

**MINUTES**  
**ADVISORY BOARD FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES**  
**MAY 18, 2023**

**Members Present:** Toby Gordon, Chair  
Michelle Bitter-Oakley  
Ellyn Drotzer  
Elizabeth Espinoza  
Roslyn Greenberg  
Mary Hudson  
Jorge Ibacache  
Mona Malbranche  
John Neff  
Tracy Stafford

**Members Absent:** Linda Fishkin  
Mary Kinirons  
Michelle Jones  
Janine Young

**Also Present:** Kristen McIntosh, Assistant County Attorney  
Carol L. Powell-Phillips, Professional Standards/Human Rights Section  
Karen Hames, Real Time Reporter

A meeting of the Advisory Board for Individuals with Disabilities (ABID) was held on Thursday, May 18, 2023, at 12:39 p.m., in Room 430 of the Broward County Governmental Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Prior to the meeting, Ms. Powell-Phillips informed the board that the minutes will be in summary form moving forward. She stated that at the June 13, 2023, ABID meeting, each member of the board will be receiving a Proclamation at 10:00 a.m. in Room 422. Ms. Powell-Phillips noted that the annual ethics training and onboarding will be held virtually on July 20, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.

Referencing the Annual Report, Ms. Powell-Phillips explained that all divisions had responded to the ABID's questions with the exclusion of Public Communications. She provided a paper copy of the Transportation, Emergency Management, and Employment responses. She provided an overview of upcoming subcommittee meetings.

**1. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL**

Following the Roll Call by Ms. Powell-Phillips, a quorum was established. Chair Gordon called the meeting to order.

**2. WELCOME – NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

Chair Gordon welcomed new member Mary Hudson. Ms. Hudson introduced herself and spoke briefly on her background. She is a retired employee of Broward County. She currently works with homeless veterans as the Director of Healthcare Navigations, which helps secure housing for veterans. Ms. Hudson chose to serve on the Transportation subcommittee.

**3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

(No Board action taken.)

**4. APPROVE MINUTES (MARCH 16, 2023)**

A correction to the minutes of March 16, 2023, was made. Chair Gordon noted that the Employment subcommittee would meet in August.

Ms. Malbranche motioned to accept the minutes. Mr. Ibacache seconded the motion. With no objection, the minutes were approved.

**5. CHAIR'S REPORT**

(No report was given.)

**6. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

A. Emergency Management

Ms. Powell-Phillips read an email to the committee from Ms. Mary Kinirons resigning from the Board. Ms. Bitter-Oakley stated that a list of questions had been submitted from the Emergency Management subcommittee. Chair Gordon noted that the questions are expected to have answers and be discussed at the June meeting.

## B. Transportation

Chair Gordon stated that the responses from the Transportation Department would be discussed at the June meeting, to give each member time to read through the responses. The committee discussed bus transportation, including safety checks and maintenance. Mr. Neff stated that when rider complaints come in, specific information should be attained, such as the bus route, number, and date so follow ups can be made. Ms. Hudson explained that she uses the public transportation system and offered to gather information on her next ride.

Ms. Drotzer explained that she works with the Lighthouse of Broward for the blind and visually impaired. She noted that a meeting took place with a manager at the Miami-Dade and Broward Region, the subcontractor for TOPS. She stated that whenever an issue occurs, they immediately resolve those issues. Ms. Drotzer offered to relay her information to invite the manager to an ABID meeting to present or answer questions.

Ms. Drotzer inquired whether sensitivity training pertaining to those who are blind, disabled, and hearing impaired were contractual requirements. She stated that specific training for drivers would be beneficial to passengers' needs. Ms. Hudson showed much support in a meeting including Transport America to discuss sensitivity training. Mr. Neff would request that ABID have an opportunity to review the contract for the bus drivers once a new contract is written. The Board discussed several concerns of the transportation system.

Discussion ensued regarding the responses that have been received from the subcommittees, complaints from constituents, and enforcement of current policies.

The next Transportation meeting date will be rescheduled, and Ms. Powell-Phillips will notify the board of the new date.

## C. Education and Awareness

Ms. Espinosa stated that some responses have been received and will be discussed at the June meeting. Ms. Powell-Phillips noted that the Education and Awareness subcommittee is pending response from the Office of Public Communication.

Chair Gordon spoke about an article in the Sun Sentinel regarding a Broward County sponsored program that would prepare individuals for hurricanes and floods. She acknowledged that had this committee known ahead of time, they could have been present to advise people with special needs.

Chair Gordon noted the importance of finding shelters for people with disabilities and shelters that accept pets during emergency situations. She inquired on whether Broward has a contact person who would know about these events ahead of time, so that members could be notified. Ms. Powell-Phillips mentioned that Public Communications may know about this information ahead of time.

Ms. Greenberg shared information on the emergency shelters in Broward County, which includes pet survival and special needs shelter kits. She provided the web address of [broward.org/hurricane](http://broward.org/hurricane).

D. Planning

Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that there were no questions from this subcommittee for this Annual Report.

E. Legislation

Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that there were no questions from this subcommittee for this Annual Report.

F. Employment

Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that the responses to the Employment subcommittee's questions, were attached to the handout.

**7. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS**

(No Board Member items were discussed.)

**8. NON-AGENDA / PUBLIC COMMENT / REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

(None.)

**9. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Greenberg. Ms. Malbranche seconded the motion. With no objection, this meeting was adjourned at 1:56 p.m.