

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, January 9, 2018 at 5:30pm at City Council Committee Room,
9th Floor, Suite 9081
One Civic Plaza NW, Albuquerque, NM

Members Present: Lisa McNiven, Terri O'Hare, Peggy Chong, Karen Cushnyr, Daniel Strones

Members Absent: Sacheen Smith, Michael Renaud

City Staff Members Present: Cultural Services Department: Deputy Director-Dave Matthews, Director of the ABQ BioPark -JT Allen, Mario Portillo-Assistant, Erica Renz-Project Manager, William Carr-Managing Attorney from the city's legal department

Members of the Public: Curtis Chong

Call to Order and Introductions: Meeting had a quorum. The meeting began at approximately 5:35 pm

Approval of Minutes and Agenda: Karen moved for the Minutes and Agenda to be approved, Peggy seconded.

Public Comment: none

Presentations/discussions: Discussion about Cultural Services and the BioPark and Zoo focused on service animal policies in particular. Safety of the zoo animals and safety of other guests visiting the facility is a key reason to determine if the claim of service animals are indeed, well-trained service animals performing tasks to assist a person with a disability. A zoo animal could injure itself if frightened from seeing a dog or other animal brought in by visitors, especially if not well behaved. Karen Cushnyr will be providing language for the Cultural Services staff to review how the ADA refers to service/assistance animals. The department is looking at everything involved with service animal access as a result of Karen's involvement and the department staff's visit with the ADA advisory board. They do have funding constraints but receive GRT funding and have a Master Plan document. They want to develop resources to expand access in the facilities and programming as possible at the BioPark and Zoo. The service animal policy that was put into place with no input from the disability community or the ADA board is open to revision in the future. The need for the policy is the public bringing untrained, unqualified pet animals to the BioPark and claiming they are service animals. Several guidelines were shared with Cultural Services to help with this task and to implement a better policy. The group discussed the existing city program of identifying authentic service animals and keeping the tags up to

date. Future meetings were mentioned to involve the disability community and the ADA board at the *start* of policymaking and programs, for a smoother integration of ideas and standards.

Member Terri O'Hare talked about how access and inclusive design within Cultural Services facilities and visitor programs can actually benefit all visitors, not just those with disabilities. Best practices from the Kennedy Center and Smithsonian were mentioned and contacts will be shared with staff. A national organization, LEAD, holds conferences every year dealing with museum and cultural services department accessibility ideas and issues. It was mentioned as a good event for city staff to attend. Terri framed access as a kind of expansion of cultural programming and an opening up of experiences for all who use the city's services in this area.

Member Lisa McNiven mentioned the Deaf community and needing and appreciating ASL interpreters for tours and events at the BioPark and Zoo. Lisa mentioned a uniform request policy be used by the city and its facilities to request interpreters. Member Peggy Chong said our board wishes for an open, honest dialogue with the city's departments.

Discussion of issues shifted from the Zoo and BioPark to the Sunport and animal relief service areas, (SARA). The work on these is 6 months behind and is being followed by Karen and others involved in this issue. TSA is dealing with pets on airplanes and the Air Carrier Act covers passengers with disabilities. Lisa McNiven mentioned when she has been in the Sunport and has found no assistance or courtesy phones available in the secure passenger area after TSA screening. There were no videophones in this area, either. One videophone is located in the main lobby area on another floor. This isn't good access policy for the Deaf community.

Public Comment: none

Adjournment:

The meeting was moved for adjournment by Peggy Chong at 6:40 pm, and seconded by Lisa McNiven.

The informal meeting minutes from January 9, 2018 have been prepared and approved by:

Chairperson: Karen Cushnyr _____ Date _____

Secretary: Terri O'Hare _____ Date _____