**Houston Commission on Disabilities**

**January 24, 2024 4:00 - 6:00 PM**

**Housekeeping items:**

* Provide instruction on ASL/Captioning and camera expectations for guests. Please make sure to introduce yourself before speaking for the ASL interpreters.
* If a commissioner is attending virtually, please keep your video and microphones off, but then turn your camera on for voting.
* If you are attending in person, please refrain from side conversations, as there are sensitive microphones throughout the room, and we will hear you speaking. Reminders about turning on/off microphones
* Individuals are encouraged to bring their computers to access the translating services.
* There is public WiFi in the building (TS-Web, no password)

Chair Meridith Silcox asked Stephanie to proceed with the roll call.

**Roll Call of the Commissioners:**

Position 1: Michael Cottingham Present

Position 2: Ricky Don Harris Present

Position 3: Ann M. Bacon Absent

Position 4: Daquan Minor Absent

Position 5: Sashikala Nisankarao Present

Position 6: Monique Mason Present

Position 7: AJ Morton Absent

Position 8: Amie Jean Present

Position 9: Mary Sias Present

Position 10: Meridith Silcox – Chair Present

Position 11: Lydia Nunez Landry Present

Position 12: Michaela Cueto Present

Position 13: Osvaldo Capmany Present

Position 14: Alexis Smith Absent

Ex-Officio: Angel Ponce Present

Ex-Officio: Marshall Watson Present

Legal: Rebekah Wendt Absent

Chair Meridith Silcox called the meeting to order at 4:06 PM with a quorum present and welcomed attendees to the meeting.

**MOPD Staff:**

Angel Ponce, Stephanie Haechten, Sissel Carlsen, Kayla Melcho, Rey Herrera, Amanda Boyd, Hilary Pircher

**Metropolitan Multiservice Center Staff:**

Hannah Walker, Nolan Griffin

**Review and Approval of September Meeting Minutes**

* Motion: Commissioner Amie Jean
* Second: Commissioner Michael Cottingham

**Public Comments**

None

**Expert Speaker**

* Audrey Omenson (Owner, The Therapy Collective)
* Navigating Advocacy Work Well
  + Intersectional Identities
  + Nonviolent communication
  + Building Rapport and Connection
  + Contact: Audrey Omenson, MA, LPC-S
    - [Audrey@therapycollectivetx.com](mailto:Audrey@therapycollectivetx.com)
    - [www.therapycollectivetx.com](http://www.therapycollectivetx.com)

**MOPD Report to the HCOD**

* Angel Ponce (Director, Mayor’s Office for People with Disabilities)
  + MOPD continuing same operations with new administration
  + Information and Referral Services – Month of November & December 61 constituents were serviced
    - Hosted 2 disability etiquette trainings
  + Pedestrian Accessibility Review – Received and reviewed 29 applications
  + Served over 90 turkeys and supplies in November for MMSC constituents
  + Houston Civic Award in December- plaque was presented to former Mayor Sylvester Turner
  + Reelabilites Festival –Abby (Reelabilites Festival Cooridnator)
    - Opening Reception Feb. 4th from 1-4pm
    - UpAbilities Feb. 15th from 7-9pm
    - ReelFilm Nights- Feb. 18,19,21
    - ReelEducation week of Feb. 12th
    - ReelMusic Feb. 22nd 7-9pm
    - ReelArt Crawl Feb. 25th 10:30am-1:30pm
    - ReelWorkplace Feb. 28th 11:30am-1:30pm
  + Working with Office of Emergency Management
  + MOPD is working on improving relationships with partners and bridging the gap

**MMSC Report to the HCOD**

* Nolan (Facilities Manager, MMSC)
* Holiday party with participants
* Wheelchair basketball team had a tournament in Dec.
* PROGRAMS are back
* MMSC will be a warming center for weather
* Metro will be running if MMSC is a warming center

**Committee Updates**

* Updates
* Education & Employment
  + SSDI & Education access resources
  + Family to Family Network conference in two weeks
* Community Access, Transition, & Housing
  + Committee met last Thursday regarding access and getting out to the community about what they do.
  + Plans to get committee together for townhall
* Emergency Preparedness and First Responder Training
  + Encourage everyone to sign up for Alert Houston and Ready Harris with upcoming weather

- Immigration committee is on pause – Chair Silcox wants to bring back committee next month and possible commissioners on two committees

- March will be April orientations

- Houston Center for Independent living offering Housing series 2nd Thursday of each month

**ADA Update**

* Marshall Watson, Administrative Coordinator – ADA, City of Houston, Human Resources Department, Civil Service & EEO Division
  + 3rd Quarter Report:

**Commission Orientation**

* March 18th orientation

**Meeting Schedule**

* March 14th, 2024
* April 11th, 2024

**Commissioners Comments**

Chair Silcox motions to adjourn meeting. Commissioner Sashi and Commissioner Amie seconds it. Meeting closes at 5:51 PM.

Meeting Minutes recorded by Amanda Boyd, amanda.boyd@houstontx.gov.

Please email any corrections.