

**Fairfax Area Disability Services Board Full
Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 12, 2024**

FA-DSB Members in Attendance:

- David E. Simon, Chair, At-Large
- Benjamin Gibbs, Vice-Chair, At-Large
- Brandis Ruise, Secretary, Hunter Mill District
- Deborah Hammer, Mount Vernon District
- Deborah Cohen, Braddock District
- Michael Ritter, Springfield District
- Lindsay Harris, City of Falls Church
- Bryan Scrafford, Sully District
- Robin Rinearson O.D., Mason District
- Andrew Magill, At-Large
- Diane Monnig, Fairfax City
- Sarah Graham Taylor, Franconia District

FA-DSB Members Absent from the Meeting:

- Courtney Cezair Mayers, Dranesville District (Excused)
- Christie Garton, At-Large (Excused)
- Vacancy, Providence

Others Present: Claudia Vila (DFS staff), Alma Hernandez (DFS staff), Ann Kim (DFS staff), Trina Mayhan-Webb (DFS staff), Moriah Kitaeff (Department of Emergency Management), and Bonnie O' Leary.

The board met virtually and provided members of the public the opportunity to access the meeting via Zoom. A quorum was present with members stating they were calling from home and within their districts.

Minutes and Agenda:

1. Call to Order: David called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. A quorum was present.
2. Approval of November 2023 Minutes: A motion to approve the November minutes was made, seconded, and approved.
3. Public Comment: No members of the public provided public comment.
4. Approval of Agenda. A motion to approve the agenda was made, seconded, and approved.

Meeting Items:

1. *Acoustics: Why They Matter* Presentation: Bonnie O'Leary, Northern VA Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons (NVRC).

Bonnie provided a presentation on acoustics in public spaces. The PowerPoint presentation is part of the meeting packet. Dave asked if there are established standards regarding acoustics in public spaces – Bonnie was not aware of the existence of such codes, currently.

Deborah Hammer noted that it would be helpful to advocate for this issue in relation to the Mount Vernon Community Center, which is currently being rebuilt; Dave agreed to help with advocacy around

this. Mike noted that traffic and lighting also likely introduce additional barriers for people who are deaf and hard of hearing. Dave asked if there's an assessment approach or tool that enables comparison between different public spaces – Bonnie was unsure.

2. Annual Memorandum reg. State and Federal Lobbying:

Claudia provided a reminder that lobbying can occur at the individual level and if advocating for issues as a DSB member, be sure advocacy aligns with what has been sanctioned by the Board of Supervisors.

3. FA-DSB Attendance- Quorum Requirements:

Claudia reminded the board that its quorum size has been reduced and will begin in March 2024 with its first in-person meeting since the approval of the by-laws; DSB members still have to meet exceptions for any remote participation, and it must be recorded; members must notify Claudia and Dave ahead of time regarding a personal or disability-related exception that would prevent a member from physically attending in-person meetings.

Andrew asked about how much detail a person had to provide regarding needing to call into a meeting on account of a disability. Claudia stated the individual does not need to provide specifics, only communicate that they meet the statutory exemptions.

Deborah Hammer asked if members attending virtually are permitted to vote. Claudia stated they are, but they would not count toward the in-person quorum requirement.

4. Board Initiatives – FY 2024:

Increased Housing for Residents with Disabilities (Courtney and Mike):

Mike inquired about whether or not the DSB provided input for housing goals put forth by Fairfax County and aims to gather information regarding potential partnerships. Claudia shared that there are specific building requirements that all developers must comply with when building new housing. Mike wants to further explore the zoning laws regarding the accessibility of communities, and in particular, single-family homes. Some DSB members encouraged the thought of brainstorming an idea that incentivizes private contractors to build more accessible homes in the area. Dave asked Courtney and Mike to draft the idea for the initiative and share during the March meeting.

Increased Employment by County Government of People with Disabilities (Diane and Debbie):

Debbie and Diane provided the update that they've recently met with Claudia and Ann who assisted them with a list of local jurisdictions who have a similar county position dedicated to recruiting individuals with disabilities. They've also met with staff from the county's Human Resources Agency and found them to be very interested in the position. Diane stated that they've worked toward this goal in the past but not consistently due to a lack of resources. Both are due to speak with District Supervisor Walkinshaw.

Parking Reimagined (Robin and David):

Dave stated that Land Development Services is currently creating a survey that will go out to county residents with disabilities. They've asked the DSB to provide input on the proposed questions, which Dave and Robin are currently assisting with. They will continue to follow up after survey feedback has been received.

Accessibility Education for Area Businesses (Deborah and Andrew):

The post-COVID letter was printed by Connections newspaper in July 2023. Dave asked if it's meaningful for a version of the letter to re-circulate every now and then to promote awareness. This was supported.

Accessible Voting Spaces (Ben and Lindsay):

Falls Church' website was recently revamped to include the DSB's suggested changes around accessible voting options. Ben and Lindsay will continue to promote education related to curbside voting. Ben suggested this initiative be categorized a "Continuing Area of Interest" and a new voting initiative be crafted. Claudia noted that there are currently a few bills related to voting that are being discussed within the legislative session, and that Ben and Lindsay might want to carve out a new voting initiative around them, should they be signed into law.

Application by FCDOT to the Transit Ridership Incentive Program to Improve the Accessibility of Transit Bus Passenger Facilities by Riders with Disabilities (Sarah):

Sarah stated that there's been some turnover in that office, but that she'll be reaching out to FCDOT to ascertain who the new point of contact is, and if they are applying for TRIP funding.

Community Forums/SHAPE Partnership (Ben and Brandis):

Deborah shared that she was going to attend a public forum hosted by one of the District Supervisors but was unable to attend. She mentioned that Mount Vernon District is hosting an upcoming environmental forum. Dave encouraged DSB members to be aware of and share when outreach events occur in their districts.

School-age Children and Family Outreach (Courtney and Deborah):

Deborah has not yet connected with the current chair of the Fairfax County Public School Board. She recently met with Transition Specialists who provide many workshops for parents. She is also considering connecting with ARC Parent workshops.

Regarding items deemed Continuing Items of Interest:

Ensure all county buildings and facilities meet ADA requirements (Robin and Christie):

Robin visited the Government Center building and discussed potential handrails within the Atrium with Justin Warton. She pointed out tripping hazards and poor signage. There may be a follow-up meeting on Friday or later in the month.

Ben proposed adding acoustics language to that Continuing Item of Interest, give what they had learned through Bonnie O'Leary's presentation. The board agreed to add that language in.

5. General Updates: None.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.