



THE 2022 PROGRESS CENTER
ANNUAL MEETING

JUNE 25, 2022
1 P.M. TO 3 P.M.

PROGRESS CENTER FOR
INDEPENDENT LIVING

7521 MADISON STREET

FOREST PARK, ILLINOIS 60310



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CALL TO ORDER: LOREE WOODLEY – BOARD CHAIR

PROGRESS CENTER BOARD
CHAIR LOREE WOODLEY WILL
CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER
AT 1 P.M.



2022 PROGRESS CENTER ANNUAL MEETING: REVIEW OF AGENDA

1:00 pm: Call to Order and Review of Agenda

1:10 pm: Approval of 2021 Minutes

1:20 pm: Board of Director Announcements

**1:25 pm: The 2022 Board of Directors
Election**

1:45 pm: Transportation Update

1:50 pm: Covid-19 Update

1:55 pm: IEMA Update

2022 PROGRESS CENTER ANNUAL MEETING: REVIEW OF AGENDA

Agenda, Continued

- 2:05 pm: Open Communities Presentation**
- 2:20 pm: Voting Update**
- 2:25 pm: Questions and Answers,
Audience Discussion**
- 2:45 pm: Staff Anniversaries**
- 2:55 pm: In Memory of Larry Biondi**
- 2:59 pm: Adjournment**

APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 2021 ANNUAL MEETING



- Call for a motion to approve the 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes.

Meeting Minutes

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
BUSINESS--
HORACIO
ESPARZA,
EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR

Outgoing Board Members—
Thank you for your service!

Sandra Murrillo

Prerak Mehta

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
BUSINESS

Current Board Member who
completed first term and is
running for a second term:

Benjamin Salentine
Disabled, White, Male

BOARD CANDIDATE FOR SECOND TERM: BEN SALENTINE

Salentine has served on the Progress Center Board of Directors for the past three years (since 2019). He has a lengthy amount of disability related schooling and research.

He has experience maintaining and managing Long-Term Support Service (LTSS) and Home and Community Based Service (HCBS) networks and providing ongoing education to these networks. He also has experience with searching for and contracting with providers in LTSS/HCBS networks.

Mr. Salentine earned a Master of Science Degree in Community Health and a Master of Science Degree in Rehabilitation in addition to a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology (Social Work).

He is currently working to complete his Doctorate of Philosophy with a degree in Disability Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
BUSINESS, LOREE
WOODLEY,
PROGRESS
CENTER BOARD
CHAIR

Review of Election Process

Introduction of New Board Candidates

CURRENT BOARD DEMOGRAPHICS

Members: 10

Disabled: 60 percent

People of Color: 60 percent

Male: 70 percent

Female: 30 percent

Vacancies: 3 (4)

BOARD CANDIDATES: PAM HEAVENS

Ms. Heavens works at United Cerebral Palsy's Center for Disability Services as a Community Access Advocate.

Ms. Heavens has been involved with the disability rights/independent living movement for 37 years, 28 of these years, she served as the Executive Director of the Will-Grundy Center for Independent Living in Joliet. She is active in the PPE for People with Disabilities Coalition (PPE4PWD), the Saving Institutional Lives Via Emergency Relocation Coalition (SILVER), the Patients' Rights Action Fund which opposes physician-assisted suicide) and the Institutional Rescue & Recovery Coalition (IRRC).

Ms. Heavens helped establish the Will-Grundy Center for Independent Living in Joliet and served as the Executive Director for 27 years. While there, we filed and won seven housing discrimination cases related to new construction, helped Joliet pass a strong accessibility ordinance, and kept up to date on disability issues.

BOARD CANDIDATES: PAM HEAVENS

In her words “I have had the pleasure of advocating with some of the PCIL staff members for the past few years. They are dedicated advocates with impressive results. Being a member of the Board would be a huge honor for me. I will put my experience to use in helping PCIL continue to grow as a strong advocacy-centered Center for Independent Living”.

Ms. Heavens can contribute to the Progress Board with her skills and contacts such as Writing letters to the editors, familiarity with some state and federal legislators, and fundraising ideas along with advocacy skills.

She is also interested in helping with fundraising and outreach/membership.

Disabled, White, Female

BOARD CANDIDATES: BRENDA IRIZZARY

Brenda Irizzary has experience working in Human Resources and Sales. She has a brother with a disability whom she has been over-seeing since his birth. In her words “I have been a strong advocate for my brother’s independence by working with Suburban Access and with other organizations. Mrs. Irizzary is interested in helping with fundraising, networking and Human Resources Policy and Procedures.

