

ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes



Date & Time: Thursday, Sept 27th, 2018 from 2:30-4:00 P.M.

Location: Sun Metro Transit Operations Center at 10151 Montana

Agenda Minutes

I. Welcome/Roll Call

Meeting was called to order at 2:40 pm with following members present. Committee introduced themselves, as well as city employees that were present.

Member	Appointment	Present
Marc Salazar	District 1	Present
Jorge Diaz	District 2	
Michelle Adjemian	District 3	Present
Vacant	District 4	
Sylvia Stuckey	District 5	Present
Mary Castillo	District 6	Present
Josue Rodriguez	District 7	Present
Kimberly Shaw	District 8	
Vacant	Mayor	
Julio Perez	Secretary	Present
Omar DelaRosa	Legal	

II. Call to the Public – Public Comment

- Lower Valley Walmart area, blocking sidewalks w/ construction signs (Alameda & Karns).
- Who is responsible for cleaning sidewalks? There are some private business areas that do not clean their sidewalks. Dyer Walmart:
 - It's not accessible, lots of cracks
 - Temporary sign blockage
- Raul Torres brought up a concern that on East Montana – one side of the street does not have any sidewalks or is inaccessible.

- Lucy Torres: Dyer and Thomason – cracks in the sidewalk.

III. Business Items

Approval of Aug 23rd, 2018 Minutes: Mary Castillo made a motion to approve and Marc Salazar seconded the motion – 4 voted, one abstention – minutes approved.

IV. Discussion

A. Bus Stop Enhancement

Frank Benavidez from Sun Metro provided an update:

- Reviewing all bus stops for accessibility – to determine priority.
- Last year – over 100 locations were completed.
- The current phase (32 locations) – 75 percent have been completed. It will be completed within a month or so.
- Also working on a long-term contractor that will continue the work after this phase completes.

B. CDBG funding opportunity for District 3 and 5

Julio Perez provided information regarding the annual CDBG (Community Development Block Grant) funding opportunity. This year, funding is available for Districts 3 and 5.

- 500K is available for each district related to small projects – sidewalk and curb cut projects would qualify under this program.
- Sidewalk projects would need to be in areas of low- to moderate-income. Curb cuts do not have to meet that requirement as they impacts citizens with disabilities.
- The funding is competitive so other agencies, City departments, non-profits, etc, can also apply for those funds.
- Requests for projects need to be submitted to Julio Perez by no later than the end of November as the application deadline is the first week of December.
- Requesting AAC appointees to meet with their respective City Representatives and see if there any requests pending from constituents in these two districts.
- In past years, the public has been slow in submitting requests and it has been up to the ADA coordinator to find potential projects – it is preferred if these requests come directly from citizens.
- Once awarded, the funding needs to be spent in FY2020.

C. Presentation by Fire Dept on the Emergency Preparedness Program

During an ADA-Self assessment completed in 2018, one of the gaps identified was that the Fire Department needed to do more outreach to citizens with disabilities as it relates to the emergency planning and preparedness program. This is one of those presentations that attempt to address that gap.

Alex Miranda from the Fire Department provided a presentation of the programs the City has to offer for citizens with disabilities under the Office of Emergency Planning.

- Emergency Alert System radios, fire alarm detectors and other emergency

preparedness items available through Fire Department. Some sampled radios brought in and distributed to all those who desired them – if more are needed, citizens need to call 311 and request one.

- Information, education and emergency preparedness items available through 311
- Mr. Miranda provided informational packets to members that include:
 - How to register online (or dial 311) so that citizens with disabilities can receive emergency texts, emails or information. It is the emergency alert system.
 - 311 is used for any information that is needed from the City of El Paso
 - 211 is a state-maintained informational system.
 - These two numbers are used to assist citizens with whatever problem they are facing (non-emergency) – problems with their pharmacy, transportation, their bills, etc – anything that they are having issues with. If they don't have the information, they will direct you to the right person. For example, during winter time, if someone needs a blanket or a heater, they can see if those are available through various City agencies. During the summer, fans, assistance with coolers, etc.
 - The informational packet includes also instructions on what to do during an emergency, where to go, what to take with you: Important phone numbers, bank information, personal items, etc.
- A question came up from the public regarding mobile apps or phone services that will identify the exact address where the person needing help is located. Mr. Miranda says that they're working on an app that will help them do that – it's complicated because of the different cell phone providers and phone limitations.

D. Discussion/update on the District Representative meetings

No City representative meeting took place regarding accessibility.

E. Discussion on street signage for visually impaired citizens or those citizens with low vision.

Ying and Yang from the City provided information on how signage specs are determined.

- All specifications regarding signage have to follow state and local ordinances depending on size of street, traffic volume, state vs. City, etc.
- If someone has an issue with a specific location, please report it (via 311, the AAC or ADA coordinator), it will be reviewed and if needed, it will be corrected or adjusted. It can be a lighting issue, maybe an tree obstruction or the sign placement can be wrong. If the letters at a specific location needs to be increased, changed, adjusted – it can be accommodated.

F. Discussion on downtown parking for citizens with disabilities

Paul Stresow from the City provided information on how the downtown parking works.

- It is free of charge for the time of the meter – for those citizens with disabilities who possess an ADA placard or any ADA license plate that fall within state law. If it's a two-hour meter, they can use it for the entire hour. However, because enforcement officers are very lenient, that time is ever extended and it is also abused.
- There's still a lot of abuse that takes place – those are reported to the Police Department.
- The City is looking at having some dedicated ADA spaces in the downtown area as well. A consultant is looking at the general issues with parking in the downtown area and recommendations will come. Any proposed changes will go to City Council.
- Julio Perez mentioned that one of the issues downtown for those with disabilities is that all the parking meters are being used. Mr. Stresow agreed and that's why they're looking at the possibility of adding dedicated spaces. However, if those spaces are provided, those with ADA placards that don't belong to them, may continue to abuse the system.

G. Discussion/update on PD's volunteer program on ADA parking enforcement

- Item postponed due to lack of presenter

H. Review/discuss the AAC flyer.

Michelle Adjamian asked the team where the AAC was on approving the flyer.

- Michelle Adjamian expressed frustration that it's taking a long time to get this out and preferred to not extend this item for another month. Marc Salazar agreed but mentioned that it does need to be reviewed by the group – and the group is not entirely present.
- Josue Rodriguez mentioned that AAC member, Kimbe Shaw provided some good recommended changes and that those need to be reviewed before approving.
- Marc Salazar recommended that the item continues to be on the agenda for next month and for Kimbe Shaw to be present – the group agreed.

I. Discussion of additional project ideas for AAC agenda items.

Item tabled due to the lack of time.

V. Next meeting Location

Nov 1st 2018 – at the Sun Metro Operations Center from 2:30-4:00pm.

VI. Adjournment – 4:03 PM