



CITY OF TUCSON COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES (CODI) Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Tucson Commission on Disability Issues was called to order by Chair Cyndi Segroves on Wednesday, November 19, 2008, at 2:31 p.m., at Ward 6 Office, Conference Room, 3202 E. 1st Street, Tucson, AZ.

1. Roll Call

Commission Members	Representing	Present/Absent
Susan Zimmerman	Mayor	Present
Vacancy	Ward 1	
Vacancy	Ward 2	
Michael Pesce	Ward 3	Present
Pamela Rhatigan	Ward 4	Present
Cyndi Segroves - Chair	Ward 5	Present
Robert Blizzard	Ward 6	Present
Willie Bond	Mayor/Council	Present
Jeffrey Handt	Mayor/Council	Present
Vacancy	Mayor/Council	
Jean Paul Jorquera	City Manager	Absent
Anthony King	City Manager	Absent
Ken Rogers – Vice Chair	City Manager	Absent
Staff Present	Representing	
Draig Phillips	Recording Secretary, City Clerk's Office	

2. Approval of Minutes – October 15, 2008

It was moved by Commissioner Pesce, duly seconded, and passed by a voice vote of 7 to 0 (Commissioners Jorquera, King, and Rogers absent) to approve the October 15, 2008 meeting minutes.

3. Staff Reports - Recommendation/Discussion/Action

- a. Equal Opportunity Programs – Alison Colter-Mack reported that all ADA compliance modifications that were allowed due to budget constraints had been completed. Some “beautification” work was still being done in the lobby restroom of the Tucson Convention Center Music Hall. Work at the Leo Rich Theater was complete. She said the remaining needed work would hopefully be completed some time next year.

Ms. Colter-Mack said the City was in the fourth year of the Department of Justice ADA compliance requirements, which was the monitoring phase. Preparations were being made to conduct the self-monitoring phase, which would lead to the self-audit. Afterwards the City would develop the transition plan, which would provide a five-year view of where the City was in order to make continued modifications.

Chair Segroves asked if Ms. Colter-Mack had heard from Dale Roose about the many concerns he had expressed at the October CODI meeting.

Ms. Colter-Mack said she had and had emailed him, but had not heard back from him. She said they went ahead and made some modifications and repairs to the areas in question at the Ward 2 office. She said there were other complaints he had that could not be addressed at this time due to the high costs, but they would be included in the transition plan.

Ms. Colter-Mack passed out materials from a conference she had attended regarding changes to the ADA. Of note, was the addition of nine (9) more major life activities that determine if someone was protected by the ADA. Also, the definition of what was a service animal was narrowed, specifying they must be a domestic animal. This was different than what was defined in the Housing Act, which still lists comfort animals as being allowed. This meant if there was a question, she would have to draw from multiple sources to make a determination. These changes would go into effect January 1, 2009, and should not be confused with changes to the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA-ADA) which would be coming from

the Department of Justice. It might take up to two (2) more years for those changes to go into effect. Therefore modifications to the City's facilities would be looked at based on the current ABA-ADA standards.

Ms. Colter-Mack introduced Martin DuPont, the new ADA Compliance Specialist. He would be helping her with the ADA modifications in order to fulfill the requirements of the Department of Justice settlement agreement. Together they would be working on the self-audit phase and developing the transition plan. Also, if necessary he would attend CODI meetings in Ms. Colter-Mack's absence.

- b. ADA Eligibility/Transportation – John Zukas reported that in October 2008 there were two hundred ninety three (293) applications requested, three hundred eleven (311) received, and seventy seven (77) returned as incomplete. He said the application had been updated to be more user friendly and they should therefore have fewer problems.

Mr. Zukas said there were two hundred eighty eight (288) ADA eligibility applications processed, of which one hundred fifty six (156) were new and one hundred thirty two (132) were re-certifications. Nine (9) of the new applications were denied as was one (1) of the re-certification applications, constituting three point four seven percent (3.47%) of the total processed. There were four (4) ADA appeals scheduled. One (1) ended up canceling due to providing a new application with new information. Three (3) appeals were heard and the initial determinations were upheld in all three (3) cases. The average number of days to process ADA applications was four point one six (4.16), well under the required twenty one (21) days.

Commissioner Pesce asked how often someone needed to have their ADA eligibility re-certified.

Mr. Zukas said it was dependent on the individual's circumstances, however the longest term would be no more than three (3) years, even if someone had a permanent disability. The required re-certifications helped to keep the database current.

Chair Segroves said she had a positive experience when she recently used the Handi-Car service. There was just some confusion when she went to buy a pass.

Mr. Zukas said there were still some people who did not understand how this relatively new service could be used when making trips out of the normal Van Tran service areas. He said this was pursuant to the use of some Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) funds allowing those who were currently ADA certified to use both systems. Van Tran used an electronic system for payment, whereas Handi-Car still used a voucher system. Efforts were underway for the contractor providing the Handi-Car service to use the same software, which would allow electronic payment for both services.

Tucson City Council Member Nina Trasoff asked if someone used the Handi-Car system to travel outside the Van Tran area going to Oro Valley, would only Oro Valley residents be eligible for a Coyote Run.