Non-Disabled, African American, Female

BOARD CANDIDATES: DEBBIE PITMANN

Ms. Pittman is a member of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois and Concerned Citizens of Paratransit. She can also produce materials in large print and Braille through Pittman Enterprises & Associates NFP. In addition, she has knowledge and resources regarding W3C accessibility communication standards.

In her own words, “Throughout the years, I have shown myself to be a strong advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion to ensure a level playing field for a diverse group of individuals through technological advances focusing on accessibility. In addition, I possess a strong work ethic and determination to be the best at what I put my mind to and have shown myself to be an excellent team player”.

Ms. Pittman would like to once again work side-by-side with Progress Center to help improve the lives of people with disabilities.

She is also interested in helping with nominating, outreach/membership and program development.

Disabled, African American, Female

BOARD CANDIDATES: RILEY SPREADBURY

Riley Spreadbury is currently a graduate student at the City University of New York enrolled in the online Disability Studies program. Additionally, she is a student at Moraine Valley Community College where I am working on my certificate in American Sign Language and Deaf Studies.

Mrs. Spreadbury is a member of the Disability and Access Coalition where she is running for a leadership position. She is a member of the Disability Rights Action Coalition for Housing. She is also a volunteer through the Lincoln Way Special Recreation Association where she has been able to touch base with many disabled residents of the Chicagoland area.

In her words, “As a disabled woman who has spent most of my life in Suburban Cook County, I feel I have a good understanding of the issues disabled residents face here as it relates to independent living. Through both my graduate and certification programs, I have also been learning extensively about the disability rights movement, the history of disabled people in the United States, and how these two concepts relate to each other. That, and the fact that my undergraduate degree is in Therapeutic Recreation, has provided me an opportunity to look at disability from multiple perspectives.”

Disabled, Female, White

BOARD OF
DIRECTORS
BUSINESS, LOREE
WOODLEY,
PROGRESS
CENTER BOARD
CHAIR

Review of Election Process

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS



TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



**Stephen Hiatt -Leonard, Community
Organizer, Progress Center**

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



According to Illinois Government Office of Management and Budget:

FY 22 -- \$8,394,900 -- State's share for Pace Paratransit

FY 23 -- \$8,394,900 -- State's share for Pace Paratransit

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE



**Melinda Metzger –
Became the Executive
Director of PACE in
April 2022**

REPORTS: PANDEMIC UPDATE

Gary Arnold, Program Director

REPORTS: PANDEMIC UPDATE

Cook County Dept of Public Health -- Covid-19 Case Data as of June 17,2022:

- 193 Cases per 100,000 Last 7 Days
- 6.6 Hospital Admissions per 100,000 Last 7 Days
- 4.6% Hospital Beds Occupied by Covid-19 Patients
- LOW Suburban Cook Community Level

REPORTS: PANDEMIC UPDATE

COVID-19 Vaccines Administered to Suburban Cook County Residents of June 17, 2022:

- 1,995,649 People with at least one vaccine dose
- 1,518,055 People with complete vaccine series
- 690,170 Fully vaccinated people with a booster
- 87.3% Percent of total population with at least one vaccine dose
- 66.4% Percent of total population with complete vaccine series
- 45.5% Percent of fully vaccinated with booster

PANDEMIC UPDATE: AT HOME COVID TESTS THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE TO BLIND LOW VISION

- The Biden-Harris Administration has launched a new initiative to expand the availability of at-home tests that are more accessible for people who are blind or have low vision. The tests work with a Bluetooth-enabled smartphone/tablet app to provide users with audible instructions, and audible test results.

How to get the tests:

- Order [online](#) or by calling 1-800-232-0233.
- Because supplies are limited, please order the more accessible tests only if you do not have options for using the standard tests.

Need more assistance?

- The trained staff at the Disability Information and Access Line (DIAL) can provide additional assistance with:
 - Ordering tests.
 - Understanding instructions for test administration and test results.
 - Providing alternative instructions for traditional at-home tests for people who are unable to access, read, or understand the manufacturer's version.
 - For those who cannot use an at-home test, DIAL operators can:
 - Assist with ordering "swab and send" kits to collect a sample and mail it back for results.
 - Connect callers to local organizations for assistance locating other testing options in their community, including in-home testing programs or transportation or companion support to visit a community-based testing site.
- Call 888-677-1199 Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Eastern) or email DIAL@usaginganddisability.org.

