



City of Oakland
***** Special Meeting *****

Mayor's Commission on Persons with Disabilities (MCPD)
Monday, January 27, 2025 5:30-7:30 p.m.
Hearing Room 1, First Floor
One Frank H. Ogawa Plaza (City Hall), Oakland, CA 94612

Minutes

Commissioners: Anwar Baroudi (Chair), Benjamin Bartu (Vice Chair), Jia Wilson, Fatimah Aure, Linda St. Julian, Thomas Cloyd, James Carter, Raven Foote, Brittaney Creswell, Kaitlin Roh

Commission staff: Anh Nguyen-ADA Programs Division Manager, Mark Romoser-ADA Programs Division Program Analyst I

Presenters: Jasmine Pomar, facilitator

Other attendees: Sheela Gunn, Nadia Morales-Saleh, N'sombi Hasan

Attendees on Zoom: James Carter

Mark Romoser begins the meeting with a reminder of rules for in-person meetings:

- No food or open drink allowed in Hearing Room 1 to maintain a clean and professional environment.
- Drinks must be in a closed container to prevent any spills or accidents.
- When commissioners speak- please press the top red button that says "mic" and when you are finished, please press the button again.
- To ensure clarity and transparency, when commissioners speak, please state your name before speaking.
- When a member of the audience is speaking or commenting- please first state your name and any affiliations you may have.
- Restrooms are located outside Hearing Room 1, near the elevators.

Exhibit B

Chair Baroudi called the meeting to order at 5:41.

Roll Call

- At roll call, quorum was not established with five of ten commissioners present.

Commissioners	Present (x)
Anwar Baroudi (Chair)	X
Benjamin Bartu (Vice Chair)	X
Jia Wilson	X
Linda St. Julian	Absent (excused)
Fatimah Aure	Absent
Thomas Cloyd	Absent (excused)
James Carter	Absent (excused)
Raven Foote	X
Brittaney Creswell	Absent
Kaitlin Roh	X

Open Forum:

- Sheela Gunn mentioned that the sidewalks along 14th Street have been ripped up by the ongoing construction project, rendering them unsafe. They added that CIL and WID's report on emergency preparedness for people with disabilities had been released, and that CIL is hosting a one-on-one emergency preparedness session for people who are blind or have low vision on February 13.

Approval Of Minutes

- Without quorum, the minutes could not be approved.

Commissioner's Announcements

- Chair Baroudi noted that the Alameda County Senior Services Coalition has invited MCPD to join. This would entail a representative from MCPD attending the coalition's meetings, which are held on the last Thursday of each month at 1 PM.

Exhibit B

Strategic Plan Survey

- Co-Vice Chair Bartu gave his presentation.
- Chair Baroudi asked if the 75 percent of respondents who used automobiles as a mode of transportation were drivers or passengers. Comm. Roh replied that the figure represented people riding in a vehicle.
- Sheela Gunn noted that the survey provided a lot of data to sort through. They added that CIL is starting an emergency preparedness workshop in February, and hopes people take advantage of that. They asked if people were aware of the Oakland Fire Department's Personal Emergency Preparedness (PEP) program, and pointed out that the survey results indicated that people aren't aware of the resources available. Co-Vice Chair Bartu stated that MCPD will be sharing more information in the future.
- Chair Baroudi stated that the survey was tremendously helpful and thanked Comm. Roh for her effort. He noted that the ratio of homeowners to renters was the opposite of the ratio in Oakland as a whole. Comm. Roh agreed, and pointed out that affordability was rated as a top concern by both homeowners and renters.

Strategic Plan 2025

- Jasmine Pomar asked the commissioners what they thought was special about MCPD.
- Chair Baroudi mentioned that disability and advocacy encompasses the whole range of lived experience, and that no one person can have enough of it. He added that having a group that can work together is hard to find elsewhere. He also appreciates the podium that we have as commissioners to reach city officials.
- Co-Vice Chair Bartu clarified that MCPD is not homogeneous, but has different people tackling different issues.
- Comm. Roh added that lived experience includes both personal and professional experience.
- Comm. Foote mentioned the different connections to the community that various commissioners have.
- Comm. Wilson noted that being able to have each other as a team helps get stuff done.
- Sheela Gunn said that MCPD's biggest asset now is the commissioners themselves. They have seen ebbs and flows, and nearly a dry creek bed, in MCPD over the years, but believes we're close to running water now, since everyone has thoughts and ideas.

