

Cape Fear Disability Commission General Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2018

Members Present:

John Edge (CFDC), Vanessa Lacer (Wave Transit), David Schultz (UNCW), Hayley Sink (ACCESS of Wilmington), David Morrison (Past Chair, DF Morrison Consulting), Ann Morrison (Parent), Tiffany Lesley (City of Wilmington, NHC Special Olympics), David Todd (UNCW), Michael Friant (Motivation Speaker, Student), Susan Barker, Patrick Davis, Cheryl Powell, Christina Bauman (DSDHH), Dustin Robinson (Town of Kure Beach), Aimee Helmus (CFCC), Pam Poretti (DHHS), Jane Jones (Cape Fear Area Agency on Aging), Chris Stone (UNCW), David Beauregard (dRC-CIL), Randy Evans (Walking Tall Wilmington), Stacie Curley, Whitney Grabar (Domestic Violence Shelter and Services)

I. Call to Order

- David Schultz called the meeting to order at 10:36 AM.
- General Announcements – David Schultz:
 - Anyone wishing to speak during the meeting please raise your hand and provide name and organization for the benefit of all members and the sign language interpreters.

II. Approval of May 2018 Minutes

- No amendments. Motion for approval made by David Todd, seconded by Michael Friant.

III. Reports

- RP1: City of Wilmington Report – Tiffany Lesley for Jonathan Batts
 - Inland Greens: All positive feedback; 100+ rounds being played per day!
- RP2: Wave Transportation Report – Vanessa Lacer
 - Reminder that Wave Bus and DART passes are available to attend CFDC meetings. Contact Vanessa at (910) 202-2045 or vlacer@wavetransit.com for a pass or pick a pass up at CFDC meetings.
 - Downtown Trolley expanding to North 4th Street, Castle Street, and South Front District in September. The trolley is accessible.
 - Monkey Junction Wave Bus Stop addition has been complete! Two covered shelters, sidewalk and accessible pedestrian route.

- Improvements are coming to the 16th and 17th Street Wave Bus Stops.
- *Comment:* UNCW now has a sidewalk and an accessible pedestrian route in front of Alderman Hall if you are traveling to campus by Wave. – David Todd
- RP3: Membership – Hayley Sink
 - Intended to be a time to recognize new members and CFDC members who have received voting rights after attending two (2) consecutive meetings. Reminder that voting rights are lost after missing three (3) consecutive meetings.
 - No new members
 - All members introduce themselves, their affiliation, and if new, how they heard about CFDC.
 - New attendees present. We are thrilled to have all members and guests in attendance!

IV. Old Business

- Bylaws have been updated on CFDC Website to reflect changes in membership requirement, as described above.
- NCDOT visit is being planned for 2019.

V. New Business

- Upcoming Meeting Panels:
 - November – Connecting the Dots to Disability Services and Your Rights

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Reminder that members that you are allowed to bring flyers and advertise upcoming events during this time.
- Special Olympics Fall Season starting soon! See flyer attached. Including a free dance and bowling tournament this fall.
 - Contact Tiffany at Tiffany.Lesley@wilmingtonnc.gov
- Cheryl Powell is new to CFDC representing the NC Council for Intellectual Disabilities (appointed) and the NC Empowerment Network, which is building a state-wide advocacy network to direct you to resources you may need.
- disAbility Resource Center's 10th Anniversary Breakfast Celebration and Awards is on September 20th at the Terraces at Sir Tyler at 9 AM. Nominate an individual for an award category (Youth Leadership Award, Exceptional Educator, Accessibility Award, Impact Award) at <http://www.drc-cil.org/2018-nomination-form.html>. Contact 910-815-6618 for more information or to purchase tickets.

- ACCESS of Wilmington invites you to the Miracle Field of Wilmington's 5th Birthday on Opening Day, September 15th at 10 AM. Registration for Miracle League, ACCESS Fit, and Project SOAR information can be found at www.accessilm.org.
 - Contact Hayley Sink at hayley@accessilm.org or 910-508-6788.
- Visit the CFDC Facebook for all announcements in between quarterly meetings. Go to www.facebook.com/CFDCILM. Send Vanessa all announcements, fliers, etc., that would be of interest to members to vlacer@wavetransit.com and she will post them to the CFDC Facebook page.
- November CFDC Meeting rescheduled for November 14th due to Thanksgiving Holiday.

