

Disabilities Advisory Commission
Minutes January 11, 2011
Loveland Museum Conference Room

Present: John Suess, Vic Beebe, Alexandra Wittenmyer, Vern Richardson, Larry Abston, Diane Hinrichs, Hal Mansfield, Linda Benefiel, John Teumer, Zach Wood, Dave McDanal, Daryle Klassen, and Bettie Greenberg

Absent: Kim Cardwell

Guests: Angie Clayton and Kathy Witcher

Meeting Called to Order: 6:00 p.m.

Approval of the Minutes: Larry moved to accept the minutes as corrected. Larry moved to accept the minutes last month; Vic seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Treasurer Report: John reported that the December statement showed a balance of \$711.

LIAISON REPORTS

DRS: Dave reported that the State's joint budget committee voted to cut funds to the Aid to the Needy Disabled program. People depend on this financial aid while waiting for approval of Supplemental Security Income (SSI). The maximum payment is \$200 and it was cut to \$140. These cuts were done by the prior administration, so addressing the issue will have to wait for the new governor to settle in, but generally funds are not reinstated.

Staff: Bettie reported that the City is looking for a volunteer from DAC to serve on a committee regarding the City's financial future. There will be up to 3 meetings. The first meeting is to provide an overview of the City's General Fund over the next ten years and the second meeting is to obtain feedback. A third meeting will be held only if necessary. John Suess said that he would attend, but he has a vacation scheduled so it depends on when the meetings will occur. Vern said that he would attend the meetings if John is not available.

Council: Daryle stated that the City has identified financial shortfalls and consequences and is convening two task forces to deal with the issues. One committee has to do with CEF's. This past year, the CEF's charged by the City were higher than all of the communities around Loveland and the City is losing business. The second task force will make recommendations on what to do with the CEF's.

Daryle discussed the manufacturing and NASA group that is considering a startup in northern Colorado and looking for space. The competition is intense. Daryle said one of the decision makers is coming to Loveland on January 18 for a presentation. The City may be in good shape with the 800,000 square feet at the old HP site. Unfortunately, the location search has expanded to Weld County and the old Kodak buildings.

A member asked Daryle about the City starting a healthcare clinic for its employees. Daryle replied that the money spent on health claims is not insignificant. The City wants to see how Larimer County's health clinic is doing. The idea is to save money spent on healthcare by the City.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

Accessibility: No plans or CO's were done. Bettie mentioned that she received a complaint about the new equipment at Chilson not being accessible. Linda stated that there is enough duplication of machines that make Chilson accessible.

Employment: Alexandra said that there is going to be a job fair in Fort Collins the last Monday of the month. She also has some more employers to add to the list for DAC's webpage. She said she would provide Bettie with the new information. Bettie will work with the City to get this information as well as employer information received before up on DAC's webpage.

Parks, Recreation, and Entertainment: Vern said that he's working on the accessibility information on the parks. He did check out 3 restrooms and only Kroh Park had an accessible port-o-potty. He also noticed that snow was piled up in front of curb cuts, but the sidewalks are clean. Linda and Hal said they went snowshoeing at the Devil's Backbone and additional seating has been added on the trail.

Transportation: Hal reported that the next meeting for the North Front Range Metropolitan Planning Organization is on the one-call center and is January 24 at 1:30; there is food. Hal said he's looking forward to having someone take over his role on transportation, but it cannot be done cold. John T. and Zach volunteered to go to the next meeting and take over the lead on transportation issues. Discussion ensued that Fort Collins has major budget problems and has talked about discontinuing Dial-a-Ride, cutting back on bus service, etc.

PR/Communication: Linda asked that for the next Barrier Awareness Day (BAD) DAC members decide on a date, such as April, and what groups, aside from City employees, should be targeted? Linda said that DAC can use the Oddfellows building for free. Discussed targeting schools and if that doesn't work, DAC can target another group. Members agreed to look at an April time frame and thought that half-day sessions worked best. Linda also said that Marcy at COLT considers DAC an ally and Linda has been training people on using the bus system.

Historian: Hal said he should have taken pictures of the bus training. If anyone needs pictures taken, please call him.

OLD BUSINESS

Budweiser Events Center: Diane passed out a draft letter to the BEC. She said due to her complaints regarding the purchasing of accessible seating, the BEC has changed the number to call for such seating. Information is also now available on its website on what accessible seating is available. Diane said she still has two areas of concern. At the handicapped entrance, there is nobody handing out programs and for overflow parking it is not clear where the accessible spaces are located. She asked that people let her know about the letter. Discussion ensued on where to send the letter. The membership agreed that it should be sent to the Commissioners, since the first letter was sent to them, with a copy to Shane.

DAC Answer Line: Bettie reported that the Senior Hotline receives only a couple of calls a month. The messages are turned over to someone on the Senior Advisory Commission for follow up. Bettie opined that such a message system for DAC was not necessary, since her phone number is listed on the webpage, etc. and she passes on disability-related inquiries when they are received.

NEW BUSINESS

2011 Goals and Committee Assignments: John S. asked members to think about 2011 goals and on which committees they would like to serve for discussion at the next meeting.

Old Records: It was asked if there was a record of the exact start date for DAD. Was it 1976? If so, it was 35 years ago and it's an opportunity to get something in the newspaper and/or make the anniversary a tag along to Barrier Awareness Day events. Bettie will look into what the City has for history and report back.

Adjournment: Larry moved to adjourn the meeting; Diane seconded the motion. Motion approved. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:

Bettie Greenberg, Secretary