

DRAFT

Portland Disability Advisory Committee

November 5, 2014

10am – Noon

Room 24, Portland City Hall

Meeting Minutes

Present: Rachel Talbot Ross, Christina Mailhot, Nicholas Smith, Adam Zimmerman, Michelle Ames, Karen Perry, Renee Berry-Huffman, Thomas Ptacek, Meryl Troop, and Jill Johanning

Guests: None.

1. Ground Rules and Committee Work discussion

Rachel shared PDAC Work Plan, meeting ground rules that were adopted at a previous meeting, and the description of the committee as a reminder of the purpose of the committee; see attached documents.

It was reviewed that the City Council has not been involved with this committee since the April 2013 request that went to city council for approval of creating the PDAC for ongoing communication and public awareness. It was suggested that committee contact mayor with their intention to participate with selection of the next city manager to show that the city values the importance of equal access for all. Adam to draft a letter to the mayor; this is a time sensitive in which members need to get comments to Adam for letter as soon as possible. Once the city enters in an interview process for a new city manager the PDAC should participate in the selection process of new city manager and create some questions for the interview candidates.

2. METRO

Co-chairs and Rachel will be meeting with METRO tomorrow at 10:30 am, Thursday November 6. The meeting is a follow up to the recent MERTO presentation to the PDAC meeting to request a liaison from METRO to attend

monthly meetings, request for documentation for existing training of METRO staff, and a commitment to have a more disability awareness training for 2015. It was stressed that METRO is providing a public service and they need to conduct themselves in that manner.

It was also requested that notes from the METRO meeting go to Ashley Gorsica of HVJ for more education and awareness opportunity collaboration. HVJ may be able to assist with messaging and branding for committee and assist with disability awareness, and perhaps a facilitate training for with other local disability organizations.

It was proposed that an education/training sub committee be formed for trainings; presentations of local disability of organizations to the committee to know what they do and offer for services and trainings would also be helpful: Alpha One, Iris Network, Maine Center on Deafness, Maine Vocational Rehabilitation, etc. It was also suggested to create a presentation to city council to bring awareness and education of the value of the committee and importance for all as their only exposure was to pass the committee resolution back in 2013.

3. Parking Committee

No update.

4. Livability Survey

It was reviewed that the survey was shortened, and paper copies were made available which Karen has returned many to the city. The city is also hiring a consultant to do an entire city survey, Rachel has inquired how disability will be included in city survey in its delivery of services, but the survey will not be happening in the very near future. It was requested to create two survey sections on the work plan to track PDAC and the city's surveys separately.

5. First Responders Training

No update.

6. 25th ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Anniversary in 2015

The city has declined organizing a formal event because it was not budgeted assuming that city would have to take on full cost; however the city is interested in participating in public awareness, but they need more clarification if there is a working committee or if participation was through Adam. To what extent does committee want to get involved with celebrating the anniversary? Renee suggested involved of Kathy McGuiness-Miser to participate with activities, Nicholas suggested a party, Meryl suggested public event (instead of court house step crawl maybe Marriott hotel crawl), and partner with other organizations.

Ask city/METRO to provide posters on busses, etc.

7. Transportation to Employment

No update.

8. Other business

Courtyard Marriott Hotel : An update was asked of the committee; Adam reviewed the situation, and Jill added that unfortunately under the ADA Design Standards that it may be ok under an exception for tenants.

It was proposed that the committee recommend that the city not hold events at the hotel due to the lack of welcoming all guests, Rachel suggested to first have a meeting with the city manager before making such recommendation, and from that meeting could make recommendation of not supporting the hotel.

Is there anything in writing the committee could present to the city about the impact and message that allowing this lack of access presents to the community that discrimination is acceptable, Jill to compose letter for committee to review. The appearance of compliance and actual compliance are two different things for supporting new development in the city. Reach out to first responders to get on board with importance of an accessible entrance.

It was also suggested to look at the issue of the lack of code enforcement inspection for access since they will be doing a through review of process due to the recent tragic fire. Rachel offered to assist with setting up a small meeting with code enforcement sooner rather than later, and incorporate with letter, incorporate with outdoor dining concerns.

Adam reviewed issue with code on outdoor dining and that the police department wanted the committee to report violators, nothing was ever submitted to the city; Riley tried to submit to city but was not successful.

Karen reviewed concern of code not returning a message that she left about a complaint. There is still a question about who the new officer contact is for enforcing outdoor dining. Marge Smuckle is retiring, so good to come up with an agenda to review with the department.

Snow Removal: Irene update from Rachel that there is a need to address soon due to recent snow fall, and to get citizens involved. An inmate program used to provided snow removal services for of elderly residents, but program cuts eliminated the program. Renee offered to follow up with local sheriff.

Jill to forward Maine DOT ADA info to Rachel for forwarding to city's legal counsel to get them to present at a committee meeting about the cities obligations under the ADA for snow removal for maintaining program access.

Festivals: The City Council recently approved new festival applications including an upcoming First Friday Art Walk; however no one addressed making sure that the festivals were providing accessible to all. How does the committee address the need for more awareness when making this type of approvals? Michelle reminded the committee that interpreters are not provided as part of the festivals also creating a barrier equal access. Jill reminded the committee that there is no disability representation on city committees making these decisions like there are representatives of other city interests. Meryl share the example that Portland Pride set up ADA access committee which may be a model for the City.

It was review that the intent was to the city manager attend quarterly PDAC meeting. Rachel offered to set up a separate meeting with the city manager and will send out invite for those at to can attend.

Future events: There will be a Walkability presentation Friday November 7 at 8am at the Portland Public Library, Jill to attend and bring back info to committee.

Adam plans to attend city council meetings from this point forward, and he announced that he will be running for city council next year for an at large seat.