

COMMITTEE ON PERSONS WITH
DISABILITIES

MINUTES

August 15, 2019

After determining that a quorum was present, the Committee on Persons with Disabilities convened in a meeting on August 15, 2019 at 6:02 p.m. in the City Council Work Session room, at 215 E. McKinney Street, Denton, Texas.

PRESENT: Val Vera, Judy Thurmond, Beth Haswell-Kirkby, Alison Kelly, Val Morgan, Tammera Beckham, Rex King, Sonia Redwine, Joe Rivas, Sally Austin

ABSENT: Jessica Spears Williams

STAFF PRESENT: Marc Oliphant, Becky Owens, Karisa Richards, Catherine Clifton, Brian Jahn

OTHERS PRESENT: N/A

REQUEST TO SPEAK: N/A

Chair Vera introduced new members Joe Rivas and Sally Austin.

Consider the approval of the minutes for the meeting held on July 18, 2019.

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

Receive a report and hold a discussion about the services offered to the Denton community by REACH Resource Center on Independent Living.

Murphy Hardinger with REACH of Denton Resource Center spoke regarding the services offered to the Denton community.

The REACH of Denton Resource Center on Independent Living (Rehabilitation, Education and Advocacy for Citizens with Disabilities (formerly Handicaps)) is a North Texas based nonprofit corporation with the dual mission of providing services for people with disabilities so that they are empowered to lead self-directed lives and educating the general public about disability related topics in order to promote a barrier free community.

REACH of Denton's primary service offerings include:

- Information referral and peer counseling
- Independent living skills training and advocacy assistance.
- Youth transition services
- ADA technical assistance and training

- Social and recreational activities

In addition, REACH offers:

- In-home Skills Training and Equipment Loan Items for People with Vision Loss
- Equipment Loan Program- Wheelchairs, Canes, Walkers, Shower Chairs, Bedside Commodes, as available (\$25.00 deposit plus doctor prescription required for wheelchairs, deposit is refundable when wheelchair is returned in good shape)
- General Support Group – most Wednesdays from 1–2:00pm (Call office for details)
- Youth Summer Camp
- Nursing Home Relocation Resources and Support
- Disability Awareness and Sensitivity Training
- Quarterly Newsletter

REACH emphasizing abilities and not disabilities.

Oliphant asked where they were located.

Hardinger stated that they are located in the same parking lot as the old El Guapos in Denton between Locust and Elm streets and Sycamore and Prairie streets. Two story brick buildings.

Receive a report and hold a discussion about occupational therapy and mental health resources in the region.

Dr. Claudette Fette, a TWU Faculty member and expert on occupational therapy and mental health, spoke to the committee about her area of expertise and how it can be applied to benefit the city's residents.

Fette started a group called the abled disabled group where everyone is welcome. It meets every Thursday at the Denton Community Health Clinic from 2pm to 4pm. They advocate for the needs for the poor in Denton and have productive occupations.

Fette also started a local Federation of Families a family to family organization for families raising kids with mental health needs. It is entirely volunteer. They meet at MMHR on the 2nd Tuesday of every month from 6pm to 7:30 pm.

Fette stated that we live in one of the least funded counties in the state and would like to see the city add more funding for mental health. She would like for more robust peer to peer support for organizations and support for recovery based issues.

Fette asked that we make sure there are strong initiatives for trauma informed systems across all systems for people who are abused and training for signs of abuse in disabled persons.

The website www.aaron-voices.com also has resources.

Receive a report and hold a discussion about a committee member's experience trying to

obtain yellow-topped trash cart assistance from the City Solid Waste Department.

The City's solid waste department offers a free cart service to persons with mobility limitations. A solid waste employee will move the cart to the curbside, empty it, and return to the cart to its place so that the resident doesn't have to move it. A committee member recently called to obtain this service. The committee will receive a report about her experience and will discuss opportunities for improvements and suggestions that can be made to the solid waste department.

Beckham gave a statement regarding her experience.