Mr. Zukas said Coyote Run was yet a third system available only to Oro Valley residents, sixty two (62) years of age or older and/or ADA eligible. Through an intergovernmental agreement between Tucson and Oro Valley, those residents used the Tucson ADA Eligibility Office for screening. Coyote Run and Handi-Car were both premium services, as opposed to Van Tran, which was an ADA complimentary paratransit service.

Commissioner Bond asked if any increase in coverage and operating hours were being considered for Sun Tran and Van Tran.

Mr. Zukas said this was considered, but this was an example of how Handi-Car and Coyote Run could be used to travel outside the current Van Tran service areas. He said Coyote Run had later operating hours, too.

Chair Segroves said Handi-Car services were slightly less expensive than Van Tran. Handi-Car would only come to pick

someone up in Tucson if the person's destination was to the Handi-Car's service area.

Mr. Zukas said due to the complexity of how to use the three (3) systems he encouraged commissioners with questions to call him and he would explain each service and how they interacted. He said there would be an RTA regional paratransit study conducted soon and he hoped to bring more information to the Commission.

Commissioner Pesce asked if any effort was planned to inform users of Van Tran of the availability to them of these other services.

Mr. Zukas said not at that time, because the expansion of the current boundaries would be part of the considerations during the RTA regional paratransit study.

Commissioner Pesce said at the recent Building an Inclusive Tucson Conference many participants asked whether Van Tran coverage would be expanded.

Mr. Zukas said once the study was completed he believed they would be pleased with what would be a more regional system. He said although Coyote Run was a system just for Oro Valley residents, he believed Handi-Car would be taking over the ADA paratransit service within Oro Valley.

Commissioner Blizzard asked if the Smart Card system would be integrated into the new regional system.

Mr. Zukas said the Smart Card system related to Sun Tran users, not those whose sole option was Van Tran due to their ADA eligibility status. He said although the software would allow for the issuance of Smart Cards, this would necessitate everyone coming in to have their picture taken for the Smart Card, which would incur a greater expense.

- c. Sun Tran/Van Tran – Ralph Power reported Sun Tran currently operated out of a facility designed to accommodate one hundred fifty (150) buses, but now houses in excess of two hundred ten

(210) buses. A new facility was being built and would be able to house some express buses beginning in February 2009. He said the new facility should be completed by November 2009 allowing for a more even distribution of the fleet. Additionally, Mr. Power said the re-imaging campaign for both Sun Tran and Van Tran was underway, which should be complete by late February 2009.

Mr. Power reported for Sun Tran in October 2008 special needs transit ambassador training was held for nine (9) operators for a total of thirty six (36) hours. Customer service made nine (9) presentations reaching one thousand nine hundred ninety five (1,995) consumers. Seventeen (17) participants attended the Sun Tran Accessible Rider Training (START) for a total of sixty eight (68) hours. There were thirteen (13) service reports of which six (6) were determined chargeable. He said they wanted to reduce the complaints to zero (0), but considering October was the first time in Sun Tran history where there were over two (2) million rides provided, six (6) chargeable complaints was a relatively small number.

Chair Segroves asked if the re-imaging effort included new posters on the buses she had seen.

Mr. Power said he was not sure.

Chair Segroves asked if there was a new push for drivers to crack down on fares. She cited an example she had recently witnessed.

Mr. Power said there was an effort ongoing to restrict fare evasion. He said they had to consider at what point it would become a safety issue. He said he suspected the incident cited involved a driver fresh out of training.

Commissioner Handt asked how far Sun Tran went toward Houghton Road.

Mr. Power said the routes still went only to Harrison Road.

Mr. Power said forty two (42) new Van Tran camera-equipped vehicles would be arriving in December 2008 and January 2009,

bringing more than seventy five percent (75%) of the total active fleet camera ready. After the next procurement, the fleet would be one hundred percent (100%) camera ready.

Mr. Power said Trish Tezer and the supervisors of the Operations Department had completed the first draft of the strategic plan, which should go into effect by January 2009.

Mr. Power reported for Van Tran in October 2008, compared to the same time last year, there were over seven thousand two hundred (7,200) more passengers for a total of over two hundred and ten thousand (210,000). Cancellations were down by over three thousand (3,000). Actual passengers were up by nine thousand five hundred (9,500), indicating an increase of seven percent (7%). On time performance was at ninety four point zero nine percent (94.09%) and late pick ups were at five point nine one percent (5.91%). Significantly late pick ups were at sixty (60), representing point one five percent (.15%), the standard being two percent (2%). Out of fifty five thousand (55,000) trips during the month, there were ten (10) correctable complaints and four (4) compliments.

Commissioner Pesce said he had heard complaints about how Van Tran drivers used to come to the door during pick ups, but now they did not.

Mr. Power said this was a policy decision based on the origin-to-destination regulation of the Federal Transit Administration. The City decided to move from a door-to-door policy to a curb-to-curb policy. One main reason was so the driver did not lose sight of the vehicle for safety and liability reasons.

Commissioner Pesce asked that this situation be included in a future customer satisfaction survey to gauge how much this has affected passengers.

