



Agenda
Village of Arlington Heights
Commission for Citizens with Disabilities
Virtual Meeting

June 8, 2021
7:00 PM

I. CALL TO ORDER

- A. **In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission for Citizens with Disabilities meeting is being held virtually, which permits the public to fully participate via their computers or using their phones.**

**To participate in the virtual meeting, please follow these instructions: <https://bit.ly/3uKyWYJ>
Individuals who wish to comment or ask a question on an item on the Agenda may either participate virtually or send an email to the Village at drobb@vah.com. Please limit emails to 200 words or less. To be shared at the meeting, the email must be received by 3:00 p.m. on June 8, 2021.**

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- A. Minutes from March 9, 2021

IV. REPORTS

V. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Progress Center Presentation

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Disability Employment Award
- B. Connections Newsletter
- C. Knights of Columbus Fund Raiser
- D. Brick Sidewalks

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Municipal Code requires a Statement of Economic Interest filing from each Board/Commission member each May 1st. The following have not fulfilled this requirement: Goldberg, Mullinax.

VIIIADJOURNMENT

Persons with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services, such as an American Sign Language interpreter or written materials in accessible formats, should contact David Robb, Disability Services Coordinator, at 33 S. Arlington Heights Road, Arlington Heights, Illinois 60005, (847)368-5793 (Voice), (847)368-5980 (Fax) or drobb@vah.com.



**Commission for Citizens with Disabilities
6/8/2021**

Item: Minutes from March 9, 2021

Department: Health and Human Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Type
Minutes from March 9, 2021	Minutes

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
OF THE ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
COMMISSION FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES**

Draft March 9, 2021

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Arlington Heights Commission for Citizens with Disabilities was called to order by Chair Michele Ramsey at 6:03 p.m. online via Zoom.

II. ROLL CALL

Present:

Michele Ramsey, Chair

Roxanne Calibraro, Seth Goldberg, David McCallum, Brian Harrison, Jacky McCarty, Sheryl Letwat, Eva Mullinax, and Peg McMahon.

Absent:

Also Present:

David Robb, Board Liaison - Disability Services Coordinator

Stacy Shein-Stapleton, ASL Interpreter

Patti Shore Kaden, ASL Interpreter

Presenters:

Gary Arnold, Program Director Progress Center, Jennifer Thomas, Loree Woodley, Carol Nemescek, and Jessica Wood.

Guests:

Keith Morens, and Melissa Cayer

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

- A. A motion was made by Commissioner Goldberg to approve the September 16, 2020 minutes as written, seconded by Commissioner McCallum. Motion passed by unanimous consent.**

IV. REPORTS

V. OLD BUSINESS

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. PROGRESS CENTER PRESENTATION

Chair Ramsey invited Coordinator Robb to introduce Gary Arnold, Program Director, Progress Center for Independent Living. Coordinator Robb welcomed Mr. Arnold and the panel of speakers and thanked them for attending the meeting. He asked Gary to introduce the panel. Gary began by introducing himself and

explaining that Progress Center is one of 22 Centers for Independent Living (CIL) in Illinois, with more than 400 Centers nationwide. Each CIL serves a specific geographic area. Progress Center serves all of suburban Cook county. Centers are mandated to have a majority, over 50 percent, of both their governing members and staff, be comprised of people with disabilities. At Progress Center 90 percent of full and part time staff (18 of 20) are people with disabilities. The idea behind this concept is to ensure people with disabilities are the ones in charge of decisions affecting their lives. Gary mentioned that the evening's presentation was not about Progress Center, but wanted to explain the concept of CILs. He then invited panelists to introduce themselves.

Panelist Carrol Nemescek greeted everyone at the meeting and introduced herself. She mentioned that she has worked as a coordinator of several Deaf Programs.

Panelist Jessica Wood introduced herself and mentioned that she likes to go outside and ride her wheelchair up and down the block.

