, Dianne Bouvier seconded. All approved. Report accepted.

New Business

Athena Award and City Commission

- Carolyn presented about the Committee to plan the Commemorative 20th Anniversary of the founding of the City Commission and 10th anniversary of the Athena Award.
- Event: Nov 6, 5:00 – 6:30 at the Community Center
- Committee- Carolyn Lewis, Davey McNelly, Michelle Hahn, Ally Hughes, Lisa Simpson, Deb Burleigh, Dianne Bouvier
- Theme – Athens City commission on Disabilities: Decades of Excellence
- Colors – Green, blue and silver
- Food – catered by Mauvette's
- Cost will be about \$4,000 and we will need to find sponsors to help with food costs
- Carolyn is checking with the City about whether we can solicit for funds

- Speaker - Looking for a speaker – Davey recommended one, who is unable to come
- Set up – round tables – will seat about 75; may need to figure out RSVP process
- Greeters - at the door – and Lisa will ask folks from HAVAR to assist
- Table cards, name tags
- Event – 45 minutes
- Davey will be the MC
- Key need – main speaker
- One past recipient to talk about what Award meant to them
- Carolyn asked mayor to do a proclamation and present awardee
- Video (?) to acknowledge how much the Commission has done over 20 years
- Entertainment – Otis – Carolyn to ask Otis Cochran
- Program - Will need to acknowledge sponsors in program
- Michelle had the event put on the mayor's calendar
- Attendees
- Davey to send Invite to previous award recipients
- Promote what Commission has done – ask Berry to be there
- Décor
- Will need list of people who might want to help us
- Send out save the dates – RSVP – talk about next month
- Committee will meet in July to continue planning

Athens City Pool

- Guests came to talk about the Athens Pool and need for time for low sensory time.
- Issue: children with autism may have difficulty with crowds, loud sounds, whistles, difficulty understanding why children need to get out of the pool.
- Issues cause overstimulation, meltdowns, feelings of being on display – stressful for all.
- Perception that pool is adult friendly but not children-friendly – adults have time 10-12 daily to swim
- Requesting: 1-2 times a week for low sensory activity in large pool for children with sensory issues. No whistles or interruptions during swim time. Signage to help educate and enforce. Consistency of staff applying rules. (Could be in conjunction with adult swim.)
- Davey made a motion that the Commission support sending a letter to Arts, Parks, and Recreation (APR) requesting 1-2 times/week that would be designated with sensory friendly hours and to request follow up time to meet to discuss. Lisa seconded. All in favor.

- Next step: Annah agreed to draft a letter to be sent around for feedback before sending to Katherine Ann at APR.
- Of note: Sensory friendly hours at Beacon School Sept - May
- Open first and third Friday evening by hiring a lifeguard at beacon school – allows people to avoid “on display” part, providing judgement free time.

Committee Reports

- Accessibility and Advocacy – committee met last Friday. They will be sending letter to Engineering about West Union St project and the importance of driveways being level with sidewalks.
- Outreach and Communication – looking for people. Melissa is interested in joining committee.

Adjournment

Lisa Simpson made a motion to adjourn, Michelle Hahn seconded. We all adjourned at 6:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne Bouvier, Vice Chairperson
June 19, 2024

Athens City Commission on Disabilities
Treasurer's Report
June 19, 2024

FY 2024 Budgeted from the City **\$2,500.00**

Walk, Talk, and Roll

Minuteman Press	\$ 128.00
Avalanche Pizza (Ally Hughes)	<u>305.13</u>
	433.13

Outreach DD Festival (Deb Burleigh) 30.93

Total Expenditures to Date
464.06

Balance **\$2,035.94**

Prepared by Carolyn Bailey Lewis
Treasurer
6/18/2024