



City of Surprise  
Special Disability Advisory Commission (DAC)  
Monday, August 13, 2012 – 6:00 P.M.  
*Surprise City Hall – Council Overflow Room*  
*16000 N. Civic Center Plaza*  
*Surprise, Arizona 85374*

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

### Members Present:

Michelle Hernandez, Chair  
John Yaeger, Vice Chair  
Shelia Lewis  
Roland Winters  
Alyson Cline  
Dr. Deborah Jones

### Absent:

Michelle Lewis

### Staff Present:

Councilman Mike Woodard  
Christina Ramirez, Neigh Svcs. Program Sup.  
Vamshee Kovuru, Planner II-Urban Design  
Fire Chief Mike White  
Police Commander John Poorte  
Domela McHenry, Communication Sup.  
April Reynolds, HR Director  
Maria Alas, HR Analyst

Dr. Jones arrived at 6:18pm

### 1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hernandez called the meeting to order at the Surprise City Hall, Council Overflow Room, 16000 N. Civic Center Plaza, Surprise, Arizona 85374, on Monday, August 13, 2012 at 6:05 pm.

### 2. **CURRENT EVENTS AND REPORTS**

Commissioner Winters (on his own behalf as a citizen) wrote a letter to Ultrastar corporate headquarters about the lack of exterior automatic doors at their Surprise venue, along with copies of costs to install automatic doors. He expressed in his letter that it's his opinion that a corporation the size of Ultrastar should be able to provide at least one automatic opening exterior door to this venue.

Vice Chair Yaeger also wrote a letter to Ultrastar corporate headquarters but has not yet mailed it. Prior to mailing it he would like to pass it through HR and Legal as he wishes to send it on behalf of the DAC. He is also going to include a copy of the costs the City obtained from a local vendor for the automatic doors at the library.

Commissioner Cline completed the grant application form for the automatic doors at the library and submitted to Mrs. Gaskins, the City's Grant Coordinator. Commissioner Cline attended the Council meeting last week where boards and commissions was the subject of discussion and spoke about this commission and how it wants to work with the City to make it even better than it already is.

Commissioner Kaiser reported the sign-up sheet has been added as an item on the August 15, 2012 regular meeting agenda.

Chair Hernandez was surprised when she visited the Ultrastar Cinema that it does not have accessible entrances when the interior features of the venue are outstanding. She would like to see Vice Chair Yaeger's letter prior to sending since it is being sent on behalf of the DAC.

3. **STAFF REPORTS**

Mrs. Reynolds provided information to the commission about possible volunteer opportunities and the process. Any additional formal requests by the commission, please forward to her and she will push them up the chain of command.

Mrs. Reynolds also read the legal opinion provided by Misty Leslie of the City Attorney's Office regarding subcommittees. Three things are required to be acceptable according to state statute: 1) a quorum of members must not exist; 2) information is not shared between committees outside of public meetings; and 3) preferably no one person is on more than one committee. Chair Hernandez mentioned that on one subcommittee there are four commissioners (Outreach & Communication?). Commissioner Kaiser noted there are combinations of commissioners on various subcommittees so that will need revisited.

Commissioner Jones inquired what took place at the recent Council work session. Mrs. Reynolds stated that the general consensus of the Council is that this commission's meetings needs to be televised and staff is taking a look at how to implement that. The hope is this will occur late September or early October, 2012. They also discussed the RPTA issue and board/commission policies and procedures handbook.

4. **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Andy Cepon, citizen, noted the legal opinion just provided the commission included the word "preferably". With a commission of this size and the number of topics to research, some bleed over is a necessity. So long as a quorum doesn't exist, it should not be an issue.

He thanked staff for the thoroughness of the meeting minutes as he was unable to attend the recent DAC meetings in entirety.

He was pleased to see a number of the commissioners at the Council workshop last week. It was a clear demonstration of the power of participation and communication. He thanked Commissioner Winters for his particularly eloquent comments to the Council on the Dial-a-Ride issue. He hopes that, if approved by Council, the solution will be a benefit to Commissioner Winters and everyone else the program serves.

He would like the commission to consider adding an item to this Wednesday's agenda the possibility of doing a brief presentation to General Plan Advisory Commission because they play a key role in planning and zoning issues.

In response to Mrs. Ramirez and Mr. Kovuru's presentations, Mr. Cepon read from pages 128-129 of the *Analysis of Impediment to Fair Housing* report, dated May 20, 2012, two recommendations:

Recommendation #6:

Continue to provide additional information on ADA requirements to builders and developers. Post requirements on the City website. Incorporate ADA requirements in the development review and permitting process.

Recommendation #7:

Use the Disability Advisory Commission to conduct a review of accessible housing supply and demand, and use the Disability Advisory Commission to increase outreach on fair housing issues.

