



COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES MINUTES

**Monday, February 11, 2008
6:00 PM**

FIFTH FLOOR LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM, CITY HALL,
3900 MAIN STREET, RIVERSIDE, 92522
GENERAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, 951-826-5427

MISSION STATEMENT

“The mission of the Commission on Disabilities is to promote greater awareness of, respect for, and the total participation of individuals with disabilities into all aspects of life.”

CALL TO ORDER

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. Roll Call: James Stream, Susanne Puffer, Linda Garcia, Debbie Keller, Lesley Robinson, Donald Hawecker

Absent: Gene Brosious (excused), Paul Van Doren, Heather Chmaj, Gigi Welch.

2. **Introductions and Public Comment Period** - This is the portion of the meeting specifically set aside to invite your comments regarding any matter within the Commission's jurisdiction.

Mr. Knudsen noted that his property is located on the corner of Nelson and Magnolia at 6832 Nelson Avenue. There is a bus stop in front of his property. Although there is a sidewalk on Magnolia, there is no sidewalk on Nelson. He provided an aerial view of the property and noted the bus stop in relation to the subject buildings. Wheelchairs must cross dirt to access the bus stop. This area is unsafe, especially since it is near the Community Access Center office building where many disabled come for resources and services.

The property is located in Ward 3. The COD noted that Mr. Knudsen should send a written account of this situation to his Councilmember, Rusty Bailey. The City Clerk, Coleen Nicol, was in attendance and noted that Councilmember Bailey would welcome a letter on this subject from Mr. Knudsen. City Clerk Nicol noted the procedure for adding an item onto the Council Agenda.

Mr. Jon Lonberg referred the COD an amended Vehicle Code (Section 1) Section 22511.85 which now allows a vehicle with a special license plate or distinguishing placard which is equipped with a lift, ramp or assistive equipment that is used for loading or unloading of a person with a disability may park in not more than two adjacent stalls or spaces on a street or highway or in a public or private off-street parking facility.

3. Minutes for the meeting of January 14, 2008

M/S Robinson/Garcia and unanimous to approve the minutes as presented.

AYES – 6 (Stream, Puffer, Garcia, Keller, Robinson, Hawecker), NOES – 0, ABSTAIN – 0, ABSENT – 4 (Brosious, Van Doren, Chmaj, Welch)

OLD BUSINESS

4. Commission on Disabilities Term Limits and Nomination Process - City Clerk Coleen Nicol.

City Clerk Colleen Nicol summarized the process of Board and Commission selection for the COD. She noted that there were various methods used to recruit for Boards and Commissions and noted the following:

- a. Utility Bill inserts
- b. Ads on Television
- c. Mayor's Nominating and Screening Committee. The Mayor's Nominating and Screening Committee consists of City Council members who review applications and available Board and Commission positions for selection and appointment opportunities.

City Clerk Nicol noted that the City Charter requires that a term of office served less than one year is not considered a full term. As in Commissioner Hawecker's case, the City Council will appoint him for his first full term, since his current service term has been less than one year. Commissioner Stream is being appointed to his second term – although his current term has been less than four years, he has served more than one year, which is considered a full term.

In regard to the Ward 5 position that is vacant, when the vacancy is Ward specific, the Mayor works with the specific Councilperson to fill the position. The Mayor and Councilmember review the applications that are on file for the Ward. The Councilperson knows his constituency. He will examine the current roster and make recommendations based on who has expressed an interest, has specific experience, can provide balance and lives in the Ward. The Councilman makes the recommendation and the Mayor makes the appointment.

In response to a question from the COD if someone can be denied an appointment, the City Clerk responded that there are only so many openings and all seven (7) Wards must be represented. Even though applicants are not selected for a current vacancy, those applications stay in the applicant pool. Those who are not selected for an appointment are sent notification after Council action has been taken on appointments.

In response to another question from the COD concerning vacancies, the City Clerk clarified again that seven (7) seats are Ward positions and the other four (4) seats are City Wide. The 4 City-Wide seats are selected by the Mayor. The Mayor will review applications and talk to Council members who may know someone that has interest in serving. Sometimes, an applicant may apply for another Board or Commission where there is no opening available. This might be a fantastic applicant and this person may be asked if they have an interest to serve on another Board or Commission where there is an opening. In this case, the applicant is often pleased with the alternate appointment.

The City Clerk noted that every year, each applicant is called and asked if they are still interested in serving as applied. If the applicant has interest, the application is forwarded to the Mayor's Nominating and Screening Committee for consideration. The only applications removed from the applicant pool are those who definitely express that they are not still interested in serving on a City Board or Commission.

