

MINUTES
ADVISORY BOARD FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES
DECEMBER 14, 2023

Members Present: Mona Malbranche
John Neff
Janine Young
Ellyn Drotzer (via CMT)
David Feldman (via CMT)
Roslyn Greenberg (via CMT)
Tracy Stafford (via CMT)

Members Absent: Michelle Bitter-Oakley
Elizabeth Espinoza
Linda Fishkin
Mary Hudson
Michelle Jones

Also Present: Carol L. Powell-Phillips, Professional Standards/Human Rights Section
Karen Pannell, Real Time Reporter

A meeting of the Advisory Board for Individuals with Disabilities (ABID) was held on Thursday, December 14, 2023, at 10:13 a.m., in Room 302 of the Broward County Governmental Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Following the Roll Call by Ms. Powell-Phillips, a quorum was established. In the absence of the committee Chair, John Neff called the meeting to order.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Neff stated that the ABID planning meeting would not require committee reports. Ms. Powell-Phillips provided the timeline of the 2022-2023 Annual Report review. She noted that the report is further along in the process than it has previously been. Mr. Neff requested that the Board prioritize the recommendations and present only one per committee to the Broward County Commission. Much discussion ensued on the timeline of the reports.

Mr. Neff made a motion to change the agenda making Item #5 a Discussion of Process and remove Items #6 & #7. Ms. Malbranche seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. CHECKLIST (Carol Powell-Phillips, Board Coordinator)

Ms. Powell-Phillips spoke on the submission of the 2021 Annual Report, which was considered “outdated” by the administration. She noted that it was revised and submitted in the 2022-2023 Annual Report.

Ms. Powell-Phillips introduced new member David Feldman, who provided a brief professional background of himself. Ms. Malbranche expressed her gratitude to Mr. Feldman for joining this Board. Mr. Feldman acknowledged Gregory Gayle for recommending him for ABID.

Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that the ADA Officer will update the Board in January.

Ms. Powell-Phillips asked the members if the meeting start-time would still work for them. Mr. Feldman stated that there would be a conflict for two meetings. Ms. Malbranche spoke on the quorum needs and inquired on alternating members to be in-person and zoom. Ms. Powell-Phillips recommended that members let her know if they will be attending meetings in-person or via zoom. She stated that all members can attend ABID meetings from 12:30-2 p.m. on the third Thursday of each month with the exception of June, which will be on a Tuesday.

Ms. Powell-Phillips requested listing members and confirm the Chair of each subcommittee. (Ms. Powell-Phillips left the room at 11:09 a.m. and the Nominating Committee convened.)

4. NOMINATING COMMITTEE BREAKOUT SESSION

The Nominating Committee of Ms. Malbranche, Mr. Stafford, and Ms. Young discussed the nominations for the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Second Vice-Chair of this Board. Ms. Young asked if any members were interested in the Chair position. Mr. Neff discussed the role and responsibilities of the Chair. Ms. Young asked Ms. Drotzer if she would be interested in the position.

Mr. Stafford made a motion to nominate Ms. Drotzer as Chair of this Board. Ms. Young seconded the motion. With no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

(Ms. Powell-Phillips returned at 11:16 a.m.) Ms. Drotzer thanked the Board for their confidence in her for this new position.

Ms. Drotzer made a motion to nominate Mr. Stafford as Vice-Chair of this Board. Ms. Young seconded the motion. With no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Malbranche made a motion to nominate Mr. Neff as Second Vice-Chair of this Board. Ms. Young seconded the motion. With no objection, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Neff made a recommendation for the January meeting to reorganize the role and restructure each committee. Much discussion ensued regarding the transformation and future of this Board.

5. COMMITTEE REPORTS- DISCUSSION OF PROCESSES

Mr. Neff spoke on the timeline of the goal of this Board, which has been a recommendation submission to the Commission in October. He stated that ABID has to have the final recommendations, committee reviews, and staff reviews completed and ready to present to the Commission in October.

Mr. Stafford explained that the timing to propose disability related concerns would be ideal since new members of the House and reelected officials would have more time to listen after elections. He encouraged reaching out to these officials. Ms. Drotzer discussed the availability of lobbying tools to search for bills that pertain to people with disabilities and where they are in the process. She stated that a meeting with the Executive Director of the Legislative Delegation would be very informative regarding legislative processes. Mr. Stafford noted that with specific bills, ABID could ask the Broward County Commissioners for their support. Ms. Malbranche recommended looking at bills from 2023 that did not pass to see if there are any of interest to ABID that could be reintroduced.

Ms. Drotzer listed several items for the Legislative subcommittee to focus on:

- identifying a representative from the House and Senate to advocate for ABID issues.
- inviting lobbyists from the County Commission Office to speak with ABID members.
- working with county staff to get information on items they will be supporting and advocating on beginning in November of each year.

Mr. Neff stated that many of ABID's concerns fall under Emergency Management. He discussed several challenges to the process regarding this subcommittee.

