

INDEX OF
CITY OF SANTA FE
MAYOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY
MEETING
May 16, 2019

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>ACTION</u>	<u>PAGE (S)</u>
CALL TO ORDER		1
ROLL CALL	Quorum	1
APPROVAL OF AGENDA	Approved [as amended]	2
APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 21, 2019	Approved [as amended]	2
APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 18, 2019	Approved [as amended]	2
PUBLIC COMMENTS		3
PRESENTATION		
a) ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY – MAURICE C. ALVAREZ, ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST, GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY		3-6
NEW BUSINESS – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION		
a) WELCOME NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS – AURORE BLECK		6
b) LOOP SYSTEM ACCESS/RECOMMENDATION – PAM J. PARFITT		7-8
OLD BUSINESS		
a) MCD-SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS		8-10
b) MCD NEW MEMBERS STATUS		10
c) ADA COORDINATOR REVIEW STATUS		10
d) DISCUSSION OF SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS		10
e) FOLLOW UP ON SNAP BENEFITS		10-11
ITEMS FROM MEMBERS AND STAFF		11
NEXT MEETING: June 20, 2019		11
ADJOURNMENT	Adjourned at 11.55 a.m.	11

MINUTES OF THE
CITY OF SANTA FE
MAYOR'S COMMITTEE ON DISABILITY MEETING
Santa Fe, New Mexico

May 16, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Mayor's Committee on Disability was called to order by Aurore Bleck, Chair on Thursday, May 16, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. at the City Council Chambers, 200 Lincoln Avenue, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

2. ROLL CALL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Aurore Bleck, Chair
Angelique Montoya-Chavez
Kathlynn Gish
Victor Hughes
Pam J. Parfitt
Hope Reed
Michael D. Wirtz

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kendra Garcia
Miriam Jawhar

OTHERS PRESENT

Maurice C. Alvarez, Governor's Commission on Disability, Technical Assistance Program
David Chapman, Staff Liaison
Mark Garcia, visitor
Robert Johnson, visitor/artist
Germaine Mitchell, Solace Crisis Treatment Center
Jo Ann G. Valdez for Elizabeth Martin, Stenographer

DRAFT: SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chair Bleck amended the Agenda to add item 9d (*Discussion of Subcommittee Assignments*) under *Old Business*.

Ms. Gish said she would like to amend the agenda also to add item 9e (*Follow up on the SNAP Benefits being counted as income*) under *Old Business*.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Wirtz, seconded by Ms. Montoya-Chavez to approve the agenda as amended.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 21, 2019 meeting

Chair Bleck said the Committee has recently had a problem with the minutes incorrectly using the last name “Lucero” when it should be “Hughes” (Committee Member). She said it is on numerous pages: page 3 (1st paragraph), 4 (last paragraph) and 7 (last paragraph in item 9) of the March 21, 2019 meeting minutes.

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Hughes, seconded by Ms. Gish to approve the Minutes of the March 21, 2019 meeting as amended.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 18, 2019 meeting

Chair Bleck said the Minutes of the April 18, 2019 meeting have the same problem with incorrectly using the last name “Lucero” multiple times and pages.

She said on page 1, she does not know if the new Members were notified that they were approved to come to the meeting and in the event, they should all be marked excused.

She said on page 2, under *Presentations*, 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence should be changed to read: “*He thanked him for all the hard work and **public** service he has given to the City over the years.*”

She said on page 4, under Item B (*MCD New Member Status*), the name Pam Parfill should be changed to: Pam **Parfitt**

MOTION: A motion was made by Mr. Hughes, seconded by Mr. Wirtz to approve the Minutes of the April 18, 2019 meeting as amended.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

6. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chair Bleck asked if there were any public comments today.

Ms. Gish said she has a public comment on behalf of a constituent who emailed her regarding a subcommittee that is seeking members to serve on the subcommittee. The subcommittee is seeking accessibility for all of the disabled community to participate in the 2020 census. She needs one or two people to sit on the committee who can represent the disabled population.

