

COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES

MINUTES

July 18, 2019

After determining that a quorum was present, the Committee on Persons with Disabilities convened in a meeting on July 18, 2019 at 6:04 p.m. in the Public Safety Training Center, at 719 E. Hickory Street, Denton, Texas.

PRESENT: Val Vera, Judy Thurmond, Beth Haswell-Kirkby, Alison Kelly, Val Morgan, Jessica Spears Williams, Tammera Beckham, Rex King, Sonia Redwine

ABSENT: N/A

STAFF PRESENT: Marc Oliphant, Ryan Adams, Becky Owens, Karisa Richards, Catherine Clifton, Carmen Grant, Brian Jahn

OTHERS PRESENT: N/A

REQUEST TO SPEAK: Jay Weidenbach, Director of Special Education for DISD introduced himself to the committee and let them know he was there to help however he could.

Haswell-Kirkby stated that the committee is interested in educational and job opportunities for the disabled.

Weidenbach stated that DISD could absolutely work with them along with one of his co-workers Christy Roberts to help students transition when they graduate.

Receive nominations and hold an election for a new Chair of the Committee on Persons with Disabilities. If necessary, receive nominations and hold an election for new co-Chair of the Committee on Persons with Disabilities.

The former chair is no longer serving on the committee therefore it is necessary to elect a new committee chair. If needed, the position of vice chair may also be elected at this time.

Beckham asked if the vice chair automatically became the new chair when the chair left the committee or if an election had to be held.

Clifton stated that an election for a new chair had to be completed but that the vice chair would fill in for the chair until a new chair was elected.

The committee decided to hold the election of a new chair and vice chair.

Haswell-Kirkby, Vera, and Kelly were nominated for chair.

With a majority vote, Vera was nominated chair.

Haswell-Kirkby, Kelly, and Beckham were nominated for vice chair.

Beckham removed herself from the vote.

Kelly removed herself from the vote.

With a majority of the vote, Haswell-Kirkby was nominated vice chair.

Consider the approval of the minutes for the Committee on Persons with Disabilities meeting held on June 20, 2019.

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

Receive a report and hold a discussion about volunteer opportunities for the disabled at City libraries and animal shelter.

Grant gave an update on the opportunities for the disabled for the libraries.

The libraries do offer a number of volunteer opportunities for people with disabilities as long as they are high functioning.

The public library utilizes many volunteers in different capacities. The first step to volunteer is signing up for an orientation training. It is offered every month but rotates among the three branches. At orientation, volunteers are asked to fill out an application and consent for a background check. Once someone is approved to be a volunteer, they can work at any branch. Volunteer activities include reshelving books and DVDs, pulling books, and help with the library computers (basic computer skills are very valuable).

Special opportunities are also available such as sorting through books for the book sale at the North Branch and helping with indexing newspapers and filing in the Special collections at Emily Fowler.

Finally, volunteers can help with special events assistance- setting up and manning a booth or tent or outreach to elementary schools, retirement homes, etc. In these special cases volunteers are paired up with a librarian. The library system has had many successful volunteers with disabilities.

Point of contact: Fred Kamman (south branch), (940) 349-8726, Fred.Kamman@cityofdenton.com

Haswell-Kirkby stated that they seem to have more volunteer opportunities for people who are physically able.

Grant stated yes, physically and mentally. That it is a demanding job.

Kelly asked if they had thought about accommodating people who were less than high functioning with items like helping dusting.

Grant stated that they have tried dusting and it seemed to bother them and sometimes they can't reach the top of the shelves.

Grant stated that they have tried several things, one also being cutting paper but it seemed to be taxing for them.

Kelly asked if people were approved on a case by case basis.

Grant stated yes because even if they can do it they may not want to do it when they get started.

Animal services was not discussed during the meeting.

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and receive feedback about the City's administrative program for ADA compliance and ADA coordinator(s).

Oliphant gave update on improvements and a central point of contact for an ADA coordinator.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Article II, provides guidance for municipalities with more than 50 employees. The general duties of a city are:

1. Designate an "ADA Coordinator" (The term "ADA Coordinator" does not appear in the law but this come to be the commonly used term for the position.)

