

**Fairfax Area Disability Services Board
Full Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 12, 2022**

FA-DSB Members in Attendance:

- Deborah Hammer, Chair, Mount Vernon District
- Brandis Ruise, Vice Chair, Hunter Mill District
- Judith Turcott, Secretary, Fairfax City
- Deborah Cohen, Braddock District (Virtual- calling from home)
- Lindsay Harris, City of Falls Church
- Courtney Cezair Mayers, Dranesville District
- Sarah Graham Taylor, Lee District
- Diane Monnig, Providence District
- Robin Rinearson, Mason District
- Michael Ritter, Springfield District
- Erika James-Jackson, Sully District (Virtual- calling from home)
- Christie Garton, At-Large
- Benjamin Gibbs, At-Large
- Andrew Magill, At-Large
- David E. Simon, At-Large

Others Present: Claudia Vila (DFS staff), Karen Kelly (DFS staff), Delali Osei-Boateng (DFS staff), Rose Asuquo (Libraries), Courtney Arroyo (OEM staff-via Zoom), Sam Ressen (member of the public, Hunter Mill District – via Zoom).

The board met in person at the Pennino Building, a quorum was physically assembled, with two members attending virtually via zoom on account of being sick and the weather.

Members of the public had the ability to access the meeting in-person or via Zoom.

Minutes and Agenda:

- 1. Call to order 7:03 p.m.** Deborah called the meeting to order. A roll call was done to establish that a quorum was present and that all could hear.
- 2. Approval of Previous (June 2022) minutes:** June minutes were reviewed and approved by the board.
- 3. Public Comment:** Sam Ressen, Hunter Mill district, thanked Deborah for the opportunity to speak at this meeting. He spoke about public spaces and how they are not accessible to citizens who are immunocompromised, because not everyone continues to wear a mask. He expressed concern that so many people seemed to have moved on from the pandemic and stressed that precautions are

still needed to keep everyone safe. He encouraged board members to support ongoing mask protections for public spaces, which everyone should be able to access without fear of getting sick. He stressed the importance of mask precautions and investing in upgraded ventilation systems for public spaces. He thanked the board for listening to his concerns. Deborah thanked Sam for raising these concerns to the board.

Courtney Arroyo also provided public comment. She shared that September is Emergency Preparedness Awareness month. She also shared that there is a new Emergency Preparedness survey out and urged that the board complete it and to please share with constituents.

Meeting Items:

a. New Board Members:

The board welcomed new board members, Michael Ritter, from the Springfield District, Erica James Jackson, from the Sully District, and David Simon, an At-Large Member.

b. Accessible Voting- Office of Elections:

Three representatives from the Office of Elections introduced themselves and discussed their roles as part of the Office of Elections. They solicited comments from the DSB regarding barriers the board may have faced or heard about when voting in Fairfax County.

Concerns were raised relating to parking, specifically limited and unclear signage to access voting. The Board of Elections stated that they are working on improving signage for the 2022 election. They stated they may look to have an increased security presence to ensure that parking spaces for voters with disabilities will be kept open. The Board of Elections is working on decreasing wait time for curbside voting to 15 minutes and would always welcome feedback on the voting experience from anyone.

A question was raised pertaining to designating a special time to access voting for people with disabilities. This is not possible due as Virginia law precludes special voting hours and the polls need to be open for all the voters during election times. A Board of Elections representative stated there is a command center on Election Day that can be accessed to solve problems.

The Board of Elections stated that there is an online training for poll workers, and they are working on expanding the current curriculum. They stated there may need to be additional specific training for voters and more educational materials provided for voters in the disability community. The Board of Elections reiterated that anyone could apply to be an election officer and support the election process.

A question was raised regarding communication, specifically communication via text. The Board of Elections is currently looking for additional ways a limited-communication voter could get in touch with an election officer. Currently there are only phone numbers to get in touch with the election officers. A suggestion was made to look into retail-type models for voters to access curbside services. At this time the county does not have the ability to do this and if they were to do so, they would have to make it available to all 216 precincts within the county.

The Board of Elections concluded that if there are any additional questions to please contact the Board of Elections directly or the DSB can contact Ben Gibbs or Lindsay Harris, the DSB representatives currently looking at voting as a DSB initiative.

- c. Resilient Fairfax Presentation- Allison Homer, Senior Community Specialist:
Allison Homer presented on the Fairfax County' Climate Adaptation and Resilience Plan. Alison reviewed the current plan and discussed ideas for collaboration with the DSB going forward. A copy of the presentation is included in the meeting packet.
- d. Presentation on FOIA updates- Claudia Vila, Disability Rights and Resources Manager:
Claudia presented on the new FOIA regulations that took effect September 1, 2022. A copy of the presentation is included in the meeting packet. Claudia asked that board members notify Deborah and herself as soon as possible, preferably one week in advance, if they are choosing to attend meetings virtually. DSB members will need to provide a brief explanation why they cannot physically be in attendance, which will be included in the minutes. A quorum will need to be physically assembled at every meeting.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the implementation and enforcement of this policy due to the fact that most board members are either caregivers of a person with a disability, or have a disability themselves. Courtney asked if the board could ask for an accommodation request to meet fully virtual. Erika thought that would be a good idea. Alternatively, Courtney suggested this request be provided directly to the state. Sarah recommended advocacy on an individual level to the state delegate that pushed for this bill at the last legislative session. Sarah promised to share the delegate's name with the board, via Claudia, after the meeting. Claudia reminded the board that any future advocacy with the delegate should be done as a private citizen and not as a representative of the DSB.

- e. All Virtual and Remote Participation Policies:
Claudia Vila provided an overview of both policies. David motioned to approve the All Virtual Participation policy. It was seconded by Robin and approved by the full board. The Remote Participation Policy was motioned by Robin and seconded by Ben. The board voted to approve this policy.

f. Martha Glennan Awards Committee:

The Martha Glennan Awards Ceremony will be held in-person this year. Claudia explained the process of nominations and that the nominations form will go live on the DSB website after the board meeting. The group decided that they may or may not award three awards this year, dependent on the applications received. They asked that this be reflected in the language on the nominations form. Claudia will make the requisite change.

Ben Gibbs and Christie Garton will represent the DSB in choosing the proposed winners for this year's ceremony.

Due to time constraints, the rest of the meeting agenda items were tabled. Claudia reminded the board there are several vacancies on the ad hoc committees the DSB participates in. She asked that members email her to volunteer.

9 p.m. The meeting adjourned with a motion by David Simon, which was seconded by Ben Gibbs.