

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

MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 16, 2011 MEETING

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

DAC Commission Members Absent: Robert Hand, Dorothy Young

DAC Secretary: Shannon M. Simonelli, ADA Coordinator

Vice Chair Bronson called the meeting to order at 10:05 am. She indicated that there was no quorum, so no action items would be addressed.

Call to Order

Call to Order and self introductions were made.

Approval of the Minutes of May 17, 2011

The DAC did not take action on this item as there was no quorum present.

Member Reports and Comments

Vice Chair Bronson reported that Chair Rachelle Taylor has resigned from DAC. Bronson indicated that DAC will miss Taylor, as she has been a wonderful addition to the team and wish her all the best. Expressed a hope that all have had a nice and safe summer.

Member Pitt reported that the Annual Western Regional Disability Conference hosted by the Rehabilitation counseling program at CSU, Fresno has been postponed for this year.

Member Randall announced her involvement with the California Council for the blind first annual 2k/5k walk-a-thon in LA and Sacramento. Participants and support for the walk-a-thon are sought, interested persons should contact member Randall for brochures. She hopes that if there is success in these two cities that next year Fresno will be included as a walk-a-thon location.

Secretary's Report

Secretary Simonelli introduced herself as the new ADA Coordinator for the City of Fresno.

Simonelli introduced from the audience Joanna Pilibosian, and welcomed the soon to be appointed member of DAC. She will be confirmed by City council on Thursday, August 18 and will be joining the DAC starting in September.

Simonelli announced that FEMA will be holding a conference "Promising Practices In Inclusive Emergency Management for the Whole Community." They have selected the team from City of Fresno, made up of Shannon Simonelli, Sean Johnson (Emergency Preparedness Officer), Michelle Bronson (DAC Vice Chair) and Bob Hand (DAC member) to attend. The conference will be held September 12-14, 2011 in Washington DC and will be focused on looking at ways to be more inclusive of people with disabilities in emergency preparedness.

Simonelli shared that Fresno City Hall is currently receiving upgrades to the facility in accordance with the ADA, as can be noted by the construction out front. Items to be upgraded include: accessible parking stall and walkway modifications, Walkway replacement, Installation of stair handrails, Replacements of two curb ramps, Reconstruction of a portion of a ramp located outside, Public counter modifications at various locations within the building and Drinking fountain replacements at various locations within the building.

Unscheduled Communication

None.

Report: Task Force on Captioning of Local TV News

Vice Chair Bronson reported on the work of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC) task force to improve captioning for local television. She indicated that the previous plan for a major event in September 2011 has been changed. Bronson stated the importance of accurate captioning of the news, especially in emergency situations, as this can affect access for Deaf and Hard of hearing people as well as people learning English, Elderly people with hearing loss, and a variety of other people. This is the reason that captioning services in the valley need to be improved. The captioning group's approach and focus has changed so as to be more collaborative working with the local news by dividing into subgroups, with each group "adopting" a local news station. The subgroups are working with the local news stations on an individual basis to assist them in providing greater accessibility with their captioning efforts as well as to create a better rapport with the news stations.

Vice Chair Bronson asked for letters of support from members of the disabled community to show that captioning affects more than just the Deaf and Hard of Hearing population. Letters of support can be given to Bronson. DAC is continuing to work in conjunction with the DHHSC captioning group and has been requested to provide a letter of support as well.

Report: Task Force to assist the Office of Emergency Services in developing Social Networking resources

Sean Johnson, the City's Emergency Preparedness Officer, reported that they are making progress with incorporating considerations for people with disabilities in the City Emergency planning. Mr. Johnson distributed the City of Fresno Area Evacuation and Re-Entry Plan draft to DAC members. Mr. Johnson explained that the last Emergency Operations Plan was from 2008 and that the city makes revisions every three (3) years. Since that time the country has experienced many natural disasters in which people with access and function needs were not incorporated into the disaster plans. The 2011 plan seeks to address the needs of people with disabilities, and was actually developed as a collaborative effort by people in the community prior to Johnson taking office. Mr. Johnson is seeking input and comments on the Draft revision from members of DAC by September 5, 2011. After feedback is received the draft will be moved to a hard copy plan. Mr. Johnson noted that he will also be bringing the draft to the FEMA conference in Washington DC to advise on the current draft. Johnson asked that the DAC

members look through the draft and see if it makes sense for their individual needs as well as for the people they makes sense.

Bronson asked for clarification as to whether he wanted the feedback emailed by September 5, 2011. Johnson said it can be emailed or brought directly to the Fire Headquarters.

Member Randall asked to which email address they should send their input. Mr. Johnson replied that it can be emailed to Sean.Johnson@fresno.gov.

Mr. Johnson noted that a Facebook page and twitter account will be launched shortly, ideally in September since that is National Preparedness month. These social media resources would only be used with the purpose of disseminating critical and preparedness messages, not spam messages or other local information. These web media outlets will be used strictly for preparedness messages. Johnson asks that once these are launched if there are aspects that are not working to meet the community needs that the DAC members notify him so that it can be addressed.

Report: DAC 2011 Achievement Award Nominations

Vice Chair Bronson stated that annually DAC asks for submissions for nominations of people with disabilities or organizations for the achievement award. DAC feels it is important to recognize people who have made contributions to the community of people with disabilities. Bronson urged that people please consider an individual or organization for nomination.

Last year the selected recipient was Rosemary Diaz for her service to the Deaf community as well as people with disabilities as a whole. The organization selected last year was Resources for Independence, Central Valley.

Correction: Resources for Independence, Central Valley was a nominee last year. The award recipient was Fresno City College Disabled Students Programs and Services.

Bronson stated that this year we want to nominate people or organizations who have provided valuable services to the community. Nominations are due August 26 by 5pm. The DAC will vote on them during the September meeting.

Achievement Award nomination forms can be obtained on the City of Fresno website or picked up in the front of the room. Submissions should be sent to Shannon Simonelli at Shannon.Simonelli@fresno.gov.

Action Item: Selection of Officers

The DAC did not take action on this item as there was no quorum present.

Adjournment

There being no further business before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 10:22am.