

Cape Fear Disability Commission General Meeting Minutes

February 21, 2018

Members Present:

John Edge (CFDC), Jonathan Batts (City of Wilmington), Vanessa Lacer (Wave Transit), Hayley Sink (ACCESS of Wilmington), David Morrison (DF Morrison Consulting), Ann Morrison (Parent), Jennifer Bell (EasterSeals UCP), Stacie Curley (EasterSeals UCP), Michael Friant (Motivational Speaker), John Hondros (Port City Daredevils) Yasin Holland (Rape Crisis Center – Coastal Horizons), Ellis Pender (NHC Veteran Services), Billy Eno (disAbility Resource Center), Dustin Robinson (Town of Kure Beach), Katherine Baugess (Town of Kure Beach), David Todd (UNCW),

Excused: David Schultz (DSDHH-WRC)

I. Call to Order

- John Edge called the meeting to order at 10:32 AM
- General Announcements – John Edge:
 - Anyone wishing to speak during the meeting please raise your hand and provide name and organization for the benefit of all members and the sign language interpreters.

II. Approval of November 2017 Minutes

- No amendments. Motion for approval made by Vanessa Lacer, seconded by David Todd.

III. Motion to Amend Bylaws

- Motion to amend bylaws to allow voting membership following attendance at two (2) meetings. Currently attendance is required at three (3) meetings.
- John Edge opened for discussion. No discussion. Motion for approval made by David Todd, seconded by Vanessa Lacer.
- Executive Committee Meetings do count toward attendance requirements, as well as General Meetings.

IV. Reports

- RP1: City of Wilmington Report – Jonathan Batts
 - Inland Greens Golf Course Update: More work to begin in March on the 9-hole, Par 3 golf course. Scheduled to open mid-May.

- There will also be a playground, picnic shelter, and bike racks – The course will connect with the Cross-City Trail.
- RP2: Wave Transportation Report – Vanessa Lacer
 - Reminder that bus and DART passes are available to attend CFDC meetings. Contact Vanessa for a pass or get one from her at the meetings.
 - Wave Transit is seeking feedback for their Short Range Transit Plan. An online survey is available through March 9th at <https://www.wavetransit.com/short-range-transit-plan/>. Feedback may also be given via email to wavetransit@wavetransit.com.
 - Get the Wave Transit App! The Wave Transit App is available for iPhone and Android devices. Search Wave Transit on the App Store or Google Play and download for free. Use the App to Locate Your Bus Route, Find Your Nearest Stop, Plan Your Trip, and Stay Informed and Connected.
 - Improvements are coming to Monkey Junction stop – The stop will be full accessible by the end of the calendar year.
- RP3: Membership – Hayley Sink
 - Intended to be a time to recognize new members and CFDC members who have received voting rights after attending two (2) meetings.
 - All members introduce themselves, their affiliation, and if new, how they heard about CFDC.

V. Old Business

- CFDC Website is updated through the City of Wilmington
 - Visit the website at <https://www.wilmingtonnc.gov/departments/community-services/cape-fear-disability-commission>.

VI. New Business

- Upcoming Meeting Panels:
 - May – Transportation
 - August – Accessibility, Accommodation, and Advocacy
 - November – Open for Nominations
- Nominations for November Meeting Panel
 - Stacie Curley recommended: Getting Disability and Medicaid – What to Do!

- Michael Friant recommended: Navigating the Disability System in General

Discussion:

- John Hondros mentioned: Parks and Recreation background, as well as interest in self-advocacy.
- John Edge asks for everyone to bring ideas to the May meeting too.

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER PANEL: PARKS AND RECREATION

- **Mr. Eric Jelinski, Carolina Beach Parks and Recreation Director**

Contact: eric.jelinski@carolinabeach.org | 910.458.7416

- 5 years as Carolina Beach Parks and Recreation Director

Beach Wheelchair Program:

- Has grown tremendously with the help of the Pleasure Island community and the thought that everyone owns the beach – How do we get everyone there!
- Island Women raised \$25,000 to have accessible beach wheelchairs donated to CB Parks and Recreation department. Town is now able to replace chairs as needed. An additional \$10,000 was raised by the Island Women, and now CB has fold-up chairs that can easily be put in the trunk of a vehicle.
- Process: Call Carolina Beach Recreation Center, come by and staff will help load the beach wheelchair in your vehicle. If staffing allows, they can also transport wheelchairs to the beach.
- Fleet of 10 Beach Wheelchairs – Booking up now for July and August!

