



# **COMMISSION ON DISABILITY**

## **MINUTES**

Wednesday, July 8, 2020, 1:00P.M.

Department on Disability

Zoom Video Conference

### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Myrna Cabanban  
David Wolf  
Robert Williams  
Betty Wilson  
Richard Rothenberg  
Iran Hopkins  
Alisa Schlesinger  
Dr. Robert Bitonte

### **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

### **DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY:**

Stephen David Simon, Executive Director, Department on Disability

## **OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:**

Chris Lee, Deputy City Attorney III, City Attorney's Office

Brenda Shockley, Deputy Mayor of Economic Opportunity and Chief Equity Officer, Mayor's Office

Beatrice Girmala, Assistant Chief of Police and Director of Office of Support Services, Los Angeles Police Department

## **ITEM NO. (1): APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

The Commission will review the minutes of the June 2020 meeting and vote to approve them.

Action Taken: The Commission approved the minutes for June 10, 2020.

## **ITEM NO. (2): PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

## **ITEM NO. (3): ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF THE DISABILITY COMMUNITY THROUGH THE COVID EVENT AND CIVIL UNREST**

Presentation from various City Departments and organizations from the greater Los Angeles area regarding the impact of the COVID pandemic and recent social justice movement activities on disability communities.

- I. Presentation is by Brenda Shockley, Deputy Mayor of Economic Opportunity and Chief Equity Officer, Mayor's Office. Deputy Mayor Shockley spoke on Mayor Eric Garcetti's Executive Directive No. 27, Racial Equity in City Government. It was issued on June 19<sup>th</sup>, Juneteenth, a historic date which commemorates emancipation for all slaves in the United States, several years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued. Due to the recent international outpouring of support for the Black Lives Matter movement, the Mayor's Office accelerated its plans to establish an office of equity. As the Chief Equity Officer, Deputy Mayor Shockley's vision is to end systemic, institutional, and structural racism in the City of Los Angeles, which

includes removing social, economic, and political barriers that exist within the City. The City's Equity Officers will meet to establish a baseline and create measurable goals and outcomes to shape the systems of the City. They will meet again in August to review feedback and make revisions to their racial equity plans. They will report back to the Mayor in September.

- II. Presentation is by Beatrice Girmala, Assistant Chief of Police and Director of Office of Support Services, Los Angeles Police Department. The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) conducts Cultural Competency trainings that are developed by communities. LAPD is reviewing all of its training materials and modules. Two training bulletins have come to the attention of Assistant Chief Girmala. One is on developmental disabilities and one for interacting with individuals who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She proposed that these bulletins not proceed further until the Commission on Disability is invited to review the documents and participate in solidifying the content before it is distributed to the police department as a whole. It is her aim to make these materials all-inclusive and to accurately reflect the needs and desires of the community. Per the Commission's bylaws, an item would need to be placed on a future agenda to establish an ad-hoc committee to review the trainings with LAPD.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

#### **ITEM NO. (4): UPDATE: SSI ENROLLMENT FOR INDIVIDUALS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

Commissioners and Department on Disability staff will provide an update on the Mobile SSI initiative recommended by Commission on 11/13/2019.

At previous Commission meetings, Commissioner Bitonte proposed creating a Mobile SSI unit to assist in connecting homeless individuals with Social Security benefits. DOD collaborated with Commissioner Bitonte's externs in creating a policy memorandum to present to the Social Security office. DOD has provided a draft of this memorandum to contacts at the Pasadena Social Security field office. Commissioner Bitonte has assembled a team of volunteer physicians to staff the mobile unit, but is still in need of a Social Security field officer and disability analyst, as well as a van to transport the staff and

medical equipment. DOD is looking into sources that may be able to provide such a van. Additionally, there may be an opportunity to utilize agency partner brick and mortar spaces on Skid Row. DOD will report back upon hearing from Social Security.

Motion made and carried to request formation of Ad Hoc committees at next COD mtg for law enforcement policy and engagement, expanding access to benefits to those experiencing homelessness, and to request.

Motion made and carried to request DOD begin Letter to Council process.

### **ITEM NO. (5): EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Discussion on items relating to Department activities, metrics, budget, planning, and/or other relevant issues. Presentation is by Stephen David Simon, Executive Director, Department on Disability (DOD).

COVID-19 cases continue to rise in Los Angeles County, and there is still a concern of the risk of reaching capacity in hospitals. County Public Health is focusing on public education and outbreak management in order to get COVID-19 under control before the start of the flu season. DOD's Meals to Angelenos with Disabilities is concluding on Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup>. The Department is looking into options that may allow for the program to continue. City furloughs are currently on hold and will not affect DOD until at least August. DOD will update the Commission when it has updates regarding furloughs and when office closures would take place as a result. DOD continues to plan the ReelAbilities Film Festival, which will take place virtually October 16-18. The Department is also hosting two Zoom panels to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act. They will take place Friday, July 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> from 2:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Louis Burns of Access Services also joined in the Executive Director's Report to provide updates. Ridership has begun to increase, and safety measures are still in place. Vehicles are sanitized and masks are provided to riders who do not have one.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

### **ITEM NO. (6): COMMISSION ELECTION**

The Commission will hold its officer elections. Nominations and Self-Nominations will be for the following positions: President, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, and Secretary. Votes for each position will be held as an open election.

Action Taken: Commissioner Cabanban is President, Commissioner Wolf is 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Commissioner Bitonte is 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Commissioner Williams is Secretary.

### **ITEM NO. (7): COMMISSION CALENDAR**

The Commission will discuss possible future topics and vote on a draft calendar.

Action Taken: The Commission discussed future topics up to December. The Commission Retreat will take place in October, but may be interchanged with November if needed. The Commission plans on meeting in December, since the regular meeting date will not coincide with Hanukkah.

### **ITEM NO. (8): NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

DOD would like to remind everyone that responses are still needed for the Census. Due to COVID-19, it has not been possible to promote the Census with the outreach efforts that were originally planned. Chris Lee of the City Attorney's Office announced a program called LA Represents, which was launched in May to provide free legal services to Angelenos facing hardship due to COVID-19. In addition to being available for individuals, small businesses are also able to obtain pro bono assistance.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

### **ITEM NO. (9): ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 3:27 P.M.