Mr. Power said some of it was predicated on rising costs and that Van Tran was charged with providing a public transportation service, not to do the job of public service agencies that serve the clients who use Van Tran. They would work with passengers on a

case-by-case basis. Whenever anyone had requested it, they had sent a supervisor out to work with the passengers.

Commissioner Bond asked the same question he had posed to Mr. Zukas regarding the expansion of services.

Mr. Power said Van Tran actually already served a wider area than Sun Tran did.

Mr. Zukas said a regional paratransit coordination plan was being developed involving the three providers. In the past the City of Tucson decided to expand Van Tran services beyond what was specified in the ADA, that is a three (3) mile band around the city limits and be operated during the same hours as days of service of the regular bus system.

d. Parks & Recreation – No report was given.

4. Goals for CODI – Council Member Nina Trasoff – Informational Only

Council Member Trasoff said she did not want to talk to the Commission, rather she wanted to listen to them. Some of the highlights of the discussion included:

- Raising the awareness of able-bodied individuals to the challenges faced by the disabled community.
- Having Chair Segroves speak to the Mayor and Council at a coming Study Session about the issues confronting the disabled community.
- Challenges the City was faced with to provide services at previous levels while having to adjust to dwindling resources and revenue incomes.
- How CODI and the Mayor and Council can better meet the needs of the developmentally disabled community.
- Fostering sports activities for those who use powered wheel chairs and working with other entities, such as Tucson Unified School District, to share sports and recreational facilities.

- Housing accessibility issues for the disabled, specifically regarding rental units.

5. Review and Recap of the Building an Inclusive Tucson Conference – Discussion/Recommendation/Action

Commissioner Pesce said the conference planning group had a meeting and discussed the conference. They reviewed the feedback forms noting things that were enjoyed and recommendations for improvement for future conferences. Chief among the responses was the desire for extended bus service going to further outlying areas not currently served. Also noted was the lack of enforcement of disabled parking, better streets and sidewalks, the need for free citywide broadband Internet service, moving away from negative terms such as people being “mentally ill”, and the need for more automatic doors. Finally, Commissioner Pesce suggested a letter be written to Mayor and Council advising them of the many concerns that were raised by conference participants.

Commissioner Pesce said based on the evaluations the areas of interest participants looked for were housing, transportation, social activities and how to generally be active. He said these would be the areas they would concentrate on during the next conference.

Commissioner Pesce said the conference cost totaled eleven thousand seven hundred and one dollars (\$11,701). There was a net income left over after expenses of ten thousand five hundred fifty seven dollars (\$10,557).

Commissioner Blizzard asked if there was any consideration about having a breakout session regarding legislative issues as they relate to the disabled community.

Commissioner Pesce said that was not one of the areas the conference planning group had talked about.

6. Call to the audience

No one spoke.

7. Break

The Commissioners chose not to take a break.

8. Email and mail distribution of meeting materials - Discussion/Recommendation/Action

Chair Segroves said in order to assist with expenses she was asking the Commissioners who had access to email to agree to receive their meeting materials via email, rather than hard copies mailed to them.

Commissioner Handt said he was agreeable as long as he could get hard copies for his records of the agenda and meeting minutes at the meetings. All other Commissioners present agreed to the email option. Those who did not have email would continue to receive these materials via regular mail.

9. Chairperson's Summary of Current Events - Informational Only

Chair Segroves said she and Vice Chair Rogers had previously done some public service announcements regarding the Ticket To Work program. Just under four hundred (400) people had responded to the campaign. She said she had recently attended a meeting regarding advocacy issues and new Medicare rules. She said she would be attending the "Gang of 13" meeting, which was a collaboration of people from many groups who deal with the disabled community.

10. Commission Member's Summary of Current Events – Informational Only

Commissioner Zimmerman passed out copies of a guest opinion article regarding helping veterans to overcome mental-health stigma.

Commissioner Handt said he was a member of the Sons of Orpheus Choir and they would be holding a concert December 17, 2008 at the School for the Deaf and Blind.

Commissioner Bond said there would be a Ticket to Work teleconference on December 9, 2008.

11. Sub-committee Reports – Informational Only

- a. Housing – No report was given.
- b. Public Relations/Education - No report was given.
- c. Services/Programs/Activities/Architectural Barriers (SPAA) - No report was given.
- d. Transportation - No report was given.
- e. Employment - No report was given.
- f. Legislation - No report was given.

12. Budget Report and Expenditures – Recommendation/Discussion/Action

- a. Reimbursement for plaque for George McFerron

It was moved by Commissioner Pesce, duly seconded, and passed by a voice vote of 7 to 0 (Commissioners Jorquera, King, and Rogers absent) to reimburse Chair Segroves for \$64.86 spent for a plaque given to former CODI Chair George McFerron.

- b. Discuss expenses for CODI December Holiday celebration

Discussion was held and decided not to allocate any funds for the CODI December Holiday celebration.

13. Future Agenda Items

The following items were suggested for future meetings:

- Disaster preparedness issues
- Presentation regarding the ADA changes from the Arizona Center for Disability Law
- Presentation from the Pima Council on Aging

14. Adjournment – Meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m.