Ms. Powell-Phillips noted that in this planning meeting, dates should be set for the subcommittees to meet and for the director of each subcommittee to speak to the ABID members. Mr. Stafford acknowledged the importance of drawing attention to issues people with disabilities have and advocating for them, since the members of this Board are affected or work with people with disabilities.

Ms. Drotzer made a motion to break for 10 minutes. Ms. Malbranche seconded the motion. With no objection, the Board went into recess at 12:02 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 12:17 p.m.

Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that a copy of the bylaws would be distributed to the ABID members for review.

The members spoke on the importance of the Transportation subcommittee to observe the county bus system, TOPS system, traffic, and traffic control signals as they pertain to the disabled community. Ms. Greenberg stated that she would like to continue to participate on the Transportation subcommittee. She noted that recommendations have been submitted and that no responses were given. She and the subcommittee would like to be notified when changes or corrections to those recommendations are made.

Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that the normal response from agencies takes 3-4 weeks once the recommendations have been submitted. She noted that responses can take longer depending on the agency. Much discussion ensued on the rectification process.

Ms. Drotzer acknowledged the new Transportation County Director, Paul Strobis, and retired Director, Chris Walton on their proactive approach and engagement within the TOPS system.

Ms. Drotzer spoke on the importance of following up with the recommendations once the responses have been received. She noted that she would like to map out the processes so that committee members and subcommittee chairs have defined roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Neff recommended that the confirmations of subcommittee chairs, members, descriptions of the subcommittees, and responsibilities be reestablished at the January 18, 2024, meeting. He also reiterated that attendance for that meeting will be critical. The members spoke on the number of vacancies on this Board and the interest Mr. Ibacache may have to return to ABID. A discussion on the

requirements of ABID representation and the allowed number of appointments per Commissioner ensued.

Ms. Drotzer requested information on reinventing the Education and Awareness subcommittee. Mr. Neff spoke on the challenges of receiving information due to HIPAA laws. Ms. Young discussed the importance of educating people and being an advocate for those with mental health and disabilities. Mr. Neff noted that many people with mental health and disabilities don't feel comfortable claiming it for fear of it impacting their ability to gain employment. Mr. Stafford indicated that education is such a broad topic that poses several challenges to this subcommittee. Ms. Young reiterated that internal health issues that cause disabilities, such as PTSD, could be addressed under this subcommittee. Ms. Malbranche stated that the person involved would need to be expressive regarding this issue, otherwise people will not know about the disability making it difficult to provide any education on the issue. Ms. Drotzer stated that once the charging documents are provided at the January meeting, this topic can be readdressed.

Speaking on the Planning subcommittee, Mr. Neff stated that Mr. Ibacache had created a document regarding all county buildings and violations, which was put on hold unless an audit arises, and an investigation is needed. He requested a list of open complaints regarding disability access and violations. Ms. Powell-Phillips will see if this list is available. Mr. Stafford spoke on the collaboration between the Property Appraiser's Office, Value Adjustment Board, and the Planning subcommittee regarding records of updates to homes such as ramps and accessible restrooms for persons with disabilities and how that could help the Board of Realtors. Further discussion regarding home improvements for the disabled community continued.

The ABID members discussed the Employment subcommittee. Ms. Powell-Phillips stated that this subcommittee pertains to constituents from the vulnerable population trying to gain employment with Broward County. She noted the importance of website accessibility and being able to find available jobs through HR. Mr. Neff reiterated the challenges due to HIPAA laws and that it is up to the applicant to claim a disability. Ms. Malbranche noted that full-time employment could infringe upon benefits received by Social Security. The members agreed that this subcommittee does not need to be held at this time.

Ms. Malbranche discussed the issue of elder abuse and fraud that is directed towards the senior community. Ms. Greenberg stated that there are programs for seniors that can alert people to deed fraud. Ms. Young stated that a lot of people do not know about these programs. Ms. Greenberg explained that the Property Appraiser's Office is working to get this information out to the community. She spoke on several other programs that are available to the public, such as the 211

Touchline for seniors who live alone, which includes assistance for violence, childcare, food assistance, financial help, and senior employment. Ms. Powell-Phillips noted that the Human Services Department has a division called the Elderly and Veteran's Services that helps the vulnerable population.

Ms. Drotzer stated that this Board has a lot of work to do. She expressed excitement in reviewing the process, redefining the Board, and clarifying the objectives to have a more effective and impactful Board. Ms. Drotzer spoke on focusing on two to three goals in order to achieve excellence in those areas rather than trying to focus on too many goals at the same time. Much discussion ensued regarding formatting the recommendation process.

Mr. Neff strongly encouraged ABID members to attend these meetings. He discussed the importance of making a quorum. Ms. Powell-Phillips spoke on the submission of the absentee list noting that after three unexcused absences members will be automatically removed from the Board.

6. BOARD MEMBER ITEMS

7. NON-AGENDA/ PUBLIC COMMENT/ REQUEST FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

8. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Feldman. Ms. Malbranche seconded the motion. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 1:26 p.m.