Exhibit B

- Ms. Pomar noted that MCPD is well-positioned within the city, and that OakDOT takes its recommendations seriously.
- Ms. Pomar resumed her presentation.
- Chair Baroudi pointed out that a lot of things needed require a robust budget, which Oakland does not have at present. He added that poor sidewalk condition presents a liability risk. He noted that BPAC's upcoming pedestrian plan would be a good place to advocate. Standards for benches, bus shelters, etc. No contract for bus shelters. Working with DOT on faster traffic calming projects. More communication.
- Comm. Wilson mentioned that she has a passion for disseminating information in an accessible format. She also pointed out the fragmentation of services. She gave an example of an actionable step: calling for programs to share information.
- Comm. Foote noted that free legal services available include a self-help center for those who represent themselves in court, and Legal Assistance for Seniors.
- Ms. Pomar asked how the resource guide would be distributed.
- Co-Vice Chair Bartu mentioned that a lot of people know what they want but don't know how to access it. He called for strengthening community centers because that's where people go to get information.
- Chair Baroudi noted that there is a lot of unused space on things like bus shelters that we could use to spread information.
- Comm. Roh called for bringing the Department of Human Services into the discussion. She noted that many people without disabilities also qualify for services. She then asked how Human Services prioritizes people with disabilities on its waitlists.
- Comm. Wilson compared the process to universal design, which is meant to work for both people with and without disabilities.
- Sheela Gunn mentioned Eden information & referral, which is a county resource. They pointed out that CIL does a lot of service navigation. They described their divorce as being completely inaccessible; for one thing, the self-help books used print forms. They asked how a blind person would get emergency preparedness or travel training. They added that ads on bus shelters are not accessible either, and that many older adults don't have computers. They urged us to metaphorically throw spaghetti at the wall and see what sticks. They noted that LAS also does health care referral for Medicare and those dually eligible for Medicare and Medi-Cal.
- Ms. Pomar asked about the practicality of MCPD purchasing advertising. Sheela Gunn pointed out that public service announcements are free. Ms. Pomar then asked about other avenues for distributing information.
- Comm. Wilson pointed out that it's not just people with disabilities who have trouble finding information.

Exhibit B

- Chair Baroudi pointed out that OakDOT has documents detailing design standards for things like benches and bus shelters.
- Comm. Wilson pointed out that design standards should be better than what already exists in the built environment. She also mentioned that a lot of them deal with one specific disability.
- Chair Baroudi noted that BPAC's pedestrian plan is being updated.
- Ms. Pomar noted that there is an active ADA lawsuit against the city.
- Chair Baroudi pointed out that the city pays a lot of money to settle lawsuits, and advocated for a slice of the general fund being devoted to access improvements.
- Ms. Pomar noted that transportation and service navigation had been fleshed out.
- Chair Baroudi said that Oakland Tenants Union could help with housing advocacy, and that the impact of the elevator maintenance ordinance needed to be studied further. He added that there is a lack of accessible rent-controlled apartments, that we will find the gaps in the system as we receive more information, and that housing is someplace where MCPD should be investing its time.
- Comm. Wilson emphasized the importance of emergency planning in the wake of the Los Angeles fires. She noted the lack of access in evacuations, and that landlords there were price-gouging on rent.
- Comm. Roh noted that neither emergency planning nor policing and safety came up either in the survey or in last month's discussion. She mentioned mental health crises and civil liberties as important topics, especially with Prop 1 funding rolling out soon. Comm. Bartu added that CARE courts would also be opening soon.
- Ms. Pomar then asked the commissioners what other issues are important to them and their communities right now. After a pause, she read some answers from Mentimeter. These included more reliable paratransit, a policy for shared mobility devices, housing affordability and accessibility. no vacancies in ADA Programs Division, and well-funded third spaces.
- Sheela Gunn mentioned that during an emergency preparedness meeting with Sadie Martinez from Colorado, they heard that the president is telling people to take accessibility language out of emergency plans. They added that people are afraid to plan for emergencies, and that access and functional needs includes more than disability.
- Ms. Pomar asked if the commissioners liked the goals presented.
- Chair Baroudi noted that only half the commissioners were present, and added that MCPD doesn't have anyone who's expert in policing and safety.
- Ms. Pomar mentioned that she had studied MCPD's strategic plans for previous years.

Exhibit B

Staff Announcements

- Mark Romoser stated that there were no announcements this month.

Co-Vice Chair Bartu made a motion to adjourn. Comm. Roh seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:24.