

## **MINUTES OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES**

The regular meeting of the Los Angeles County Commission on Disabilities was held on Wednesday, February 16, 2005, at Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Room 140, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles.

### **CALL TO ORDER**

One seat short of the nine members required for a quorum, Chair Lane called the meeting to order as a Committee of the Whole at 1:10 p.m. and advised that although the Commission could not take any actions, the Commission could still hear Committee reports, public comment and updates on related agenda items.

### **APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 15, 2004 AND JANUARY 26, 2005 MEETINGS MINUTES**

(This item was continued to the March 16, 2004 agenda.)

Chair Lane announced that at today's meeting, Gordon Anthony, ADA Compliance Officer, would be giving an update on the outcome of the Board Letter regarding the use of ADA compliant cable covers in the film industry; due to the absence of Commissioner Resendez, her presentation would be carried over to a future agenda; Mr. Burt Wallrich from the Office of Emergency Management would be giving a presentation on Emergency Services for People with Disabilities; Teddy Joy Remhild would be giving a report on ASI; and Gordon Anthony will be giving an update ADA Compliance Office activities.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

**Teddy Joy Remhild** invited everyone to attend the upcoming "Optimizing Options for Employment and Health Benefits for People with Disabilities" training which is scheduled for three days: March 15<sup>th</sup> at the North L. A. County Regional Center; March 16 at the Goodwill in Long Beach; and March 17<sup>th</sup> at Cal State Northridge Technology Conference at LAX.

Topics that will be addressed include the Medicare modernization Act, Ticket to Work Program, DB 101 Website, Medical-Cal 250% Working Disabled Program, IHSS in the Workplace (AB925) and the Aged and Disabled Federal Poverty Level Program. Additional information regarding the training topics is available at [disabilitybenefits101.org](http://disabilitybenefits101.org). For training registration contact Ms. Remhild at (818) 206-8000 or e-mail [tremhild@pascla.org](mailto:tremhild@pascla.org).

**Linda Block** reported on HR-489 saying that if this bill is passed it would require all U. S. citizens to have a national identification card. Ms. Block stated that Congressman Ron Pauley has a weekly radio announcement about this issue which callers can listen to at (888) 322-1414.

**Susan Susman** announced that people who are in need can contact Info Line to find the nearest participating agency or food bank distributing free food in emergency situations.

Chair Lane encouraged audience members working with agencies involved with disability issues to take some flyers back to their offices for distribution to the public.

### **STAFF REPORT**

Jim Corbett shared with the Commission a Metro publication titled "Metro is for Everyone, A guide to Metro's Accessible Service", which addresses accessibility and accommodations for persons with disabilities riding the bus. As a bus rider, Mr. Corbett commented that he has witnessed several instances where the disability accommodations on buses were inoperable which was very inconvenient for patrons needing the services.

Dedie Ward reported the following:

- Cal State Northridge is hosting a Technology Conference for Persons with Disabilities, March 14-19, 2005 at the Hilton Los Angeles Airport, and Los Angeles Airport Marriot Hotels of Los Angeles. For further information visit the website at [www.csun.edu/cod](http://www.csun.edu/cod).
- WALK NOW is hosting an Autism Community Resource Fair on April 10<sup>th</sup> at the Home Depot Center in Carson. For more information contact Bridget Bitner at (323) 549-0500 Ext. 46.
- The new 211 Helpline service was launched in Ventura County on February 11, 2005. County residents can call this number if they need social services or emergency food and shelter assistance. Additional 211 help lines are scheduled for implementation this summer in the Counties

of Los Angeles, San Diego, Riverside, Santa Barbara, Orange County and San Francisco. Please contact Maribel Marin of CAIRS (California Alliance of Information and Referral Services) at (626) 350-1841 Ext. 2100.

- Fiesta Educativa is having its 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Educational Conference on Disabilities, at the University of Southern California campus, June 17 and 18, 2005. For more information contact the office at (323) 221-6699.

Chair Lane commented that the Public Relations Committee is in the process of creating a brochure and informational packet that can be placed and distributed at disability events held throughout the County.

Chair Lane suggested that the Public Relations Committee should work on developing an informational brochure/flyer or informational packet about the Commission.

**APPROVAL OF EXPENSES FOR COMMISSIONER HAMILTON TO ATTEND THE "BUILDING EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES" CONFERENCE ON MARCH 29-31, 2005, SACRAMENTO, CA**

Chair Lane announced that although this item was previously approved, the administrative offices of Commission Services have requested the Commission to give a more specific dollar figure for the trip costs, including the expenses for Commissioner Hamilton's assistant.