Chair Bleck asked Ms. Gish if they are doing other outreach also.

Ms. Gish said yes. She noted that this individual sent her some information and she will forward it to David Chapman.

Chair Bleck said if anyone is interested or know individuals who might be interested in serving on the subcommittee, they can get the information through David Chapman.

She asked if there were any other public comments and there were none.

7. PRESENTATION

a) ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY – MAURICE C. ALVAREZ, ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY SPECIALIST, GOVERNOR’S COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

Ms. Alvarez introduced herself noting that she is an Assistive Technology Specialist with the New Mexico Technologies Assistance Program (NMTAP), which is a branch of the Governor’s Commission on Disability. The Program is supported by a grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Community Living.

Ms. Alvarez distributed some brochures on the services that they provide for individuals with disabilities and explained the services that they provide. NMTAP provides assistive technology related assistance for individuals with disabilities of any age, any disability, any income who are living anywhere in New Mexico.

The Program is designed to meet the requirements of the Assistive Technology Act of 2004, part of US public law. Assistive Technology includes any device or system that is used to increase, maintain or improve functional capabilities of an individual with a disability in education, employment and community engagement. The Device Loan Program provides short-term loans of assistive technology devices for any individual with a disability. Devices can be borrowed to try out before purchasing, to act as a loaner until a

personal device is repaired, to provide training or for short-term accommodations. They also arrange device demonstrations for individuals or groups which are designed to explore and compare similar types of assistive technology that are available to provide access for those with cognitive, visual, speech, hearing and mobility issues.

Ms. Alvarez said NMTAP does not sell any of these items - the Device Loan Program helps individuals compare similar types of assistive technology that are available - to make an informed decision on what works best for them.

She said one of the main goals of their program is to help alleviate some of the financial burdens for those individuals who do not have the opportunity to try different types of devices, such as hearing devices, which can be very expensive.

She said as part of the NMTAP program, two types of financial loans are available to any individual with a disability. San Juan Center for Independence is their partner who provides two types of loans: Access Loan New Mexico is a low interest loan that allows a NM resident with a disability to purchase an assistive technology device or to make home or vehicle modifications. NM SEED (Self Employment for Entrepreneurs with Disabilities) Loans is a low interest loan for an individual with a disability who needs to purchase equipment to expand or create a home-based business. This program is funded through the Rehabilitation Services Administration Access to Telework Award and provides accommodations, including materials in alternative formats to afford an individual with a disability, the equal opportunity to all services, meetings and loan applications. People can obtain information and applications through the NMTAP website or call them at 1-855-891-8295.

Ms. Alvarez said this program does not cover start-up costs.

She said another two parts of their program include the Device Reutilization program. NMTAP can provide used assistive technology to individuals with disabilities when there are no other options. "Back in Use" provides donated durable medical equipment that has been gently used to individuals with disabilities. DiverseIT provides refurbished computers to individuals with disabilities, free of charge. NMTAP is partners with Adelante Development Center who is located in Albuquerque to provide this assistance. There is an application process for this and people can contact Adelante Development Center.

Ms. Alvarez said the last part of their program is the training and technical assistance. Trainings include presentations like this where they go out and speak to the public or organizations to let people know about their services that are available. They provide information on availability of resources and funding through public and private sources to obtain devices or services. This also includes referrals to other agencies, organizations or companies. They also offer instructional/training events for groups designed to increase knowledge, skills and competences regarding assistance technology.

She mentioned that NMTAP has two satellite offices in the NE (Las Vegas) and SW

(Silver City) regions of the state who can also provide device loans, demonstrations and trainings. People can link to these offices from the NMTAP website.

Ms. Alvarez said they are trying to reach out to the rural communities who might not have access to this technology; or do not know that it exists. She noted that NMTAP ships products free-of-charge to the user.

Ms. Alvarez demonstrated some samples of the devices that included an amplified cell phone device; an eating utensil (helps individuals who have a mobile disability: tremors); they recently received a robotic eating device; a vision device; and an IPAD and Notebook that had different types of apps like a memory task app. She said people can request a demonstration or a device loan through NMTAP's website or call 505-841-4464.