1. Found out phone# to call at committee meeting held on July 18th.
2. Dee, Care Giver, called first time on afternoon of Friday, July 19th. NOT SURE WHO SHE TALKED TO AND WILL NOT HAVE HER COMING BACK
3. Being a Friday, NOTHING GOT DONE.
4. Had Dee to call 2nd time on Monday, July 22nd and whoever she talked to said to wait until Trash Pick Up on Wednesday. Whoever she talked to asked why I needed those trash cans & wasn't there anyone nearby who could get it to the curb for me I thought this: THE AUDACITY OF THEM ASKING. I'm 100% DISABLED & this is a SERVICE OFFERED TO THE DISABLED PEOPLE OF THE CITY OF DENTON!
5. Out of town for former work/retirees' BRUNCH on Wednesday, July 24th. Home AFTER 5 PM SOOO CHECKED AND NO YELLOW LID TRASHCANS!
6. Had Dee call for 3rd time on Thursday, July 25th & talked to David Sanders, Field Services Supervisor/Collections Division/Solid Waste & Recycling Department came personally AFTER 5 PM. He gave Dee his Business Card with his office & cell phone #'s BOTH ON THE CARD. Actually, walked my 2 trash cans up from the curb to the house. Then, took photo of my house + the trash cans on his cell B4 leaving in his Black Suburban - like, LEXIUS car. DID NOT BRING YELLOW LID TRASH CANS.
7. AGAIN, ON FRIDAY, JULY 26th-- NOTHING HAPPENED.
8. Night of July 26th, attended the ADA - 29th Anniversary in downtown where met Mayor Pro Tem, Gerald Hudspeth.
9. Had Dee call on Monday, July 29th for 4th time in afternoon. Assured that Yellow Lid Trash Cans would be delivered to me. NOT!
10. Change of guards from Dee to Natalie - new Care Giver yet OLD FRIEND who has been working for me for over 1 year.
11. Have Natalie call for 5th time on Tuesday, July 30th.& left message on David's cell BC NO ANSWER ON # given.

12. Had Natalie call for 6th time on Wednesday, July 31st. She got I'm touch with David who said that this was the 1st time. That he'd heard of it! To witch Natalie said, "Funny thing, BC Tammie has your personal BUSINESS CARD. Again, NO YELLOW LID TRASH CANS By now, I'm wondering if they REALLY DO EXIST? NOW, I'M sooo very, mad that I realize that I'm fighting for ALL OF THE CITY OF DENTON DISABLED!
13. Natalie calls for the 7th time on Friday, August 2nd, where she talks to a TRACY who couldn't find David.
14. ALLISON called Natalie saying that she ASSURED US THAT THE YELLOW LID TRASH CANS WOULD BE DELIVERED TODAY BY THE END OF THE DAY on Thursday, August 1st. NO TRASH CANS DELIVERED !
15. Natalie called AGAIN FOR 8th time on Friday., August 2nd. Talked to a STARLA who put Natalie on hold to go talk to a KAREN and they ASSURED ME THAT ON MONDAY, AUGUST 5th BEFORE THE END OF THE WORK DAY that my YELLOW LID TRASH CAN + RECYCLING CAN WILL BE DELIVERED. We'll see I'm NOT HOLDING MY BREATHE ! Starla was the 1st & ONLY ONE who had to get my personal permission to speak to Natalie with Natalie telling STARLA the entire time that she probably COULD NOT UNDERSTAND ME BC OF MY PARALYZED VOCAL CORPS.
16. Also, Natalie was told during this conversation WITH STARLA that the Supervisors name was JOHNNY. SOOO, WHO IS IN CHARGE!!!
17. 9th phone call on Monday, August 5, 2019 -- GOOD THING I DIDN'T HOLD BY BREATHE BC NO YELLOW LID TRASH CANS!!!!!! Called at 4:34 PM & Natalie spoke to an ANTHONY who said that DAVID SANDERS was gone for the day. He'd give him the message tomorrow. Natalie was SOOO PISSED THAT SHE SAID THE FOLLOWING SO THAT ANTHONY COULD HEAR: "I guess we're just going to have to call the Mayor, Tammie."
18. FINALLY, ON THE MORNING OF AUGUST 6, 2019, NATALIE WAS LOADING HER TRUCK UP FOR SHIFT CHANGE (Care Givers switch on Tuesdays at 11:30AM) and this was about 9:35. Natalie came back in & announced this to me: "YELLOW LID ON THE GREEN TRASH CAN, BUT NOTHING ON THE RECYCLE CAN."
19. Conclusion: 9 Phone Calls by 2 different Care Givers + over 2 weeks to resolve this issue. HOW MANY DISABLED PEOPLE WOULD PUT UP WITH THIS MUCH RED TAPE?

Boerner, Director of Solid Waste for the City of Denton, apologized for situation and stated that the City is working on updating the program and working with customer service on response time and issues.

The normal process for the changes to be made to the lids is 2 weeks.

They are working on a system online where you are able to apply, download a form for your doctor to sign, and turn in to have the service started making the process easier for customers.

The timeframe for roll out of the new process is around 1 year.

Beckham asked if she will have to apply over again for new process.

Boerner stated that she would not but that everyone will have to reapply every two years in order to keep the service.

King stated that he had a good experience when he applied and that within a week he had a yellow lid. He stated that overall he had a good experience.

Alison asked if there was a place online now to apply.

Boerner stated that right now the only way to apply is to call customer service at 940-349-8400.

Redwine ask if when an individual calls in, do they know will take two weeks.

Boerner stated it is currently not on the script but they are working on updating it.

Receive a report, hold a discussion, and receive feedback about draft portions of the City of Denton ADA Transition Plan.