1. Provide: Name, Office Address, Telephone Number

•Carla Romine (Employment), Carla.Romine@cityofdenton.com, (940) 349-8344

•Dean Hartley (City Facilities), Dean.Hartley@cityofdenton.com, (940) 349-8243

•Todd Estes (Public Rights-of-Way), Todd.Estes@cityofdenton.com, (940) 349-8917

2. Provide Public Notice about the ADA

1. Public notice about the ADA is provided via City of Denton ADA Directive 100.02

<https://www.cityofdenton.com/CoD/files/23/2371bb97-3714-4394-a79a-c66e4ecf5234.pdf>

3. Adopt and Publish Grievance Procedures

1. Grievance procedures are outlined in City of Denton ADA Directive 100.02, albeit briefly.

B. Questions concerning general ADA policy, reasonable accommodations, and grievances by citizens or employees not resolved by the appropriate department shall be directed to one of the following ADA Coordinators or their designee for resolution:

- Facilities Manager – buildings and facilities owned and/or operated by the City of Denton;
- City Engineer – public infrastructure; and
- Director of Human Resources – employment-related matters.

The ADA Coordinator shall resolve the issue(s) or make recommendations to department heads, the City Manager, or the City Council, as appropriate.

Spears Williams stated that there needs to be a clear understanding of where someone can go to file a grievance.

Adams stated that the committee webpage can be updated to include this information.

Vera asked if grievances are specifically related to the City of Denton.

Adams stated that it is for issues on City properties and not private establishments and that our current policy could be updated through human resources to include more information on grievances.

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and provide staff feedback regarding the City's Census Complete Count Committee which is tasked with ensuring that all Denton residents are counted in the upcoming 2020 census and how best to ensure that the disabled are counted.

Adams gave an update regarding the City's Census Complete Count Committee and asked for recommendations from the committee.

The 2020 Census will take place beginning April 1, 2020. The U.S. Census Bureau sponsors a program whereby local governments, schools, nonprofits, and civic organizations organize Complete Count Committees (CCC) to help resident's proactively complete census forms. The goal of a CCC is to ensure a more complete count through voluntary responses and to reduce the need for in-person census interviews.

A complete count is critical as 75% of all federal grants and other funding are apportioned based on census population estimates.

Each person counted, equates to roughly \$1,500 of federal dollars. To put it simply, if you're not counted, you don't count.

The role of a CCC includes:

- Educating communities and promoting the census through locally based, targeted outreach efforts
- Creating localized messaging to improve response rates
- Dynamic in nature to provide targeted support for communities with historically low response rates
- Holding census events and attending other community gatherings to inform residents about the importance of completing census forms

The Denton Complete Count Committee has identified 6 key objective areas to focus their education and outreach efforts:

- Immigrant populations
- Homeless populations
- Students
- Rental housing
- Geographic pockets
- Disabled and Elderly

The Denton CCC is seeking feedback on how to effectively engage the disabled community to encourage and enable them to complete the 2020 census.

The committee gave the following recommendations on reaching out to the community:

Nursing homes, assisted living centers, next door app, bars in town for students, flyers, coordinate with the VA clinic, have committee assist people with day where people can come in and committee can help, UBH, Denton State School, community market booth, post on disability webpage, medical centers, healthcare providers, Facebook pages.

Receive a report and hold a discussion regarding Article III of the City Code which governs boards, commissions, and committees and specifically discuss the attendance policy.

Article III requires members be given a copy of the ordinance. In making the determination on whether or not an absence will/will not be excused, the reasons that fall under an excused absence must be considered. If the reason for an absence does not fall under any of the noted categories, only the board can determine if it will be excused or unexcused. That type of decision can only be made if an item is properly posted on an agenda.