Beach ACCESS Decking:

- Beach is a way of life and the community goal is to make CB the most accessible beach in the southeast!
- The Boardwalk is completely ADA compliant and accessible. Access Decking was demoed for 10 days, during Life Rolls On event, and was awesome! No sweeping was needed and it was well used.
- Coming Memorial Day to Labor Day 2018! A 'U' will be made from the access point, down to the beach, and up to the Boardwalk. CB and Ocean Cure are making this possible through collaboration and community drive!

- **Superintendent Chris Helms, Carolina Beach State Park**

Contact: j.chris.helms@ncparks.gov | 910.458.8206

- Carolina Beach State Park is over 700 acres! Almost 50 years old – Opened in 1969
- Part of NC State Parks System
- Growing in attendance: Individuals looking for green space, attendance continually rising. Visitation rose by 21% in 2017 alone!

Carolina Beach State Park Facilities:

- Campground: 83 campsites with camper cabins, tents, full-service RV sites. Cabins and RVs had improvements in 2016.
- Reservations through Reserve America.
- Fully forested, state park camping
- Accessible Sites:
 - Visitors Center has tactile exhibit and is fully accessible!
 - Marina Facility has 54 slips (month to a year lease), transient slips, also for cabin check in, store.
 - Accessible – 3 docks!
 - 2 tent sites with sidewalks and ADA fire pit with an elevated, tactile surface.
 - Centennial Cabin - # 42
 - \$ 58 dollars per night, Friday and Saturday 2-night minimum
 - Electrical Outlets, Heating and Air
 - Still utilize existing bathroom facility outside of the cabin
 - 200 Square Foot, Sleeps 6

Carolina Beach State Park Activities:

- Fishing Dock is along the Cape Fear River, brackish water
 - Accessible small fishing dock. Small fishing dock with ramp. Recently replaced after 20 years.
- Trails: Many are off-road, with an accessible Beach Wheelchair available at the Visitor's Center, but the following are recommended:
 - Flytrap Trail: 3/10 of a Mile. Accessible with a Boardwalk. Can view Venus Fly Traps.
 - Summer Weekends: Guided Ranger hikes on Saturday and Sunday mornings
 - A Ranger on site has signing experience and can assist visitors
 - Park Fitness Trail
 - Crush and Run Surface for Bikes, Wheelchairs, etc.

Fort Fisher State Recreation Area:

- 2 Beach Wheelchairs
- Ramps to Visitor Center
- Restrooms Redone – ADA compliant

- **Mr. Jack Viorel, Indo Jax Surf Charities**
Contact: jack@indojaxsurfschool.com | 910.274.3565
 - Owner of Indo Jax Surf School and Charity Program

Indo Jax Surf Charities:

- Mission: Empower medical fragile, special needs, and at risk youth by exposing them to the ocean environment and teaching them to surf! Teach life lessons that you do not find otherwise: Unpredictability, environment, fear factor, etc.
- If you can surf, you can do anything!
- Serves medically fragile, special needs and at-risk-youth. Including individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Visual Impairments, Wounded Warriors, and some International outreach programming as well.
- Charity Program is free! Other programs at cost.
- International Surf Therapy Organization accredited – Organization sets standards for adaptive surf; one of only 20 in the world accredited.

Indo Jax Surf School:

- Scholarship program for typical camps – Encourage children in special needs program to join the typical program for inclusion factor. No additional charge for inclusion. Instructors use adaptive equipment and design what works!
- International Surf Therapy Organization – Set standards for adaptive surf; one of 20 in the world accredited.