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER PANEL: ACCOMODATIONS, ACCESSIBILITY, and ADVOCACY

- **Aimee Helmus, M.Ed. – Director, Disability Support Services at Cape Fear Community College**
Contact: ahelmus@cfcc.edu | 910-362-7012
 - *What does Accommodations, Accessibility and Advocacy mean to you and your role?* Works with students to manage accommodations while being a student at the college. Helps students achieve desired accommodation or makes recommendations to students for what may help them be most successful. Also, advocates for physical and classroom accessibility on campus. It is important to advocate, but help students learn how to advocate for themselves. Give them techniques to communicate with instructors, etc.
 - *What is a community connection that your office engages in?* Going into high schools to educated students and teachers that opportunities are available for them at the university level.
 - *Thoughts on technology promoting access?* Can be a barrier, but great with textbooks – Creates a read-a-loud solution that is very helpful and more time considerate than requesting a braille book. Cost is often less. When technology does not work it is a significant barrier.
 - *Advice:* Students should feel comfortable asking for help and that is always great to learn early! Have to be proactive and ask for help, go to tutoring, register, etc.
- **Pam H. Poretti, Hard of Hearing Services Specialist, NCDHHS Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**
Contact: pam.poretti@dhhs.nc.gov | 910-251-5702
 - *What does Accommodations, Accessibility and Advocacy mean to you and your role?* Need for education toward advocacy, self-advocacy and

then training to self-advocate, speak up and know what is happening to them. Listening fatigue and social impact for seniors particular. DSDHH also has in-service training and training with other service providers to understand how to communicate with individuals undergoing hearing loss or hearing and vision loss.

- *What is a community connection that your office engages in?* People not aware that there are accommodations available for them. The Wilson Center is doing a wonderful job with Assistive Listening Devices at their performances. Very accommodating and wants to do more. DSDHH reminds individuals of the ADA and that reasonable accommodations must be provided if asked.
- *What support groups do you provide or partner with?* Particularly with veterans, asking for help goes against being fit for duty. Having a friend bring them is a great start, but still difficult to cross this barrier to accept services and see the need for services. Try to give information and roll model how to do this. Talk about issues that are important to them. Support within the group for those that need it. Generational barriers are present as well.
- *Thoughts on technology promoting access?* Very helpful to have an iPhone with free ability to message, FaceTime, etc. You can download free apps that help the deaf and hard of hearing community to communicate, this is particularly helpful with the late deaf population. Connectivity is still an issue in rural counties.
- *Advice:* Vital information for planning for the future. Groups like CFDC are so important and helpful to share information and services.

- **Jane Jones, Area Agency on Aging Director, Cape Fear Council of Governments**

Contact: jjones@capefearcog.org | 910-395-4553 Ext. 209

- *What does Accommodations, Accessibility and Advocacy mean to you and your role?* Works with all aging individuals regardless of ability. If they are 60+ they are eligible for a service. Navigate seniors to disability partnering agencies to provide more help and expertise – The AAA role is to know the resources and connect them.
 - Plethora of services for seniors in our community: volunteer, noon-day meal for anyone 60+, exercise classes, craft classes, as well as other opportunities to promote connectivity and socialization. Transportation provided, as well as medical transportation. Homebound meal delivery. Adult Day Care through Elderhaus, personal assistance, evidence-based health promotion, operation fan for seniors without air conditioning. Anyone 60+ reach out and AAA will connect you.

