



COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES MINUTES Monday, May 6, 2019 5:30 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: 5:30 pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ABSENT: Kimberly Lopez (unexcused).

Also in attendance were General Services Deputy Director Shari Call, Assistant to the Mayor Luke Villalobos and ADA Coordinator Monique Gordon.

1. **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.

None.

PRESENTATIONS

2. Presentation from the Southern California Council on Aging's Health Insurance Counseling Advocacy Program about Medicare fraud and abuse prevention including phone, internet and mail scams and ways to prevent, detect and report fraud and abuse.

Robin Nicoles, HICAP Community Education & Outreach Specialist. HICAP is an unbiased organization that helps people understand all of the Medicare plans and programs without charge. HICAP works with people who are victims of fraud; seniors and people with disabilities are targeted. HICAP advises everyone, if you do not recognize the phone number, do not pick up the phone. Chances are it will be a scam. Scammers prey on the elderly.

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) attempts to teach Medicare recipients to protect their cards. Monthly Medicare statements will show what was charged against your Medicare benefits; this statement should be reviewed each month. If there is a problem with the statement or you receive a bill for goods or services you did not receive or authorize, contact HICAP for assistance before you make any payments. HICAP will help determine if it is a legitimate bill or something that should be removed from your account. HICAP representatives are Medicare specialists.

3. Receive an oral presentation from participants of the Mayor's Social Work Internship Program to create awareness about how hands-on social work, collaboration with local universities, faith organizations, the City of Riverside's Office of Homeless Solutions and the local nonprofit homeless shelter can work together to alleviate barriers to housing, health and social services.

Assistant to the Mayor Luke Villalobos provided this presentation. A large part of his responsibility is working with people who are homeless: Constituent affairs, producing new partnerships in terms of faith based organizations building on church properties, such as The Grove project which opened the end of last year, providing housing for people who are homeless on their property. It is anticipated that this will be the first of many such projects. There are other faith based organizations who have expressed interest in participating in similar housing projects for people who are homeless.

For the last year, Mr. Villalobos has been working on a social work internship. About 2 years ago, there was a faith summit where over 90 churches participated from around the region who came to the City of Riverside to discuss the faith response to homelessness. The Mayor held this meeting with some City staff. One of the ideas from the summit was the idea that you can insert social work interns, those earning their BSW or MSW into faith organizations to work with people who are homeless. La Sierra Community Church has been doing this for the last 4 years. They have a professor from La Sierra University Social Work Department, placed one of her students at the church and piloted this concept. This pilot program has seen some incredible results. The church is paying less in terms of contributions to programs for homeless services and seen more efficiencies in terms of connecting foot traffic from people who are homeless to various organizations that are working with this population.

Based on this pilot concept, the participating faith based organizations came to the Mayor during the faith summit and suggested that other churches and universities get involved and deploy social work students into congregations at the various sites and work with people who are homeless. The expanded project was implemented. La Sierra University Church, Loma Linda University Social Work Department, and Cal Baptist University provided 15 interns for the project. The interns have been placed in 6 faith based organizations throughout Riverside to work with people who are homeless. So far, there have been great results in the pilot year.

The idea is not to just work with people who are homeless, but also work with willing church congregations. Many congregations want to help people who are homeless, they have ministries to help homeless population with feeding programs, homeless outreach and other relationship building programs. The next step is to provide people who are homeless with a path to self sufficiency. The goal of the internship program is to put on workshops at various churches concerning bridges out of poverty, such as managing finances, mental health first aid and dealing with someone who is severely mentally ill. Also, helping without hurting - how to approach a person and get them on the path to self

sustainability. These workshops are for people who are homeless and the congregations, in order to professionalize the current outreach provided by various churches. This is being done. There have been about 15 different workshops provided in the 6 different churches, along with hundreds of contacts and connections with people who are homeless. The churches in this program are Calvary Presbterian Church, La Sierra University Church, Riverside Community Church, Faith Lutheran Church, Hope Community Church, Sandals Palm Avenue Church.

For the second year, a \$300,000 grant was received to sustain the program for the next three years. The goal is to look at churches as regional outposts. For instance, in year 2 a challenge is that more churches, hospitals, libraries, non-profits and people want to be involved. The difficulty is incorporating the different interests in the program. The regional outposts plan is for each church to be in charge of a region. For instance, Calvary Presbterian will be part of the downtown region and interns placed there will be in charge of building relationships with anyone in that region interested in partnering concerning people who are homeless. Data sharing and looking at who is doing what and how the interns can facilitate those connections, including connecting congregations in order to reduce redundancy in services to people who are homeless.

Commissioner Lewis voiced her frustration that there were no African-american churches involved in this project. There are a large number of African-american churches in the community who have been around a long time and have worked very hard within the community doing work for people who are homeless. At a recent meeting, Revend Munford of New Joy Baptist Church, described the large, sustained problem with people who are homeless camping on his church property. It appears that various churches with diverse congregations are not included in this discussion. Was Reverend Munford invited to the summit? Churches of the chosen few is not fair, not right and something needs to be done. Commissioner Lewis noted that she has an upcoming meeting with Mayor Bailey and will discuss this issue of a lack of diversity for this summit. The summit needs to reach out to all of the churches.