Questions/Comments

Ms. Parfitt asked Ms. Alvarez if they had devices that were compatible with hearing devices (some kind of earbuds) or headphones.

Ms. Alvarez said no, unfortunately, they do not have any type of hearing aid devices. They usually refer people to the Hearing and Vision Center in Albuquerque because they focus on hearing aid devices.

Mr. Wirth asked how many people approximately are taking advantage of the facilities and equipment.

Ms. Alvarez said she would say hundreds. They loan out devices quite often during the week and they ship out items throughout the entire state. They also have therapists come in to work with people on the different goals they have. She said they would definitely want to have more utilization of their free services and one of their challenge is getting the word out to let people know that they have these services available.

Ms. Montoya-Chavez asked how they advertise to the public – how do they get the word out to the public.

Ms. Alvarez said mostly word of mouth. They also do public awareness events and try to participate with community events to talk to the community but getting the word out could definitely improve. She said if the Committee, or anyone, had ideas on ways that they could reach the smaller communities, please let them know.

She mentioned that they hold an annual conference and they just had that last week and therapists from around the state attend that and they spread the word out.

Chair Bleck asked Ms. Alvarez if they have training for medical providers in northern New Mexico.

Ms. Alvarez said yes, as mentioned earlier, they do have different kinds trainings but if there is an organization that specifically would like for them to go out and do a training, they do this as well. They also get calls to make presentations or training for staff at the universities a lot.

Chair Bleck asked if there were any more questions.

Mr. Garcia wanted to know what the exact website was.

Ms. Alvarez said it is www.tap.gcd.state.nm.us and it is also listed on the brochures that she distributed.

A citizen noted that he has trouble with putting time in perspective and he is always running late and he asked if they had any device for this and for organizing things better.

Ms. Alvarez said yes, they have a couple of them that she can recommend, if he would like to speak with her after.

Mr. Chapman asked Ms. Alvarez how often they get updated or new equipment.

Ms. Alvarez said they do purchases 2-3 times a year and people can let them know if there is any equipment that they would like to add to see about purchasing it.

Ms. Montoya-Chavez said she has personally seen how these devices can impact a family. She mentioned that she is a mother with two children with disabilities and she is their full-time care provider to her children who are both medically fragile. She said she takes a lot of pride in caring for them, and is honored to be a part of the Committee for, not only her children, but for their peers also. She noted that her son is completely dependent on a couple of apps on the IPAD. She offered her assistance in any way that she can help to get the word out to other children.

Ms. Alvarez said she brought extra brochures as well so she can leave some with Ms. Montoya-Chavez.

Chair Bleck asked if there were any more questions and there were none. She thanked Ms. Alvarez for her informative presentation.

8. NEW BUSINESS – DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION

a) WELCOME NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS – AURORE BLECK

Chair Bleck said the Committee has new members: Angelique Montoya-Chavez and Pam Parfitt. She asked the Committee Members to introduce themselves. Each of them provided a brief history of their respective backgrounds.

b) LOOP SYSTEM ACCESS/RECOMMENDATION – PAM J. PARFITT

Ms. Parfitt said she is here to advocate and represent the hard of hearing people who can benefit from the assisted hearing loop. A hearing loop is a type of assistive listening system used to silently transmit sound to the hard of hearing via electromagnetic waves that are received by tiny receivers called telecoils. Such systems are now required in most public venues that feature a public address system. In its simplest form, a hearing loop is an insulated wire loop that surrounds a seating area. The loop is connected to an amplifier and microphone and it transmits a silent electro-magnetic signal to the telecoils found in most hearing aids or cochlear implants that those devices turn into sound. A telecoil is a small copper coil of wire that can be found in over 79% of all hearing aids currently available and in all new cochlear implants.

Ms. Parfitt noted that a hearing loop assistive listening system allows those with telecoil equipped hearing aids and CIs to access the system with the simple touch of a button.

