

**WEST HOLLYWOOD
DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
MAY 25, 2005**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairperson Cherner called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Dr. Harrison Kline-Aguado, led the Pledge.

3. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Norman Cherner, Jordan Chinich, Suzanne Dietrich, Bryan Dahlgren, Dr. Harrison Kline-Aguado, Joel Ring, Anne Semonco

ABSENT: Debra Chodash, Phyllis Coto

ALSO PRESENT: Leslie Isenberg

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda of May 25, 2005 was approved.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes of the April 27, 2005 meeting were approved.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Jeanne Dobrin, West Hollywood resident, spoke in support of efforts to enforce codes that disallow merchants and restaurants from blocking the Public Right of Way in front of their properties.

7. STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Ms. Isenberg gave an brief re-cap of the Senior Health Fair. She also spoke about the upcoming July elections and encouraged anyone interested in running for Chair or Vice-Chair to prepare a brief statement to be read at the July meeting.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

A. HOUSING:

Paul Zimmerman from the West Hollywood Community Housing Corporation (WHCHC); Jeff Skorneck, Housing Manager for the City of West Hollywood; and Yellena Orloff, Rent Stabilization Information Coordinator spoke on housing issues and addressed questions from the Board.

Paul Zimmerman gave an overview of the WHCHC. Since 1986, the WHCHC has completed 12 projects (seven new, five rehabilitated) in the City for a combined total of 268 units. Approximately 1/3 of those units are occupied by Seniors, 1/3 by people with disabilities and 1/3 by people who are poor (not Seniors or people with disabilities). The new buildings are more accessible than those that have been rehabilitated. Approximate rent for a one-bedroom apartment is between \$450 - \$600.

Jeff Skorneck gave an overview of the housing stock in West Hollywood, stating that housing is scarce and lot sizes are small. Most of the housing for sale in West Hollywood are luxury condominiums that sell for \$600,000 to over \$1,000,000. New units built in the last five years in West Hollywood total 408 with approximately 64 units targeted toward people with disabilities. Recent census data estimates that 5,100 people with disabilities live in West Hollywood. Mr. Skorneck explained inclusionary zoning and discussed future projects such as the Laurel Project and the Sunset Millennium Project.

Yellena Orloff gave the Board an overview of the work Information Coordinators conduct in the City's Rent Stabilization and Housing Department. Ms. Orloff reported that they handle many landlord/tenant issues and the Department employs a mediator who helps resolve landlord/tenant disputes. She talked about the history of West Hollywood as a rent controlled City and said that rents can be raised only once a year. Any unit voluntarily vacated after January 1, 1996 can be rented for market rate. No evictions can take place without good cause (i.e. non-payment of rent).

Jeanne Dobrin, West Hollywood resident, addressed the Board on housing issues.

B. CITY EVENT DISCOUNTS FOR THE DISABLED:

After some discussion, the Board voted to unanimously support Dr. Harrison Kline-Aguado's resolution as amended recommending that the City Council require the same discounts to people with disabilities as those given to Seniors and students for: 1) any event receiving City funds, and 2) any event within West Hollywood City limits as consistent with the ADA and accessibility related issues. The board will develop eligibility requirements for people receiving these discounts.

C. SELECTION OF BOARD REPRESENTATIVE FOR CSW TASK FORCE

The Board voted unanimously to have Bryan Dahlgren be the representative on the CSW Task Force. The Board also unanimously approved Dr. Harrison Kline-Aguado's resolution that particular attention be paid to accessibility issues at the parade and festival.

10. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no public comment.

11. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS/LIAISON UPDATES:

Ms. Semonco went to the Transportation Commission meeting where bus furniture was discussed. She reported that installation of the furniture at the other bus stops will be happening soon. The Commission is aware of the accessibility issues. They also know that the benches are small and they will see what they can do about that. The Commission is studying the taxi issue and DOT staff would like to hear from people who are experiencing problems with the taxi companies. In addition, traffic studies at various intersections throughout the City are being conducted. Staff would like to hear from constituents on any issues they are experiencing at intersections, as well.

Dr. Kline-Aguado reported that he and Bryan attended the CSUN Technology Convention. He also suggested we have someone from Covenant House address the Board at a future meeting and talk about their services.

Ms. Dietrich reported that the Women's Advisory Board is working with CSW to make it a more environmentally friendly parade.

Mr. Chinich requested an update from staff on whether the City will apply for the grant funds to retrofit units for accessibility. If the City is not applying, Mr. Chinich would like to know the reason.

Chairperson Cherner announced that on October 12, 2005 from 9:00-3:00 at the Convention Center, the Accessible City Expo will be held. He also informed the Board that the City Council recently approved a two-year extension of their contract with Jewish Family Service and the Taxi Voucher program and a one-year extension of Dial-a-Ride and CityLine. He expressed displeasure at not having been informed by the staff who presented transportation information at last month's meeting that these contracts would be considered for renewal. Chair Cherner requested that an item be placed on next month's agenda regarding this issue.

11. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Cherner adjourned the Disabilities Advisory Board meeting at 9:15 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 22, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. in the Community Conference Room at City Hall, 8300 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA.