

**Athens City Commission on Disabilities**  
**February 17, 2021**  
**Video Conference**  
**5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

Meeting was held via Zoom and set up by Scott Thompson and Ryan Schwartzhoff with the Government Channel.

**Call to Order** - Meeting was called to order by Vice Chairperson Trembly at 5:03 pm.

- Welcome to Lisa Simpson, new Commission member; Announced that Cheryl Prusinski is taking a temporary leave of absence from the Commission.

**Establish Quorum**

**Present:** Dianne Bouvier, Claire Gysegem, Carolyn Lewis, Sly Mata, Davey McNelly, Lisa Simpson, Arian Smedley, jw Smith, Noah Trembly; Nico Fuentes (ASL interpreter); Scott Thompson and Ryan Schwartzhoff (Government Channel)

- Nine Commission members were present; 7 members constitute a quorum. Quorum established.
- Commission members are asked to review the excel Membership Roster and let Dianne know if any contact information needs to be updated.

**Reading of Mission** – Claire Gysegem read the mission.

**Approval of Minutes**

- Davey McNelly made a motion to accept the January minutes as written, Arian seconded, jw Smith abstained. Minutes approved.

**Treasurer's Report**

- Carolyn reported that nothing has changed since last month's report. The City allocated \$3,000 to the Commission, \$1,800 is for the Call All Artists awards, \$1,200 for the Athens Award event and other Commission expenses that may arise. Jw made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, Dianne seconded motion; Report accepted by unanimous vote.

**New Business**

- Accessibility of Children's Parks, particularly West State Street Park (Arian)  
Arian proposed to Executive Committee to have commission explore playground equipment, particularly at West State Street Park (the ward she represents). Discussed that City Parks & Rec would like to have accessible playgrounds. Davey noted that parks vary on accessible parking, pathways, and equipment. Dianne noted that it is important to look at intersection of all components within a location to make sure a park is accessible, which may involve different City departments. Davey said the Accessibility Committee could do a Walk and Roll assessment of the West State Street park in the summer. Arian noted that accessibility upgrades would cost money and other neighborhoods have partnered with local civic groups to make park equipment accessible. Accessibility Committee could draft document to the City; Communications could seek media coverage of the issues of accessible parks and the walk and roll.

## Old Business

- SOCIL Steering Committee Updates  
Davey announced that the Southeast Ohio Center for Independent Living is becoming a central information hub and they are accepting referrals for Athens County and Davey will send numbers. The next meeting is March 16 at noon on zoom with various representatives from the State Board, Jordy and 5-6 local people driving the process. Contact information for SOCIL: Fairfield County 740-689-1494; Hocking and Athens County 740-380-1475
  
- Guidance on 2021 Goals
  - Davey discussed guidance for Commission Committees for them to use their goals as a workplan and to bring issues that may need full Commission discussion to the monthly meetings. Monthly presentations should be focused on Outcomes achieved.
  - Notes for Committees from the agenda:
    - All committee goals are compiled in the January Exec Team meeting minutes
    - Set objectives to complete goals – i.e., outline who will do what by when
    - Whenever projects/topics are narrowed down, present to full commission, get approval and finalize (send formal request letter once research/planning is done – here’s what we want, when we want it, and how to do it.)
    - Present Outcomes achieved – what you finished, what you are working on, lessons learned.
    - Look for opportunities to collaborate with other committees
    - As goals are completed, committees can add more goals

Discussion: jw asked whether the Exec Team had any feedback on the committee goals provided. Exec Team did not have specific feedback.

