

Pueblo and PACOG ADA Advisory Committee

Minutes of the Meeting

January 2, 2014

Present: Rod Slyhoff, Greater Pueblo Chamber of Commerce; Don Bruestle, member; Lisa Aragon, Human Relations Commission; George O'Brien, co-chair, Ralph McPherson, co-chair; Kip Morphey, Facilities Manager; Earl Wilkinson, ADA Coordinator; Kristi Alfonso, City Center Partnership; Jo Booms, interpreter; Jeanie Benfield, vice-chair; John Madrid, member; Ron Burke, member; Terry Skinner, guest; Sharon Campbell, member; Brenda Broyles, Pueblo Transit; Dale Buterbaugh, Deaf Gathering; Brandon Chambers, Southern Colorado RETAC; Kristen Castor, secretary

Minutes were accepted as presented and the agenda was modified to allow Brenda Broyles and other guests to present in the absence of scheduled speakers.

Pueblo Transit: Brenda Broyles

There are some vacancies for bus operators and a mechanic aide open. It is also being advertised in Colorado Springs. There was a Federal Transportation Authority (FTA) review and Pueblo Transit passed. The Transit Board met and letters of appointment for the new members will be sent out.

The CSU students working on the Regional Transportation Authority project we requested have been talking to Brenda and Scott Hobson so the project was undertaken and we may have just been left out of the loop.

This is a mandatory sampling year and Transit is doing surveys to get true numbers on ridership that will be much easier because of the electronic tickets, although it is supplemented with human counters on every route at different times.

Chamber of Commerce: Rod Slyhoff

Businesses are hesitant to make changes that would make them more accessible because then there is a problem of bringing things up to code if they are inspected.

- The Chamber would like the correct information to give people in terms of tax write offs and opportunities to help with simple modifications.
- The buying power of the ADA population is probably underestimated and needs to be presented.
- The Chamber does offer a monthly seminar that is free. We can pick a date the first Wednesday of the month for some kind of presentation
- There is also a regular newsletter where we could have a brief column.

Sharon suggested “Disability Friendly” and “Disability Etiquette” as two topics. Ralph asked about a panel presentation. Don described the loan program the URA has available for façade improvement. Kristi Alonzo from downtown has some grant opportunities as well.

The Chamber supported the trolley project and would like to see more opportunities for getting people downtown. The Chamber is getting requests for accommodations at conventions. Don reminded us we were looking at a presentation on what could be done to make facilities minimally accessible.

Jeanie pointed out accessible rooms don’t always accommodate attendants. She sometimes travels with a male attendant who must be available to her at night and needs a separate bed or an adjoining room. This can be difficult to arrange even when requested ahead of time.

Electricity rates are making it very difficult for existing smaller businesses. The Chamber is impressing this on Black Hills Energy (BHE.) Ron added that BHE charges the business rate to churches.

Sharon brought up the problem of businesses taking down signs as soon as the certificate of occupancy is given. Rod asked about van only spaces, which are allowed in name only. They cannot be enforced because they are not in statute.

City Updates: Earl Wilkinson

On Union and in front of the coffee shop on B Street, merchants and vendors have been told to keep the walk space open, which benefits all pedestrians. George noted that Ralph’s path of travel goes up to Abriendo and Jackson and there are also places along Abriendo where he has problems.

The Bessemer ramp project is underway and the CDBG pedestrian ramp project is up for bid. The bus stop on Northern and Hollywood is also under construction.

Council meetings are now closed captioned and Earl is looking at another station for a laptop and wants to make it wireless for ease of access. Pueblo Community College (PCC) is responsible for broadcasting the meetings and so it is also responsible for the captioning. It hired someone and the captioning seems to be fairly accurate. Dale said the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) population uses it too.

County Update

Kristen reported that Weston Burrer is staying on top of the situation at DSS and wants to hold a workshop on Effective Communication. He couldn't be present because of a new birth in the family. George added that the county has more options in providing services to the deaf because it is rural and can get grants from the Department of Agriculture in areas outside of Pueblo.

Brandon Chambers: Southern Colorado Regional EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (SCRETAC)

George explained that he is concerned about the County's readiness especially when it comes to functional needs populations because the Emergency Operations Plan is just a boiler plate and citizens are not involved in planning or in training through drills. Brandon explained that the mission of RETAC is to train, not to plan. Earl sad there was an agreement last year with the DOJ that outlines emergency planning and procedures.

Sharon identified the issue areas as:

- Temporary housing
- Service Animals
- Generators for refrigerated medicines and CPAP machines

Earl will approach council about this to go around some of the more aggressive activists.

George wants to see a meeting of everyone involved in transportation to plan an evacuation. It might take a quarterly meeting to put this together.

Brandon countered that there are indeed well developed plans that have put to use in real life situations, but it's not publicized. The Health Care Coalitions are a better venue for our input.

Kristen asked if the Committee could play a role in training, which Jean especially would like to participate in because of the difficulties she has had with EMTs responding to her communication needs. Brandon said that RETAC has worked for Colorado Springs School for the Deaf and Blind.

Dale said there is an app on cell phones for communication and he wants to see that on everyone's phone. Brandon said this is a problem because most of the EMTs use their personal phones.

Ron wanted to get assurance that EMTs will HAVE to report to work in an emergency. Brandon said this is simply not required of off duty personnel. There are two states where first responders can be held liable if someone knows you are emergency responder and you don't respond. It's not same as a Good Samaritan law. Responders are identified as such so that people know they are certified and not just volunteer Samaritans.

SECRETAC is a regional resource including, Pueblo, Fremont, Custer, and El Paso counties. It works with the emergency manager group.

George asked if there is a callout mechanism in place to provide appropriate response including Citilift. AMR is in a better place to mobilize resources quickly.

Publicity and Outreach for our Meetings

Don Bruestle asked that the secretary send minutes and agenda to the county clerk to post on the bulletin board. We are now listed in the calendar section of the paper. We should also invite Friendly Harbor to become members.

Bon reported that Pam Medina says they'd like to test their system and report in March.

Dale will request membership from Earl.

Elections

Current officers were re-elected by unanimous consent as no one else is willing to fulfill those duties.

The Meeting Adjourned at 3:00 pm.

The next work session will be Thursday January 16 at the El Pueblo History Museum at 301 North Union from 1-3 pm.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Thursday February 6, 2014 at the El Pueblo History Museum at 301 North Union from 1-3 pm.

Anyone needing accommodations should contact Earl Wilkinson at 553 2295 at least three working days before the meeting.