



Commission on Disability

DRAFT Minutes re September 10, 2025, meeting

**North Berkeley Senior Center, Aspen Room
1901 Hearst Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94709**

Preliminary Matters

1. Call to Order by Chair Pugh at 5:03pm
2. Land Acknowledgment recognizing Berkeley as the ancestral, unceded home of the Ohlone People
3. Roll Call by Secretary
Commissioners present: Vice Chair Fischer, Chair Pugh, Commissioner Sun, Commissioner Lewkowicz, Commissioner Mann, and Commissioner Nisen.
Commissioners on Leave of Absence: Commissioner Walsh and Commissioner Paz.
Staff present: Thomas Gregory.
Public members present: Kitt Saginor (of the City's Open Government Commission) and Ruth Rogow.
4. Public Comments

Ruth Rogow commented on the benefits, including those to seniors with disabilities, of a recurring, longstanding, popular no-cost ceramics program that has been housed at South Berkeley Senior Center for years. This programming is at risk of interruption due to a lack of a venue when South Berkeley Senior Center is closed (temporarily, but for a substantial amount of time) for renovations, and Ms. Rogow stressed the importance of finding a new venue and of the City playing a role in that effort.

Kitt Saginaw, a member of the City's Open Government Commission, expressed (a) that commission's support for the CoD-led initiative to ensure the City's website is rendered WCAG-compliant by April 2025 and (b) that commission's availability to support the initiative if/as needed. Ms. Saginaw also commented on the benefits/importance of public meetings featuring an option for members of the public to attend virtually.
5. Approval of draft minutes: July 9, 2025 meeting
"...to approve the July minutes."
Moved by: Commissioner Lewkowicz; seconded by: Commissioner Sun.
Ayes: unanimous.
The motion passes.
6. Approval: Order of Agenda
"...to approve the agenda."

Moved by: Vice Chair Fischer; seconded by: Commissioner Nisen.
Ayes: unanimous.
The motion passes.

Discussion/Action Items

7. CoD-City staff WCAG process

Commissioner Sun, who is a member of CoD's ad hoc committee regarding WCAG compliance, updated the full commission on that committee's ongoing collaboration with City staff. Commissioner Sun mentioned positive steps staff have made (e.g., conducting training sessions, forming a task force) and positive steps staff could and should make (e.g., engage Rolling Orange more heavily re possible improvements, make wider use of HTML formats). Commissioner Sun and fellow committee member, Vice Chair Fischer, expressed doubts that WCAG compliance will be timely achieved unless the City invests more human resources to the effort, which is not something the City has committed to doing. The committee feels that .5FTE of additional staff and .25FTE of existing staff should be directed toward this effort to achieve WCAG compliance. There was skepticism among commissioners that the City will achieve WCAG compliance by April of 2026, which is the objective of both CoD and staff.

8. CoD-City staff PROWAG process

Vice Chair Rena informed commissioners that the City Manager intends to report to Council regarding this topic some time this October. The Vice Chair also stressed that major construction projects should be assessed for ADA compliance prior to project implementation rather than after implementation has begun.

9. Recommendations: City meeting accessibility and meeting accessibility statement

There was discussion among commissioners regarding whether it was better to combine or separate CoD's advocacy regarding the following two issues: (a) adequately informing the public that ADA modifications are available upon request re all public meetings and events and (b) rendering public events and meetings more accessible by offering access-enhancing features (such as captioning) at such meetings and events as standard operating procedure.

10. Work Plan Updates and Developments

a. Review Work Plan draft

Commissioners discussed draft Work Plan and the need to fill several unfilled roles regarding monitoring/liasing with other relevant City bodies. Commissioner Lewkowicz expressed interest in serving as CoD's monitor/liaison vis a vis the City's, Transportation & Infrastructure Commission.

Vice Chair Fischer discussed the usefulness of collaborating with Council Members' offices when developing recommendations for Council.

b. Schedule of presentations to advance Work Plan

No upcoming presentations are currently scheduled. There is potential for an upcoming presentation from San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (regarding transpo-related subject matter of interest and relevance to Berkeleyans).

Commissioner Announcements

11. As needed

A commissioner mentioned that a local advocate with Universal Design expertise was contemplating applying to join CoD.

Staff Updates

12. Log of Access Complaints

Vice Chair Fischer questioned the soundness of the outcome of the ADA Grievance that was dated 8/6/25. The Vice Chair pointed out that the City was responsible for the ADA violations of a nonprofit entity that uses City-issued funding for general operating costs even if the entity in question receives no City funds to support specific programming and even if the entity in question is not housed in a City facility.

13. Email and voicemail sent to the Commission

Adjournment at 7:11pm

Minutes approved by COD vote on: _____

Thomas Gregory, Secretary to Commission