

Tacoma Area Commission on Disabilities Committee

Meeting For Urgent Issues.Minutes

Zoom Remote Meeting Hosted in Tacoma, WA 98402

Friday, April 10, 2020

4:00 PM

Call to Order	The meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.
Commissioners Present	Luke Byram, Rebecca Parson, Krystal Monteros , Lukas Barfield, Dylan O’Catherine, James Williams and Todd Holloway
Commissioners Absent	Lori Allison, Richard Smaby, Anthony Caldwell, Robert Hersey
City Staff Present	Lucas Smiraldo, Mia Navarro
Guests Present	Julian Wheeler, PCHS, Kathy Hall, VADAS, Bob Reiller, Pierce County Disability Rights, Amy P, Brain Injury Alliance
Adoption of Agenda	A motion was made by commissioner Byram and seconded by Commissioner Parson, and carried to accept the COD meeting agenda of April 10, 2020.
Acceptance of Minutes	A motion was made by Commissioner Williams. seconded by Commissioner Byram, and carried to accept the COD meeting minutes of February, 2020.
Public Comment	Julian Wheeler expressed concerns around the Civil Rights of people with disabilities during the COVID crisis and ask the commission to consider joining a complaint sent to Pierce County Government. He also expressed concerned the LGBTQ communities who wanted to give blood were being asked about their sexual histories and that heterosexual people were not vetted at the same standard.
<i>New Business</i>	None
<i>Guest Presenter</i>	None
<i>Reports</i>	<p>Todd Holloway shared concerns about health care rationing that placed people with disabilities at lower priority and also reported that the commission would continue to promote a long term solution for people with disabilities who continue to lack accessible transportation and require accommodations.</p> <p>Commissioner Parson reported in her position as Chair of Accessible Taxi Committee that social service providers were focused on getting supplies to people sheltered in but were not engaging in the conversation around transportation for people with disabilities to reach essential services including securing groceries and prescriptions so the commission need to continue to move this forward.</p> <p>Commissioner Holloway continued and expressed concerns around the right of people with disabilities to retain health care givers in support facilities which they are entitled to by law. He shared the ongoing issue of rationing and disproportionate</p>
<i>Reports</i>	

effect on people with disabilities.

Lucas Smiraldo offered the liaison report and elaborated on the Commission's efforts to find a permanent solution to accessible taxi and to leverage the \$300,000 set aside by the City of Tacoma with other partner funds to affect a sustainable solution. Based on the feasibility proposal submitted by Purple Mountain Associates and embedded revisions from the Commission Members, the Finance Director and OEHR leadership, the Commission plans to submit the revised feasibility proposal to the City shortly.

Mr. Smiraldo asked commissioner members and afterward, Commission guests to offer recommendations to City leadership to address the needs of people with disabilities. The following was offered:

***Commission and
Guest Input***

Commissioner O'Catherine—The Tacoma School District must do more to provide for the needs of students with disabilities during the COVID quarantine. Along with the need for access to computers many students, including deaf and blind students and others with special needs, need one on one instruction and this provision is not happening for many students.

Commissioner Holloway offered that Comcast was offering waivers on past account balances and inexpensive options to people in need but that these options were not highly promoted.

Commissioner Byram that mutual aid groups were providing delivery options for people with essential needs such as delivering food. Commissioner Williams ask for access to a list and Commissioner Byram promised to pass on a link.

Lucas Smiraldo posed the question of the need to assess the extent of the need for these and other services for people with disabilities and to name the gaps.

Commissioner Parson expressed concern around evictions and the need to directly address the vulnerabilities of people with disabilities around safe housing.

Commissioner Monteros expressed deep concerns about the condition at the Monroe Prison and the spread of COVID during crowding. This includes both inmates and staff who can spread the virus once leaving the facility so it is an overall public health concern. She and Commissioner Byram believe a riot occurred at the facility a few days prior due to these conditions. Commissioner Holloway indicated that AVID was deeply concerned about inmate rights and the human rights and public dangers of overcrowding during COVID.

Guests Concerns:

Kathy Hall expressed concerns for people with disabilities in residential programs around job retention and safety traveling two and from work.

She was concerned for the safety of shelters for people experiencing homelessness.

She expressed concerns around the lack of affordable housing in Tacoma citing a recent council passage of subsidies for a developer building housing in Hilltop that included one bedrooms going for \$2,100, completely out of the reach of most residents in the area.

***Input from Community
Members***

Julian Wheeler warned that the city should never go back to the "old" normal. He recommended that commission meetings should become more accessible to people with disabilities by providing remote options. He also indicated that election sites should have wheelchair accessibility including the main site on 35th street.

Commissioner Byram recommended that a remote meeting should take the place of the cancelled meeting in August and Mr. Smiraldo indicated that the staff was considering some sort of a rotation which would provide permanent remote meetings along with live ones to build greater access. He thanked Mia Navarro for her outstanding technical support of the remote commission meeting in his closing words.

Commissioner Holloway ask for a motion to close the meeting which was offered by Commissioner Williams and seconded by Commissioner Byram. The motion passed and the meeting closed at 5:27 PM.

Next meeting will be held on Friday May 8 if the commission feels need to address issues of immediate need for disabled community.

Adjournment