



**Montgomery County, MD**  
**Commission on People with Disabilities**  
**May 13th, 2015**

**Welcome and Approval of April, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes:**

Seth Morgan, Chair, convened the meeting. Kathy Mann Koepke, Commissioner, made a motion to approve the April, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes. Tim Markwood, Commissioner, seconded the motion. A vote was taken and the April, 2015 Meeting Summary Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at [www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd](http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd).

**Housing Update – Stacy Spann, Executive Director, Housing Opportunities Commission:**

Mr. Spann began his employment with the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) in February 2012. He has reorganized the Commission with the goal to streamline programs and focus on adding value to the lives of their customers.

The mission of HOC is to provide affordable housing and supportive services that enhance the lives of low- and moderate-income families and individuals throughout Montgomery County, Maryland. Programs include:

- The **Housing Choice Voucher Program**, formerly known as "Section 8," provides assistance for very low-income households (single or family), the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market. Participants who receive vouchers search for their own housing, which may include single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments, or even the family's present residence. Provided the housing they select meets the requirements of the program, the housing subsidy is paid to the landlord directly by the Housing Opportunities Commission on behalf of the family.
- **Opportunity Housing** is a non-technical term that HOC uses for its broad range of non-federally subsidized housing types owned by HOC and located throughout the County. They may be multifamily developments or scattered sites. Usually, they serve lower or moderate income people, rather than those of very low income. Some of HOC's multifamily Opportunity Housing developments are Chevy Chase Lake, Fairfax Court, Greenhills, Pooks Hill Tower, Sligo Hills, and Tanglewood.
- **Mixed Income Properties.** HOC is a national leader in developing mixed income housing, a type of Opportunity Housing which includes market rate units and affordable units in the same development. The rents on the market rate units, which may be either moderate or high end luxury rents, subsidize the lower rents on the affordable units. HOC's mixed income portfolio includes The Barclay, The Glen, The Oaks at Four Corners, Montgomery Arms, and Spring Gardens as moderate mixed income developments. HOC's high end mixed income developments include MetroPointe, Alexander House, The Metropolitan, Pooks Hill Mid-Rise, Strathmore Court, Timberlawn Crescent, and Westwood Tower.
- **Low Income Housing Tax Credit Partnerships.** The federal government makes available tax credits to be used to fund affordable housing. Investors, usually local businesses, purchase the tax credits, thus lowering their tax burden, and enter into partnership with HOC to purchase housing that is rented to moderate income households. HOC manages 467 scattered site units that were funded this way, as well as Manchester Manor and Pond Ridge multifamily developments.
- The **Public Housing Program** is a federal program that provides decent and safe rental housing assistance for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Public housing units are owned and managed by HOC. The units may be grouped in a single community (such as multi-family developments and high-rise towers) or distributed throughout the county in "scattered sites".

Public Housing is built and operated using one of two budgets – public housing capital funds or public housing operating funds. Funds are received from U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). HOC is in the process of transitioning out of the HUD Public Housing Program.

Mr. Spann reported that HOC has approximately \$650,000,000 in the pipeline for both new housing and renovations. HOC will be working to make a significant percentage of those units accessible. Cindy Buddington, Commissioner, offered to do site visits and provide input on accessibility and design. Mr. Spann suggested that HOC and the Commission convene an Ad Hoc Committee to discuss accessibility and design prior to construction and renovations. New properties will be made accessible or can be outfitted to allow for accessibility features to be added in later. Tim Markwood, Commissioner, asked about the accessible inventory of HOC housing. Mr. Spann stated that the information has been compiled, but it is not in a format that is easily distributable.

It was asked whether renovations and repairs were completed on a regular cycle basis or on an as-needed basis. Mr. Spann noted that due to HUD public housing funding repairs and renovations are made retroactively. With future properties no longer using HUD public housing funding routine maintenance will be scheduled and planned far ahead with a portion of rent being set aside for repairs. Mr. Spann noted that HOC is investing money into scattered site properties to bring them up to neighborhood standards. Mr. Spann stated that he is looking forward to working with the Commission.

#### **Chair and Vice-Chair Report:**

Seth Morgan, Chair, reported that he attended the Maryland Alliance meeting earlier this month. Carol Beatty, new Secretary of the Maryland Department of Disabilities, was the speaker. Ms. Beatty has a strong history of advocating for deinstitutionalization of persons with disabilities and promoting employment of persons with disabilities.

Seth attended the Affordable Housing Conference May 5<sup>th</sup> where information was provided on transit oriented housing. Tom Perez, former Council Member and now Secretary of Labor was there and addressed housing issues as well as employment.