Panelist Loree Woodley introduced herself and reported that she is a member of Progress Center and is currently serving on the Board of Directors of Progress Center for Independent Living.

Panelist Jennifer Thomas introduced herself and mentioned that she is a resident of Arlington Heights and that she had the pleasure of working at both Progress Center for Independent Living and Access Living of Chicago. She spent a little bit of time working in the "Medicaid world" and is currently at the Regional Transportation Authority in the Mobility Services Department.

Gary then gave a brief outline of the presentation and began a Power Point Presentation. He asked people to think about everyday activities that we do to stay happy and healthy. He gave some examples like eating, bathing, going to work or school, and shopping online or at the store.

He then said that the needs of people with disabilities are often referred to as "Special Needs" when in fact the needs of people with disabilities are the same as nondisabled people. People without disabilities are provided supports to access goods and services and people with disabilities have the same rights to the supports needed to access goods and services.

But too often the support needs of people with disabilities are not met because their support needs are thought of as "special needs." Special needs are not treated the same way as civil rights. Special needs are often siloed or thought of after the fact. As an example; Amtrak was given 20 years to make their train stations accessible and after 20 years there are still a huge number that are inaccessible. The U.S. Department of Justice filed a lawsuit against Amtrak. As part of the settlement Amtrak was given another 10 years to make just a percentage of their stations accessible.

Gary then proceeded to ask each panelist a series of four questions and gave each about five minutes to answer the questions. The questions included:

1. Please share one experience either as an adult or as a young person you have faced because of attitudes or barriers related to disabilities?
2. What do you think are the most important issues facing people with disabilities?
3. What gives you hope for the disability community?
4. Name one thing you want people here tonight to know about disability?

Panelist Carol Nemescek presented first. Carol is Deaf and signed her responses to the questions using American Sign Language (ASL). One of the ASL Interpreter's voiced Carol's greeting. Carol explained that she works with many Deaf and Deaf-blind consumers for many, many, years and has seen so many barriers. It's been a battle for clear communication. People in the Deaf community want equity per their access to communications through interpreters and captioning. As an advocate she accompanies her Deaf consumers to various places and it is especially a problem at hospitals who imply that she can be their interpreter. Then she must explain that she cannot interpret as she is Deaf as well. So, it is a problem when places agree to provide an interpreter and then don't. It's important for people to learn how to advocate for themselves to request interpreter services when needed. English is most people's second language so written messages doesn't often provide effective communication. Many places continue to push back and not supply interpreters thinking that their written messages and other means are sufficient when they are not.

People in the Deaf community want to be labeled "Deaf and hard of hearing" and not "disabled." Their issue is communication. Calling to schedule an appointment is not as simple for the Deaf and Hard of hearing. Every person is unique and has their own specific communication needs. People will approach her assuming automatically without asking that she can read lips and that an interpreter is not needed. That is not the case and English is the second language. It's frustrating. People want you to communicate on their level without any consideration to communicate on the Deaf or hard of hearing person's level.

Her hope for the Deaf community would be more working together, more interaction, more understanding. Team work. Some people know very little. Education that people would take classes to learn about the Deaf community. And not just the "disability community." Community supports to the Deaf community.

What I want people to know is that there is a Deaf community and to have respect for the Deaf community.

Panelist Jessica Wood presented next. She reported that she worked at The Pie Shop and needed a job coach. The Pie Shop is a place that hires people with disabilities in Oak Park. She did labeling and greeted customers. Her coworkers in the kitchen had job coaches to help them with cooking the pies. Her job coach was good for her as the job coach helped her to stay focused. Many buildings are not accessible. People have a lack of exposure to people with disabilities. Her hope for the disability community is that society would make accommodations for people with disabilities. She wants people to know that people with disabilities advocate for themselves and deserve respect. She prefers the term "differently abled" instead of "special needs."