## Committee Reports

### Executive Team

- The Exec Team worked on drafting guidance for Goals and Committee Reports during meetings; discussed what other events the Commission might take on (like an additional Walk and Roll zoom event – speakers, demonstration of the new City Source app with some people walking around uptown looking at accessibility of a particular area)
- Noah talked to someone from health dept to come and lined up someone to talk with us next month about how people with disabilities are impacted by COVID.
- Next meeting – February 26th at 1 pm

### Accessibility

- Goals Update
  - Discussed SeeClickFix app, which is now being called “Athens Ohio City Source,” a new App to notify City of accessibility and other issues. They plan to do a Walk N Roll event April 8 12:00 – 1:00 zoom meeting, with presenters and someone demonstrating the app from uptown location. They are seeking assistance from Communication Committee to help publicize.
  - Planning follow-up with city officials (David Riggs, Code Enforcement; Jessica Adine, City Engineer) to provide a letter about accessibility to jointly send from Committee and City Code
  - Accessibility Committee is discussing adding Technology accessibility to its role, especially in light of how many of us use technology to navigate the world now. jw said it’s a great idea

and recommended Jill Bateman (from OU IT Accessibility) be contacted to join. Dianne will ask her. One Committee Goal is to increase membership by 2-3 people.

- Next meeting – March 11th at Noon via Zoom.

#### Communications

- Goals Update
  - Claire presented that the committee met Feb 11 and discussed goals. One is to have the monthly column with Athens Messenger, to be called “Athens Abilities,” with Commission logo. Dr. Lewis is writing the first feature.
  - Gathering information on commission members to highlight in stories– Davey wrote an example using their template; committee will revisit getting this form to people.
  - Commission will be featured in special edition in Athens News, thanks to Arian– with insert of the Athens County Board of Developmental Disabilities (ACBDD) annual report
  - Committee is developing a form for committees to use when they want the Committee to publicize events; until then, emails are okay. They hope to present at the next commission meeting.
  - They discussed cross-collaboration with other City Commissions and projects
    - o Spoke with Lacey Rogers from the Community Relations Commission. They are doing work on race throughout city of Athens, thought it would be good to include race and disability intersection. Idea came when Arian received two children’s books about race; they are discussing ways to provide similar resources about varying abilities. (one resource for elementary level ideas is Jan McGarry, Morrison Schools)
- Arian has agreed to co-chair Communications Committee
- Next meeting – March 11<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm

#### Education & Outreach

- Carolyn reported that the Committee unable to meet since quorum was not met. Cheryl Prusinski is temporarily taking a leave of absence and not co-leading the Committee
- Goals Update
  - o Athena Award Art Work - Committee did not receive many artist submissions and are discussing whether they need a panel to select the artist. Suggestion to contact the Athens Municipal Arts Commission (AMAC) if they need a resource.
- Next Meeting – March 9<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm

#### Advocacy

- Sly reported that the committee met and has designated the first Tuesday of the month, 5:00 – 6:00 pm for regular meetings. Lisa Simpson is a new member on this committee.
- Goals Update
  - o Committee is deciding on process for selecting advocacy topics
  - o Discussed bringing in speakers to the Committee
  - o Some topics discussed: Stimulus checks not provided for persons with disabilities when they did not earn enough to file for taxes; HB for government business to be conducted via zoom expires in July. This past year has proven that government business can transpire effectively through on-line platforms. Requiring all in-person meetings to conduct government business limits participation by those with disabilities who are unable to be in person.
  - o Suggestion to invite someone from Ohio Legal Rights to Commission meeting

- Next Meeting - March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:00 pm

### **Announcements**

- Davey said the ACBDD is hosting a virtual event in March. Arian will send out flyer. Arian presented that the theme is “Healthy You, Healthy Me, Healthy Community.” They will have a virtual version of march on Court Street. March is DD awareness month; Athens News special edition
- Tomorrow night – February 18, Black Summit virtual event, 6:00 – 9:00 pm– jw is the keynote; Carolyn coordinated and is co-moderator and coordinated. All invited.
- Next Commission Meeting – March 17, 2021, 5:00 – 6:00 pm via Zoom

### **Adjourn**

Davey made a motion to adjourn, jw seconded. Noah adjourned the meeting at 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

*Dianne Bouvier*  
*Secretary, Athens City Commission on Disabilities*  
*February 18, 2021*