

ACCESS WILMINGTON
THE MAYOR'S COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
JANUARY 18, 2024
MINUTES

Present: Ken Rolph (Chair); Catherine Coin (Vice-Chair); Earl Tate (Committee Members); Tim Lucas, Phil Birk, (Department of Land Use and Planning).

Guest Speaker: Joann Kingsley, Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.

The meeting was convened at 9:38 a.m. Chair Ken Rolph called the meeting to order. He initiated a roll call of the Committee Members. Catherine Coin read the minutes from the November meeting. Ken then requested a motion for approval of the minutes of the December 13, 2023, Access Wilmington meeting. On a motion by Mr. Tate, and seconded by Ms. Coin, the minutes were approved as read.

The meeting began with a brief discussion, and then moved quickly to a presentation by the guest speaker, Joann Kingsley, from the Community Legal Aid Society. Ms. Kingsley led a comprehensive discussion about voting rights and accessibility for Delaware voters with disabilities. Her presentation included a very detailed PowerPoint presentation, which explained the mission and role of the Community Legal Aid Society, Inc., as well as the related Disabilities Law Program.

(The link to the PowerPoint was included in the email containing the meeting minutes.)

Detailed information about voter accessibility, which is very similar to Ms. Kingsley's PowerPoint presentation, can also be found here.

<https://www.aclu-de.org/en/news/accessibility>

During the presentation, Ms. Kingsley took time to answer questions from the committee. While the presentation described the efforts of polling places to reduce barriers to participation in elections, it was clear that more work still needs to be done. Mr. Rolph asked, "Do poll workers know what to do with someone who is blind?" and Ms. Coin asked, "Do polling places with access issues know they are out of compliance?" And there were several questions about the training that poll workers received on the topic of accessibility. Unfortunately, poll workers are not well trained, and are not always familiar with the accommodations needed for people with disabilities.

Ms. Kingsley reminded everyone that in this presidential election year, the presidential primary will take place on Tuesday, April 2, 2024. Finally, she encouraged everyone to be familiar with the federally mandated polling place accessibility laws (many of which are explained in the PowerPoint presentation), and to call (866) 687-8683 if they have an issues with election accessibility. Ms. Kingsley call also be reached directly by calling (302) 856-2027.

The meeting came to an end with a final discussion of the next guest speakers, who would be from DART.

Mr. Tate made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Ms. Coin at 10:55 am.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 15, 2024.