Mr. Cepon suggests this commission request tours of the 911, traffic control, and emergency preparedness facilities.

Mr. Cepon asked Chief White about the pending agreement with APS and the scheduled life of McMicken Dam. Chief White did not have any specific answers. Mr. Cepon believes this commission is the perfect conduit for getting emergency information out to the citizens.

Mr. Cepon would like this commission to consider adding an awards program with six awards. It could be called the Disability Advisory Commission Awards, and be based on the six focus areas listed in the DAC Strategic Plan. He suggested citizens/businesses/organizations would submit nominations to this commission via staff. This group would then recognize the winners in the different categories, and present them to the Council. This is one way to reinforce and publicize this commission and its purpose. Secondly, there are many citizens who believe members of the various commissions should be included in the General Plan Board, but Council did not decide to do it. He believes it's critical that members of this commission get in front of the General Plan Board to present the general issues it feels are important in structuring the planning framework that the City will follow in the future.

Mr. Jim Olmstead, citizen, recommended that a member of this commission attend Planning & Zoning Commission meetings to see what is happening, and to get to know and work with staff on a more regular basis.

Visitability was adopted by the City during his tenure as a former DAC commissioner. The former DAC Commission advised the City in 2009 to adopt a visitability ordinance similar to what Tucson and Pima County have which requires all homes meet visitability standards. He suggests this group continue on with this because it is very important. He also mentioned an individual with much knowledge in the area of visitability is Jim Christensen. Mr. Christensen has spoken to the DAC in previous years on this subject.

Mr. Olmstead also mentioned, in Sun City West (the community he lives in), the parking is more than 50% accessible now, which far exceeds the ADA minimum. Increasing accessible parking is one area that this commission needs to focus on.

Based on Mrs. McHenry's presentation about the 911 system, Mr. Olmstead asked what happens when a resident calls 911 and they have an out of state cell phone. Mrs. McHenry stated it's based on the cell tower location. There are things they can do to research where the caller may be located. Mr. Olmstead feels this is an issue this City needs to explore further.

## 5. **AGENDA**

### A. Discussion with staff about the *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice* report found on the City of Surprise internet

Mrs. Ramirez presented information about what her department does, how they created and update this report every five years, and the projects funded by the City's CDBG program in the Original Townsite. They have completed several projects over the last few years. Last year they worked on connectivity of sidewalks on roads with ramps, wide widths, removed barriers, and made improvements to provide better access to businesses in the Benavilla area. They also worked on a flooring renovation in the Senior Center, removing tripping hazards, etc. The third project is housing rehabilitation. This program assists income eligible residents with emergency repairs and/or ADA modifications. The City, for its neighborhood stabilization program, purchases bank owned properties, demolishes them, and rebuilds them to be energy efficient and have visitability features.

Vice Chair Yaeger inquired how the City provides all this information to the community so they are aware these programs exist. Mrs. Ramirez replied they utilize several methods – newspaper, facebook, tweet, email, present to Council annually with public hearings, brochures at block parties, etc.

Commissioner Cline noted that the commission would like to know when the City purchases these bank owned properties so they could visit the properties before demolition so they can see a before and after perspective of the neighborhood revitalization program.

Mr. Kovuru presented information on visitability and commercial project reviews. Visitability is not part of the ADA standards but has been adopted by many cities throughout the country. The City introduced the visitability program to the Disability Advisory Commission in 2009. The City created this program to provide better opportunities for homebuyers to purchase properties in Surprise that accommodate individuals with disabilities. Visitability was included as part of the City's design guidelines in 2009. The guidelines require every new model home built in Surprise to meet the visitability standards as well as post a sign stating "ask us about accessibility options", and offer brochures or other information regarding accessibility options.

Mr. Kovuru then provided an example of a commercial property site that was recently approved (Freddy's Steak & Burgers) and what is required on the site plans. For example, the site plan for this restaurant includes a minimum 5 foot sidewalk, ADA ramps at every intersection where the sidewalk turns, connectivity features between sidewalks, ADA parking (for every 25 parking spaces there must be one ADA accessible parking space).

Commissioner Winters inquired about van accessible parking. Mr. Kovuru explained that van parking is dependent on the project. Van accessible parking is not required in addition to ADA parking per ADA minimum standards. The City uses the 2006 version of the *International Building Code* guidelines which incorporates the ADA minimum parking standards along with other building guidelines for site plan reviews.

