

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES

October 3, 2013 MINUTES

Commissioners Present:

Esther Bennett, Susan Dye, JoAnne Fritsche, Don Izenman, Roxanne Miles, Gerrit Nyland, Gary Peterson, Lois Stark

Staff Present:

Gail Himes, Tansy Hayward, Marya Gingrey

Guests Present: Ken Gibson (TACID), David Viers (HSDC), Dan Eberle, Frank Gavaldon, Genal Gavaldon

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order. The agenda was accepted as presented. The minutes of the September 5, 2013 meeting were accepted as revised (pg. 7 - ~~Tacoma School District~~ District (should have been) Wilson High School is using a bond to remodel some of their schools. They will do the upgrades at Wilson High School in two phases. The first phase will be to work on the ball field, take out the tennis courts, etc. Phase two, which will be completed in 2015, will include work on curb ramps and walkways.

Director's Report: (Tansy Hayward)

- Director Hayward reported about the Temporary Homeless Camps. In 2010, the Washington Legislature passed Ch. 175 (ESHB 1956), codified as RCW 36.01.290, which granted broad authority to religious organizations to host temporary homeless camps for individuals experiencing homelessness on property owned or controlled by such organizations. Ms. Hayward passed out handouts, which gave in-depth information about this legislation.
- Ms. Hayward also passed out a draft document about CDBG and ESG Funding Priorities for 2014-15. This draft document gave guidelines about how CDBG and ESG funds are distributed. These funds are not population driven, but the city receives funds granted to them.

TACID Report (Ken Gibson):

- Mr. Gibson introduced David Viers from HSDC (Hearing, Speech & Deafness Center of South Sound, Tacoma).
- TACID is looking toward the future. They want to make sure the revenues are equal to the expenses. One exciting thing is that PEER Counseling Training will be held again next year. Another thing that is being looked at is how to align the partnership of the best of TACID with the best of Center for Independence.
- There were approximately 75 fewer people at the 2013 TACID luncheon, but the average donations were equal to what was received in 2012.



ADA Report (Gail Himes):

- To follow-up on Haley Edick's request/complaint for accessible audible signals (APS) at 12th & Pearl Streets and 9th & Pearl Streets. Adding APS to 12th Street will be expensive since it would require new curb ramps on all corners, but Ms. Himes will look to see if she can find the money in 2014. Ms. Himes found that 9th Street already has APS on the North crossing, which is working appropriately.
- Ms. Himes partnered with Northwest ADA Center, Barney Fleming, to give a two hour lecture to occupational therapy students from University of Puget Sound. They discussed how to evaluate buildings for ADA compliance. During the following week they evaluated City and Metro Parks buildings on their own. Ms. Himes received paper copies of building evaluations which she will share with Ms. Miles, ADA Coordinator for Metro Parks.
- Ms. Himes has been receiving complaints about the force and closing speeds of doors. Ms. Himes reported there is no code requirement to have automatic/power assisted doors. The State code allows 10 pounds of force for doors leading outside. Sometimes the force cannot be easily adjusted due to HVAC systems and other conditions.
- Ms. Himes attended the NW ADA Conference in Boise, ID. She connected with the ADA Coordinators from Seattle and Portland, who were both new, as well as many other ADA Coordinators from across the country. The Access Board also attended this meeting. They made the announcement that the Outdoor Recreational Guidelines are now enforceable only for federal agencies, not for state agencies.
- Ms. Himes, with the help of Chair Nyland, finished the third Curb Ramp two-day training for staff. About 58 staff were trained.

Public Open Forum:

- Frank Gavaldon, a former Human Rights Investigator with the City of Tacoma, mentioned that he felt his comments at the September meeting were minimized and not taken seriously. He clarified his concerns with the way the City of Tacoma was addressing the service to citizens in relationship to EEOC and ADA complaints filed. Chair Nyland stated that they have requested an answer to Mr. Gavaldon's previous concerns.
- David Viers, from Hearing, Speech & Deafness Center of South Sound, Tacoma, introduced himself and offered his agency to assist with any citizen who have a hearing, speech or deafness disabilities. Mr. Viers said he would provide the commissioners with flyers about the services his agency could provide.