(Code 1966, § 1-43) (c)

Absences. Every board, commission, and committee member shall attend all regularly called and scheduled meetings of the board, commission, or committee of which he or she is a member. The chairperson shall announce, for the record, the names of members absent and determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. Members who cannot attend the meeting should contact the chairperson or an appropriate staff liaison concerning his or her absence prior to the meeting. The unexcused absence of any board, commission, or committee member from more than three (3) regularly called and scheduled meetings of the board, commission, or committee of which he or she is a member in any one (1) year or lack of attendance at fifty (50) percent of the number of regular meetings in a year, unless such absence is excused, shall be considered "cause," as that term is used in section 14.16 of the Charter, for removal of the member by the city council from such board, commission, or committee. An excused absence shall include personal or family illness, death of a family member, jury duty, service in the armed forces, testifying before the legislature, attending a seminar involving municipal matters of importance to the member's duties, absence necessary for the member's business or employment, and any related emergencies or other matters which the board, commission, or committee finds qualify as an excused absence. Attendance reports will be provided by boards, commissions, and committees to the city council on a quarterly basis for their review. Copies of this ordinance shall be forwarded to members of all of the standing boards, commissions, and committees and to new members as they are appointed.

Staff update:

Oliphant gave a Staff Update regarding:

DCTA Bus Stops: Staff met with DCTA on July 9th to further discuss the bus stop list compiled by the committee. Three stops were identified that DCTA can independently improve (without requiring major coordination and/or additional funding with TXDOT and/or the City).

Stop 770013 (2625 Scripture, by Texas Health Presbyterian)

- Shelter and/or bench could be installed

Stop 770123 (2400 E. McKinney, South Side, by “The Veranda” apartments)

Stop 770145 (2400 E. McKinney, North Side, by Fountains apartments)

- These two stops are across the street from each other. DCTA can approach private property owners about moving the stop closer to driveway aprons.

ADA Training: City training (half-day) is scheduled for the morning of August 8th from 8:30 am to noon in the Community Room of the Civic Center. The training provider is the Southwest ADA Center at ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization at TIRR Memorial Hermann Hospital). All committee members and select city staff are invited to participate.

Downtown Accessible Disabled Parking: The city has striped disabled parking spots in the concrete paved portion of the city owned lot between McKinney and Oak at Oakland. The lot will be repaved in the future and disabled parking will be included.

ADA Requirements in Acquisition Documents: Staff discussed the contract templates used by the City with the Purchasing department. The contract and solicitation forms reviewed did not have any language or reminders about ADA compliance. Going to follow up to dig deeper into

Trash Collection Assistance for the Elderly and Disabled:

Contact solid waste to set up service to get trash to vehicle

Robert’s Rules of Order: The more the committee can adhere to Robert’s Rules of Order (being recognized before you speak, yielding to others, etc) the more efficiently it can operate. Adhering to this ensures that more people can be heard. It also makes it easier for city staff as they type up meeting minutes.

Upcoming Events:

ADA 29th Anniversary Disability Rights Rally. 27 July at the Courthouse on the Square at 7 pm. The Mayor has also proclaimed July 27th as “Denton Disability Rights Day”.
Temporary parking at the event, signs made.

City Mobility Plan Public Meetings: Input for live meetings

- 31 July- 6:30 to 8 pm at the Denia Rec Center
- 1 August- 6:30 to 8 pm at the Patterson-Appleton Arts Center

ADA Training- August 8th, 8:30 am to noon. Civic Center Conference Room.

October is Disabilities Employment Awareness Month for the state of Texas.

Six-Month Check-In: This July meeting marks six-months of existence for the Committee on Persons with Disabilities. Staff would like to get any brief input or feedback that committee members may have about how things are going and what can be improved.

Vera is glad people can now share their opinions and not just coming from one person.

Haswell-Kirkby said that she thinks everything is going well even though progress has been slow. She does like the list that is provided that shows what has been completed.

Spears Williams is glad that training has been set. If training hadn't been scheduled this meeting she was thinking about leaving the committee.

Alison would like to know progress on at large and replacement members. Also information from KDB for volunteer opportunities.

Spears Williams asked that terms like "they or them" not be used when speaking about disabled people and would like for that to be included in the ADA training.

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 – not sure what progress is

Future topics for the Committee:

- Have Danielle Shaw attend a meeting to explain social services her department provides.
- Have non-profit providers come and speak.
- No need for sub-committee – as needed basis, specific topic
- October is National Disability Employment / month – awareness
- Miss Wheelchair Texas – come to speak
- Reach, Serve Denton, come to speak
- Have TWU / UNT come speak for students on campus

Set Future Meeting Date.

The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, August 15, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:48 p.m.



VAL VERA
CHAIR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS



KARISA RICHARDS
RECORDING SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS