

Americans with Disability Advisory Council Minutes

Date: Tuesday, November 10, 2020

Time: 5:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

Council Members Present:

Matthew Loehman, Chair
Travis Davis, Vice-Chair
Sean King
Daniel Strones
Kaatje van der Gaarden
Jessie Calero

City Staff Present:

Adam Leuschel, Assistant City Attorney
Jordan Vargas, ADA Coordinator
Crystal Velarde, Minute Taker
Rolando Suarez, Assistance Operations Manager

Members of the Public:

Adena Martinez
Rachel Cooper
Terra
Karen Cushynr
Nate Dean

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:36 pm with Chair Loehman and Members Davis, King, van der Gaarden, Calero and Strones participating.

II: APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Loehman requested the Council move Discussion on Albuquerque Rapid Transit (ART) and ADA Access be heard before ADA Advisory Council Resolution. Member King moved to approve the agenda with requested amendments, and Vice Chair Davis seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by other council members.

III: APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM OCTOBER 6, 2020

Member Calero moved to approve the minutes from October 6th, and Member King seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by other council members.

IV: INTRODUCTIONS

Council members, City staff and members of the public introduced themselves.

V: PUBLIC COMMENT

Members of the public shared their concerns regarding service animals at voting polls and finding attorneys to represent disabled members of the community in domestic matters.

A member of the public also shared there is a Facebook group called People First of Albuquerque and they meet on Wednesdays.

VI: DISCUSSION ON ALBUQUERQUE RAPID TRANSIT (ART) AND ADA ACCESS

Member van der Gaarden shared issues she has experienced riding the ART buses. Her main concern is the way her wheelchair is fastened when using the ART buses. Member van der Gaarden's wheelchair reclines to help with her medical needs. Some drivers do not allow her to face the direction that will allow for her wheelchair to recline. Member van der Gaarden would like to know if there is a way, she would be allowed to face the direction she needs to recline her wheelchair.

Mr. Suarez shared a video from YouTube explaining how the bus locking mechanism works. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aogfpsnjHO4&feature=emb_rel_end) He went on to explain the locking mechanism works when the wheelchair is rear facing and not forward facing. Like Member van der Gaarden is requesting. However, they have added a 4-point tie-down system that will accommodate Member van der Gaarden's needs. He stated Transit is in the process of doing a refresher course on the locking mechanisms they have on the busses. He is also hoping to start 90-day refresher courses as well, since the drivers do not use the locking mechanism often.

Mr. Suarez also discussed service animals vs. emotional support animals. Under ADA regulations service animals are allowed on busses but emotional support animals are not. It was addressed that the policy may state different. He will look into it but as he currently understands that service animals are the only ones allowed. Ms. Vargas shared Department of Transportation (DOT) does have a different definition than ADA. They will work together to address the policy and make sure Transit is following all guidelines.

VII: ADA ADVISORY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

Vice Chair Davis moved to approve the ADA Advisory Council Resolution, and Member King seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by other council members.

VIII: UPDATE ON ADA INQUIRIES, JORDAN VARGAS, CITY OF ALBUQUERQUE ADA TITLE II COORDINATOR

Ms. Vargas shared calls are down for Title II ADA issues. Most City facilities and services are closed or limited due to COVID. However, she did receive an email regarding a City website not having image descriptions. She is working with the department to make sure they are addressing this issue.

Ms. Vargas is also receiving calls regarding wearing masks. She is seeing a lot of businesses deny services where they need to be providing another avenue. Other avenues could include curbside pick-up or delivery for many stores.

IX: NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM MEMBERS

Chair Loehman announced if members wish to add to the agenda, they can contact him.

Member Strones shared he is part of creating a new organization called The Albuquerque Crisis Intervention Coalition. They are working on getting an alternative number to 911 to assist with mental health and homelessness.

X: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:59 p.m.

Next regularly scheduled ADA Advisory Council Meeting will be Tuesday, December 1, 2020.

Matthew Loehman, Chair

Date