TED Talk: <https://www.tedxutk.com/talks/2752696962/special-needs-surfing-taking-the-lid-off>

- **Hayley Sink, ACCESS of Wilmington operators of The Miracle League of Wilmington, Project SOAR, and ACCESS Fit**
Contact: hayley@accessilm.org | 910.508.6788
 - Mission is improving the health, wellness and quality of life of children, adults and veterans living with disabilities in southeastern North Carolina.
 - The goal of ACCESS of Wilmington is to eliminate barriers to physical activity and create community for the tens of thousands of children, adults and veterans living with physical, intellectual and invisible disabilities in southeastern North Carolina.
 - ACCESS of Wilmington currently aims to achieve this goal through 3 programs:
 1. The Miracle League of Wilmington: An accessible baseball league filled with joy, dancing and home runs for children and

adults living with disabilities; Ages 4+

2. Project SOAR: A sport program offering archery, cycling, golf, kayaking, SCUBA, and surfing for veterans living with service-connected illness or injury.

3. ACCESS Fit: ACCESS of Wilmington's newest program. A year-round fitness and wellness program designed for young adults, adults, and older adults living with disabilities; Ages 12+

Coming Summer 2018 – Kayaking, Cycling, and Archery for all ages!

All programs are in session this spring. Participants can register at www.accessilm.org or by calling 910.508.6788. Registration for Miracle League and ACCESS Fit is \$35 for the entire season. Scholarships and transportation through Wave Transit is available!

- **Tiffany Lesley, City of Wilmington Program Specialist; NHC Special Olympics and Visually Impaired Bowling Program**
Contact: Tiffany.Lesley@wilmingtonnc.gov | 910.341.7253

New Hanover County Special Olympics:

- Serves individuals with intellectual disabilities; Ages 8+
 - Serves 600 athletes
 - 14 seasonal sports
 - Also offer Unified Sports: Inclusion focus; Special Olympic athlete playing alongside a non-special Olympic athlete.
 - Currently Offered: Flag Football, Basketball
 - Looking for Unified Sports volunteers
- Events and Program:
 - Global Messenger Program: Allows Special Olympics athletes the opportunity to engage in public speaking and build confidence as an ambassador of the Special Olympics program!
 - Summer Camp: Free! 4-weeks, each week is a different age group.
 - Socials and banquets throughout the year.
- Visually Impaired Bowling:
 - At Cardinal Lanes on Shipyard Weekly
 - For individuals with Visual Impairments; All ages.
 - Transportation is provided within City of Wilmington limits.
- Athletes also have the opportunity to compete at State Games, and possibility of National and World Games.
 - Unified flag football team and a SO tennis player are going to World Games this year!

- **Jonathan Batts, City of Wilmington Recreation Manager and ADA Coordinator; North Waterfront Park**
Contact: Jonathan.Batts@wilmingtonnc.gov | 910.341.7810
 - 20-million dollars, 6.6-acre project:
 - Located by Isabella Holmes Bridge
 - Part of 2016 Parks Bond
 - Development Underway:
 - Planning process Fall 2017 to take input from the community.
 - Survey input had been collected as well.
 - Planning a large concert and festival space, garden, public art, public docks, and natural greenspaces
 - This is considered a plus as festivals can now be hosted at North Waterfront Park as opposed to closing streets in Downtown Wilmington.
 - Future Development:
 - Plan 1 – Faces Cape Fear Memorial Bridge
 - Plan 2 – Faces Isabella Holmes Bridge
 - Likely going to mix feature of both designs for final project plan.
 - Parking:
 - Surrounded by private entities and land to be developed.
 - Conversation around a Parking Deck, yet still undecided.
 - Accessibility:
 - Accessible: 5-degree slope throughout, open design.
 - Planning to have accessible playground in final design.
 - Winter 2020 completion date!

Questions and Answers:

Q: Carolina Beach State Park: Cost and Accessibility of Cabin? – John Hondros

A: Hoping to add more sites soon. An update to the existing bathhouse has been passed; will be redone implementing ADA standards. Has an individual that is a wheelchair user and camps at Carolina Beach State Park that assists with sharing ideas for accessibility improvements.

Note: ADA Site Assessment available through CFDC at no cost.

Q: Indo Jax Surf Charities: Does it expand to adults as well? – John Hondros

A: Yes, more children than adults, but yes definitely adults too. Particularly, those with Visual Impairments.

