



MILWAUKEE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
& HUMAN SERVICES  
**AGING & DISABILITIES  
SERVICES**

**Commission for Persons with Disabilities**  
**April 10, 2023**

**The Commission for Persons with Disabilities** convened virtually on Monday, April 10, 2023. Members and attendees joined the virtual meeting with video conference and conference call options (computer or telephone). A quorum was reached.

**Commissioners Present:**

Damian Buchman, *Commissioner*  
Allison Caudill, *Commissioner*  
Deb Falk-Palec, *Chair*  
John Haupt, *Commissioner*  
Willie Johnson, Jr.-*County Supervisor*  
Barbara Leigh, *Commissioner*  
Marcia Perkins, *Secretary*

**Commissioners Excused:**

Anne Kearney- *Vice Chair*

Denise Koss, *Commissioner*

**Milwaukee County Staff:**

Mike Bonk, *DHHS*  
Vincenza Doyne, *DHHS*

**Attendees from the Public**

Felicia Claybourne  
Sherry Mickelson  
Leon Todd

**MINUTES**

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL: Director Mike Bonk**
- II. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 13, 2023 MINUTES: Commission for Persons with Disabilities**  
Commissioner Falk-Palec requested some corrections to be made. She will follow up with the office after the meeting for corrections.
- III. SPECIAL REPORT- Transit Plus: Fran Musci MCTS**  
Ms. Musci was unable to attend today's meeting due to another commitment. Item was tabled until next meeting.
- IV. WIL-O-WAY COMMITTEE UPDATE: Deb Falk-Palec**  
Director Bonk and Commissioner Falk-Palec attended the ARPA Task Force meeting last month. Supervisor Johnson Jr. sponsored a resolution request for the renovations of the splash pad, ADA ramp, and park bench replacements at Wil-O-Way Underwood. These items were not initially approved and referred to a sub-committee within the ARPA Task Force. The sub-committee meeting date and time is not known yet by Director Bonk.. Commissioner Falk-Palec thanked

Commissioner Johnson Jr. and Commissioner Kathleen Vincent who worked together on putting together the resolution asking for immediate funding to be requested out of the emergency contingency fund from the Finance Committee to address the wheelchair accessible ramp, and park bench replacement to be ADA compliant. This resolution also included the asphalt around the ramp area.. Director Bonk is working with the Parks Department on the style of park benches being considered for people who want to transfer out of a mobility device to sit on a park bench in a safe manner so there are no gaps on the back of the benches. This style of park bench is also safer for small children as there is no gap between the seat and backing on the bench, it prevents falls, and children from getting stuck. The Finance Committee approved the funds to be committed to replace the ramp, and park benches. Commissioner Falk-Palec is grateful for all the help and getting this done prior to camp starting on June 27<sup>th</sup>. Commissioner Falk-Palec then asked Director Bonk for the status of the splash pad. Director Bonk commented that they did get approved for the amount over the fifty-two Thousand dollars for the park benches as well as the ADA ramp and the other asphalt surrounding the wading pool area. Director Bonk stated this time of the year is where Capitol requests are made for large projects exceeding one hundred thousand dollars are made and that his department has met with the Department of Administrative Services Budget and strategy area as well as the Director of the Department of Administrative Services regarding the Splash Pad for capitol request. Director Bonk explained the capital request for the splash pad for Wil-O-Way Underwood will be next year, and the following year will be the request for the splash pad at Wil-O-Way Grant. Director Bonk stated there are other funds within the ARPA task force that could potentially fund a new wading pool. When the request was brought forward to the ARPA task force it was considered under the Recreational category and now it is being reconsidered under the Revenue Loss Category. No timeline has been given for this yet. This request may come back around in the fall, but it would be made in future requests as a parks enhancement if not approved this time. Director Bonk gave a brief timeline of the Capitol Process commenting where this is at now and what steps will take place before the fall. Architects and Engineers will want all capital requests by May 1<sup>st</sup> so that can start gathering estimates. As of this time these requests are ahead of schedule. In the fall will go before the County Executives Office and the full County Board for the following year. Director Bonk will continue to work with Joe Lamers who is part of the ARPA Task Force Group. Questions comments, Commissioner Buchman asked if anyone spoke to the Parks Dept about who their vendor might be. Director Bonk stated they initially met with Parkitecture as that was recommended by the Parks Department but they will be meeting with vendors in the fall to see what actual costs might be. Director Bonk stated that there will be RFP's taken for the proposal. . Director Bonk's office continues to work directly with the Parks Department to ensure they are using approved vendors.

