



COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES MINUTES Monday, March 9, 2009 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.”

State law restricts the Commission on Disabilities from taking action on an item unless it has been included on an agenda and posted at least 72 hours in advance of a meeting or unless the matter falls within one of the narrow exceptions. Consequently, any item not listed on this agenda will normally have to be delayed until the item can be made part of a posted agenda.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

1. Roll Call: Chairperson Debbie Keller, James Stream, Susanne Puffer, Gigi Welch, Linda Garcia, Lesley Robinson, Donald Hawecker, Virginia Werly, and Jack Brewer

Absent: Van Doren (excused), Brosious.

Also present were Parks, Recreation and Community Services Director Ralph Nunez, General Services Director Kris Martinez, Deputy City Attorney Neil Okazaki, Parks, Recreation and Community Services Project Manager Randy McDaniel, and ADA Coordinator Monique Gordon.

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. Individual audience participation is limited to 3 minutes.

In attendance was:

- a. Lisa Murillo – Resident and RCC Sign Language Interpreting student
- b. Jennifer Brown – Resident and RCC Sign Language Interpreting student
- c. Allison Alejo – Blindness Support Services, Inc. She wanted to let the COD know about an opportunity for the blind and visually impaired. BSS is a non-profit organization in Riverside who serve San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Currently, there is a fitness program that has many workout opportunities for the blind and visually impaired. There are fitness programs and community walks with sighted guides available. This program is funded by the Riverside Community Health Foundation.
- d. Kaliz Dowdell – Resident and UCR student

e. Heather Daviz – Resident who is present in support of the COD.

3. Minutes for the meeting of February 9, 2009

Page 4, just above Future Agenda Items, change boot to booth.

M/S Werly/Robinson and unanimous to approve the minutes as corrected:

AYES – 9: (Keller, Puffer, Hawecker, Welch, Brewer, Stream, Werly, Garcia, Robinson); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0; ABSENT – 2 (Van Doren, Brosious)

OLD BUSINESS

1. Project Update: Fairmount and Andulka Parks (Ralph Nunez)

Director Nunez noted that Randy McDaniel would be giving the presentation because he was the project planner for the three parks: Andulka Park, Fairmount Park and the Arlington Heights Sports Complex. In terms of the universally accessible playgrounds, Director Nunez noted that Riverside was the only City in the County that had a universally accessible structure. He commented that: children in wheelchairs could actually swing, play on the structure and actually be a part of the play experience and that the Shane's Inspiration CD shows some of the play experiences of kids of all abilities and their families. Disabled children who previously could not participate can now have that opportunity.

In response to a question from the COD concerning why the City did not make all playgrounds universally accessible, Director Nunez noted that the City would love to, but sometimes projects were driven by economic constraints. He noted that the Fairmount Park universally accessible play structure probably cost double what a regular play structure would cost, and noted that the structure was specifically customized. Andulka Park also had a universally accessible playground.

Project Manager Randy McDaniel noted that there would be a playground at Arlington Heights that would be ADA compliant, including the poured in place surface, which is not required for ADA compliance.

Director Nunez noted that "above and beyond" ADA compliance could be described as (1) The ability to wheel a child in and have that child access a ramp on the playground instead of sitting on the side watching everybody else plays. (2) Placing a disabled child on a modified swing so that they can have the experience of swinging instead of simply watching is a priority of the City. You just have to visit a universally accessible playground to see the interaction between all the children, able-bodied and disabled, to understand the impact. As a community, we have the responsibility to provide this type of experience and Council is extremely supportive. Working with Shane's Inspiration was a great fit for the City in providing these special structures.

Director Nunez noted that the COD had a strong voice in terms of potential funding sources and should consider applying to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) process. Earmarking CDBG grant funds for universally accessible playgrounds would be a great help for funding these special structures. PR&CS has a great grant writer available to put together any grant opportunities for the COD.

Chairperson Keller noted that universally accessible playgrounds were the first project of the COD by way of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department. She thanked Director Nunez for getting the COD involved in this topic.

In response to a question from Commissioner Garcia, Mr. Nunez offered to contact the COD to make them aware of any relevant issues that would be of interest to the COD and invite a joint meeting between the PR&CS Commission and the COD.

Fairmount Park

Project Manager McDaniel continued with a presentation. He provided project updates on Fairmount Park, Andulka Park and the Arlington Heights Sports Park. He noted that Fairmount and Andulka Parks had universally accessible play areas and Arlington Heights had an ADA accessible play area that exceeded minimum requirements with the inclusion of the poured in place rubber play surface.

Mr. McDaniel noted that the universally accessible play structures at Fairmount and Andulka were the first in Riverside County. He described the layout of the Fairmount Park play area in relation to other park features and parking. He noted that both parking lots were to be renovated and accessible parking would be included at double the required rate. He noted that the bathrooms would be accessible from both parking lots and a network of concrete sidewalks would surround the playground. Another goal for Fairmount Park would be to provide accessible paths along the Fairmount Lake. He noted that Lake Evens included an accessible area for fishing. As the park is being renovated, it is being brought up to current Codes. Mr. McDaniel described the playground that serves the pre-school aged kids and the 5-12 year old playground and a water-play area. He noted the sand, sensory play areas and the picnic areas. This project is currently in the bidding stage and it is expected that this priority project would be completed before the end of 2009.

