



COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

MINUTES

Friday, March 27th, 2020, 10:30 AM

Department on Disability

Zoom Video Conferencing

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Theresa de Vera
Myrna Cabanban
David Wolf
Dr. Robert Bitonte
Iran Hopkins
Richard Rothenberg
Robert Williams

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Alisa Schlesinger (excused)
Betty Wilson (excused)

DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY:

Stephen David Simon, Executive Director, Department on Disability.
Lourdes Sinibaldi, Project Coordinator, Community Outreach Referrals and Education (CORE), Department on Disability.
Geoffrey Straniere, ADA Compliance Officer, Disability Access Service Division (DASD), Department on Disability.
Jaime Pacheco-Orozco, Assistant Executive Director, Department on Disability.

*AUDIO TAPE(S) and CAPTIONING NOTES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:

Chris Lee, City Attorney

Omari Battles, Principle Project Coordinator, Emergency Management Department.

GUESTS:

Andre Colaiace, Executive Director, Access Services.

ITEM NO. (1): PUBLIC COMMENT

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

ITEM NO. (2): COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND THE IMPACT ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES PRESENTATIONS

Presentation from the Department on Disability, Emergency Management Department, and Access Services regarding COVID-19 and the impact of this pandemic on people with disabilities.

- I. Presentation is by Stephen David Simon, Executive Director, Department on Disability (DOD). He provided updates on items the department is working on in response to COVID-19. The Department on Disability occupies the FNSS and the DOC seats in the Emergency Operation Center to help coordinate during an emergency activation, such as COVID-19. The top goal of DOD during this time is to continue operations and staffing the Emergency Operation Center within the Department of Emergency Management. During the COVID-19 crisis, DOD is addressing the issues with food and meal deliveries, grocery access and earlier shopping hours, and access to testing sites. DOD created a COVID-19 resource page for people with disabilities. Many of the department's staff were approved to telecommute and continue to perform their regular duties while remaining at home.

- II. Presentation is by Lourdes Sinibaldi, Project Coordinator, Community Outreach Referrals and Education, Department on Disability. DOD wants to get a better understanding of what resources the disability community needs. Therefore, DOD will send out a survey to partners

and other organizations to get a better understanding on what resources are needed, such as food, toilet paper, distilled water for oxygen machines, or fixing durable medical equipment. DOD will also set up a meeting with partner and other organizations to understand how they are working remotely and how they are able to meet the need of their communities.

- III. Presentation is by Geoffrey Straniere, ADA Compliance Officer, Disability Access Service Division (DASD), Department on Disability (DOD). DOD is addressing the needs of people experiencing homeless during COVID-19 by opening a shelter program to ensure that the homeless community has access to shelters and ensuring that the shelters are accessible. Currently, there are 42 sites that have been evaluated for accessibility and expect to have at least 13 sites open in the coming days. DOD assesses the shelter site by checking restrooms, route of travel, spatial planning, accessible bedframes, power availability for mobility devices, and information kiosks. DOD will be working with the Emergency Operational Center to expanding the shelter program and utilize field areas such as trailers, tents, or other accommodations.
- IV. Presentation is by Jaime Pacheco-Orozco, Assistant Executive Director, Department on Disability. DOD is reaching out to LAUSD for resources and other opportunities for students and families. During the COVID-19 crisis, LAUSD is switching from a traditional school setting to a distance, online school setting. DOD is also reaching out to LAUSD to ensure that educational components, Independent Education Plans, and 504 reasonable accommodations are being met and are accessible to the students and families. Currently, LAUSD is conducting their grab and go program, where students can pick up meals.
- V. Presentation is by Andre Colaiace, Executive Director, Access Services. Access Services are still in operation and are serving customers in during the COVID-19 crisis. However, they are urging people not to ride if possible and especially not if they are sick. During the COVID-19 crisis, Access Services are changing the in-person eligibility requirements because their service center in Commerce is currently closed. They are utilizing their online reservation booking and app push notifications to notify customers of business policy changes

during this time. Currently, Access Services are now conducting eligibility approval through a phone interview and are given a one-year temporary eligibility, with a 120-day extension for renewals. A concern they have is the financial viability of continuing serve because of the decline in ridership. Their revenue is based on competed trips, and they will continue to monitor impact on the financial viability. They are also continuing to enhance cleaning protocols for their vehicles and have the capacity to assist in an emergency beyond their usual job duties.

- VI. Presentation is by Omari Battles, Principle Project Coordinator Emergency Management Department (EMD), City of Los Angeles. EMD is coordinating with DOD and the Department of Aging to ensure that needs are being addressed for all constituents. EMD is conducting the bi-weekly community needs assessments from partners to fill in the gaps and needs of the community. They are also working with other departments to address meal delivery, grocery delivery, and with transportation to testing sites. EMD is working with the Mayor's Office and the Unified Homelessness Response Center to ensure that shelters are fully operational and are ADA compliant.

Action Taken: The Commission voted on a motion to request the Department on Disability to work with the Mayor's Office, City Emergency Management Department, other City Departments, ACCESS Services and Community Service Providers to develop programs and services to address the needs of people with disabilities impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The motion passed.

ITEM NO. (3): ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 12:15 PM.