- New Hanover County Special Needs Task Force Partner: Register in the event of impending disaster to check in on disaster plan, as well as those that are homebound before, during, and after the storm. Learn more [here](#).
 - New Hanover County and Brunswick County Senior Center connector as well.
 - *What is a community connection that your office engages in?* The AAA reminds the community to make the accommodation available to invite the ask for reasonable accommodations from those who need them.
 - *Thoughts on technology promoting access?* Social Media is preventing isolation and allow for connection and reconnection. Particularly for transplants to the SENC region. Can create more opportunity for fraud. Cost can be a barrier for aging adults.
 - *What support groups do you provide or partner with?* Many for medical conditions, disabilities, etc. in the community. Particularly early onset. AAA has a list of these groups for individuals routed through AAA.
 - *Advice:* Future planning to have family members help aging individuals. Now AAA's goal is to provide option counseling with younger adults to write their own plan for their future. Let family know what your wishes are now.
- **Chris Stone, Director, Disability Resource Center at University of North Carolina Wilmington**
Contact: stonec@uncw.edu | 910-962-7555
 - *What does Accommodations, Accessibility and Advocacy mean to you and your role?* UNCW DRC has named identify, access, and advocate as their focus – Used to be a service office, but shifted to being a resource to work with students, faculty, and staff, to create a proactive environment to accessibility. Also works to create access to doors, technology, pedestrian walkways.
 - *What is a community connection that your office engages in?* Misconception of students coming to the university with a disability that they applied differently. They did not – They deserve to be here and have earned the right through meeting the same rigorous qualifications. People are more than their disability! Other identities are most important – athlete, spouse, SGA member, volunteer, etc.
 - *Thoughts on technology promoting access?* Technology creates access, but barriers to accessibility simultaneously. Can we use this or will need a work-a-round? Technology has allowed for the office to use a lot more read-a-loud and recording options as opposed to a note taker if the students is able to physically and intellectually take notes, they can use a smart pen and listen later.

- *What support groups do you provide or partner with?* Students do not have a strong interest in this, but they will connect students with online support or dRC if the need is requested. Military Students connected through the Office of Military Services who can then bring them to the UNCW Disability Resource Center has proven helpful.
 - *Advice:* Not about asking for special services, it is about getting an individual prepared for what is next and them knowing where to go to get support. It is important for the student to be challenged, but to be supported to foster individual growth. Would love to see the student be at the front of their IEP/ISP as they move through K-12 system. Also, important to be prepared for working on transitioning out to the workforce following school. Also, you are going to get asked questions – What do you want? Why? What challenges are you encountering? You need to be ready and prepared to have these conversations.
- **David Beauregard, ADA and Advocacy Specialist, disAbility Resource Center**
Contact: david.beauregard@drc-cil.org | 910.815.6618
- *What does Accommodations, Accessibility and Advocacy mean to you and your role?* Largely working with organizations to help them understand through advocacy. Example: Working with an HOA to explain that a ramp with a step up is not accessible, and the meeting needs to be open to all.
 - *What is a community connection that your office engages in?* Invisible disability awareness in the community is important. The dRC also encourages individuals to be proactive to use the aspects of the disability to do all they can within that!
 - *Thoughts on technology promoting access?* Cost is premium for many users.
 - *What support groups do you provide or partner with?* Social Media provides a big support network that dRC will route individuals to.
 - *Advice:* Youth Transition Services are very important to become involved in – For what to do when transition out of school (K-12). How do you plan for social interaction and their future after? Stevie Toole goes to all high school in NHC and runs this program for transition. Do not wait until the last minute, be as proactive as possible.

Questions and Answers:

Q: Higher Education Panelist – In working with students to teach them to be self-advocating you mentioned that you try to work directly with the student and not the parent. How do you navigate this? – Christina Bauman

A: It is difficult. At CFCC allow the parent to be present with the student, but in the meeting we speak directly to the student, look directly at the student, etc. FERPA exist – Have the student sign and they have to list the parent for them to stay in the meeting. The office tells the student this with the parent present and informs them that they can change this list at any time. CFCC provides more direct support and interaction with the parent as it is a “stepping stone.” At UNCW, we work to acknowledge that the parent has had a large and influential role, not trying to cut them out of the process, but trying to take the student to the next level. Use language, like I am going to be talking to your son or daughter, etc. UNCW also offers information sessions for students in small groups. It is just for students, not parents, as it allows them to create community among themselves organically. Also, informs parents that they are going to tell their child we had this conversation if parents try to communicate with the office around the student.

Comment: I agree with everything said, especially about allow for independence. – Michael Friant

Comment: Also important at doctor’s appointments. We train the doctor to talk to their patient, look at their patient, ask parents to leave if necessary, or you may not get to what is medically wrong. – Cheryl Powell

VI. Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Michael Friant at 12:12 PM. Seconded by Vanessa Lacer.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: October 17th, 2018 at 10:30 AM

Next General Meeting: November 14th, 2018 at 10:30 AM

**Meetings held at New Hanover County Government Center Human Resources Suite 135.*