She mentioned that she set up a fund “Loop Santa Fe” at the Santa Fe Community Foundation. This will pay the bill to loop the Lensic Theatre. She said she has also been speaking with the Center for Contemporary Arts and they are actively seeking bids to install the loop. Loop Santa Fe will help with that funding.

Ms. Parfitt spoke about House Bill 48 that was recently passed into law that makes it mandatory that hearing aid dispensers and audiologists counsel their clients about telecoil technology before they sell them a hearing aid.

Ms. Parfitt distributed information that explains the assisted hearing loops and the laws for these. Please see “Exhibit 8b” for the specifics of this presentation.

Questions/Comments:

Mr. Wirth said there has been all sorts of controversy and confusion about cell towers and electro-magnetic fields to the point that people are sick from it. He asked if there was any potential of these loops causing some health problems.

Ms. Parfitt said she can tell him that she is one of those people who had all kinds of trouble and who was sensitized to computers, to YouTube and to every single new technology but she has never been affected by magnetic fields or magnetics. However, to answer the question, she can never say that there will be no one who will be affected by this.

Ms. Montoya-Chavez asked about individuals who have a magnet for their seizures – will they be affected by this.

Ms. Parfitt said she did not know medically-speaking if this technology will affect

seizure implants but she does know that magnets change things because she used to have hearing aids that were implanted and she used to turn them on and off with a magnet and she remembers that the magnet in the receivers turned her hearing aids off. She said there are magnets everywhere and she did not know where all of them are.

Ms. Montoya-Chavez said it would be interesting to find this out for those who have implants in their brains and their chests.

Ms. Parfitt said she could try and find out if this technology could affect those. She asked Ms. Montoya-Chavez to write down her concerns.

Ms. Montoya-Chavez said sometimes people do not know and possibly signs indicating that the facility/building is looped would be helpful and she would like to see how they can be inclusive of different populations.

Ms. Parfitt said that is the law that the signs go up and she will look into whether or not this will affect those with these types of implants.

She said mass gathering places (city buildings) is the first priority that she would like to address-such as the Convention Center or the Genoveva Chavez Center.

Chair Bleck said it seems that Ms. Parfitt's recommendation is that the Convention Center and the Genoveva Chavez Center need to be fixed and the southside needs to be looped. She suggested that Ms. Parfitt make a list of the City's public facilities because they can only affect things that are city-controlled.

Ms. Reed noted that they can talk with the Governors' Commission on Disability for the State buildings.

Chair Bleck asked if there was any more comments or questions and there were none.

b) OLD BUSINESS

a) MCD-SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

Plan Review Subcommittee

Ms. Reed said they have not had plans to review and she noted that the notes from the last meeting state that there are CAD programs that can help them to see if they are in compliance and would save them time; however, she find out that this programs are not working that well yet. She said the other issue is that they have to design one for New Mexico because there are different laws and requirements in our State and they want a system that will work for New Mexico. She will look at that further.

PTS Subcommittee

Mr. Hughes said they have a few things to comment on. First, he attended the Assisted Dogs of the West graduation last night and a gentleman shared his story how the service dog has assisted him in cutting down his medication that he takes by 50%. He said this is an example of the kind of impact that these dogs can have.

Mr. Hughes said the other event that he attended this past month was a Trauma-Informed Care Working Group Collaborative meeting that was hosted by the Santa Fe Community Foundation. He said this group consists of approximately 50-60 different service groups who all deal with traumatized individuals. He said it was a very productive meeting and they plan to meet every month to discuss how to approach trauma-informed care here in Santa Fe. He noted that although the group is quite large, they are looking to make it as inclusive as possible and he will be inviting others to participate and if anyone else has any recommendations for people to participate, or anyone who will benefit from participating in this group to let him know.

Mr. Hughes said he also met with Kyra Ochoa, the Community Services Director for the City and she expressed interest in attending a Mayors Committee on Disability meeting in the future.

Mr. Chapman offered to get a hold of her to possibly speak to the group.

