



**Commission on People with Disabilities
Meeting Summary Minutes
June 12, 2024**

**** MEETING WAS HELD VIA ZOOM ****

Welcome and Approval of May 2024 Meeting Minutes

Karen Morgret, Acting Chair, convened the meeting. A motion was made to approve the May 2024 Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded. A vote was taken and the May 2024 Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved as written. Approved minutes are available online at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/cpwd.

Welcome to New Members

Person with a Disability - Mary Simons, Nina Russell, Chris Sinsheimer, Leslie Green Lyles, Rebecca Murphy, Deborah Rozell, Christian Navarro

Parent of a Person with a Disability - Jamila Michael-Sobratti, Shameen Anthanio-Williams

Agency Representative - Azeb Adere, Felicia Brannon, Jennifer Berzok, Dr. Tria Gray

New ADA Title II Regulations for Websites and the Final Rule: What Does it Mean for Montgomery County Websites - Matt Barkley, ADA Compliance Manager, Montgomery County Government

On April 8, 2024, Attorney General Merrick B. Garland signed a [final rule](#) under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) to ensure the accessibility of web content and mobile applications (apps) for people with disabilities. This final rule clarifies the obligations of state and local governments to make their websites and mobile applications accessible.

Title II of the ADA requires that state and local government entities do not discriminate against people with disabilities in their programs, services and activities. The goal of the ADA Compliance Team is to coordinate Montgomery County government's overall ADA compliance efforts.

Please review the PowerPoint presentation from Matt Barkley to learn more about the new requirements, what the limited exceptions are, and what Montgomery County Government is doing to comply with the new standards and other accessibility initiatives: <https://montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/Minutes/WCAGforCPWDBarkley.pdf>

The floor was opened to questions.

It was asked how the libraries will be affected by this ruling as they offer many resources via third party vendors such as the Washington Post or high school graduation tests. Matt said if the vendor is providing services through a paid contract then they would have to comply.

Accessible Microsoft Office Document Basics - Myra Coffield, ADS, Accessible Document Specialist, Management & Program Analyst, Office of Information and Technology, Section 508 Compliance, Veterans Administration

Please review Myra's PowerPoint presentation for detailed explanations on how to make Word, PowerPoint and Excel documents accessible, how to export these types of documents into a PDF format, and how to use color contrast checkers and screen reader software to test for accessibility:

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/HHS-Program/Resources/Files/A%26D%20Docs/CPWD/Minutes/DocumentA11yBasicsCoffield.pdf>

The floor was opened to questions and comments.

Betsy Luecking, Staff, noted that the majority of County employees do not have a license for Adobe Acrobat Pro. It will be a challenge to train employees on how to post documents that are accessible. She will continue to work on this issue.

Commissioners commended Myra for her knowledge and expertise and her ability to explain how to make documents accessible in a way that is easy to understand.

Felicia Brannon, Commissioner, asked Myra to assist her with ensuring the transportation newsletters she shares with members of the Leisure World community are accessible.

It was noted that while fixing websites at the page level to ensure they are compliant will be important, the biggest hurdle the County will face will be ensuring documents are accessible. It was recommended that the County hire an accessibility company to consult with and to provide the level of accessibility needed to meet the new requirements.

Chair Update

The Commission will not be having a Steering Committee meeting this month as June 19 is a federal holiday and the County will be closed.

It was discussed that a retreat should be held at the September meeting to discuss goals and budget priorities for the upcoming year. The meeting may possibly be held in person.

A selection committee will need to be nominated in September to select a new Chair and Vice Chair.

New member orientation will be held June 20 from 4pm to 5pm. Betsy will send a Zoom link out to Commissioners.

Update – Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Commission (IDDC) – John Whittle, Commissioner and Liaison to IDDC

Tabled until next meeting.

Ex-Officio Member Updates

Angelisa Hawes, Montgomery County Public Libraries (MCPL), reported MCPL is partnering with Montgomery Parks Foundation to offer a summer reading challenge where children ages 0 to 12 can earn e-badges while learning about the accessibility of South Germantown Recreational Park, helping to preserve history and learn more about the Josiah Henson Museum and Park, and helping make Montgomery County Parks beautiful and learning more about Northwest Branch Stream Valley Park. Learn more:

<https://montgomerycountymd.gov/library/programs/summer-reading.html>

Jennene Blakely, Montgomery Parks (MP), reported MP is hosting their first adaptive mountain biking event on August 4. More information to follow.

Richard Shermanski, Commissioner, reported he was recently appointed to the Maryland State Bar Association's Diversity, Equity and Inclusions subcommittee. This subcommittee is working on issues regarding accommodations and accessibility for persons with disabilities at Montgomery County courthouses and the courts in general. Richard was Chair of a Commission subcommittee that worked on these issues as well and he will be regrouping his resources over the summer to restart the Commission subcommittee. Chris Sinsheimer, Commissioner, indicated he would like to join this subcommittee.

Commissioner Updates

None

Public Comments

No member of the public signed up to speak.

Meeting Adjourned – 7:35pm

Submitted by: Carly Clem, Program Specialist II
Betsy Tolbert Luecking, Community Outreach Manager

Attendees

Commissioners Present: Karen Morgret, Acting Chair; Azeb Adere; Shameen Anthanio-Williams; Jennifer Berzok; Felicia Brannon; Tonya Gilchrist; Karen Goss; Tria Gray; Leslie Green Lyles; Samuel Korper; Cindy LaBon; Ricardo Lopez; Jamila Michael-Sobratti; Rebecca Murphy; Christian Navarro; Lisa Quinn; Deborah Rozell; Nina Russell; Richard Shermanski; Mary Simons; Christopher Sinsheimer; Jeneva Stone; Teresa Villani

Commissioners Absent: John Whittle; Melissa Wyman

Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members Present: Matthew Barkley, ADA Compliance Team; Jennene Blakely, Montgomery Parks; Rebecca Grayson, Housing Opportunities Commission; Candace Groudine, Human Rights Commission; Angelisa Hawes, Montgomery County Public Libraries; Angela Luskey, Department of Recreation

Non-Voting Ex-Officio Members Absent: Patricia Cochrane, Montgomery County Public Schools; Karen Hochberg, Office of Human Resources; Denise Isreal, Department of Transportation

County Staff Present: Dr. Patrice McGhee, Chief, Aging & Disability Services, Department of Health and Human Services

Commission Staff Present: Betsy Luecking, Staff Liaison; Carly Clem, Program Specialist II

Public: Debbie Brown; Karen Leggett Abouraya; Kaylee Davis; Seth Morgan; Stacey Briggs; Avner Shapiro; Pat Sheehan; Michael Aniton

**Montgomery County Commission on People with Disabilities
September 2024 Meeting and Events Calendar**

Full Commission Meeting – Wednesday September 11
6pm to 7:30pm to be held via Zoom – link to be announced

Steering Committee Meeting – Wednesday September 18
5:30pm to 6:30pm to be held via Zoom – link to be announced