

**Olmstead Consumer Taskforce
Community Access Committee Meeting Minutes
Date: 9/10/2025**

Attendees

Joel Vander Molen, Ernie Geiger, Harriet Gulbranson, Jessica Williams, Kelly Stull, Paula Connolly, Julie Gibbons, Zachary Mecham, Edward Esbeck, Laura Leise (HHS), Andria Pooley (Staff Support)

1. Advocacy Update

- Joel shared that city elections are coming up in November.
- He spoke with a candidate about accessibility in his town.

2. Medicaid Budget Cuts

- Many cuts will not go into effect until November 2026.
- Kelly noted changes impacting people living at home:
 - Moving to a daily rate system, which may drastically cut staff wages or client services.
- Best ways to advocate:
 - Reaching out to legislators.
 - Submitting public comment (open until September 19).
 - Link: [Provide Your Input on Proposed HCBS Waiver Changes in Iowa](#)
 - Summary of changes: [Proposed HCBS Waiver Changes](#).

3. SEATS Transport Issues

- Ernie continues to advocate on transportation access.
- He met with Angel McConville, who will provide a full explanation at the larger Taskforce meeting.
- Key issue: Budgeting for an additional bus to North Liberty / UIHC campus.
- Current workarounds exist but:
 - Require long wait times and personal costs.
 - Uber does not provide wheelchair-accessible options.

4. Data Crosswalk Update – Laura Leise (HHS)

- Crosswalk completed; data categorized into pools of need.
- Prioritized areas with greatest need and momentum.
- Developed goals to address identified needs.
- Laura will present goals at the Friday full Taskforce meeting.
- Revised publish date: delayed one month.

5. Allies and Advocacy Collaboration

- Zach reported work on collecting stories from Medicaid recipients.
- Goal: highlight what Medicaid enables people to do in their lives.
- Committee members are encouraged to connect Medicaid recipients with Allies and Advocacy to share their stories.

6. Scholarships

- Arc of Iowa is offering scholarships for the Make Your Mark and SOAR Conference.

9. Action Items

- Share and collect Medicaid recipient stories.
- Submit written comments on proposed CCO changes.
- Attend Friday's full Taskforce meeting.
- Continue local outreach to candidates on accessibility issues.
- Explore accessibility advocacy in schools now that the school year has begun.

Next Meeting: October 8, 2025