New Business Items:

- Chair Nyland passed out a list of the COD Goals for 2013 so that the committees could give the current status of these goals.
 1. Improve and enrich the quality of life for people with disabilities living in the City of Tacoma.
 - a. **City websites:** Chair Nyland stated that there are 3 main components:
 - Continued testing as the websites are updated and modified.
 - Attempting to modify the process with IT, which is very time consuming. They are trying to reduce testing time from 40 hours down to 3 hours.
 - Working to give clear expectations to vendors who are contracting with the city.



- b. **Disability Advocate of the Year Awards:** Commissioner Fritsche gave information about the businesses and organizations that were considered for the award. She wants to give recommendations about how to reach out to these businesses and organizations in the future.
 - c. **End of Year Celebration:** Ms. Himes stated that the Effective Communication Team plans this celebration and they have begun to make plans. It is suggested that this take place at the December 4 COD meeting. Chair Nyland suggested that this be a joint celebration with the Human Rights Commission. He also suggested that members of the City Council be invited.
 - d. **Sound Transit Tacoma Link Extension:** Commissioner Stark stated this has been completed.
 - e. **Prairie Line Trail Task Force:** Commissioner Stark stated this has been completed.
 - f. **'Say Hey Tacoma' Event:** Commissioner Bennett stated that although the turnout for this year was not as many as previous years, the facility (Evergreen State College -Tacoma campus) was the nicest facility where they had held this event. Many success stories were shared by people with disabilities.
2. Educate the public on Accessibility Issues and Available Resources.
 - a. **Cityline Appearances (TV Tacoma):** Commissioner Miles needs to confer with the Effective Communication committee to see which topic on their list they would like the Cityline to cover. It was decided that it is appropriate for the Effective Communication committee to pursue this.
 3. Retrofit all City-Owned facilities to comply with the ADA Act.
 - a. **Tacoma Dome and Other City-Owned Internal Retrofits:** Ms. Himes stated that they need to regroup next year (2014) to pursue the rest of the external retrofits. All of the Tacoma Dome restrooms have been retrofitted and platforms for wheelchairs have been constructed. They are currently working on the bridges to these platforms.
 4. Improve Universal Access to All Tacoma Businesses.
 - a. **Tacoma Business Universal Access:** Commissioner Fritsche stated that businesses needed to be reminded of the tax benefits that are available. She has requested input from others how to approach this. Ms. Himes and Director Hayward mentioned some tools that were available for this use.
 5. Ensure All Parks Owned by the City of Tacoma are Accessible.
 - a. **City of Tacoma Park Accessibility:** Commissioner Miles stated that out of 35 of city owned parks, approximately 25% have already been audited. The remaining 80 city owned areas are open spaces and smaller parks.
 6. Educate City Staff on Disability Related Issues.
 - a. **Disability Related Issue Education for City Staff:** Chair Nyland reported that there have been approximately 8 city staff training sessions this year.
 - b. **Initiate Regular Contact with City Council:** Chair Nyland reported that the committees are waiting for an invitation from members of the City Council. Director Hayward mentioned that these invitations should occur during February and March 2014.
 - c. **Invite City Council Members to Attend at least one Commission Meeting:** Chair Nyland reported that the City Council Members will be invited to the COD



End of Year Celebration.