Commissioners discussed whether a special meeting should be held to approve the expenditures because the date of the conference is fast approaching. Jim Corbett explained that it would still be okay if the expenses were approved at the next meeting because Commissioner Hamilton's registration fees and travel expenses have already been handled. The County has travel guidelines in place that allow only a certain amount daily for meals, transportation and incidental expenses. Following the trip, Commissioner Hamilton would be required to submit receipts for reimbursement.

**PRESENTATION ON EMERGENCY SERVICES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SENIOR CITIZENS - BURT WALLRICH, EMERGENCY NETWORK BUILDERS, COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

Chair Lane introduced and welcomed Mr. Burt Wallrich, Consultant for Emergency Network Builders who is currently working with the County Office of Emergency Management on a project to develop user friendly disaster materials for people with disabilities and seniors.

Mr. Wallrich stated that the County Office of Emergency Management has enlisted his services in the preparation of an ESP (Emergency Survival Program) flyer that addresses the specific needs of each disability group, seniors, and critical assistive equipment that would be needed in a disaster situation. Mr. Wallrich is currently in the initial stages of developing the flyer and has asked the Commission for its input, suggestions or feedback on any information that would be helpful for inclusion in the flyer.

Following a question and answer period, Chair Lane thanked Mr. Wallrich for his presentation.

### **ASI BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Teddy Joy Remhild reported that last month the ASI Board of Directors made a final decision about its Paratransit Plan for 2004-2005. At that time, five issues were being considered: 1) Elimination of Same Day Service, 2) Re-categorizing of Standing Rides from ADA to premium, 3) Functional Eligibility, 4) Night Owl Service, and 5) Service Delivery in Santa Clarita.

Mr. Remhild reported that following the vote, Same Day Service was eliminated. Standing Rides were re-classified as a premium service with the caveat that it would be treated the same as next day service, and Night Owl service remains in effect. A decision has not yet been made regarding Functional Eligibility, and service delivery in Santa Clarita. ASI has appointed a group to evaluate and assess these services.

Ms. Remhild stated that in the future it is her hope that the Commission might lend its support and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors on issues relating to ASI's service delivery, particularly since some of the Supervisors on are the MTA Board of Directors, and MTA allocates the funding for ASI.

Following discussion, Commissioner Wright suggested that a committee should be formed to address issues relating to ASI service delivery and funding, and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors if needed.

Chair Lane appointed an Ad Hoc Transportation Committee consisting of Commissioner Neal as the Chair, Commissioners Wright and Siegel and Ms. Remhild to address this issue.

## **ADA COMPLIANCE OFFICE REPORT**

Gordon Anthony gave an update on the status of the processing of the letter from the Board of Supervisors encouraging the film industry to use ADA compliant cable protectors while filming in the Cities and County of Los Angeles.

Mr. Anthony reported that following several meetings to discuss areas of concern regarding the cable protectors, the interested parties which included Chair Lane, Supervisor deputies, the President of the EIDC, filming companies, and renters of the cable ramps, a positive outcome was reached and the Board Offices agreed to go forward with the motion which was passed on February 1.

In accordance with the Board order a letter will be sent to the EIDC and filming companies in the 88 Cities within the County of Los Angeles operating film commissions encouraging them to use ADA compliant cable covers during filming operations.

It was pointed out that use of the protectors saves the film companies in violation costs and potential injury claims. To rent the cable protectors costs about \$25.00 per week; to purchase the equipment costs around \$700 for a one time purchase; and violation costs are \$4,000 per day per incident.

Chair Lane thanked Mr. Anthony for his assistance in bringing this issue to a positive conclusion and for also helping the Commission with one of its key goals which is to create more credibility and visibility for the Commission with the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Anthony continued his report on the ADA Compliance Office's efforts to ensure that County Departments implement their Transition and Self Evaluation Plans, comply with the ADA, adhere to policies of non-discrimination based on a disability, and appoint an ADA Coordinator to represent their department.

The ADA Compliance Office continues to monitor all complaints in the County dealing with public access or effective communication issues, and has also worked in conjunction with the County CAO to establish an annual \$1 million ADA budget that allows County Departments to address any complaints regarding accessibility and barrier removal.

