

**MINUTES
LAWTON ACCESS BOARD
NEW CITY HALL
CITY ATTORNEY'S CONFERENCE ROOM
212 SW 9th STREET
MARCH 28, 2014**

Jim Russell, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in the New City Hall 2nd Floor Conference Room. Notice of meeting and agenda were posted on the City Hall notice board as required by law.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Sharon Fanning; Joseph Harper; Don Kesler, Jr.; Kay Love; Jim Russell.

ABSENT: None

OTHER PRESENT: Denise Ezell, City Clerk's Office; Mike Jones, GIS Division; Kim McConnell, Lawton Constiution.

BUSINESS ITEMS:

Russell stated he would like to welcome everyone. He stated he is the Assistant City Manager and ADA Coordinator for the City of Lawton. Russell has dealt with ADA accommodations through his role as the Human Resource Director. Russell asked that we go around the table and everyone introduce themselves.

Mike Jones, GIS Division City of Lawton. GIS in the simple form is smart maps and those maps are available on the city's website. In his former role with the city he served as a building official where he administered the handicap accessibility codes.

Don Kesler stated he is retired military and retired from a software development contractor. He served for 6 ½ years on the city's Human Rights and Relation Commission and helped to rewrite Section 13 of the city code. Section 13 is the ADA compliance section. He has hearing loss, back problems and leg problems. He looks forward to working with everyone.

Joseph Harper stated he moved to Lawton from Bakersfield, California. The reason for the wheelchair is because he can't walk. He stated the streets and sidewalks in Lawton are much different than California. California uses blacktop on their streets. He mentioned several sidewalks within the city that you cannot get a wheelchair on or off.

Kesler stated the typical bus stop has no on or off with concrete from the sidewalk to the curb. Russell stated all the bus stops were like that.

Harper stated these changes are not just for the handicap. Russell stated the city wants to make it accessible for everyone.

Kesler stated the original ADA outlawed the term "handicapped" to "disable/disable person". We need to educate ourselves so we can educate the community.

Kay Love has lived in Lawton for 37 years. She started losing her sight 30 years ago due to Type 1 Diabetic. After 21 years she has retired from Cameron University and looks forward to getting involved with making the community a better place.

Sharon Fanning has lived in Lawton for the past 3 years and just graduated from Cameron University. Love was her counselor. Forty-Five (45) years ago she was in a car wreck and had a spinal cord injury. She is excited to be on the Board and was excited to see the ADA laws put into effect.

Russell stated Council approved the Self-Evaluation and the Facilities Assessment. The assessment shows that the City of Lawton is behind in making the city accessible to disabled individuals. The Board's first goal is to get the transition plan in place. The ADA settlement agreement stated this plan must be in place by June 16th. The Board will continue to meet once the plan is in place to monitor the plan.

1. New Business

A. Review purpose of Board and establish meeting dates, take action if necessary

Russell stated the board needs to establish meeting dates and times. It was agreed by all that Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. was the best time for everyone. Meeting dates are April 8th and 22nd and May 6th and 20th. Communication will be by email except for Mr. Harper and his will be by mail.

B. Review Self-Evaluation and recommendations, take action if necessary

Russell stated everyone has received a copy of the Self-Evaluation and the Facilities Assessment. Both documents were combined by Otten Consulting and the City work with them through the entire process. Russell passed out a copy of the 2010 ADA Standards and stated these 3 documents would be the Boards resource tools. Russell will do a matrix with points from both the Self-Evaluation and the Facilities Assessment. The Board will prioritize all the assessment and note how they should be accomplished.

Fanning asked if these assessments were just for city properties or if it would involve retail and restaurants. Russell stated just city owned property. Retail and restaurants are covered under the ADA and the Board could make recommendations to them. Most people are ignorant to the law and they just need to be educated.

Russell stated as part of the settlement the city is required to designate a certain dollar amount each fiscal year for these accommodations. Part of the prioritization will be the cost. Russell asked if everyone was clear as to where they were going with these documents. All stated they were.

Kesler stated another resource is Lawton City Code Section 13-1. These are the definitions used for the Human Rights and Relations Commission.

C. Review Facilities Assessment and recommendations, take action if necessary

Covered above.

2. Citizen complaints

A. Taxi complaint – lack of taxis to accommodate disabled citizens

Russell has been contacted by American Airlines. There are times they have passengers that are in need of handicap transportation. Only 1 company in town has these capabilities. The airlines contacted them but the vehicle was broken and inoperable. The airlines are looking for another means of transportation. LATS has a paratransit unit that is used for long term usage not short term. They do have another vehicle and they are looking into it being on an on-call basis for the airport. This Board may want to talk to Council about changing code to require taxis to have at least 1 vehicle to accommodate disabled persons.

B. Local businesses – non-accommodation complaint

Russell a complaint was lodge against the Bingo Country. The front doors are not automated so it isn't wheelchair accessible. After contacting Bingo Country they have placed a security guard at the door to accommodate wheelchairs. Russell hopes that once the businesses see the city is trying to accommodate the ADA requirements they will also.

Fanning asked what was expected from the members of the Board. Russell said to get a Transition Plan ready to take to Council. Once the Transition Plan had been accepted by Council the Board would meet bi-monthly to monitor the plan. The Board will be reviewing citizen's complaints to see if there are areas they might be able to address. The Board can't force action be taken but might be able to make suggestions.

Love stated she and Kesler worked with the Boy Scouts to make some changes at Cameron University. Fanning asked the managers at both Walmart's to lower the soap dispensers and they both complies. Love stated once businesses are aware of the issues most are are willing to accommodate and make the adjustments. Fanning stated we don't want people to say "we expect it because we are handicapped". When you make demands you become a nuisance and then the businesses won't talk with you.

3. Transition Plan Update

A. Review milestone chart for completion, take action if necessary

Discussed above.

4. Adjournment

Russell stated that is all I have today and I'll see you on the 8th. Thank you very much.

Motion by Harper, **Second** by Fanning, to adjourn at 3:15 p.m. **Aye:** Harper; Kesler; Love; Russell; Fanning. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**