Transit

Chair Bleck said the Transit Committee had a meeting in April and they discussed the Southside Center that is supposed to open in 2020 and redoing the share center downtown. She said there is no movement whatsoever mainly because of culture issues and the fact that we are getting into tourist season.

She noted that Transit is going to have 40 new buses at the end of September and they received four vans for Paratransit. They also trained some people on the route maps and things like that, which should increase sufficiency with routing people in the Paratransit system.

She mentioned that they are doing a service plan update and they are going to ask for extended pick up service in Santa Fe to 8:00 p.m. She said they are also changing their brochure and are addressing the no-show policies and they looked at the policies and systems that the Committee set up several years ago. They are also talking about combining the paratransit rides and the senior rides. She noted that they are supposed to have an app now that will show where the buses are.

She said they have good employees in the Paratransit system and the service has been great. The drivers and call takers have received a \$2.00 raise and the Transit Department also has retention incentives.

Mr. Wirth noted that there was an article in the *New Mexican* a couple of days ago

about the weeds in Santa Fe and again one of his actions is the reduction and elimination of the use of herbicides so he will be calling John Munoz (new Director of Parks) to make sure that he follows the integrated risk-management resolution that was passed.

b) MCD NEW MEMBERS STATUS

Chair Bleck said they now have a complete Committee and there are no vacancies.

c) ADA COORDINATOR REVIEW STATUS

Mr. Chapman reported that they received applications from five qualified individuals for the ADA Coordinator position and they will finalize their selection this afternoon and hire someone soon.

d) DISCUSSION OF SUBCOMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Chair Bleck asked if anyone would like to add or subtract from their subcommittee assignments.

Ms. Parfitt said she would like a little more definition of the Plan Review Subcommittee.

Ms. Hope said they review all new and renovated sidewalks and parks, and to make sure that events and buildings are ADA accessible. She said they would welcome Ms. Parfitt and would like her to participate with them when they do assembly areas - on the hearing aid systems.

Chair Bleck asked if there was anyone else who would like to do subcommittee assignments and there were no responses.

e) FOLLOW UP ON SNAP BENEFITS

Ms. Gish noted that she voiced either in September or October 2018 that the Federal law states that SNAP benefits cannot be counted as income for any purpose. She said the City Water Division is counting these as income for the Low-Income City Water permits that eliminate monthly fees for the charges of water usage. There are some who could potentially lose this benefit because they count SNAP benefits as income. She said she forwarded this information to David Chapman and he forwarded to the City Attorney but they have not had an official response from the City. She mentioned that the City agrees with the Federal law and what it says about SNAP benefit and they would like to act in any way to reduce this conflict. She said she is not sure how to proceed.

Chair Bleck said she noticed that David Chapman re-stirred the issue recently by sending an email.

Mr. Chapman said this is his third follow up that he sent to Legal and he also talked to the Public Works Division Director yesterday. He will also be having a conversation with him on another subject today and he will discuss it with him again and hopefully the City Attorney can determine how to get this resolved. The City Attorney would still like to get

month.

Ms. Gish said the City is violating the Federal law because no government entity should count SNAP as income, for any purposes, especially if it reduces people from qualifying for other benefits.

Ms. Montoya-Chavez said she is concerned about those who do not have the means to advocate about this and could have their water shut-off.

ITEMS FROM MEMBERS AND STAFF

Mr. Parfitt asked Mr. Chapman if the hearing loop was installed at the Convention Center.

Mr. Chapman said he does not know anything more from the last time he talked to Ms. Parfitt. He said he asked the Project Manager to let him know but he could request that the Committee would like the Project Manager for that project to address the Committee at the next meeting.

Chair Bleck said that would be great.

Mr. Chapman reported that the City is working with two contractors to remodel and replace ADA curb ramp improvements. He mentioned that the City has put a lot of money (\$500,000) towards these improvements.

NEXT MEETING: June 20, 2019

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectively submitted by:

Aurore Bleck, Chair



Jo Ann G. Valdez, Stenographer