PANDEMIC UPDATE: PROGRESS CENTER

- **Progress Center staff are working in hybrid mode. Staff have the option of working from home or in the office.**
- **Staff have the option of meeting in person with community members.**
- **Community members must set up an appointment to visit the office.**

PANDEMIC UPDATE: PROGRESS CENTER

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- **Progress Center Continues to maintain supplies of Personal Protective Equipment**
 - **Supplies are available to community members and to their providers**
 - **Community-Based Organizations are eligible for K95 Mask Donations**
 - **Staff continue to work in coalition (PPE for People with Disabilities Coalition) on implementation of SB 921**
 - **Staff can assist with setting up test and vaccine appointments**
 - **Call 708-209-1500 for more information**

REPORTS: IEMA – ILLINOIS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY

Laura VanPuymbrouck, PhD, OTR/L
Assistant Professor
Rush University
Department of Occupational Therapy

PRESENTATION: OPEN COMMUNITIES

**Dominic Voz, Fair Housing Associate,
Open Communities**

VOTING UPDATE –
MANUEL
GONZALEZ –
COMMUNITY
ORGANIZER,
PROGRESS CENTER



**Manuel Gonzalez, Community
Organizer**

VOTING UPDATE —

- June 27 is the Last Day of Early Voting
- June 28, Election Day, is the Last Day mail in ballots can be post marked
- June 28 is official Election Day

VOTING UPDATE —



To view information about what political races and what candidates are on the ballot, visit this web page:

- <https://www.cookcountyclerkil.gov/elections/current-elections/view-all-candidates>

VOTING UPDATE –



To view information about your registration status, visit this webpage:

- <https://www.cookcountyclerkil.gov/elections/your-voter-information>

This web page and the Board of Elections site will have information that answers this questions:

[What Is My Registration Status](#)

[What Is On My Upcoming Ballot](#)

[Where Is My Polling Place](#)

[Where Is My Early Voting Site](#)

[Who Are My Elected Officials](#)

[What Is My Mail Ballot Status](#)

VOTING UPDATE —



If you'd like to contact the Cook County Board of Elections directly, here are some different phone numbers to use:

English

Phone Number

(312) 603-5656

Español

Phone Number

(312) 603-6767

TDD

Phone Number

(312) 603-0902

VOTING UPDATE –

Here is a link to the website which provides some information about judges running for office:

- <https://www.injusticewatch.org/interactives/judicial-election-guide/2022-primary/en/>

VOTING UPDATE —



Voting Rights of People with Disabilities

Finally, here is some information about the rights of people with disabilities and voting

This election, there is a new vote by mail system for people who are Blind, DeafBlind:

Ahead of the June 28 Primary Election, the Illinois State Board of Elections launched a remote accessible vote-by-mail system for the primary.

VOTING UPDATE —



Voting Rights of People with Disabilities

In Illinois there is an Ombudsman Program that supports voters with disabilities.

The State Board of Elections has established an Ombudsperson to help answer questions or facilitate problems encountered by persons with disabilities attempting to vote in the June 2022 Illinois Primary Election.

That Ombudsperson is Jordan Andrew, Deputy General Counsel & ADA Coordinator, who can be reached at jandrew@elections.il.gov and phone 217-782-4003.

VOTING UPDATE –



Voting Rights of People with Disabilities

The organization Equip for Equality has resources for voters with disabilities.

They have a web page with a list of Frequently Asked Questions:

<https://www.equipforequality.org/issues/voting/faq/>

On the day you vote, if you have questions about voting or run into specific issues, contact Equip for Equality:

Equip for Equality at 800-573-2632 or
voting@equipforequality.org

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION



2022 PROGRESS CENTER ANNUAL MEETING: STAFF UPDATES

Progress Center Staff Anniversaries
Horacio Esparza, Executive Director



2022 PROGRESS CENTER ANNUAL MEETING: STAFF UPDATES

**Thank you to Progress
Center Staff for their
dedication and service
to the organization
and to the community.**

**Please join us in
recognizing these staff
anniversaries.**

PROGRESS CENTER STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

**Welcome Staff who started at
Progress Center in the past
year:**

Hanan Alalfi

Stephen Hiatt-Leonard

Kristina Reis



PROGRESS CENTER STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

**Staff who have worked for
Progress Center from 1 to 9
years:**

Gary Arnold

Tonya Covington

Manuel Gonzalez

Marvin McClure

Kira Meskin

Esther Sanders



PROGRESS CENTER STAFF ANNIVERSARIES



**Staff Celebrating a 10-
year work
anniversary:**

Patrick Hartmann

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

**Staff who are celebrating an
anniversary of more than 10 years:**

Don Albrecht

Rhyhell Barnes

Clark Craig

Art Johnson

Carol Nemecek

STAFF ANNIVERSARIES

**Staff who are celebrating an
anniversary of 20 or more years:**

Horacio Esparza

Anne Gunter

Marie Mister

IN MEMORY LARRY BIONDI

FEBRUARY 17, 1963 - JUNE 28, 2021



CLOSING REMARKS



ADJOURNMENT





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