Panelist Jennifer Thomas presented next. She mentioned that as an adult and as a person with a disability you can face many, many things. Access to transportation. In college she needed a personal assistant to help her with note taking and typing. Now, working remotely transportation is important because she doesn't drive. It is always a worry living in Arlington Heights because if a Pace bus route gets cut that eliminates her Paratransit rides. In the winter having worked downtown Chicago pre COVID when it snowed she worried that there would be clear pathways for her wheelchair and whether the wheelchair lift would be deployable should there not be adequate snow removal on the train platform. In Arlington Heights as a resident of the Village there needs to be more discussion around transportation. The most important issue facing people with disabilities is healthcare. As a person with underlying health conditions because she is not 65 she can't get a COVID shot yet. The thing that gives her hope is that coming from the "Independent Living Philosophy" that young people are being taught that we have a voice. That they are a voting block and can affect change. There has been a very strong push to remove the term "Special" and make it person first language, i.e., "persons with disabilities" or however the person self identifies in another protected class. The National Council for Persons with Disabilities is led by a person with disabilities. She has some hope that our local government and national governments aren't just pushing people with disabilities aside. The one take away she wants people to remember is that etiquette is important. Understanding not to talk around a person but to talk with a person. Disability has no bounds, anyone could join the disability community at any time. Perhaps people have a family member or friend. Also, that Progress Center is the Center that serves the Arlington Heights area.

Panelist Loree Woodley presented last. Loree greeted the audience. She reported that her experience and concerns of facing barriers was when she was first told by her ophthalmologist that she was legally blind and that she could now apply for disability. He didn't tell her what else she could do or supply her any resources for therapists or support groups. He didn't supply her something to encourage her to go to the next steps of living her life, as life goes on after disability. As a result, she stayed at home doing very little for about 6-months feeling blue. One of the last times she saw her ophthalmologist he asked if he could share her number with others newly blind. She said of course and though it should have been happening all along versus staring after decades of her seeing him.

The biggest issue facing the disability community is communication. Many people may not have smart phones or be tech savvy to understand how to sign up to get the COVID 19 vaccine. Because a lot of information is now in an electronic format people with disabilities without the electronic means to receive information and updates are missing out on important information and knowledge needed to better their lives. The other concern is healthcare in Illinois for people with low-income how the health system in Illinois is structured to help people with less means financially.

The thing that gives her hope is this platform on Zoom with the group discussing these issues. Also, the outreach to young people making transitions to sit at the same table with them mentoring them.

The thing I want people to know from tonight is the term "Access" as a blind visually impaired person institutions like the Herald Washington Library says it is ADA Accessible but they are referring to a table height and bathroom stalls they are not talking

about people. The ADA is about people, not just numbers of accessible elements within a facility.

Gary Arnold then proceeded on with his Power Point Presentation and highlighted etiquette examples given him by a host of people with disabilities. Some examples included” “Don’t talk to my care giver talk to me,” and “Don’t touch my wheelchair.” Language is always evolving don’t be afraid to ask. He prefers referring to himself as a person of short stature, instead of saying he is a dwarf.

Several commissioners commented on how informative the presentation was and thanked the presenters. Commissioner Goldberg suggested having high school students do a simulated disability for a week. That it would help to change some people without disabilities perceptions with disabilities. Commissioner Calibraro reported that Pam Stocking used that same analogy when she had the Village Engineers tour Village facilities in wheelchairs. It rained the day of the scheduled tour and the engineers wanted to call it off. Pam stood her ground and said people with disabilities still go out in the rain. The engineers got to experience first hand the difficulty of using wheelchairs to get through inaccessible doorways with inoperable an automatic door button. Commission McMahon commented that way back while she was in school as a physical therapist she had to simulate various disabilities but it is only an inkling of what people with disabilities live through. It opened a sensitivity for her during the experience, it was good. Commissioner Calibraro said that Guide Dog trainers are sighted but must train with their dogs under blindfold. But it is temporary. At the end of the day the trainer goes home and takes off the blindfold. It’s a temporary simulation compared to actually being blind and living it 24/7. Coordinator Robb mentioned that he had worked at Progress Center. In their disability sensitivity training a nondisabled person was paired with an individual with disabilities and accompanied them throughout their day to see firsthand the things a person with disabilities encounters throughout their day. At the end of the day all the paired participants met at a banquet hall to report back on their experiences throughout the day.