Oliphant gave an update on portions of the Denton ADA Transition Plan.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Article II, provides guidance for municipalities with more than 50 employees comply with the law. Denton is in the midst of drafting it's ADA Transition Plan. The Transition Plan documents Denton's current situation with respect to the ADA and lays out a map for the city to work towards a greater degree of compliance.

One of the important things it discusses is the standard PROWAG, Pedestrian right of way accessibility guidelines, which is like a supplement to the ADA that outlines best practices for providing accessible sidewalks, ramps, etc.

The document updated the current ADA coordinator information and what area each one is responsible for and also added language for a single ADA coordinator.

Public notice language was updated.

Information added for an ADA liaison committee that includes only city employees.

Vera stated that the liaison committee would need training.

Vera asked the total number of streets and intersections evaluated in the report.

Oliphant stated that the report would cover all areas in Denton.

This will be a living document and updates as they go.

Funding opportunities are included in the document, currently do not have dedicated funding.

The City is working on bond in November and part is for sidewalk improvements.

Austin asked if someone working on the issues was in an actual wheelchair and disabled.

Oliphant stated that they are required to be registered accessibility specialists.

Oliphant is hoping that within the next month the document will be available for review.

Staff Update regarding:

ADA Training: City staff and committee members received a half-day training on the Americans with Disabilities ACT on August 8th. The training provider was the Southwest ADA Center at ILRU (Independent Living Research Utilization at TIRR Memorial Hermann Hospital).

Redwine asked how was it received by city staff and if there is an opportunity to bring it back again?

Oliphant stated that everyone said they learned a lot and are excited to learn more and that they would look at training closer to home, free training, and possible funding to budget.

Committee members stated they were happy that they attended and learned a lot.

The committee stated that they would like for all of City Council to attend and all of the ADA City coordinator.

Kelly stated that she would like for a staff liaison from each department also attend.

Locust/Elm ADA Ramp Improvements: TxDOT has a project to bring the curb ramps along 15,000 linear feet of US 77 up to ADA standards within the city.

Map included in backup.

Informational PDF about Service Animals: City staff have prepared an information PDF about Service Animal rights. This document has been posted on the committee's webpage as an informational service to the community.

<https://www.cityofdenton.com/CoD/media/City-of-Denton/Government/Service-Animal-User-Rights.pdf>

Vera asked to update the description of images under pictures for text readers with descriptive text of what each picture is.

Morgan asked if it can be sent out to others, Chamber, business owners, realtors, housing authority, land lord association, main street association, etc.

King stated that as a military requirement, it has to be a trained animal and updated annually including a certification card.

Draft updates to the City's ADA Grievance Procedure: City staff have created an updated draft grievance policy. It is being reviewed by senior staff and city legal department.

Morgan asked if it was only for the City and to make that clear on the website.

Upcoming Events:

Recreation Center Planning Meeting: The Parks and Rec Dept. is hosting a focus group meeting for public input on recreation centers on Thursday, August 22 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room at Denton Civic Center, 321 E. McKinney St. You can also submit input via email to Gary Packan, Director of Parks and Recreation, at Gary.Packan@cityofdenton.com, call (940) 349-7460, or visit www.dentonparksmasterplan.com.

National Night Out, 30 Sept & 1 Oct: A citywide kickoff party will take place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Monday, Sept. 30 at the Civic Center. On the evening of Tuesday, Oct. 1, City staff will visit neighborhood-organized parties. <https://natw.org/>

October is Disabilities Employment Awareness Month: What could the city and committee do to promote this? Suggested events from the July meeting:

- Meeting/Luncheon with City HR director to talk about outreach and accommodation.
- Social media posts about it on city Facebook page. Or invite Record Chronicle to write an article. – JOURNALISM STUDENTS
- Proclamation.

Austin added that October 15th is National White Cane Day.

Matrix of Future Items

Come up with 6 month plan in future

- City social services
- Ada coordinator progress / informal staff report
- Keep Denton Beautiful volunteer discussion
- Animal control volunteer discussion
- Ada transition plan sidewalk inventory

Future topics for the Committee:

- Bring in Police Department for the whole meeting to discuss how the handle persons who are deaf, mental health focus person and who that have who is well versed in disabilities.
- Bring Michael Penaluna from emergency preparedness, list for people to call for

- emergency services
- Bring all ADA coordinators to meeting
 - Furniture for city facilities (Larry Chan & Dean Hartley) – after ADA training, chairs were miserable, adaptive equipment, system set up to order / keep track of furniture
 - Manager of CBOT for veterans to speak (Ashley French)

Set Future Meeting Date.

The next committee meeting will be held on Thursday, September 19, 2019 at 6:00 pm.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:05 p.m.



VAL VERA
CHAIR
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS



KARISA RICHARDS
RECORDING SECRETARY
CITY OF DENTON, TEXAS