## V. COMMISSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES OFFICER ELECTIONS:



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This item was tabled until after item number VII. Commissioner

**VI. ABILITY CENTER AND WISCONSIN AVENUE PARK UPDATE: DAMIAN BUCHMAN**

Commissioner Buchman introduced himself as the Director of the Ability Center. The goal of the Ability Center is to make community assets more inclusive and accessible to everyone. He gave a brief overview of the current project the Ability Center is working on to make Wisconsin Avenue Park a Universal Park. Commissioner Buchmann stated that in conjunction with Milwaukee County Parks, they are gifting the community Universal Park, which will be fully accessible and inclusive to those with disabilities. Some proposed features within the eighteen-acre park will be a Universal Baseball field, the county's first and the only fully accessible field. The Ability Center also plans on including adult wheelchair softball, adult wheelchair football and wheelchair lacrosse. In addition, they are looking into ways to implement pickleball as well as basketball opportunities into this space. The Club House at this park will be enhanced along the lines of "The Landing" space which is at Hoyt Park pool. There will be sensory rooms, nursing rooms and wellness rooms with two bathrooms where all stalls will be ADA compliant. One bathroom will include a changing table as well as an adult sized changing table. There will be opportunity for areas to plug in and charge devices. People to spend as much time as they want at this park without being limited by an opportunity due to their mobility device or communication device being down. They are adding a half mile of trails within the woods of the park which will have pockets for playing and fitness so that everyone can have access. The Ability Center has partnered with a variety of organizations. Some have done pro-bono work and so far, there is one hundred thirty-four thousand invested through the work that Commissioner Buchmann's office and partners have done. In addition, a commitment of two million dollars from the George F Moss charitable trust has been committed to the project. A groundbreaking ceremony will take place on July 26<sup>th</sup> at Wisconsin Avenue Park, the exact time will be determined at a later date. There are 2 public input meetings, the first was held on March 27<sup>th</sup>. The next meeting is held virtually on April 12<sup>th</sup> and another on April 17<sup>th</sup> at Wauwatosa West High School from 6-7:30pm. Information on attending will be forwarded to this commission. Commissioner Buchman added that while he presented a vision in an idea to this committee, that nothing is set in stone. With this plan Commissioner Buchmann stated they are looking for public feedback. They are working with GameTime, regarding some of the amenities that will be installed at the park. Commissioner Buchmann went on to say that some parents feel that playgrounds are overrun and not safe for their kids anymore. They are exclusive. Commissioner Buchman's office is looking at ways to build a playground that everyone can use. Commissioner Buchman asked this committee to mark their calendars to join in and give input. Adaptive equipment will be made available as well to use free of charge while people are at the park much like the Bradford Beach wheelchairs is also another item being looked at. Commissioner Buchman also stated there would be a presence of persons in the



park to greet people that come in to play and enjoy the park. Director Buchman also stated that his office is currently lobbying the state for three million dollars to support this project. More funding will be sought from the DNR and Nelson Stewardship Fund. The goal is to get people moving and mobilizing with making the areas of the park accessible to all. Guest Sherry Mickelson commented about how nice it would be to have staff available at a park. In Franklin, Kayla's Crew, has scheduled volunteers who walk around the park and engage with the children making sure that all are having a good time. Ms. Mickelson also asked about lighting at the park in the fall winter months. There will be lighting but not at the west end where the forestry is and there will be presence in the park year-round Director Buchman stated.

## VII. DISCUSSION ITEMS:

### a.) Other Commission Business

Commissioner Falk-Palec gave an update on where things are at with moving forward with the submissions for new commission members. The committee of Health Equity and Human needs, and Strategic Planning, has made a full recommendation for approval of Sherry Mickelson to the County Board. Mr. Leon Todd will need to meet with the same committee that Sherry Mickelson met with. Mr. Todd will speak with Director Bonk who can get him connected to set up the meeting so he can be considered for moving on to the County Board for approval to also be a member of this commission.

Commissioner Perkins asked about holding an in-person Commission for Persons with Disabilities meeting. A possible meeting at the Wil-O-Way facility in July was discussed. Director Bonk will check the schedule and see what is possible, they do not want to hold this meeting while camp is in session. There will also be an option for Hybrid so that anyone who cannot be in person can still attend virtually. Another option would be the Coggs building. Next, the County Executive's plan to roll out a program which consists of Federal and County funding to purchase foreclosed homes and rehab them, sell them at an affordable rate to enable individuals to own their own homes. Accessibility was brought up and the question of will there be a ramp attached to these homes for those who are disabled so that no one is excluded. Director Bonk commented stating that the Department of Health and Human Services and Housing are working together on this, and Director Mathy oversees the development and how it will look. Director Bonk stated the homes will be near the Coggs building. Commissioner Caudill asked for clarification on the Housing in Wauwatosa and this housing and yes it was clarified that these are two separate housing entities. **The foregoing item was not considered in agenda order: Item V.**

Commissioners met briefly in closed session regarding Felicia Claybourne and voted. Supervisor Johnson Jr. moved and Commissioner Buchman second to move into a closed session. The commission in open session then approved unanimously to move Ms. Claybourne's application and resume forward to the County Executive's office for approval of becoming a member of this commission.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT (2:30 P. M.)**

**NEXT MEETING OF THE COMMISSION**

Monday May 8<sup>th</sup>, 1 p. m.

Virtual Meetings will be held until further notice

Respectfully Submitted,  
Vincenza Doyne  
Office Support Assistant II  
Aging and Disability Services