

MINUTES
LAWTON ACCESS BOARD
NEW CITY HALL - CITY ATTORNEY'S CONFERENCE ROOM
212 SW 9th STREET
JUNE 26, 2014

Jim Russell, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. in the New City Hall City Attorney's 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.; Jim Russell.

ABSENT: Kay Love.

OTHER PRESENT: Mike Jones, City of Lawton GIS; Doug Wellhouse, Code Plan Supervisor for License & Permit Division; Denise Ezell, City Clerk's Office.

APPROVE MINUTES from May 16, 2014 meeting.

Motion by Kesler, **Second** by Harper, to approve the minutes of May 16, 2014 as written. **Aye:** Harper; Kesler; Russell; Fanning. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. New Business

A. Transition Plan Update and review milestone chart for completion, take action if necessary.

Russell stated the 2014 City of Lawton ADA Transition Plan was approved by City Council at the meeting on Tuesday night. This is a living document so we will continue to make changes. We are on target and moving in the right direction. The front portion gives you some background on why we have to have a transition plan, what the parameters are suppose to be, what the plan is to include, who is to identify the plan and those type of things. I did a lot of cutting and pasting from the Self Evaluation Plan. In terms of compliance the city needs to address city programs, documentation, and how we interact with the public. The last portion is the matrix. We have looked and addressed some of this. First is our notice. A phrase has to be stated in a public place that talks about whether we are in compliance or working towards becoming compliant. That will be posted in a couple of different places.

Kesler stated you need to place it on the website.

Harper stated and publish it in the newspaper.

Russell stated I agree. We can also do radio and television PSA's. I will look into what a PSA entails. All city documentation has to have some standard language in regards to meeting the ADA compliance issues.

Kesler asked is there or can we develop a template so it would just be a matter of filling in the blanks.

Russell stated there is suggested language in the ADA Standards. Human Resources already has this on the applications but I don't know about License and Permits.

Wellhouse stated we don't have.

Russell stated I need to check with Parks and Recreation also. A little cleanup is needed there.

Fanning asked would the wording not be similar to the EEOC statement.

Russell stated it is basically the same type verbiage. We are also obligated by ADA Standards for anything internally to have the same verbiage. We need to make certain our disabled employees know their rights. We are required to make the public aware of who the ADA Coordinator is. This information must be placed in strategic locations so everyone has the ability of knowing who the coordinator is and how to contact them for complaints and grievances. I'm the coordinator for the City of Lawton. The Grievance Procedure states what we are to do once we receive a grievance. First they make contact with the ADA Coordinator and submit make a written complaint. Then it will come before this Committee to address and determine the best way to issues any corrections that need to take place and prioritize the correction. Hopefully these complaints will be things we are already aware of and is on our to do list.

Kesler asked is the coordinator part of the Assistant City Managers duties or did it just happen to fall on you.

Russell stated it comes with being the Assistant City Manager. The Coordinator needed to be somebody with some authority to make things happen. They wanted to make certain it was somebody that had the ability to give directions to city staff to make corrections. The intent is to hire a full-time coordinator to take over all the duties. We hope to be able to fund this position half way through this fiscal year or by the next fiscal year.

Kesler stated the reason for asking is if it is a position we could state that in the transition plan and if someone new comes in we would not have to republish the plan.

Russell stated the plan will be republished every year. This is a living document so we will be re-prioritizing each fiscal year so we will republish yearly. I see where your coming from but the ADA Standards require we name an individual with their contact information. I'll look and see if it will allow us to be more generic in the Transition Plan as long as we post specifics in our notice.

Fanning asked if the public has a complaint how do they find where anything is located within the city. When you call nobody seems to have an idea of where or who you need to speak with. There doesn't seem to be a central operator and there needs to be.

Russell stated typically you would contact the City Clerk's Office, City Manager's Office or Human Resources.

Fanning asked does the public know that.

Russell stated it isn't published anywhere. There is a main trunk but I believe it rings at the police station. It is just an automated line.