Commissioner Cline asked why this site plan example does not denote a specific van accessible parking spot, especially since the number of ADA parking spaces is limited. Mr. Kovuru explained the width of the van parking spaces is wider and generally accommodates smaller vans. Chair Hernandez asked how much bigger is a van accessible parking space than a typical parking space. Mr. Kovuru explained a typical parking space is 8 feet to 10 feet in width, and 18 feet to 20 feet in length for full length cars. Most vans can be accommodated in the 10 x 20 parking space. Mr. Kovuru will look into this as requested by Chair Hernandez.

Chair Hernandez mentioned that, at one point, the Quality of Life Commission was looking into accessible parking and, since they are now defunct, she would like Mr. Kovuru to work closely with this commission on this.

Chairman Winters inquired to Mr. Olmstead if he knew if home sales increased in Tucson because of the visitability ordinance requirements. Mr. Olmstead did not know but stated the developers and contractors now consider visitability a non-issue.

Councilman Woodard asked Mr. Kovuru if the City only uses the minimum standards or does it exceed the standards when approving site plans. Mr. Kovuru stated the planners try to adopt more than the minimum standards whenever possible, but cannot force the developer to exceed them because the minimum standards have been met.

Commissioner Cline understands one thing this commission could support as part of its strategic plan is encourage the Council to adopt standards for parking, etc. that exceed the ADA minimum, and this commission could also work with the Planning & Zoning Commission and housing associations on individual site plans.

Chair Hernandez asked on behalf of Commissioner Lewis if the City encourages apartment owners/housing to accept Section 8 housing. Mrs. Ramirez replied that an application process is required, and there are currently several homes in Surprise that are Section 8. The City does not have its own Section 8 program. It is officially operated by Maricopa County.

Chair Hernandez called a recess at 6:55pm, and resumed the meeting at 7:02pm.

B/C. Discussion with staff about disabilities database, registry and 911 system

Fire Chief Mike White and Domela McHenry, Communications Manager, explained how the 911 system works and the limitations of the system. Mrs. McHenry's office only dispatches police calls. Fire calls are forwarded to Phoenix. The 911 operator does not know if the caller has a disability as the dispatcher is only provided limited information from its sources.

Mrs. Reynolds asked Mrs. McHenry, since this commission is developing its strategic plan, if medical information for citizens is located somewhere, if the 911 system could access that information. Mrs. McHenry indicated that, because it is medical in nature, it could be a HIPAA violation and is not generally available. To incorporate a disabilities database into the current 911 system would require millions of dollars. She stated that, if a registry does exist, all she would be able to do now is go to that database and research if the caller is on the list. The time spent doing that would exceed the time it would take to have a first responder report the scene.

Chief White then explained that the radio systems are very complicated and very expensive. The system is shared valley wide and the costs are shared by all the valley municipalities.

Chief White stated the Fire Department is charged with carrying out the City's emergency preparedness plan, with cooperation from the Police Department. There is a misconception that the City must be able to provide emergency preparedness service for its citizens. The reality is that every citizen must be prepared to take care of themselves and plan for the first 72 hours because the Fire Department does not have the resources, money or manpower to be able to assist every citizen or business in a crisis. This message is on every emergency preparedness website from the City's all the way to FEMA's. The City's emergency preparedness webpage contains a lot of good resources for individuals. However, in cases of isolated disasters (e.g., McMicken Dam breaks or localized flooding), the City could respond.

He offered an example of a power outage some time ago that affected many people and how he was concerned about the vulnerable citizens in this community. He asked APS if they could provide information to identify the locations of these individuals, but APS would not provide it. So he received a government grant to create a database that the Fire Department could log people in but updating is labor intensive. The system is totally voluntary for citizens to sign up. Registration is via the Fire Department webpage. It allows the Fire Department the ability to query where citizens with certain special needs are so, in the event a disaster occurs affecting these citizens, the Fire Department knows where they are located. However, the Fire Department doesn't have the staff or money dedicated to keep the system current. The staff that maintains it currently also has other duties. They have to be very selective and add the tactical information for those very special and extreme cases. Otherwise, it defeats the purpose of being able to identify the locations of those individuals the Fire Department needs to focus extra attention towards.

Commissioner Cline believes this commission can help with outreach about this program by placing links to it on its webpage and centralize the resources so citizens can more easily locate it. This group could also work with the Fire Department to volunteer providing data entry and upkeep of this system.

Chief White mentioned the City is working towards improving this system but their budget is zero. He is pleased that the City incorporated the Emergency Operations Center when the new Public Safety Building was built that ties into the Traffic Management system. This has helped, but is far from the optimal solution.

Police Commander Poorte spoke about a check welfare program they have. It is a registry for those individuals with disabilities or medical needs who can request a daily computer generated phone call to check on their welfare. If the citizen does not answer after three tries, a citizen volunteer responds to the location. It is on the Police Department's webpage.

Commissioner Cline reiterated that this information should be centralized with the other emergency-related information on the City's DAC webpage.