To date, the County has been doing a good job with addressing accessibility issues and implementing transition plans, however the ADA Compliance Office has noticed an increase in the number of barrier complaints particularly from the deaf or hard of hearing public. To address this issue and to ensure the County

continues its accessibility efforts, this year the ADA Compliance Office has developed an ADA Compliance Review.

Each County Department's compliance efforts are being evaluated to determine where they are in their Transition and Self Evaluation Plans and staff training on procedures relating to ADA Compliance policies. As a result of the new ADA Compliance Review, Departments are now viewing ADA as a high priority and the ADA Coordinators are receiving more support from their Department Heads.

Several County Departments have been doing an exemplary job with the funding they have received for accessibility changes which include the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Library and the County museums.

Mr. Anthony added that anyone having ADA complaints should contact the Compliance Office, however, complaints can be filed anywhere. If a person goes into an office that is not accessible, the person has the right to file a complaint in that particular office and line staff there should be able to give them a complaint form. They can also file a complaint with Board of Supervisors. Part of the new Assessment process is ensuring that line staff is trained on accessibility issues and know how to report and proceed when a complaint is made. The website is [www.oaac.co.la.ca.us](http://www.oaac.co.la.ca.us).

Mr. Anthony was asked to bring in a complaint form for review by the Commission at the next meeting.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **2005 Access Awards Luncheon Fundraiser**

Commissioner Jensen reported that seven applications have been received in response to the Fundraiser position and the Committee will be conducting interviews in the next two weeks. Also, the Tainter Scholarship applications will be going out to the schools with the next few weeks.

### **Community Forum**

Vice Chair Neal reported that her guests for today's program were Stentorians from the City and County Fire Departments. They spoke about a film being featured for Black History Month called "Engine Company X" which is about discrimination in the Fire Department.

Ms. Neal noted that when African American firemen first started, breathing apparatus' were not made available to them until around 1968. As a result

many of the men among that group have developed health problems which include lung cancer or other types of cancer.

Vice Chair Neal also reported that some teachers have requested copies of the program tapes for use in their classrooms, and the public has been providing service announcements, information on jobs, and activities and training opportunities within the community

### **Public Relations Committee**

Vice Chair Neal also reported that the Committee has been discussing several issues which include a concept for the development of a disability awareness and recognition program and the development of some kind of informational material about the Commission for distribution to the public.

Vice Chair Neal also gave a recap of the recent changes to the Community Forum format saying that the station's Program Director Donny Anderson is currently on hiatus and in the interim has asked Ms. Neal to step in and take over production of the show.

Questions were raised as to the validity of the contract since Mr. Anderson is no longer on the show. Jim Corbett explained that the contract was between the radio station and the Commission and Mr. Anderson's leaving the program has no effect on the terms of the contract.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ray McKeever announced that the SHHHH organization will be hosting a State Conference February 18-20.

Vice Chair Neal announced that there will be a preparatory academy for anyone wishing to join the City or County Fire Departments. The preparatory academy will assist prospective recruits in passing the physical agility requirement. The academy will be held on Saturday, March 5, 9:00 a.m., at 1409 W. Vernon Avenue.

### **ITEMS NOT ON THE POSTED AGENDA TO BE PLACED ON A FUTURE AGENDA**

Commissioner Wright requested that the procedures regarding Commissioner attendance, public comment, and the Sunset Review for the Commission be reviewed and discussed at the next Commission meeting.

Jim Corbett offered a brief overview of the Sunset Review process and stated he will give more information at the next Commission meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Present**

Carol Lane, Chair  
Janet Neal, Vice Chair  
Ruth Ann Acosta  
Steve Jensen  
Harley Rubenstein  
Carlton Russell  
John B. Troost  
Sheila D. Wright

### **Absent**

Kecia Weller, Treasurer  
Viola Vivian Corbett  
Ernest Hamilton, Jr.  
Michael Gureckas  
Richard Krzyzanowski  
Bernard Siegel  
Wendy Welt

### **Board of Supervisors**

Jim Corbett  
Dedie Ward  
Garren Khachian

### **Department Liaisons**

Juan Benitez, Dept. of Parks and Recreation  
Carlton Lindo, Consumer Affairs  
Burt Wallrich, Office of Emergency Management  
Royce Crowder, Sheriff's Department

### **Guests**

Susan Susman  
Henry Garcia  
John Whitbread  
Jess Segovia  
Ray McKeever  
Donald Brandon  
Mary Griffieth  
Juan Orantiz