Mayor’s Advisory Committee for Citizens with Disabilities
Proceedings

OFFICIAL MINUTES

The meeting was held on March 13, 2018, at 4:07 p.m., at Peoria Civic Center, 201 SW Jefferson, Room #134. Committee Member Laurie Atkinson, Chair, presided.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following committee members present: Laurie Atkinson, Kaye Berry, Amr Elsamny, Kendra Moses-Hagan, Ashonta Huddleston, Melynda McKeever and Mike Van Cleve – 7. Absent: Doris Hayes – 1. Also present was Staff Liaison Scott Reeise, Public Works Director, and Patti Pitcher, Recording Secretary.

MINUTES

Discussion was had regarding retrieval of Meeting Minutes. City staff explained the Agenda and previous month’s Minutes must be posted to the City of Peoria’s website to comply with the Open Meetings Act a minimum of 48 (business) hours prior to the next meeting. For this Committee, they must be posted by 4:00 pm the Friday before the 4:00 pm Tuesday meeting. These are found on the City of Peoria website under the Boards/Commissions tab at the top. No objections. [Staff has updated the Agenda format to include step-by-step instructions.]

Mr. Van Cleve motioned to approve the February Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Ms. McKeever.

Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Mr. Van Cleve introduced his friend, David Kuriniec. Mr. Kuriniec stated he is an attorney with the State of Illinois for the Department of Healthcare and Family Services. He has spent most of his life devoted to enhancing the civil rights of persons with disabilities and other minorities and hopes to have that opportunity with the City of Peoria [as the City’s Diversity Officer, a position for which he recently applied] going forward.
UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Subcommittee Reports

Publicity Committee – No report.

Events Committee – No report.

MACCD Guidelines for Public Speaking

Ms. McKeever said as previously discussed, these [guidelines] would be incorporated into the Bylaws, but she is not prepared for taking action due to today’s brief meeting. A hard copy of the MACCD PowerPoint was distributed for final review. Ms. McKeever encouraged feedback or edits prior to next month’s meeting asking if the City logo could be added as well. Mr. Reese indicated that would be acceptable once the document is approved. Mr. Van Cleve explained no action needed as guidelines are for [members’] marketing purposes only.

Presentation on University of Illinois Main St. Project

Mr. Van Cleve stated he’ll head to Champaign on Friday [March 16, 2018] for mid-term reviews in which the students will be presenting what they’ve learned so far and the beginning of their design ideas. At the next [MACCD] meeting he’ll be able to give an overview of the different projects they’re proposing and the impact on the corridor. Input from the City continues to be valuable, and the college students are asking great questions, so it’s proceeding well.

MACCD’s Goals for 2018
Ms. McKeever suggested postponing this topic again until both Committee members Mr. Elsamny and Ms. Hayes are able to attend. No objections.

NEW BUSINESS

As reflected in last month’s Meeting Minutes, Ms. Huddleston had asked that the West Main Street corridor be reviewed with regard to businesses and their barriers in relation to the University of Illinois project.
Mr. Van Cleve reported he took a photo, collecting 60 to 70 photos showing various conditions of barriers from High Street to University (400 – 1300 blocks of W. Main Street). Some examples [photos] show great levels of accessibility while others show some challenges.

There was only one issue that he deemed urgent regarding to a pedestrian walkway barrier – a concrete planter placed next to a tree planter which narrowed the sidewalk width to less than the 30-inch width requirement - and for that he commended Mr. Reeise and his staff for addressing it promptly. Mr. Van Cleve emailed Mr. Reeise Saturday evening and by Monday the City had removed the receptacle, alleviating the issue.

Overall, there were two common issues – one being procedural, the other being a physical barrier. The procedural issue was that the only place snow remained was at the curb cuts. In communications with Mr. Reeise and Mr. Sie Maroon, it was determined a different plan needs to be implemented regarding placement of snow mounds during plowing.

The physical issue pertains to the curb cut transitions where they meet the asphalt because there’s a height discrepancy. This is a fairly easy fix by grinding the asphalt to omit the height differential. The other – in vehicular areas, especially crossing a pedestrian path - there weren’t tactile warnings (strips) at the shopping center to indicate to someone with visual impairment that they’re crossing a vehicular path. That, too, is a fairly easy modification.

In conclusion, Mr. Van Cleve recommends sharing the photos with City staff in an effort to develop a plan to alleviate these issues. No objections.

In reference to Ms. Huddleston’s comment last month that 50 percent of the businesses along the corridor have access issues, Mr. Van Cleve concurs. He found that approximately 50 percent of the storefronts have one or two steps leading to their entrances. It appeared that modifications hadn’t been made to the sidewalk or business entrances for quite some time. Dialogue with the City is important to figure out an action plan on how and when these issues could be addressed with the business owners/landlords in order to make their storefronts more accessible. Whether it's a 5- or 10-year plan or something more immediate, is unknown, but it will be a larger
and more costly project than simple barrier removals. Mr. Reese said anything operational – such as grinding down the curb cut transitions – will be addressed in 2018. Other items requiring large capital costs will be incorporated into a transitional plan. No objections.

Ms. Berry announced Peoria Kids Are Heroes is very active in Peoria and has been for about six months. She is the coordinator for the Central Illinois chapter. This program allows handicapped kids to be turned into heroes. For example, a boy dressed as Superman will be by the basketball hoops. There are three professional photographers, make-up artists and other volunteers community-wide making this happen in addition to news coverage. Some of these kids are even going to be paid to be in commercials. She clarified this organization doesn’t discriminate and includes cancer patients and kids with all types of disabilities. She went on to report that items of all kinds are being donated but volunteers are always needed and asked if the Committee wanted to be involved. Mr. Van Cleve said he, for one, supports it. It’s unknown at this time how many local kids will be involved. The Central Illinois group’s first [public] meeting will be held March 14, 2018, at 6:00pm at 817 SW Adams, one-half block south of the [Dozer] ballpark. Ms. Berry may be contacted for further information or there’s also a Facebook page if the Committee wants more information.

On a side note, Mr. Van Cleve reported he and his wife coach the Peoria Wildcats Wheelchair Basketball team who recently beat a Chicago team to become the 2018 State Champions.

PROPOSED AGENDA ITEMS

1. Approval of the March 13, 2018 Regular Meeting Minutes.
2. Peoria Kids Are Heroes participation. Possible action.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Van Cleve motioned to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Moses-Hagan. Meeting adjourned at 4:30p.m.

NEXT MEETING DATE

April 10, 2018