Commissioner Goldberg asked the panelists “how long have the four been part of the Progress Center? And how has it changed your life? **Panelist Loree Woodley** said she came to Progress Center about 10 years ago at the time she didn’t know what Progress Center was all about and she certainly didn’t have a voice as a person with a disability. Director Horacio said of her “that she was a sleeping giant that woke up.” She came to Progress Center as a sleeper and found her voice because of being there. **Panelist Jennifer Thomas** reported working at Progress Center Right out of college as a Home Services Coordinator. She worked there for about 3½ years. She then went onto work at Access Living in Chicago as the Personal Care Coordinator for 10 years. She came to realize that she belonged to a larger community of people with disabilities and it is where she developed her voice to speak out and advocate for herself and others with disabilities. She mentioned that the peer support program helps people with disabilities to understand that they have a voice and can advocate for themselves. She suggested Progress center is a great place to refer individuals with disabilities to get the peer support and learn about their rights as a person with disabilities. **Panelist Jessica Wood** stated that there is not enough information available about people with cerebral palsy. She thanked the group and Gary Arnold for the opportunity. **Panelist Carol Nemescek** recalled traveling back and forth between Washington D.C. and Chicago before permanently moving to Chicago The biggest miscommunication happened when she thought the flight seemed shorter

than usual and something seemed off as she was disembarking the plane. When she walked off the gangway there was a big sign that read “Welcome to Columbus Ohio.” She ended up getting into a big argument with the flight personnel. There had been an announcement that the flight had been changed but because she was Deaf she didn’t hear it and no one told her and they didn’t catch it when she boarded the plane. She laughs about it now but at the time it was a big mix up due to a lack of access to communication.

Coordinator Robb thanked Gary Arnold for arranging the presentation and panelists and he thanked the panelists for their participation. Gary Arnold thanked Commissioners and Coordinator Robb for hosting their presentation and offered to partner again with the Village to do more disability sensitivity training.

Commissioners then commented on how good and informative the presentation was. Commissioner Calibraro excused herself due to another engagement and Commissioner McMahon apologized for not joining the Zoom meeting until 6:55 p.m. when she stopped to look at the agenda and realized the meeting started at 6:00 p.m. Not the standard starting time.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Commissioner McCallum commented on the problem of snow removal in the downtown by businesses. He reported that businesses have not removed the snow plowed and piled high along the curb line and it was impossible for his wife to climb over the piles. He asked if there are any policies for businesses requiring them to remove snow. Commissioner Harrison said that it is up to the business to remove the snow. Commissioner McCallum said that they haven’t removed the snow and if parked on the street one must walk down to the corner to get onto the sidewalk.

Coordinator Robb reported that there had been a lot of citizen complaints with all the snowfall of late and that there is no good answer to address the problem. The Americans with Disabilities Act requires businesses to maintain their accessible features including clearing snow from sidewalks. He also reported that in 2005 the Commission studied snow removal policies in other like-sized communities in the northern suburbs. As a result of their study Village administration advised the commission to promote community awareness for people to clear their sidewalks for their neighbors including people with disabilities. A video was produced that is still aired during winter months asking people to shovel their sidewalks and clear corners to help out their neighbors. The segment is aired on the cable access channel each year and perhaps it is time now to update the video and include downtown scene. That could be a new commission project. It would be best to have actually snow on the ground for the filming of the video but we could plan to do it next winter.

- B. Commissioner Goldberg thanked everyone who had reached out to him and his family with sympathy and condolences in the passing away of his Mother Marla Goldberg.

