

**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE ESCAMBIA COUNTY DISABILITY AWARENESS
COMMITTEE (ECDAC) MEETING
OCTOBER 15, 2025**

Present: Rhonda Dorfman – Present
Jason Coffey – Present
Kristin Wilson – Present
Tammy Straughn – Absent
Dawn Shumaker Smith – Absent
Lisa Fournier - Absent

Location: 3363 West Park Place, Room 104 , Pensacola, Florida

Minutes prepared by: Cecelia Amos

REGULAR DISABILITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE MEETING AGENDA

1. Call to Order

Chair (Jason Coffey), called the Disability Awareness Committee Meeting to order at 2:09 p.m.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Jason Coffey led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Did we have a quorum?

No, a quorum was not established.

4. Was this meeting properly advertised?

The Disability Awareness Committee Meeting was published in the Pensacola News Journal on October 9, 2025.

5. Are there any items to be added to the Agenda?

No items were added to the Agenda.

6. Guest Speakers for Meeting: The Committee listened to presentations from two guest speakers

- Dawn Rockey, M.Ed. – Student Accessibility Resources Director at the University of West Florida: She explained the meal, housing, furniture,

academic, and internship accommodation services that the Student Accessibility Resources Office of the University of West Florida offers to its students. A separate office works with campus accessibility. She stressed that the accommodations were meant to level the playing field for disabled students, not provide advantages over other students.

- Rhonda Dorfman offered to connect her with the Division of Blind Services, North Davis Highway Office.
- Kristin Wilson offered to connect her with Escambia County Area Transit representatives.
- Charles Thornton, Sr. – Incoming President of the Civitan Club of Pensacola: He promoted the mission of the Civitan Club in aiding those with developmental and intellectual disabilities as every person is “one step away” from having a disability. Primarily the Civitan Club works as sponsors to raise funding and is looking to expand their membership. He invited citizens to a 5 p.m. meeting at Lost Pizza.
 - Kristin Wilson promoted the Miracle League of NE Pensacola, located at the John R. Jones, Jr. Athletic Complex.

7. Public Forum: The Committee heard comments from the following individuals

- Carolyn Grawi, Executive Director at the Center for Independent Living – She promoted the Center for Independent Living’s supplementary services for disabled Escambia County citizens and specifically highlighted employment services under the LOST grant, adaptive device procurement, and peer support. She provided fliers and her business card for anyone interested.
 - Jason Coffey asked her about the Center’s efforts towards adaptive housing and offered to connect her with construction companies that he was working with.
- Angela Walden, Escambia County Area Transit – She highlighted Flex Transit services for the County and expressed Mass Transit’s plan to expand those services into Century, Florida.

8. Old Business – Announcements

Reminder about the Cornhole Tournament hosted by Five Flags Sertoma of Pensacola on October 25, 2025.

9. New Business

- The Second Draft of the Escambia County Disability Awareness Committee 2025 Annual Report was reviewed with no new changes suggested.
- Social Hangout Game Day will be hosted by the Center for Independent Living on October 29, 2025.

- Recreation Training Day will be hosted by the City of Pensacola at the Bayview Senior Center to learn how to use smartphones and tablets on October 29, 2025.
- Kristin Wilson would like to invite Lizzie Rogers of ARC Gateway and Paul Chestnut of the Pensacola Ice Flyers to come to speak at the next meeting.

Additional Business and Closing Remarks

Next Meeting Scheduled: November 19, 2025

Meeting Adjourned: 2:50 p.m.

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA**

3363 West Park Place, Room 104
(850)595-4900-Phone
www.myescambia.com



**Escambia County Disability Awareness
Committee**

Speaker Request Form

Please Print Legibly

*Name: Carolyn Grawi
*Email Address: Carolyn.eci@nwf.org *Phone: 850-595-5566
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Chamber Rules

1. All who wish to speak will be heard.
2. You must sign up to speak. This form must be filled out and given to the clerk to be heard.
3. When the Chairperson calls you to speak, come to the podium, adjust the microphone so you can be heard, then state your NAME for the record.
4. Everyone will be granted uniform time to speak.
5. Should there be a need for information to be presented to the Board, please provide 6 copies for distribution. The board will determine whether to accept the information into the record. Once accepted, copies are given to the Clerk for Board distribution.

