

CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD

Minutes of the Disabilities Advisory Board October 25, 2017 Council Chambers, West Hollywood Park

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Freiberg called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

A. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Vice-Chair Anny Semonco led the pledge of allegiance.

B. ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Yola Dore, Joy Freiberg, Mikie Friedman, Danny Hang, David Nash, Roderick Renfrew, Anny Semonco, Louise Smith and Rick Watts

STAFF PRESENT: Joan Mithers, Derek Murray, Diane Kahn-Epstein, David Giugni, Elizabeth Savage, Melissa Crowder, and Kim Patterson

C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda for the October 25, 2017 meeting was approved by the Board.

D. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mayor Pro Tempore John Duran gave a brief evolution of the City's Social Services, thanked the Board for their work, and congratulated the Disability Service awardees.

Esther Baum, Senior Advisory Boardmember, complimented the Dial-a-Ride service which she has used a lot since she retired last year.

Stephanie Harker, resident, thanked the Board for their important work, and congratulated the awardees.

Genevieve Morrill, President/CEO of the West Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, thanked the Board and awardees for their invaluable work.

Marina Berkman, Director of the Jewish Family Services' Comprehensive Service Center, congratulated the Board for a successful Health & Wellness Fair, and the awardees. She summarized the services for people living with disabilities that the Center offers.

Michael Arrigo, former Board member, congratulated the Board and the awardees on their continued work.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident, raised concerns about Americans with Disabilities Act compliance in buildings in the City.

2. CONSENT CALENDAR

A. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 25, 2017 meeting were approved by the Board.

3. NEW BUSINESS

A. OPENING REMARKS FROM HILLARY SELVIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN

Hillary Selvin congratulated the awardees and also Elizabeth Savage for her many years of work for the City. She addressed healthcare and disability challenges as social justice issues, and shared her own health related challenges and outlook on living with those challenges. She thanked the Board for being role models.

B. 2017 DISABILITY SERVICE AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Councilmember John D'Amico and Boardmember Louise Smith presented the Nonprofit Award to Braille Institute. Reed Strege and Ben Pomeroy of the Braille Institute accepted the award and spoke of the Institute's centennial.

Councilmember Lauren Meister and Boardmember Rick Watts presented the Media Award to Jenni Gold of Gold Pictures. Ms. Gold spoke about her appreciation for the City's focus on diversity and inclusion.

Elizabeth Savage, Director of Rent Stabilization and Human Services, and Chair Joy Freiberg presented the Business Award to MV Transportation. David Ross was acknowledged as an exemplary driver. Judie Smith, Area Vice President, received the award on behalf of MV and thanked the employees for their dedication and the Board for the acknowledgment. David Ross spoke about his positive experiences as a driver in the West Hollywood community.

Boardmember Yola Dore announced that the Lovedy Brydon Differently Abled Individual Award has been given to Maria Shriver. Ms. Shriver thanked the Board via video for the recognition of her work on behalf of the disabled.

C. PRESENTATION FROM THE OFFICE OF SUPERVISOR SHEILA KUEHL ON HEALTHCARE ACCESS

Elan Shultz, Senior Health Deputy for Supervisor Sheila Kuehl's Office, addressed healthcare access for the community and the impact of potential changes to the Affordable Care Act. He also spoke about the Drug Medi-Cal Waiver which provides Medi-Cal funding for substance treatment services.

Michael Wojtkielewicz, resident, spoke about his challenges to maintaining healthcare coverage.

D. PRESENTATION FROM THE LOS ANGELES LGBT CENTER ON HEALTHCARE ADVOCACY

Aaron Fox, Director of Government Relations at the LA LGBT Center, spoke about the fight to save the Affordable Care Act, locally and nationally. He thanked everyone, including the disabled who have become the face of this struggle, and have made a difference in preserving the ACA.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

5. EXCLUDED CONSENT

There was none.

6. ITEMS FROM STAFF

Staff congratulated the awardees. They acknowledged the work of the Board, including the subcommittee, on the successful meeting and well-attended Health & Wellness Fair. They also thanked all of the presenters.

The following announcements were made:

- City Council will consider a resolution opposing the ADA Reform Act (HR620) at the November 6 meeting.
- The next meeting of the Board will be a study session on accessible design on December 6. The facilitator will arrange pre-meetings with Board members in November.

7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Sheila Simmons, resident of Los Angeles, requested that the Board consider writing to local officials to support a ban on service animal fraud and establish a certification program.

Victor Omelczenko, resident, expressed appreciation of the Health & Wellness Fair, of which he was a beneficiary. As a former member of the Public Facilities Commission he addressed the dog park at Hart Park. He also raised concern about the accessibility of the automated garage at City Hall. . Lastly he suggested that the Board request a walk-through at the new units that are being constructed in the City.

8. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

The Board congratulated the awardees, and thanked the presenters and City

Council. They also thanked Elizabeth Savage for her years of service, and the staff for their continued work.

Rick Watts announced that Maria Ochoa, labor organizer, is undergoing cancer treatment so he has shaved his head in solidarity.

Anny Semonco spoke about the importance of protecting health coverage for people with pre-existing conditions.

David Nash thanked Councilmember Meister for appointing him to the Board, and appreciated the wonderful work of the Braille Institute and Dial-a-Ride from which he has personally benefitted.

Mikie Friedman spoke about using determination, a sense of humor, and attitude to carry her through 23 years as a person living with a disability.

Yola Dore, Louise Smith, Danny Hang, and Roderick Renfrew thanked the honorees and presenters for coming to the event.

Chair Freiberg thanked Councilmember Lindsay Horvath for giving her the honor of serving on the Board.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The Disabilities Advisory Board adjourned at 8:00 PM in honor of Director Elizabeth Savage, to its next special meeting on **December 6, 2017** beginning at **5 PM in Rooms 5 & 6 of Plummer Park, 7377 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood, CA 90046.**

APPROVED BY A MOTION OF THE DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD ON THIS 25th DAY OF OCTOBER 2017.


JOY FREIBERG,
CHAIRPERSON

ATTEST:


STAFF LIAISON

A copy of the audio recording of this meeting can be obtained from the City Clerk's office upon request.

(Disclaimer: Staff records the meetings for the sole purpose of composing the official meeting minutes; therefore the recordings are not of commercial quality.)