

COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES

MINUTES

June 20, 2019

After determining that a quorum was present, the Committee on Persons with Disabilities convened in a meeting on June 20, 2019 at 6:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Conference Room, at 321 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas.

PRESENT: Val Vera, Judy Thurmond, Henry Jason, Beth Haswell-Kirkby, Alison Kelly, Val Morgan

ABSENT: Jessica Spears Williams, Tammera Beckham, Rex King

Sonia Redwine arrived at 6:18 p.m.

STAFF PRESENT: Marc Oliphant, Ryan Adams, Becky Owens, Karisa Richards, Sarah Fullwood, Larry Chan

OTHERS PRESENT: Jordan Drake, Director of Program Services for Special Abilities of North Texas

REQUEST TO SPEAK:

Two people signed up to speak. Abigal Clement and Jean Greenlaw.

Abigal Clement wanted to inform the committee about the ADA29 rally for the 29th anniversary of the passing of the ADA. It will be held on July 27, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. at the Courthouse on the Square in Denton, Texas. There will be a march and the event will also include speakers. She would like for everyone to come out if they have a chance.

Haswell-Kirkby asked about parking around the square for the event and if there would be enough handicap spots. She said that over 100 people with disabilities have been invited.

Oliphant stated that the City did receive a request regarding parking for the event and that staff will be looking into it.

Jean Greenlaw stated that Denton already does a great deal to help the disabled, for example the trash pickup, if you are disabled you can get a yellow lid on your trash can and they will come get it for you and bring it back. There are other cities that do not do as much. She stated that she could see that 2 people on the committee were disabled because they came in with a roller but that there are so many things that people who are not disabled think about. For example when you are building new buildings, there will be a button on the outside to allow access to the building but the inside

doors are too heavy. Also going into bathrooms, the handicap stall is at the very back of the restroom. The floors are often times wet from the sinks and people washing their hands. It makes it difficult for the disabled to walk by without slipping. The handicap stalls should be at the front of the restroom. At the library, the furniture is not handicap friendly. The chairs are very low to the ground and makes it difficult to get out of them. She stated that there are kind people who will help her get out of the chairs but she should not have to ask for help. She asked that when furniture is being replaced or upgraded for people to think about the disabled. She said that you really need to ask and check with different disabled people to see what needs to be done.

Haswell-Kirkby stated that the committee is addressing new building construction as part of their scope of work for the City Council and how they see them as disabled people. She asked that people keep in mind that not everyone looks disabled and that not everyone has a mobility device. There are people on the committee that have disabilities that are invisible.

Jason stated that the charge of this committee is to ensure that the American's with disabilities act are usable and accessible to disabled and that they are looking into all of the items mentioned.

Chan stated that the comments are very well received.

Consider the approval of the minutes for the Committee on Persons with Disabilities meeting held on May 16, 2019.

Beckham motioned, and Haswell-Kirkby seconded to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding ways to increase awareness among the general public and city employees of issues related to accessibility and disabilities.

Fullwood gave a presentation on how The City of Denton utilizes a wide variety of communication methods to reach different audiences across the community. These efforts may target the broader community or seek to communicate to a targeted group. Their methods include print material, digital and social media, community and neighborhood relations, video and broadcast services, and media/public relations.

They operate with the goal of introducing, informing, and enlightening. Additionally, the communication office strives to tailor messaging specific to the audience and use data to understand the effectiveness of that message.

Haswell- Kirkby how can the committee draw and direct people to the website page.

Fullwood stated that communications can be sent out as new items or things are added to the website page.

Jason asked who decides what type of articles and links would go on the webpage.

Adams stated that that would go through the Public Communications office and the content would have to be approved.

Haswell-Kirkby stated that she would like for things like information on the trash cans with yellow lids listed on the webpage.

Adams stated that they can add the content for the program.

Jason stated that he had a concern with contacting staff and receiving information. He wanted to know how to let them know the scope of the committee. He said that on one occasion staff would not get back with him.