The City Clerk informed the COD that the meeting minutes can be routed to the Council Members each month after they are approved.

NEW BUSINESS

5. Election of Officers

Debbie Keller and James Stream were nominated to serve the COD as Chairperson. Commissioner Stream respectfully declined the nomination. Debbie Keller was elected as the new Chairperson of the COD.

M/S Hawecker/Robinson and unanimous to elect Debbie Keller as Chairperson of the COD for 2008-2009.

Gigi Welch was conditionally elected for a second term as Vice-Chair since she was not present. Via telephone, Vice-Chair Welch agreed to serve a second term as Vice-Chair.

M/S Stream/Puffer and unanimous to Elect Gigi Welch for a second term as Vice Chair of the COD

AYES – 6 (Stream, Puffer, Garcia, Keller, Robinson, Hawecker), NOES – 0, ABSTAIN – 0, ABSENT – 4 (Brosious, VanDoren, Chmaj, Welch)

6. Community Outreach: Additional Advertisement of the COD – Next Steps

It was noted that the COD may need additional advertisement to notify the community of meetings. Although the COD has had a Channel 3 and the utility bill insert, the COD seems unknown in the community. The following outreach will be conducted:

1. Note the meeting in the weekly section of the Press Enterprise
2. Route the minutes to City Council members and City Manager's office
3. Make sure the website address is publicized – www.riversideca.gov/cod/
4. Distribute COD information at public libraries, Parks and Recreation and other public places

Chairperson Keller noted that there would be a senior collaborative at the Goske enter near the end of March – the COD could have a booth there. COD information can be distributed at this event. Libraries, parks and community centers are also set up to receive literature about the COD.

Commissioner Hawecker suggested that as part of the Digital Inclusion computer classes, the students can be provided with a list of websites throughout the City that they can visit for information. Also discussed was distribution of COD business cards and busses.

The COD discussed being more active in attending events, outreach activities, senior centers, schools and other venues that would gain community exposure for the COD.

The COD discussed that as residents come to COD meetings with issues, the major part that the COD can take is forwarding these issues to the appropriate departments and following up as necessary. City departments need to hear from citizens in order to know what the issues are in the community. If necessary, the particular departments can address issues and present their policy or possible resolution to a citizen concern.

Commissioner Stream noted that there is survey computer software called www.surveymonkey.com where you can pay \$19.99 and work with an expert to ask survey questions. The process is that you blanket the community with the website link and you can begin to get feedback. This type of outreach is something the COD can research to see if it is a viable way to compile information on the disabled community. This program allows you to ask very direct, simple questions. This is one way that the COD can reach the community. There are growing numbers of disabled who use assistive technology and would be able to respond to an on-line survey. The COD has to ask what it takes to get large numbers of people activated and involved.

The COD directed staff to:

1. Proceed with placing an ad in the Press Enterprise
2. Follow up on the Channel 3 segment: Is it still running? How often?

7. Disabled Disaster Preparedness – Next Steps

The COD discussed meeting with the Emergency Services Manager and Red Cross Representatives last in January 2009 and noted that preparedness required community involvement. The COD discussed that there are numerous established community groups in Riverside and it may be possible to collaborate with them on emergency preparedness. Is there a list of future events that members of the COD can attend?

It was noted that the Fire and Police Departments had previously attended COD meetings and discussed that the disabled needed to let neighbors and the rescue agencies know their location and any special needs so the rescue unit can respond appropriately in case of emergency. Organizations such as the Red Cross have offered to work with community groups in an effort to be more prepared for the disabled in case of an emergency.

How can the COD raise awareness in the disabled community about disabled disaster preparedness? How can the disabled increase their chances of being adequately rescued in case of disaster and how can the disabled community help the Red Cross and similar organizations be prepared to receive (house) the disabled after a disaster.

The COD will continue discussion of this item to the March 10, 2008 meeting.

8. Public Service Announcement concerning Proper Placement of Trash Containers in conjunction with Public Works Solid Waste Division –Next Steps

This item will be continued to the meeting of March 10, 2008.

9. Annual Board and Commission Reception – March 24, 2008 at 5:30 pm in the lower level of the Municipal Auditorium.

This item was noted by the COD.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

10. ITEMS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

- A. Parks and Recreation - detailed description of universally accessible parks

11. INFORMATIONAL ITEM

- A. Performance Measurement from Code Enforcement concerning Sidewalk Obstruction by Trash Containers and Vehicles (standing report)

Date	Postcards Distributed by Code Enforcement
January 2008	70

12. ADJOURNMENT: 7:30 pm

These minutes were approved at the regular Commission on Disabilities meeting on March 10, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,

Monique Gordon
ADA Coordinator