Fanning stated everywhere else I've lived you just call city hall. That doesn't get you anywhere here. At the very least everyone who answers a phone needs to have a list of key phone numbers.

Russell stated they all should have one. We have a phone roster that is broken out by division and it list the supervisors name and phone number.

Fanning stated the Election Board knows nothing and will tell you they know nothing. They need access to city numbers as well.

Russell stated a lot of the time it just happens to be who answered the phone. My office has a rolodex of all the numbers and we give them out. If you call Parks and Recreation or Water Distribution they probably can't find the information as easy. My office is considered the communication entry point for the citizens of Lawton. The Election Board is part of the county.

Kesler stated you can find some of the information under the government listings in the phonebook.

Harper stated there are times you don't know if it is federal, state or county.

Russell stated if you call the City Clerk, City Manager or Human Resources office we can direct you where you need to go.

Fanning asked has the city not considered a central line/operator.

Russell stated at one time we thought about putting someone in the atrium and the budget wouldn't allow it. This was a couple of years ago and we haven't talked about it since. I will certainly have that conversation with Long.

Fanning stated the reason for mentioning this is when you advertise there needs to be a phone number to call and be certain they reach someone who can assist them.

Kesler stated something else to consider is placing a phone at the reception desk where you could look through a directory and push a button to get the person whom you need to speak with.

Russell stated okay.

Kesler asked do you see in the future where we might go out and work with the public.

Russell stated yes. I would like for that to happen.

Kesler stated if it does we need to have some sort of identification so people don't blow us off.

Wellhouse stated License and Permit can make badges. If you will go have a passport picture made we will make a badge for you.

Russell stated we are drafting a letter for issues identified at local businesses. It will state that the Lawton Access Board would recommend they make certain changes in order to be in ADA compliance.

Kesler stated you have to be careful not to put the city into a position where they might be held liable for something we did.

Russell stated we can't force anybody to make the changes but we can certainly make a recommendation. We can make them aware of what the ADA Standards say, what we observed and that we would like for them to consider making some changes.

Kesler asked the committee might need some training.

Harper stated there are stores within the city that will have boxes sitting in the aisles to where you can't get through. I have told them they need to clear the aisles so we would have room to get through and they just shine me off. If I had some identification that identifies me with the ADA then they might take notice.

Russell stated you have to be careful not to give the appearance of being an inspector. We can't force them to do anything.

Harper stated no but at least they might pay a little more attention to me.

Russell stated we might want to consider on an annual basis to allow people to come to a public forum that gives updates on what changes will be occurring for the upcoming year.

Fanning stated that is a great idea.

Kesler stated and give a quarterly report to the Council.

Russell stated we can certainly do that. Page 22 talks about the different program evaluations. This is where we get into our hearing impaired, visual impaired, and oral impaired type situations and how to address them. This is an area we need to start brainstorming to come up with some ideas. We have talked about a big screen with closed captioned and I have our Facilities Coordinator researching software. We already have the sound amplifiers you can checkout.

Fanning asked are the amplifiers out where the public can see them or is there signs stating they are available. Without signage they will assume there is nothing available.

Russell stated we probably need to get some signage. If it is during a council meeting you need to check with the City Clerk or the Facilities Coordinator and either of them can help you.

Fanning asked so you will make the sign.

Russell stated yes.

Kesler stated if there was some kind of commonality between the city, state and federal government where you could buy the amplifier for \$10 or \$15 then you wouldn't have to worry about decontaminating and sterilizing them.

Fanning stated that is a great idea. Maybe the city could have some for sale.

Russell stated I will look to see what the cost is and let you know. So the Program Evaluation is about coming up with ideas on making those venues a little more accessible to people with various disabilities. Page 24 goes into Departmental Surveys. This is going to be along the same lines of everything we just discussed. It is going to be whether the documentation is in line with the ADA, if we have the ability to make the programs available for those with various disabilities and those types of things. There is nothing new it is just going to be more specific to certain departments. If we come up with ideas we will discuss them and fold into the Departmental Surveys. I consider these to be low hanging fruit. Now let's look at the transition matrix. Jones has gone through and prioritized the majority of these items based off the ADA criteria. My intent is for us to look at the priority that is assigned and determine if it needs to be altered due to public demand, use, available funding or an emergency/safety issue. If we feel the priority needs to be elevated then we will adjust the priority.