In response to the COD's concern about the picnic tables and the sand area, Mr. McDaniel noted that the sand area was accessible because it was a sand table at wheelchair level with room to move around it. Mr. McDaniel noted that the picnic table was accessible on the ends – companion (stationary seats shortened to allow for wheelchair access) seating was also being provided at Fairmount and Andulka Parks.

Andulka Park

Andulka Park is currently under construction and opening day is May 2, 2009. Located at Chicago/Central Avenues, the first stage of baseball fields had been completed two years ago. The tennis complex is being constructed. The Park includes 2 baseball fields, a universally accessible playground area, picnic table area, a volleyball court, 2 basketball courts, 10 tennis courts and the tennis complex. The universally accessible playground consists of a bank of swings, a preschool age play area, a 5-12 year old play area, and poured in place rubber surfaces.

2. Final Review and Comment: COD Annual Report to City Council – April 2009 (Garcia)

The COD thanked Commissioner Garcia for her work on the Council report.

3. Update: Community Outreach - Disabled Disaster Preparedness and Sign-up Sheet (Keller)

Chairperson Keller noted that she had spoken to Deputy Fire Chief Oran Pentz who is very willing to provide a procedure to share with the community groups about how to register with the voluntary response registry. She noted that there is a similar procedure for the Police Department.

Ms. Keller also spoke with the Superintendent of the Riverside Unified School District who approved COD fliers to be distributed to all of the disabled students and their teachers – 4600 students and teachers.

Commissioner Welch volunteered to speak to the Alvord Unified School District about distribution of COD information to students, teachers and special education teachers.

Commissioners should be prepared to sign up for specific community meetings by the April 2009 COD meeting so that the COD community outreach campaign can begin.

Commissioner Van Doren advised Commissioner Hawecker about a disaster preparedness event on April 30, 2009 at the California School for the Deaf. If anyone is interested in attending, contact Paul Van Doren at the Riverside Community Access Center.

Commissioner Werly noted that the County of Riverside conducted a Disaster Planning, Preparedness, Response & Recovery event for Disability specific issues. She noted that there was a session presented by the City of Riverside staff from Fire, Police and other representatives from various cities and counties were present. Disability Policy Consultant June Isaacson Kailes, jik@pacbell.net organized this event and prepares municipal disaster plans. Ms Kailes offered the updated municipal disaster plan from the City of Los Angeles without charge as a template for the City of Riverside.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Update: Arlington Heights Sports Complex (Ralph Nunez)

Mr. McDaniel noted that the Arlington Heights project required a long master plan process and the design process is near completion. Construction is tentatively due to be completed by end of summer 2010. This is a large 34 acre site that will consist of 4 multi-use fields (soccer, football), 2 basketball courts and 4 overlay fields. The park will include 3 rows of citrus around the entire park creating a unique greenbelt. There will be 300 parking spaces including accessible spaces throughout, which amount to more than the minimum required. The park includes a neighborhood park where the playground is located. The playground will also include 2 playground areas, a water play area, interpretative panels, shade structures and restrooms. For Arlington Heights, the agricultural heritage was important; this park will be reminiscent of the greenbelt and agricultural atmosphere. Mr. McDaniel asked the COD for any requests they might have concerning the play structures that he could forward to the designer. He noted that currently, standard structures were planned.

The COD requested rigid, high backed swings and asked that any decorative ground hardscape not be difficult for people using walkers and canes, such as smooth concrete but not pebbles or rocks. The COD also asked to be kept updated on the progress of this facility.

2. Welcome new Commissioner Jack Brewer

Commissioner Brewer noted that his career has been in law enforcement and he retired in 2000 as a District Administrator of the State Alcoholic Beverage Control over Riverside and San Bernardino counties. He still does some work for the State in investigations. He was on the Community Police Review Commission (CPRC) for 8 years.

3. Article Discussion: What You can Learn from an Employee with Autism (Garcia)

This article was noted by the COD. The article's focus was that there is no reason not to hire people with specific disabilities.

UPCOMING EVENTS

1. Annual Board and Commission Reception - Grier Pavilion, Monday, March 23, 2009 at 5:30 pm

Noted by the COD.

2. 6th Annual Senior Conference – Janet Goeske Center, Wednesday, March 25, 8 am to 1 pm

Noted by the COD.

3. 3rd Annual Very Special Art Fair - Ramona High, April 16, 2009 from 9 am to 1 pm.

The COD will discuss attendance of this event at the April 13, 2009 meeting.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

1. Report: Barrier Removal Requests in Retail Establishments (Hawecker)
2. Discussion Item: Public Service Announcement concerning Proper Placement of Trash Containers in conjunction with Public Works Solid Waste Division

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

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

Date	Postcards Distributed by Code Enforcement
January 2008	70
February 2008	0
March 2008	0
April 2008	201
May 2008	0
June 2008	40
July 2008	20
August 2008	45
September 2008	135
October 2008	113
November 2008	14
December 2008	0
January 2008	0
February 2008	0

ADJOURNMENT: 7:39 pm