- C. Commissioner McCallum commented about the panelist with Cerebral Palsy (CP) as he was born with CP. He would like to reach out to others with CP and be a help to them if he can.
- D. A discussion ensued about when to meet and at what time. Commissioner voiced that for now meeting ever other month would be preferred until there is more business for the commission to engage in. The Commission will meet again in May with the time of the meeting to be determined per a poll/survey of Commissioners. Coordinator Robb will survey the group.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Commissioner McCarty, seconded by Commissioner Goldberg. Motion passed by unanimous consent. The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 p.m.



**Commission for Citizens with Disabilities
6/8/2021**

Item: Statement of Economic Interest

Department: Village Clerk

ATTACHMENTS:

Description

Form

Type

Exhibits

VILLAGE OF ARLINGTON HEIGHTS
STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC DISCLOSURE

NAME (Last First Initial)	APPOINTMENT DATE
POSITION TITLE	

This form is required pursuant to Chapter 1, Section 1-602 of the Arlington Heights Municipal Code. It is to be filed with the Village Clerk on or before May 1 of each calendar year. This requirement is separate from any form that may be required by any other governmental entity.

Disclosure of Ownership of Real Estate

Do you or your spouse or children have any interest in real property located within the corporate limits of the Village of Arlington Heights or in the unincorporated area within one-half miles of the corporate limits of the Village of Arlington Heights? (The ownership of a beneficial interest in real estate held in trust or real property held by a corporation in which the person filing owns more than five percent of the outstanding stock shall be listed. The property on which the person resides is exempt from the provisions of this section.) Please check one: YES_____ NO_____. If the answer is yes, state the following:

Commonly Known Address of Real Property	Nature of Interest in such Real Property (Owner, Joint Owner, Tenant, Beneficiary, Trustee, etc.)	Permanent Real Estate Tax Identification Number

Disclosure of Loans

Have you or your spouse been released from an indebtedness exceeding in its principal amount \$100 within the year, without paying the total balance due on such indebtedness or giving adequate consideration? Please check one: YES_____ NO_____. If the answer is yes, state the following:

Name of Creditor	Nature & Amount of Indebtedness Released	Description of Circumstance of Release

Disclosure of Ownership of Business Interests Conducting Business with the Village

Do you or your spouse or children have a direct or indirect ownership interest in any business, firm or corporation which has entered into contract with the Village or received any remuneration from the Village during the past year in which the interest held exceeds 1%? Please check one: YES_____ NO_____. If the answer is yes, state the following:

Name of Business Entity	Nature of Your Relationship to Business Entity	Extent of Ownership of Business Entity

If you or your spouse or your employer has had any dealings with any Village departments regarding licenses, reviews, or approvals necessary for conducting business in the Village, a statement to that effect shall be included with this filing.

Disclosure of Other Employment

List the names of all corporations, companies, firms or other business enterprises, partnerships, nonprofit organizations and educational or other institutions with which you are connected as an employee, officer, owner, director, member, trustee, partner, adviser or consultant. In the case of persons employed as attorneys, insurance agents or brokers, real estate brokers, or salespersons, you need include only the firm or professional corporation or other entity by whom the person is employed, and clients of such persons or employers of said persons who do business with the Village of Arlington Heights.

Name & Address & Kind of Organization	Position in Organization	Work Hours	Nature of Service Rendered

I declare that this Statement of Economic Disclosure (including any accompanying statement) has been examined by me and to the best of my knowledge and belief is a true, correct and complete statement of my economic interests as required by Chapter I, Article VII of the Municipal Code of the Village of Arlington Heights. I understand that the penalty for willfully filing a false or incomplete statement or violating the provisions of Chapter I, Article VII of the Municipal Code of the Village of Arlington Heights is a fine not to exceed \$750 for each such offense.

Signature of person making the statement Date

Please return to the Village Clerk no later than May 1.