

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ADVISORY COUNCIL MINUTES

Tuesday, December 6, 2016 at 5:30pm
at North Valley Senior Center, at 3825 4th Street NW 87107

Note: Please read information about NEW meeting location for January 2017 Pgs 2-3.

Members Present: Lisa McNiven, Peggy Chong, Terri O'Hare, Karen Cushnyr, CeeCee Montgomery

Members Absent: none

Staff Members Present: City: Annabelle Romero

Guests present: Albuquerque Police Chief Gorden Eden, Deputy Fire Chief Christopher Wade, Major Arturo Gonzales, Animal Welfare Corporal Iris Goddard, Lieutenant McKay

Members of the Public: Lindsay Sloan, Tara Chavez and her guide dog Rica, Brianne Kotschwar and her guide dog Melville, Teresa Blankmeyer Burke

Call to Order and Introductions: Meeting called to order at approximately 5:35 pm

Approval of Minutes and agenda: Peggy Chong made a motion to approve minutes and agenda, Lisa McNiven seconded approval.

Presentations:

Service/guide animals covered under ADA and EMS/APD interactions with their owners: Chief Eden spoke to several topics regarding guide/assistance animals and law enforcement/EMS. He stated there was no consistent, standard operating procedure (SOP) for how to handle assistance/guide animals when their owners may be unconscious and have a severe injury and need to be taken to the ER.

Deputy Fire Chief Christopher Wade added that during a traumatic time of stabilizing the injured, (if a 911 call), and transporting to the ER, the crew on site often makes the decision about bringing the animal along in the ambulance and to the hospital. Some local ambulance companies have clear guidelines while others do not. Sometimes the EMS crew stays at the residence until a family member/friend can be located if there are pets that need to stay. Discussion also covered deaf citizens having an emergency and the need for professional interpreters, *not family members as interpreters*. Members of the ADA council gave first-hand feedback and provided options for ASL interpretation in emergency situations.

The discussion led by member Peggy Chong also questioned if policies were in place city-wide and even statewide for how to handle deaf and/or blind/disabled citizens who may need ASL interpreting and procedures for handling service animals safely and for the benefit and proximity of the injured person.

Council member Lisa McNiven will get contact information for emergency ASL services to EMS and APD staff. No service/guide animals are presently allowed in the MDC, Metropolitan Detention Center.

Chief Eden suggested having a statewide policy developed into law on these issues, and advocated for, by one of the state disability orgs. Member Karen Cushnyr mentioned the state already has legislation from 2013 about clarifying what a service animal is and what protections they have under state and Federal law such as ADA.

Lieutenant McKay asked how to determine what a real service/guide animal is. A great question. With so many 'fakes' it is very difficult to actually know what is real. The council members discussed various ways to identify a real vs. fake working animal. Members of the public were very helpful, speaking from first hand experience with their dogs about behaviors that authentic working animals have compared to fake, often unruly animals in public.

Additional discussions explored where a service animal who cannot accompany their owner, goes during an emergency. How long will an animal will be kept? Will the animal be checked for current shots as they enter any multi-animal shelter? Answers by Corporal Iris Goddard of Animal Welfare were the animal will go to the city's Animal Welfare Department and be kept for at least 14 days with room and board. There will be microchip scanning of the animal to see current shots and health/immunization records and of course, to identify contacts for the animal to be released to. Service animals will not be adopted out, the Animal Welfare staff stated.

Another topic covered with law enforcement staff pertained to several traffic lights in downtown intersections that were covered over and now are 4-way stop signs. This presents dangerous issues for pedestrians with disabilities of all kind, as this happened with no warning. One location downtown is a central office for several disability organizations and people come and go frequently using canes, wheelchairs and guide dogs. There have been some near-miss accidents due to the removal of the street lights at crossings. Chief Eden said one reason this was done was to prevent jaywalking at some streets. There was discussion of notice signs for drivers to slow down and stop. This situation will be monitored by members of the ADA Council.

The ADA Council was *very appreciative* of Chief Eden attending along with several law enforcement professionals and the Deputy Fire Chief.

ADA Council member's business:

Member Karen Cushnyr reported on the 'Pets on Transit' Resolution passed six months ago as a pilot by Councilor Trudy Jones and the status of the impact on transit riders and drivers (and service/guide animals). There will be a longer process now apparently, where the city will hold public information meetings and drivers will be able to give feedback to Transit management staff before the resolution is made final or denied.

Member Terri O'Hare stated she would like the Council to consider a January 'planning meeting' for the next year-a meeting held in public, but for the purpose of discussing goals, events and objectives for 2017 rather than a traditional agenda. All were interested and Peggy Chong said it would need to be after January 12th for her calendar.

Public Comment:

Teresa Blankmeyer Burke spoke regarding a Nob Hill business violating ADA disabled parking space regulations with a truck parked in spaces and others blocked by cones in preparation for the Nob Hill Shop & Stroll event. The attached 3 page letter explains the situation in detail. The ADA Council thanks Teresa for taking the time to self-advocate in this situation and to attend the ADA Council meeting for our education.

Adjournment:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm by a motion from Peggy Chong. It was seconded by Lisa McNiven.

NEW LOCATION FOR JANUARY MEETING, IMPORTANT:

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the ADA Council will be held on Tuesday, January 3, 2017, in the accessible City Council Committee Room, 9th Floor, Suite 9081 of the (City Hall) Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Government Center building, One Civic Plaza NW, Albuquerque. Underground and surface parking is available right in front of the building.

The meeting minutes from December 6, 2016, have been prepared and approved by:

Chairperson: Karen Cushnyr _____ Date _____

Secretary: Terri O'Hare _____ Date _____