7. Ensure City Policies, Procedures and Contracts Support ADA Compliance.
 - a. Ms. Himes is working with the Legal and Purchasing Departments to review and revise the boilerplate language for all City contracts. Commissioners Dye and Moran would like to work with Ms. Himes on this project.
8. Increase Accessible Transportation Options.
 - a. **Help bring at least one accessible taxi to Tacoma:** Chair Nyland asked if anyone on the commission would like to pursue this topic. He has lots of background information on this subject.
 - b. **Educate Pierce Transit about the importance of accessible bus stops:** Ms. Himes is involved in meetings with the City and Pierce Transit. The goal is to reach agreement on accessibility issues and to finalize the franchise agreement. It was noted that Mr. Ken Gibson is currently a member of the Pierce Transit Advisory Committee.
9. Provide Oversight and Feedback on ADA Parking Citations and Fines.
 - a. **Meet with Parking Enforcement Staff:** Commissioner Dye has nothing to report.
10. Ensure Pedestrian Access During Construction.
 - a. **Provide at least one training to City Staff:** Commissioners Peterson, Stark, Izenman, and Nyland conducted a walkabout of the Pacific Avenue project to educate staff on pedestrian access through construction zones. Commissioner Peterson commended the construction crews for doing a great job.
11. Improve Accessibility of Pedestrian Routes Throughout the City.
 - a. **Identify pedestrian routes from bus stops to hospitals:** Chair Nyland, Commissioner Stark, and Ms. Himes have identified these routes and have partnered with the CEDD Department to achieve these improvements.
 - b. **Provide feedback on capital improvement and private development projects:** Chair Nyland is working to identify capital improvements and private development projects in the area.
12. Ensure the City of Tacoma Emergency Management is Prepared to Assist People with Disabilities during Disasters.
 - a. **Assist with City Council Adoption of the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan:** Ms. Himes attended the COOP/CEMP meeting the previous week. They hope to have the COOP plan in place by February 2014. However, the CEMP has not been adopted yet. Ms. Himes will discuss with city staff the importance of this being adopted by 2014 and each Department having policies and procedures to carry out all essential support functions.
 - b. **Monitor Adoption of the Minimum Building and Structures Code:** Ms. Himes is working with code enforcement about the minimum building and structures code language for the city. She feels that as long as the language is being interpreted correctly, there should be no future issues.
13. Evaluate Employment Practices in the City of Tacoma to Ensure Equal Access for People with Disabilities
 - a. **Work with city staff to improve access:** Commissioner Bennett has nothing new to report. There is a meeting scheduled the end of October concerning this.
 - b. **Continue to research private employment:** Ms. Himes stated they are working



with the Human Rights Commission concerning this.

Committee Reports:

- **Parking Enforcement:** (Commissioners Dye and Chair Nyland): -
 - See report above.
- **Public Right of Way and Transportation Committee:** (Commissioners Dye, Izenman, Stark and Chair Nyland): –
 - See report above.
- **Emergency Management and Public Safety** (Commissioners Moran, Porret and Stark): –
 - See report above.
- **City Parks** (Commissioners Stark, Miles):
 - See report above.
- **Effective Communication and COD Website:** (Commissioners Bennett, Fritsche and Izenman):
 - See report above.
- **ADA Web Accessibility Committee Team (Gail Himes, Gerrit Nyland):**
 - See report above.
- **City-Owned Facilities Retrofits (Commissioners Peterson and Porret)**
 - See report above.
- **Employment, Contracting and Licensing:** (Commissioners Bennett, Fritsche, Moran and Peterson, Gail Himes):
 - See report above.

Stakeholder Group Reports:

- Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition: Chair Nyland –
 - ◆ No Report.
- Prairie Line Trail Task Force: Commissioner Stark –
 - ◆ This is no longer an active committee, as this project has been completed.
- Pierce County Coordinated Transportation Coalition: Chair Nyland –
 - ◆ This is no longer an active committee, as this project has been completed.

Good of the Order/Announcements:

- Chair Nyland mentioned that normally the COD Retreat was held in the month of October. However, he suggested having a longer meeting for the January 2014 meeting to reflect about the 2014 Goals. It was suggested that the location for this long meeting



- be at somewhere besides TACID, to get them away from the regular meeting site.
- Director Hayward mentioned that the Human Right Commission was holding their retreat on Saturday, October 9.
 - Commissioner Fritsche complimented Ms. Gingrey for attending the COD meetings when she could. Commissioner Fritsche stated that she thought that since many of the issues and agendas of the COD and the Human Rights Commissions overlapped, it was good for them to understand how each commission worked.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:54 pm.

Next Meeting – November 7, 2013, 4:00-6:00pm at TACID