Mr. Villalobos noted that he deeply appreciated her comment. This is something he has been advocating for internally: More Catholic, African-American and other churches being involved. In reality, he noted, this is an inherited project. He was uncertain about how outreach of the faith summit happened, but there was a list of churches that were interested in the social work internship and the program was built based on that interest list. Originally, 12 churches were interested and that number was narrowed to 6 because there was not enough capacity: one field work instructor who was supervising 15 interns and 12 churches was not logistically possible.

For the second year, there is discussion about how to proceed and at the meeting next Thursday, the diversity issue will be discussed. The goal will be to include African-american and Catholic churches. Also the community of churches should be reviewed so various other faiths can also be included. Churches who provide services for people who are homeless will be given top priority. Of note, the grant funds have been provided to pay a full time staff member to manage the program, not to provide funding for churches.

The ADA Coordinator noted that the COD had been planning on developing a homeless summit and had no idea that this homeless program was currently happening. Instead of the COD reinventing the wheel, a way should be sought to participate with the current summit in a collaborative way to reach out to homeless residents. Maybe the best route would be for the churches to collaborate and share outcomes in order to duplicate the success of the intern program.

Commissioner Lewis suggested that groups like the NAACP and others be at the table and included in the discussion. A more diverse group can provide and receive these homeless services. This is the point where the existing program can branch out and become regional.

Commissioner Lewis was invited to the upcoming steering committee meeting concerning the social work internship program for people who are homeless.

Former Commission on Disabilities Commissioner Keith Nelson noted that the private sector has not been invited to this discussion. He and his brother have property, the old Alta Dena Dairy where people who are homeless currently live. The Nelsons wanted to develop part of the property and donate the rest to the City for development of homeless shelters. His brother called the Mayor's office many times and received no response. He noted that there are people in the business sector who are willing to donate pieces of property to help curb the homeless issue. Churches are great but the money is in the business sector.

Commissioner Krick noted that the New Joy Baptist Church is located right across from the river, near Martha McClain-Anza Narrows Park, which has a large homeless encampment, which is why the Church experiences a lot of people who are homeless camping on church grounds.

Mr. Villalobos went on to describe how more about how churches could be involved as regional satellites connected with the primary church "hubs" since funding is limited.

DISCUSSION CALENDAR

This portion of the Commission on Disabilities Agenda is for all matters where staff and public participation is anticipated. Individual audience participation is limited to 3 minutes.

4. Discuss a proposed change in meeting date and location to allow for videotape production of regular Commission on Disabilities meetings.

The regular COD meetings have been moved to the third Thursday of the odd months, in the Art Pick City Council Chambers at 5:30 pm.

5. Board and Commission Attendance Policy concerning the March 4, 2019 meeting:

Commissioner Tola Perkins noted that her absence was due to a medical issue that the Commission qualified as excused.

M/S Lewis / Nelson and unanimous to excuse Tola Perkin's absence from the March 4, 2019 meeting.

AYES – 9 (Alexander, Lewis, Krick, Davis, Quezada, Nelson, Aleman, Foust, Perkins); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0; ABSENT – 1 (Lopez).

6. Minutes for the meeting of May 6, 2019

M/S Foust/Nelson and unanimous to accept the minutes of March 4, 2019 as corrected.

AYES – 9 (Alexander, Lewis, Krick, Davis, Quezada, Nelson, Aleman, Foust, Perkins); NOES – 0; ABSTAIN – 0; ABSENT – 1 (Lopez).

COMMUNICATIONS

7. Brief reports on conferences, seminars, meetings attended by Commission on Disabilities Members.
- a. Chairperson Alexander attended the Board & Commission Appreciation event along with other Commission members.
 - b. Commissioner Davis attended the Board and Commission Orientation.
 - c. Commissioner Krick asked about City badges for Board and Commission members.
 - d. Commissioner Lewis mentioned the NAACP Youth Group Unity Basketball Game at Poly High School. The event is free on May 8, 2019 at 4 pm.
 - e. The COD requested a list of speakers (guide) for the last 3 years for brochure development and a disability summit and public outreach tables. Target date, first quarter of 2020.

Items for Future Consideration:

1. Presentations about employment and disabled youth. Invite Parks and Recreation.
2. Update of employment PSA.
3. Update of brochures.
4. Make COD members available to provide presentations for other groups.
5. Going before Council to let them know what is happening with the COD – Quarterly
6. Agenda item to discuss how the COD can be more public.
7. Presentation by Blindness Support Services – Toni Quesada.
8. What happens when a child / adult with disabilities is arrested? Invite a representative from the Riverside Police Department.

ADJOURNMENT: 7:00 pm

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be Thursday, July 18, 2019, Art Pick Council Chambers, 5:30 pm.