Commissioner Winters asked if there are criteria for citizens to participate in this program. Commander Poorte stated one of the citizen volunteers meets with the citizen to ascertain if the citizen's needs will be best addressed by the system.

D. Continuation of previous work session discussions to update the Disability Advisory Commission Strategic Plan

After discussing the revisions to the Strategic Plan that were developed at the last two DAC workgroup meetings, the highlighted verbiage below are additions and changes to the goals and accomplishments discussed by the commission Monday, August 13, 2012:

**BUSINESS – Cline/Lewis**

- Goals:
  - ✓ To have community businesses voluntarily participate in the removal of barriers and to improve accessibility
- Objectives:
  - ✓ Facilitate business owners in specific aspects of accessibility
  - ✓ Equate economic benefits to create barrier-free environments
  - ✓ Recognize and reward a business in the community annually that exceeds ADA requirements
  - ✓ **Recognize an organization that supports the mission of the Disability Advisory Commission**

**TRANSPORTATION – Winters/Yaeger/Hernandez**

- Goals:
  - ✓ Evaluate the effectiveness of the new Regional Public Transit Authority (RPTA) program for individuals with disabilities in the community
  - ✓ **Encourage the Planning & Zoning Commission re: van accessible parking – overall handicapped accessible parking in excess of minimum International Building Code standards**
- Objectives:
  - ✓ Ascertain results quarterly from [www.valleymetro.org](http://www.valleymetro.org)
  - ✓ **Communicate the Disability Advisory Commission's viewpoint as issues are appropriate**

- ✓ **Recognize an organization that supports the mission of the Disability Advisory Commission**

### **CONNECTIVITY, COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH – Yaeger/Jones/Winters**

- Goals:
  - ✓ Increase community awareness of the Disability Advisory Commission's commitment to serve individuals with disabilities and their families
  - ✓ **Research other methods of participation for those who cannot physically attend meetings**
- Objectives:
  - ✓ DAC city webpage
  - ✓ Monthly meetings televised, by delayed camera or via Skype
  - ✓ Meetings have close captioning
  - ✓ Dedicated call-in phone line for "calls to the public" portion of meetings
  - ✓ Quarterly newsletter
  - ✓ Powerpoint about the DAC added to Cable 11's public TV loop
  - ✓ Televis "Conversation with Council" between various DAC members and Council members on Cable 11. **Explore the process to create a program**
  - ✓ **Recognize an organization that supports the mission of the Disability Advisory Commission**

### **DISASTER, SECURITY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS – Hernandez/Kaiser**

- Goals:
  - ✓ Ensure that individuals take personal responsibility for emergency preparedness
  - ✓ Ensure people with disabilities are included in emergency preparedness plans
  - ✓ Identify the special needs of people with disabilities and recommend action
  - ✓ Review the City's emergency preparedness plan and provide input
- Objectives:
  - ✓ ~~Local/state registry~~
  - ✓ Identify types of disabilities and particular needs
  - ✓ Training for first responders and alternative response volunteers (face-to-face and online)
  - ✓ Customize awareness and preparedness material in alternative accessible formats and place in accessible locations
  - ✓ Invite speakers from local first responder organizations
  - ✓ Coordinate informational resources
  - ✓ HOA Academy awareness of disability issues
  - ✓ **Recognize an organization that supports the mission of the Disability Advisory Commission**

**ADVOCACY, HOUSING & VISITABILITY – Jones/Lewis**

- Goals:
  - ✓ Identify areas of opportunity & inclusion for housing and visitability
  - ✓ Encourage multi-family housing complexes to participate in housing opportunities
  - ✓ **Promote awareness of Section 8/HUD housing opportunities within the City of Surprise**
- Objectives:
  - ✓ **Access link → Maricopa**
  - ✓ **Research opportunities for Section 8/HUD housing within City of Surprise with representative(s) of Maricopa County**
  - ✓ Research and explore opportunities to reduce barriers
  - ✓ Equate economic benefits of barrier-free housing
  - ✓ **Recognize an organization that supports the mission of the Disability Advisory Commission**

**FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS – Cline/Kaiser**

- Goals:
  - ✓ To research potential grants with staff that are available to fund projects that promote and support issues that impact individuals with disabilities
  - ✓ To be aware of alternate funding sources that may be presented to Council for their consideration and approval
- Objectives:
  - ✓ Research grants
  - ✓ CBC funding opportunities for businesses within the Original Townsite **for ADA and barrier reductions**
  - ✓ **Recognize an organization that supports the mission of the Disability Advisory Commission**

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

None

7. **ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Kaiser motioned to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Cline seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:57pm.

*April Reynolds*

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April Reynolds, HR Director