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**Escambia County Disability Awareness
Committee**

Speaker Request Form

Please Print Legibly

*Name: Angela Walden
*Email Address: alwalden@myescambia.com *Phone: 850 595 0873

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**Escambia County Disability Awareness
Committee**

Speaker Request Form

Please Print Legibly

*Name: Charles D. Thornton

*Email Address: CharlesDThornton@gmail.com *Phone: 850-346-0231

Chamber Rules

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3. When the Chairperson calls you to speak, come to the podium, adjust the microphone so you can be heard, then state you NAME for the record.
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ESCAMBIA COUNTY DISABILITY AWARENESS COMMITTEE

Escambia County Central Office Complex
3363 West Park Place, Room 104

SECOND DRAFT OF ANNUAL REPORT 2025

The Escambia County Disability Awareness Committee (ECDAC) was established by the Board of County Commissioners (BCC), in its regular meeting on October 17, 2013, by adoption of Resolution Number R2013-126. The purpose of the ECDAC is to make recommendations regarding issues relating to the disabled community of Escambia County, Florida, and any other issues requested by the BCC.

Committee Members:

- **Jason Coffey**
- **Kristin Wilson**
- **Tammy M. Straughn**
- **Rhonda Dorfman**
- **Deborah Carty [Resigned on August 19, 2025]**
- **Lisa Fournier**
- **Dawn Shumaker Smith**

Staff:

Cecelia Amos, Administrative Assistant, County Administration

Misty Pardue, Citizens Services Coordinator, County Administration

Donald A. Christian, III Program Manager, Engineering

Meeting Dates for 2025:

April 16, 2025
June 18, 2025
August 20, 2025
October 15, 2025
November 19, 2025



Summary of Activities for 2025:

April 16, 2025

- Established dates for upcoming scheduled meetings of the committee
- Sunshine Law
 - Speaker: Christi Hankins, Assistant County Attorney, from the Escambia County Attorney's office
- Special Guest Presentation: Special Olympics Florida
 - Speaker: Michael Stone, Regional Community Engagement Manager
 - Discussed: Special Olympics Florida's growth, free health screenings, athletic training, school partnerships. Expressed interest in future collaboration with Escambia County

June 18, 2025

- Public Forum
 - Stephanie and Donnie Ellington – Failure by Independence for the Blind, Division for Blind Services, the Florida Council for the Blind, and the American Council for the Blind to provide skills for his wife, became blind two years ago, to live independently
 - The couple was denied service because of racial slurs and theft allegations Stephanie Ellington made against her provider.
 - Michael Stone – Announced and invited the audience and Board to the regional bowling event, hosted by the Special Olympics and including seven Florida counties, on July 26, 2025, from 8 am – 1:30 pm at Strikerz Entertainment Center
 - Thomas Burns – Wanted to speak but left due to a lack of an interpreter for the deaf. It was noted that future aid and accommodation for those with disabilities may need to be prepared ahead of time. This would allow disabled citizens the opportunity to speak and be heard, just as able-bodied citizens.
- Special Guest Presentations:
 - Deborah A. Trocki, M.S.W. and Susan Wachob-Joiner, Business Relations Representative and Youth Services Consultant, Bureau of Field Services, Florida Division of Vocational Rehabilitation - Deborah A. Trocki explained that the purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation services is to help individuals with disabilities, from 14 years of age and up, to secure employment by removing barriers.
 - Glenn Barbee, Director and Secretary of Pensacola Lions Foundation - He introduced the Pensacola Lions Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit that sponsors projects and initiatives for individuals suffering from blindness or vision impairment, in addition to other community projects. A flyer was provided summarizing their projects including the Sight Clinic and Independence for the Blind.

August 20, 2025



- Public Forum
 - Thomas Burns with Kristy Hatsfelt & Joni Caraway serving as ASL Interpreters from AOI Interpreting Services – Reported the difficulty of locating and harnessing information to procure an ASL Interpreter through the Escambia County website
- Special Guest Presentations:
 - Eddie Smet, President of Five Flags Sertoma of Pensacola – He introduced the Pensacola chapter of the national Sertoma Clubs and the charitable work they engage in.
 - Jacquita L. Stokes, ADA Mobility Coordinator and Angela Walden, Mass Transit Information Specialist, ECAT – They discussed and promoted ECAT services specifically highlighting Flex Transit, ADA, and Transportation Disadvantage services.

October 15, 2025

- Public Forum
- Special Guest Presentations

November 19, 2025

- Public Forum
- Special Guest Presentations

Recommendations for the BCC

1. Post the procedures to request an ASL Interpreter in a prominent place on the Escambia County website.
2. Post the Escambia County procedures for requesting an ASL Interpreter in the Survival Guide.
3. Issue a standing contract for an ASL Interpreter to be present at all Escambia County Disability Awareness Committee and Board of County Commissioners Meetings.