Adams asked that if that happened in the future as a customer services standard to please let him know so that it can be addressed but if he is requesting information for the committee to go through the staff liaison. The staff liaison can address concerns from the whole committee and not just one person.

Jason stated that they need an ADA coordinator who can address the issues and answer questions for the committee.

Haswell-Kirkby said that the city has 3 ADA coordinators on staff that Mark can contact.

Jason stated that they have other priorities and things that they need to do. He said that every city department needs to have ADA interaction.

Vera asked how they communicate items like the ADA29 rally.

Fullwood stated that the city can do a social media post for items like that. If you let the staff liaison know he can communicate that to the Public Communications department. Also if items like a proclamation are being done they can communicate that as well.

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding social services and programs available to the disabled in Denton.

There are numerous social services options available to the residents of Denton. Social services are provided by the city, county, state, and non-profit and faith based organizations. The types of services offered include housing assistance, mental health counseling, food resources, veteran specific needs, and medical care. The 211 community resource hotline is the recommended place to start for receiving assistance. 211 is provided by the Texas Department of Health and Human Services as a resource for all Texans.

Jordan Drake, Director of Program Services at Special Abilities of North Texas spoke about their program.

They are non-profit day hab program that provides programs in education/academics, vocational training/job coaching, health/fitness/nutrition, independent living skills, and community

inclusion for adults 18 and up with special needs. They are currently located in the Lewisville area but have hopes of coming to Denton.

The majority of clients come through medicade care programs and they do have a big wait list. They currently serve around 150 to 160 clients.

Henry asked if Denton residents partake in the Lewisville program.

Drake stated yes and that they have clients who also come through the Denton County MMHR but one of the barriers for Denton residents is transportation. DCTA access bus does not cross the bridge into Lewisville.

Haswell-Kirkby asked if they planned on getting a Denton facility.

Drake stated that they hoped to have a facility within the year as long as the location and building were the right fit. They are hoping to get a location that can serve up to 50 people.

Drake explained that they have over 20 people on staff that includes two nurses, direct care staff, program specialists, and college students.

Kelly asked if they had BCBA's on staff.

Drake stated that they do not have board certified behavior analyst on staff but do have lots of therapist, speech therapist, etc. and other can be contracted in.

The Lewisville campus is located at FM 407 & Garden Ridge in Lewisville.

They have been an organization for 26 years. They started in Denton as an adult day stay.

Henry asked what sets them apart from others.

Drake stated that they provide nurse care, can give medication, and provide lower staff to client ratios that other day hab programs do not have.

They receive the majority of their funding is through grants and fundraisers.

Oliphant asked if there were similar providers that are currently in Denton that can provide services.

Drake stated that there is a programs called Life Works community in Denton.

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding City facilities and accessibility.

Chan with the City of Denton facilities management department gave a presentation

The city owns and maintains many buildings and properties. The city facilities department is charged with their care.

Chan stated that he is familiar with the ADA and being an engineer has dealt with many ADA related issues.

He spoke on the issue of the doors being too heavy and said that the ADA does have set rules for items like that. If they do find issues with city facilities to please let staff know. The doors can be adjusted.

He stated that the reason toilets are located at the back of the restroom is due to costs and space.

He said that the city has a binder with information called the architect barrier renovation plan that has all of the city owned properties and issues with accessibility. All buildings have been surveyed and the issues are being worked on as funds are set per year. The book has been ongoing from 2014 with updates.

He said that items like parking lots that are being reworked and in the future will include the correct amount of handicap parking.

Beckham stated that weather or not the bathroom stall was at the front or back it takes up the same amount of space.

Chan stated that the ADA is constantly changing and they work to incorporate all of the changes.

If there is something installed wrong and needs to be updated, the city will work to fix it.

Henry stated that one of the limitations of committee is that they don't know what work is getting done and if it is in compliance.

Chan stated that any work that is done is reviewed by the State and they have the records of compliance.

Henry stated he wanted to be sure that steps are being taken to ensure compliance.

Haswell-Kirkby asked if it would be helpful to bring a committee member along when working on projects.

Chan said that if need be they can ask for the committees volunteer.

