

**CITY OF FRESNO
DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMISSION**
City Hall, Second Floor – City Council Chambers

MINUTES OF THE FEBURARY 15, 2011 MEETING

DAC Commission Members Present: Michelle Bronson (Vice Chair), Jenelle Pitt, Carlos Duarte (*ex officio*)

DAC Commission Members Absent: Robert Hand, Mary Beth Randall, Dorothy Young, Rachelle Taylor (Chair),

Staff Present: Elizabeth Kunz, DAC Secretary

Call to Order

Vice Chair Bronson started the meeting at 10:15 am. She noted that the DAC would hear the presentations, but take no action as there was not a quorum of the membership present.

Approval of Minutes

No action taken.

Member Reports and Comments

None.

Unscheduled Communication

Nancy Lucinian addressed the DAC. She identified herself as a person with a disability on a fixed income. She asked whether the City could implement service at a reduced cost to individuals who only needed garbage pick-up two times a month rather than weekly.

Presentation: Fresno Housing Alliance People's Housing Summit

Kellie Longo-Albarrán of Resources for Independence, Central Valley (RICV) identified herself as the Systems Change Advocate for that organization and briefly described her duties. She described the Fresno

Housing Alliance as representing a number of organizations serving different segments of the community, including Centro La Familia, Fresno Interfaith Refugee Ministries (FIRM), and people with disabilities.

Ms. Longo-Albarrán provided a general description of the People's Housing Summit, sponsored by the Fresno Housing Alliance, which will be held May 7, 2011 at Valley Christian Center. It is expected that more than 500 people will attend the Summit. Topics will include renter's rights, homeowner's rights, avoiding foreclosure, Universal Design and access for people with disabilities. Ms. Longo-Albarrán indicated that they were open to input on the types of accessibility issues that could be addressed at the Summit.

Ms. Longo-Albarrán fielded questions, including the location of the event, time (9 am – 4 pm), and whether there would be meals provided (breakfast and lunch). Ms. Longo-Albarrán asked individuals who required accommodations to contact her, and indicated there would be accessible transportation available from pick up locations. Ms. Longo-Albarrán also provided additional information about the session topics and her telephone number: 221-2330.

Action Item: Letter of Support for People's Housing Summit

No action taken.

Action Item: Formation of a Task Force to Address Captioning of Local Television News

No action taken.

Presentation: Service Animals in Transit

Member Duarte presented highlights of the final rule amending the US DOJ regulation for Title II of the ADA, which take effect March 15, 2011. He provided the definition of service animals in the new regulation as described in the US DOJ Fact Sheet distributed at the meeting. Member Duarte indicated that, according to this definition, service animals are dogs, but may include miniature horses, and are distinct from animals that provide purely emotional support. Member Duarte also reviewed sections of the Fresno Municipal code and FAX drivers' handbook on service animals in transit.

Vice Chair Bronson opened the floor to public comment. Ms. Longo-Albarrán said that RICV does training on service animals for businesses and other entities. She clarified that miniature horses, rather than dogs, used by individuals for religious reasons.

Mr. Ramirez requested clarification on the issues of: 1) when dogs are required to be in a container on the FAX buses, 2) when dogs are allowed to be held by riders. Mr. Ramirez referred to dogs needed for mental health reasons.

Member Duarte explained that pets are required to be in approved carriers, but service animals are not. There is a restriction on “comfort animals,” not service animals, which should be in a carrier. Mr. Ramirez questioned the distinction between companion animal and service animal, and the importance of the former to members of the community. Member Duarte referred to the distinction in the new ADA regulation, indicated that drivers are directed to allow animals on that the rider identifies as their service animals.

Presentation: Fresno Area Express Complaint Process

Greg Eisner, Transit Operations Manager for Fresno Area Express (FAX), gave a presentation on the complaint process that is monitored and audited by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). He reviewed the process from the initial call of the reporting party through to the resolution of the issue. Mr. Eisner referred to a complaint flow chart, tracing the progress of reports that are considered an inquiry and those that are considered formal complaints. He reviewed the investigation process and timelines for formal complaints.

Member Pitt asked the languages is the complaint form provided in. Mr. Eisner responded that the complaint form is currently available in English, but that FAX will provide a translator to take the complaint and transcribe it into English. Mr. Eisner also stated that they are going to implement a new phone tree that will be in English and Spanish.

Vice Chair Bronson asked the telephone number individuals should use if they want to make a complaint. Mr. Eisner stated that people should call 621-RIDE and get in contact with the Complaint Coordinator.

Adjournment

There being no further business to bring before the Commission, Vice Chair Bronson adjourned the meeting at 10:46 am.