Q: North Waterfront Park: Parking Issue. Can CFDC write a letter to address this? – Ann Morrison

A: CFDC will write a letter to address this. Vanessa Lacer, Wave Transit, Downtown Trolley would provide access to NWP -- From Parking Deck to NWP -- If the Trolley is not working, Wave will send another mode of accessible transportation.

Q: Is there a Texting System for Wave Transit Bud and DART? – Michael Friant

A: Not currently. Vanessa Lacer, Wave Transit, to address further following the meeting.

Q: Indo Jax Surf Charities: I have a friend that is wheelchair user – Can you help him to surf? - Dustin Robinson

A: Yes! Absolutely. Indo Jax has equipment, techniques, and training systems in place to make it possible. Looks different for everyone, but the outcomes are the same. Instructors are all specially trained on these techniques. Currently, transportation is not provided, but Indo Jax will help with Wrightsville Beach access and Beach Wheelchair coordination.

Q: Indo Jax Surf Charities: Overcoming fears while surfing? – John Hondros

A: Works through this with typical children and parents too. It is unpredictable! Indo Jax promote that just because something is scary, you do not have to avoid it all together. Systems are in place for wipeouts, kids that cannot swim, with sharks...What we do have in place, is that we are on boards that are 9-feet long and are in the water with up to 70 participants, each with their own instructor, so sharks likely avoid the group. Never have had a bad encounter with a shark, but no guarantees, we believe that the equipment and group is so large that they do not interfere.

Q: To All Panelists: To have community partners that EasterSeals UCP and other providers can send participants to means so much! Thank you! – Jennifer Bell

A: Thank you!

Q: Indo Jax Surf Charities: When do surfing classes start? - Vanessa Lacer

A: Spring Break start, inclusionary for all programs! Starts spring break and goes through Labor Day. No fall or winter programs at this time.

Q: Indo Jax Surf Charities: Could you invite Bethany Hamilton to speak? - John Hondros

A: She is definitely an inspiration and currently competing at highest level as an amputee! Bethany Hamilton film producers also made a film about Derek Rabelo – Derek came to Indo Jax Surf School Camp and was a huge inspiration to the children and families as a surfer with a visual impairment.

Note: Visit <http://beyondsightmovie.com/> for more details.

Q: Carolina Beach Wheelchair Program: Details of reservation process? – Vanessa Lacer

A: Can reserve up to one-year in advance, but encourages to reserve as soon as possible. You can rent the Beach Wheelchair, at no cost, for up to one week.

Q: Carolina Beach Wheelchair Program: How do the Beach Wheelchairs specifically adapt? – John Hondros

A: They are very easy to use and push in sand! Carolina and Kure Beach delivers. Also have water wheels to go in the water and in swimming pools.

Q: NHC Special Olympics: Is there a deadline to volunteer with Unified Sports program? – Vanessa Lacer

A: No deadline, but Unified Sports start in second week of March.

Q: Indo Jax Surf Charities: How much do camps and private events cost? – Vanessa Lacer

A: Various – Outreach camps are free to participants. If there is a program that does not fit exact need, individuals can apply for a scholarship so at no cost! Love the inclusion program – Would like to never have a special program, but have everyone together!

Web: www.indojax.com or www.indojaxsurfcharities.org

Q: North Waterfront Park: Accessibility features and input? – Vanessa Lacer

A: Please continue to represent and provide input at open meetings and through surveys. CFDC does provide representation, but encourages all CFDC members to be involved.

Q: NHC Special Olympics: Are Wave Transit bus passes offered at this time? – Michael Friant

A: Not offered at this time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Reminder that members that you are allowed to bring flyers and advertise upcoming events during this time.
- John Hondros welcomed attendees to pick-up information about Port City Daredevils and join them at their next event!
- Visit the CFDC Facebook for all announcements in between quarterly meetings. Go to www.facebook.com/CFDCILM. Send Vanessa all announcements, fliers, etc., that would be of interest to members and she will post them to the CFDC Facebook page.
- November CFDC Meeting rescheduled for November 14th due to Thanksgiving Holiday.

VII. Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn made by Vanessa Lacer at 12:01 PM.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: April 18th, 2018 at 10:30 AM

Next General Meeting: May 16th, 2018 at 10:30 AM

**Meetings held at New Hanover County Government Center Human Resources Suite 135.*