The Commission meeting in June will be a joint meeting with [Healthy Montgomery](#), which is a Montgomery County program whose mission is to achieve optimal health and well-being for Montgomery County residents. They are hosting multiple community outreach events and have asked to present before the Commission. Commissioners will have an opportunity to share their experiences accessing health care and provide recommendations on how our community can improve health outcomes for people with disabilities. The meeting time will be extended to allow for this presentation and will be open to the public.

#### **Ex-Officio Updates:**

Jay Kenney, Chief, Aging and Disability Services, reported that the Health and Human Services FY16 Operating Budget went before the full County Council on Monday for review. The budget includes \$440,000 to provide Resource Coordination for 500 individuals. This budget includes staffing for ten resource coordinators, one manager, one person for quality assurance, and one person for staff support. The County currently retained four staff persons for Resource Coordination. If the budget is approved the County can begin to accept 40 clients over the next two months prior to the new fiscal year that begins July 1<sup>st</sup>. The final vote on the County's operating budget will occur next week.

Anil Saini, staff at ADA Compliance, reported that the EOB Circle will close in approximately two weeks. The project is to take at least 15 months to complete. Nancy will provide updates to the Commission on the progress of construction. During construction it is advised that MetroAccess should make its pick-up and drop-offs near the Ride On bus stop in front of the EOB. Commissioners should enter via the cafeteria side entrance.

Charlie Butler, Department of Recreation (DR), reported that the new [North Potomac Community Center](#) is currently under construction. This project provides for the design of a 33,000 net square foot community recreation center and associated site of approximately 17 acres. The building will include typical elements such as a gymnasium, exercise room, social hall, kitchen, senior/community lounge, arts/kiln room, game room, vending space, conference room, offices, lobby, rest rooms, and storage space. The Potomac Community Center's existing outdoor skating rink will be refitted with a soft surface akin to the surface used at the Miracle League field in Germantown. Charlie also reported that beginning this summer customers can find facilities and register for classes offered by Montgomery County Recreation, Community Use of Public Facilities (CUPF) and Montgomery Parks using ONE convenient system and one account. Cooperatively, the three agencies will be

launching ActiveMONTGOMERY, the new online registration and reservation website. Visit [www.activeMONTGOMERY.org](http://www.activeMONTGOMERY.org) for additional details.

Seth discussed the issue of public transportation to community and recreation centers. Anil stated that concerns regarding access to County facilities can be directed to the County's ADA Compliance Team at 240-777-6197 (V), [adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:adacompliance@montgomerycountymd.gov).

Betsy Luecking, Staff, asked about classes for targeted age groups and how residents can request classes to be offered by Rec. Charlie said that residents can contact Rec directly with requests.

Kathy Mann Koepke, Commissioner, noted that often times a therapeutic recreation class will be canceled due to low enrollment or a class that for a specific disability population is offered at a time that is not accommodating. Charlie added that people with disabilities can take non-therapeutic recreation classes and ask for an accommodation at no cost.

Steve Riley, Commissioner, made a motion to write a letter to the Director of Rec and identify the following issues raised by the Commission: scheduling of classes, time of classes relevant to disability, access to facilities, and waiver minimum enrollment due to specialized nature of classes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Faisal Khan, Department of Transportation (DOT), reported on a question from a previous meeting regarding bus routes to County recreation and community centers. Changes to a new route or the addition of a bus stop to an existing route requires six to eight months of planning before it is active.

Steve Riley, Commissioner, made a motion to write a letter to the Director of DOT and raise the Commission's concerns regarding access to County recreation and community centers via public transportation. Steve suggested sending a copy of the letter to the Department of Recreation. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mike Subin, Office of the County Executive, reported that he will be convening a meeting with the Department of Permitting Services to discuss their enforcement role in the Respect the Space campaign. Betsy noted that in COMAR (Code of Maryland Regulations) it states that the local entities are responsible for enforcement of parking laws.

Gina Smith, HOC, reported that HOC will be opening their waiting list for people with disabilities in July and for the general population in August.

Simone Geness, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS), announced that on May 16th a MCPS Parent Summit to be held at Gaithersburg High School from 9:30am to 2:00pm. Topics will include special needs trusts and guardianship.

**Roundtable:** None.

**Next Full Commission Meeting: **\*\*Please Note Extended Meeting Time\*\***** June 10th, 2015 – Executive Office Building, 101 Monroe Street, Lobby Auditorium, Rockville, Maryland, 20850 – **6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** The Commission will conduct business from 6:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. A community forum in collaboration with Healthy Montgomery from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Food and light refreshments will be served from 5:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**Steering Committee Meeting:** Wednesday, June 17th, 2015 - 401 Hungerford Drive, 1st Floor Tan Conference Room, Rockville, Maryland, 20850 – 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Administrative Specialist I; Betsy Luecking, Manager