



Disability Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Date: Wednesday, October 8, 2025, 3 P.M. – 5 P.M.

Location: Dakota County Western Service Center, Room 106, 14955 Galaxie Avenue, Apple Valley, MN, 55124

Attendance

Council Member	Representing	Attended
Linda Bailey	Lived experience	
Aiden Kilgannon	Lived experience	x
Amy Hunting	Lived experience	x
Sumukha Terakanambi	Lived experience	x
Michael Cashman	Lived experience	x
Lucianna Wolfstone	Lived experience	
David Shaw	Lived experience	x
Eva Johnson	Family member	x
Stephanie Thomas	Family member	x
Alison Niemi	Family member	x
Susan Pagnac	Service provider	x
Ann Bailey	Service provider	x
Jodi Yanda	Service provider	x
Mike Welsh	Service provider	
Toby Hearn	Service provider	x
Michael Dahl	Service provider	x
Bilan Arab	Faith community	x
Sheila Hawthorne	Housing	x

Dakota County Staff in Attendance

Sky Jarvi, Dakota County Inclusion Diversity Equity Access (IDEA) Manager

Jessica Johnson, Dakota County Access Management Coordinator

Tim Sime, Dakota County Assistant County Attorney

Jessie Carlson, Dakota County Central Operations Division Deputy Director

Mike Lexvold, Dakota County Facilities Management Director

Amanda Geske, Dakota County Library Youth Services Manager

Dua Thao, Dakota County Library Youth Program and Outreach Coordinator

Agenda

- I. Call to Order: Sumukha at 3:05
- II. Approval of Agenda
- III. Approval of August Meeting Minutes
- IV. Council Business
- V. Presentations
 - a. Presentation from Dakota County Facilities: Mike Lexvold, Dakota County Facilities Management Director, provided an overview of Facilities Management and an update on current projects. Facilities Management includes building maintenance, grounds maintenance, security, and capital projects. Mike discussed current projects related to adult changing stations. He also discussed the project development process and requested feedback on the best engagement points to obtain feedback from the Disability Advisory Council.
 - b. Presentation from Dakota County Library: Amanda Geske, Library Youth Services Manager and Dua Thao, Library Youth Program and Outreach Coordinator provided an update on ASL at Library Storytimes. The library plans to focus on making storytimes more accessible for deaf and hard of hearing community in 2026. They will be hosting 12 storytimes, one per month, where they will contract with an ASL interpreter. They requested feedback regarding the plan and the best way to promote.
- VI. County Updates (Dakota County Staff)
 - a. Jess Johnson introduced Jessie Carlson and Tim Sime. Jessie and Tim will be working with Jess on a draft workplan for the Disability Advisory Council.
 - b. Jess Johnson provided an update on an upcoming Transportation Open House.
 - c. Jess Johnson noted a recent test on track chairs in Dakota County parks. There was discussion on how to make the chairs more supportive, advertisement, and adding more than one chair.
 - d. Work is underway on a public art framework plan.
 - e. Sky Jarvi mentioned an upcoming training and education opportunity for Dakota County staff. The 2025 IDEA Summit for Dakota County staff will be held in November. The focus of the summit is on access and disability equity. It will include a keynote presentation from QualityLogic on digital accessibility.
- VII. Council Member Announcements/Updates

- a. Susan Pagnac noted sign language is being offered as a language in Hennepin County schools. Could that also be offered as a language in Dakota County schools? Could this group recommend?

VIII. Adjourn

Decisions Made

- Decision: Approval of Agenda
- Decision: Approval of August 13 meeting minutes.
- Decision: Adjourn

Action Items

- None

Discussion Items/Presentations

- Dakota County Facilities Update on Current Projects (Mike Lexvold, Facilities Director)
 - There was a question about when budgets are decided for projects. It was noted that budgets are established early in project development. Ideally, feedback would be obtained shortly after projects are scoped.
 - It was noted that the Planning Commission is discussing several projects in parks. Work is underway to also communicate with that group.
 - There was discussion about making sure individuals who are deaf, blind, or have low vision have access to parks including trail heads and water. There are sharp corners in some of the parks. Having mirrors available would be helpful along with straight paths. Voice activation and flashing lights are also helpful.
 - Discussion about challenges crossing through roundabouts.
 - Discussion about the importance of collecting additional feedback.
 - There was a question about updates happening to the Western Service Center building (accessible door button at the front door and curb cuts). Mike noted that work is underway on replacing the button and construction is underway in the parking lot/sidewalks.
 - Discussion about bathrooms and handicap accessible stalls. The handicap stall should be as close to the restroom door as possible. There was discussion about challenges updating already established restrooms versus new design.
- Library Programming and Accessibility (Amanda Geske, Library Youth Services Manager; Dua Thao, Library Youth Program and Outreach Coordinator)
 - Positive feedback and thanks for working on this opportunity.

- Have a session for adults/authors.
- Not everyone uses ASL. Consider using an app such as Otter.ai.
- Have someone who is deaf telling stories and/or leading the group.
- Consider intellectual and developmental needs.
- Is there a video provided ahead of time?
- Discussed use of visual schedule, fidgets, ensuring accessibility for kids with mobility needs.
- Make sure the individual sharing the story is forward facing.
- Discussion about accommodating children that are deaf and blind.
- Discussion about tactile sign language. American Sign Language Interpreting Services (ASLIS) should be aware of this method.
- Contact special education directors at school districts. District 917 music therapist may be a good resource. Also mentioned school district physical therapists. Other resources may be Metro Deaf School, MN State Academy for the Deaf, Regional Service Center, private practice therapy clinics, Down Syndrome Association of MN, non-profit mailing list, Access Press
- Could the event be recorded and shared?
- Great opportunity to provide exposure.
- Question about reading lists created earlier this year. The library will pull numbers to determine if there was an impact on the number of times books were checked out. Also, discussion about use of a filter on the library app.

Next Meeting

Date: Wednesday, November 12, 2025
 Time: 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
 Location: Dakota County Western Service Center, Apple Valley, MN

Minutes Prepared by: Jessie Carlson

Date: 10/8/2025