



Meeting Minutes

First Floor Conference Room, City Hall

November 18, 2015

3:00pm

Commission members present: Deb Aden, Kendra Gottsleben, Joyce Heiser, Kevin Horner, Sarah Jo Jorgensen, Sheila Sandness, Walter Schaefer

Commission members absent: Lori Lewison, Tana Zwart

Staff present: Colleen Moran, Human Relations Manager and Tina Lemieux, Human Relations Technician

Guest(s) present:

Call to Order

Co-Chair Walter Schaefer called the meeting to order at 3:01 P.M.

Welcome Guest(s)

No guests were present.

Approval of Minutes

Aden moved to approve the meeting minutes from October 28, 2015. Gottsleben seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Disability Rights Updates

The first update involved an agreement between the Department of Justice (DOJ) and McLennan County, Texas. McLennan County and the Department of Justice reached an agreement under the department's wide-ranging initiative to ensure that cities, towns and counties throughout the country comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Under the agreement, the county is required to ensure that people with disabilities can take full advantage of the county's services, programs and activities. Under the agreement, McLennan County will develop and implement a new county website that is compliant with the web content accessibility guidelines; the county will also designate a web accessibility coordinator who will be responsible for coordinating the county's web accessibility compliance. The county will also ensure that its polling locations are accessible to persons with disabilities. In addition, the county will modify its emergency operations plan to ensure that it is accessible to all persons with disabilities in the event of an emergency. McLennan County will also adopt and implement its Sheriff's Department Effective Communication Policy for

Co-Chairs: Walter Schaefer & Lori Lewison | **3rd Chair:** Deb Aden

People Who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. Finally, the agreement requires the county to ensure that its courthouses, buildings, parking lots, parks and toilet rooms are accessible to persons with disabilities.

The second update involved a case of discrimination based on disability. The Justice Department filed a proposed consent decree with Bolivar County, Mississippi, resolving claims that the county violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The complaint alleges that the county violated the ADA by terminating a correctional officer with the Bolivar County Regional Correctional Facility one day after he disclosed in a post-hire physical examination that he previously had diabetes. The county terminated the employee, who had nearly 20 years of prior experience as a correctional officer and was qualified to perform the position, because he had a record of a disability.

The consent decree requires the county to pay the employee nearly \$100,000 in back pay and compensatory damages, offer to reinstate him to the correctional officer position, provide training on the ADA and file reports on its compliance with the decree and ADA with the Justice Department.

Continuing Business

- A. Charter for Compassion – Moran provided updates on the Charter for Compassion. The next Charter meeting is Monday, November 23, 2015 at 12 p.m. A press conference will be held in December to announce the City's support for the Charter. Moran also discussed the Scarf Project, an effort designed to provide those in need with a warm scarf during the winter season.

New Business

A. Review Committee Expectations:

- a. Lemieux presented a list of committee expectations which were reviewed with the Commission. The list included, but was not limited to, preparing for and participating in selected committees, attending events sponsored by the DAC, and establishing a committee chair who will report to the Commission on the group's work.
- b. Lemieux also discussed the idea of forming two committees to oversee the efforts of the DAC. The two committees are the Outreach Committee and the Communications Committee. The Outreach Committee is responsible for the development and execution of events supported by or associated with the Disability Awareness Commission. The Outreach Committee will seek out events that heighten awareness for people with disabilities. The Communications Committee is responsible for the marketing and promotion of events supported by or associated with the Disability Awareness Commission. The Communications Committee will seek out and offer suggestions on marketing materials.

Jorgensen moved to recommend the establishment of the Communications and Outreach Committees; Horner seconded. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

B. Establishment of Committees

- a. The Outreach Committee – Horner, Jorgensen, Sandness, Lewison, Schaefer
- b. The Communications Committee – Heiser, Gottsleben, Aden, Zwart

Roundtable/Public Comment

No public comment.

Adjournment

Having no further business, Horner moved to adjourn; Jorgensen seconded. The meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

The next DAC meeting is scheduled for December 16, 2015, 3 p.m. in the First Floor Conference Room, City Hall.

These minutes submitted by Tina Lemieux