Morgan asked that facilities please take into account seating and furnishings as mentioned earlier.

Henry asked if projects could be listed on the website.

Chan said that he can work with staff to put out information in a quarterly type of article update. They could start in September with an introductory and current projects, what to be aware of, and tips.

Staff update:

DCTA Bus Stops: Thresholds- 10 boarding's per day are needed to justify a bench at a stop. 25 boarding's per day are needed to justify a shelter (very few stops with the exception of UNT actually meet this standard). DCTA is looking into modifying these thresholds. DCTA has a budget every year for passenger amenities, based on the federal grant money they receive (the USDOT funds 80%, DCTA funds 20%). All funds have been spent for the current fiscal year. The fiscal year (FY) '20 budget goes into effect on October 1, and will probably be around \$70k. The law says that DCTA is responsible for providing the accessible bus stop, but the jurisdiction, i.e. the City or TxDOT, is responsible for providing the accessible path. That has proven to be a big challenge. An accessible bus stop consists of a 5' X 8' level boarding area.

DCTA is working to identify all bus stops to make them all compliant.

Oliphant will coordinate to examine stops in Denton.

Henry stated that the blind can't tell where a bus stop is and would it be possible to put objects in ground that would help identify where stops are.

Jazz Fest Shuttles: Shuttle ridership was down this year for Jazz-Fest, though overall attendance was also down. A Jazz-Fest planning meeting will be held in the fall to go over lessons learned from this year and make changes for next year.

Grant Funding List Request: At the May meeting, the committee requested information about entities that currently receive city grant funding. This request is in process with the financial/budget department. Will get more in depth at a future meetings.

Service Animal Information: Staff will provide samples of service animal information cards at the meeting. These are available through online retailers. Those individuals accompanied by service animals can carry these cards on their person for easy reference. Marc will check into putting link to card on committee webpage and having veterinarians provide.

ADA Training: City staff have been in contact with the Southwest ADA center to solicit training information but have not yet been able to set a firm training date with the organization. Communication has been spotty and at times not responsive. Staff is going to look at different vendor.

Henry asked if the City is responsive to provide training.

Oliphant stated yes that providing training for the committee and staff related to the committee is a priority. Providing training for 1700+ city staff is not a guarantee but may be able to do training class through HR depending on the budget.

Haswell-Kirkby stated that staff related to committee need training, attorneys, committee members, and city council members.

MATRIX OF FUTURE ITEMS

- Census Complete Count Committee – July
Haswell- Kirkby asked if someone help fill out census form for people with disabilities
- Sidewalk & ADA ramp construction - July
- Volunteer opportunity follow up – library & animal shelter - July
- Right of Way management – August

Future topics for the Committee:

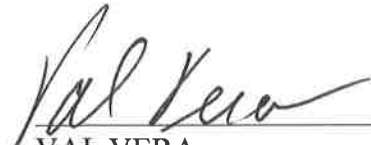
- Attendance rule for code that governs the open meetings act, excused and unexcused absences, more information to be provided.
- Have Danielle Shaw attend a meeting to explain social services her department provides.
- Have non-profit providers come and speak.
- Transition plan follow up.
- ADA training, online trainings that can be sent to everyone on staff.
- DCTA bus stops.
- Current grant funding – who receives funding from the city and where resources came from for budget. What is the process?
- State and Federal grant funding.
- Education for businesses, workshops, partner with the Chamber, UNT/TWU resources.
- Item brought to City Council to be voted on to hire 1 ADA coordinator position for the City of Denton, gather information from other cities, discuss at next meeting and take action on it.
- Revisit purpose of committee.
- Brainstorm workshop for committee members
- Have police department write out process for service dogs, step by step of what to do (disability discrimination) protocol of how to address – want written process not someone to come and how will it be communicated to public.
- Parking issue on Hickory Street that Rex brought up – has it been fixed / updated – back in parking.

- Information on sub-committee – how to set up and what process can be.


Set Future Meeting Date.

The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, July 18, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.



VAL VERA
VICE-CHAIR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS



KARISA RICHARDS
RECORDING SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS