

## Minutes Commission on Disability Concerns Meeting January 13, 2025

Minutes of the COMMISSION ON DISABILITY CONCERNS held on Monday, January 13, 2025, 6:30 p.m., held both In-Person & Virtually: Tempe Public Library 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 3500 South Rural Road, Tempe, AZ 85282 & Microsoft Teams at the following link: [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#) or by telephone: (480) 498-8745, United States, Phoenix (Toll), Conference ID: 762 995 762#

**(MEMBERS) Present:**

Kathy Jefferson (Chair)  
Jacob Bush  
Genevieve Vega  
Irene Mochel  
Krista Smiley  
Steven Tokos  
Carla Reese  
Lauren Hansen  
Nicholas Gaitan

**(MEMBERS) Absent:**

N/A

**City Staff Present:**

Monique Perry, ADA Accessibility Coordinator/ Staff Liaison

**Guests**

Public Guest: Darrel Christenson & Don Price

**Call to Order**

Commissioner Jefferson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

**Agenda Item 1 – Native Land Acknowledgement Statement**

We wish to acknowledge that Tempe is the homeland of the Native people who have inhabited this landscape since time immemorial. These ancestral lands of the O’odham (known as the Pima), Piipaash (known as the Maricopa), and their ancestors extend far beyond our city. This land continues to be spiritually connected to the O’odham of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community and Gila River Indian Community. We accept the responsibility of stewarding those places and solemnly pledge to consider this commitment in every action.

**Agenda Item 2 – Public Appearances**

The Commission on Disability Concerns welcomes public comment for items listed on this agenda only. There is a three-minute limit per person. If you would like the Commission to consider an issue or topic, please request the topic be placed on the agenda for the next

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meeting. The Commission must provide notice to the Community of our discussion, consideration, and PUBLIC MEETING AGENDA possible action on every topic. Please feel free to speak with any Commissioner or staff so we may assist you.

### **Agenda Item 3 – Approval of Minutes: November 4, 2024 & December 2, 2024**

Commissioner Tokos made a motion to approve minutes from both the November 4th and December 2<sup>nd</sup> meetings, Commissioner Mochel seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

### **Agenda Item 4 – Presentation of the Visitability Concept by Darrel Christenson**

The concept of “visitability” is a form of accessibility that is focused specifically on housing and proposes a shift in residential design so that all new homes are at least somewhat accessible to all people, regardless of physical abilities.

Six suggested features:

- Zero step entry- slope running away from the door.
- 32” clear for all interior doors. (Offset hinges)
- Lever handle doors throughout the house
- Interior route expanded to 36” throughout
- Reinforcement around the toilet
- Height of outlets and controls at 15” minimum (current height is 9”)

Darren identified nine benefits of visitability:

- Low cost, high impact
- Currently one in five people have a disability - sixty-one million
- Baby boomers are getting older
- Americans are moving every seven years, on average
- Reduces the need for expensive home modifications
- Helps with short term disabilities
- Helps the elderly stay in their homes longer and out of nursing homes
- Young families with strollers will also benefit from a zero-step entry
- It is good public policy

Darrel Christenson’s ask from the commission is to support moving toward the concept of visitability by requiring the six features into all methods of new construction, hoping to start with multi- family builds.

### **Agenda Item 5 – New Commissioner Introductions**

The commission is starting the year with three new commissioners, Carla Reese, Lauren Hansen and Nicholas Gaitan. The commissioners took the opportunity for introductions.

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### **Agenda Item 6 – All-Abilities Subcommittee Update and Vote**

The commission reviewed, discussed and voted on the award nomination form, the sponsorship letter and the communication plan. All items were sent with the meeting agenda and all commissioners confirmed they had a chance to review the attachments. The voting for each document was as follows:

- Nomination Form - Commissioner Tokos motioned for approval, Commissioner Mochel second the motion and all commissioners voted aye to confirm.
- Sponsorship Letter - Commissioner Tokos motioned for approval, Commissioner Vega second the motion and all commissioners voted aye to confirm.
- Communication Plan – Commissioner Vega motioned for approval, Commissioner Tokos second the motion and all commissioners voted aye to confirm.

The commissioners received the list of schools in the city and Commissioner Jefferson stated the process used in prior years worked, and requested the process remain the same for this year. Commissioners were asked to choose the schools closest to their residence and agree to provide that school with the nomination form and sponsorship letters. Commissioner Tokos agreed to take all high schools on the list and will stop by City Hall to pick up copies for those schools. No other commissioners choose any schools but were instructed to email their choices to both the Chair and the Staff Liaison.

The subcommittee is scheduled to meet this Thursday, January 16, 2025, at 6pm.

### **Agenda Item 7 – Updates/ Questions**

Commissioner Mochel announced to the commission that this would be her last minute because she is relocating to another state to be near family. She advised how much she has enjoyed the years she has been a part of the commission and she would miss everyone involved. She advised she would keep in touch because she wants to know what the commission is up to.

Commissioner Vega discussed information from the last meeting with the Increased Advocacy for Tempe Youth with Disabilities Subcommittee, for parents seeking alternatives for their special education kiddos. It came up that they have Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) that their Park Rangers go through and shared the curriculum for CIT.

The subcommittee is seeking potential funding to have an advocate to assist with getting the families what they need. And for clarification, sorry that meeting that subcommittee meeting was on Friday the 13th of December, and that was the last time we met. The next meeting is set for January 24, 2025, at noon, in the City Manager’s Conference Room on the third floor.

### **Agenda Item 8 – Announcements**

Name tags for each commissioner were given out at the last meeting but those have the old City logo and need to be undated. For new commissioners, name tags and plates are in the process of being ordered and will hopefully be available by the next commission meeting.

Commissioners were asked to provide their volunteer hours for events or work group activities to the staff liaison, so they can be tracked and reported accurately for the annual report for the event.

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**Agenda Item 9 – Upcoming Meeting Date + Proposed Future Agenda Items**

- Upcoming Meeting Date – February 2, 2025
- Proposed Future Agenda Items Updates
  - Project Vision Zero Presentation
  - First Responders training Presentation
  - The Centers for Habilitation Presentation
  - Adult Changing Tables
  - Potential “green certification” process

**Motion made by Commissioner Tokos to adjourn the meeting.  
Second by Commissioners Mochel.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:48 p.m.**

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Prepared by: Monique Perry

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Reviewed by: Velicia McMillan Humes