

**Commission on People with Disabilities
March 15, 2007
Southern Maryland Higher Education Center**

Minutes

Attendants: Julie Randall
Sheral St. Clair
Susan Erichsen
Christina Bishop
Kendall Sorenson-Clark
Bill Nicholas
Cindy Phillips
Pam Main
Paula Andreas
Paula Carpenter

Excused: Margaret Ann Stewart, Cathy Zumbrun, Birgit Wilhelm, Dennis Phillips
Mark Kalmus

Call to order - The meeting was called to order at 3:12 p.m. by Julie Randall. The meeting agenda was distributed and reviewed by attendants.

Review previous meeting minutes – Minutes from the previous meeting were distributed for review. A motion was made to approve the minutes; the motion was seconded and the minutes were approved.

Financial Report – C. Bishop had no commission finance report at this time. J. Randall asked C. Bishop if the BOCC had held hearings on the 2008 budget. S. Erichsen mentioned that the school board budget has funding set aside for the disabled and a discussion ensued on how this allocation could be utilized better. It was decided that the SMCPD budget and review will be included on the agenda for the next COPD meeting on April 26, 2007.

County Compliance / New Laws and/or Regulations – C. Bishop reported that the bylaws have gone to the legal department and will then go to the Board of County Commissioners for approval.

Committee Status Reports – The members were all reminded that Disability Awareness Day is March 24. C. Bishop said that the proclamation before the BOCC to go “Fly a Kite” went very well. P. Andreas shared that there will be 45 vendors at the event. C. Bishop assured members that community service workers will be assisting all day at the event and that Arthur Shepherd will act as host. The kites that Choporis-Weikert donated are very nice. The commission giveaways will arrive soon and will be given out at the event. P. Main has secured a tremendous amount of nice door prizes and she shared a list with the members. C. Bishop said that the commission has \$200 left to spend. S. Erichsen mentioned that the Washington Post and County Times have been contacted to inform them of the event. J. Randall led a discussion on the possibility of COPD members wearing name badges on the day of the event.

S. Erichsen began a discussion about awards to be given by the commission. Should the commission focus be on individuals or businesses? Are other organizations giving out comparable awards? A discussion ensued and a proposal was made to include both individuals and businesses that deserved recognition for their efforts in assisting the disabled community.

Events / Resources / Conferences – J. Randall brought up that there will be a meeting of Southern Maryland Coordinated Transportation Planning on March 22, 2007. S. St. Clair and M. Kalmus will be attending and S. St. Clair will brief COPD on important aspects of the meeting. C. Bishop mentioned that the World of Possibilities Expo at Timonium is a huge event offering

workshops and many other interesting activities. More information may be obtained at caringcommunities.com.

Old Business - K. Sorenson-Clark was nominated for and voted unanimously to be the COPD Vice Chair.

New Business – A needs assessment was handed out and it was decided that it must be put on the agenda for the next meeting to discuss further. The primary issues not addressed in this assessment include transportation, housing and employment of our disabled citizens. A discussion began on resource coordination and recommendations on how to improve this assessment to better assist our citizens. Further discussion revealed that no document exists to present to the BOCC to show what is needed for the ADA. The commission would like to pull resources together and update them. J. Randall brought up that the COPD should identify specific committees to work on specific tasks so members can feel that accomplishments have been made. 3 goals and 3 committees have determined and they are:

- 1) Needs assessment gap analysis – pull together information and resources to report to COPD which will then determine a goal of what to report to the BOCC
- 2) Resource guide of offerings for disabled citizens of St. Mary's county
- 3) Events and awards – for businesses and individuals

J. Randall brought up the idea of a local management board to play a coordinating role for pooling resources. A discussion entailed regarding the serious assistance accessing the service system for disabled citizens needs. It is not centralized, it does not advocate and it is difficult to determine eligibility. K. Sorenson-Clark suggested that assessment updates be completed by the May meeting. She also mentioned that the COPD main project be the resource guide to show the community; here's what we know and what already exists; where do people go for help and how are they informed of this; and that this endeavor may go hand in hand with the needs assessment. K. Sorenson-Clark suggests that the commission starts on a "smaller" scale and avoids taking on too many endeavors. C. Bishop suggested to pool resources to start the product. K. Sorenson-Clark would like to see information put together in an "interesting way" to appeal to the public. S. Erichsen suggested that the commission attempts to "do 1 thing well" rather than taking on too much. It was decided that members will bring examples of information to meetings so members can begin to compile it. The finished product should be bilingual and easy to understand. J. Randall said that St. Mary's County ADA Transition Plan will feed into the needs assessment.

Next COPD meeting & Adjournment – April 26th at 3:00 p.m. at the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center. A motion to adjourn the meeting was made and seconded at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by: Paula Carpenter