Kesler stated one other thing would be statutory requirement.

Russell stated that should have been part of the overall criteria.

Jones stated it was factored in.

Russell stated Harper brought in four (4) items specific to sidewalks and street repair. The last page of the matrix is just a general streets/sidewalks/curb cuts. There are not specific streets or sidewalks identified. I need help from the Committee in identifying those areas that

have a higher priority. Jones has identified all the bus stops and routes that go through the city. I believe our first priority is to start spidering out from the bus stops. If we have high use areas we may need to pay more attention to them.

Kesler asked does that include the stops that are on Fort Sill?

Jones stated yes, but we have no jurisdiction on federal property.

Russell stated we could probably contact the Post Commander stating we have an ADA concern.

Kesler stated you would need to contact the Garrison Commander so they can budget and fix it.

Fanning asked how do we find where all the bus tops are.

Russell stated Jones is working on that map. Once it is ready we will give everyone a copy. You will also have access to the GIS maps on the city website.

Jones stated you can go to the LATS website to see the routes and stops.

Harper stated their map only shows the main stops.

Jones stated we are taking that a step or two farther on our website. Once you access the map you will see the bus routes. There will be an icon for each stop and if you place your arrow over an icon it will tell you if there is additional information. If you click on the icon you will see either a sign or a bench telling you what kind of stop it is.

Russell stated once we are finished we will be working with LATS to see if it can be incorporated into their brochures. We have been contacted by a company that does sidewalk repairs. They will be doing a survey to determine what sidewalks we have, what needs repaired and where we need to place sidewalks.

Whisenhunt stated this company was originally setup for sidewalks with offsets. They would eliminate the offset to make them compliant. They have evolved into doing actual surveys of your sidewalk system which includes curb ramps. They are looking for non-compliances for cross slopes, grade, curb ramps, too steep, not wide enough, and not in the proper location. They will go through and GPS the locations, do a survey and create a survey that can be imported into our GIS network. That will identify all the sidewalks and their conditions and allow you to look at the routing and prioritizing. Offsets are minimal compared to curb ramps. With your cross slopes there are different states of non-compliance. Their survey will identify those defects and from that the Committee will be able to prioritize what needs to be repaired and taken care of first.

Fanning asked they are going to identify every sidewalk in Lawton.

Whisenhunt stated yes.

Fanning asked via GPS.

Whisenhunt stated yes.

Fanning asked how do they do that.

Whisenhunt stated they will walk it.

Fanning asked they are going to walk the entire city.

Whisenhunt stated yes. They drive around to see where there are not any sidewalks and when they get to sidewalks they will walk them.

Fanning asked is that more cost effective than having city employees walk it.

Whisenhunt stated we don't have the software or equipment to import it into GIS. The equipment is quite expensive. They present good reports that can be pulled into the GIS and if you have access you will be able to see the condition of that sidewalk. We will be able to map routes that are complaint so you will be able to get from city building A to city building B.

Fanning stated I understand.

Russell stated the survey will identify where sidewalks are and where they aren't, where curb ramps are and where they aren't and actually remove some of the trip hazards.

Whisenhunt stated the trip hazards is really their focus. They want to shave off the offsets to make them complaint.

Fanning asked what is the projected timeframe of the completion.

Whisenhunt stated we are still in the early stages.

Russell stated we met with them for the first time and we are in the process of getting the package together for them to bid it. We hope to have them working on the survey piece by the end of the year.

Kesler stated there is federal grant money available for sidewalks that are on the safe walk paths for schools.

Russell stated we are Safe Walk certified and I'm exploring that area.

Whisenhunt stated we actually did some sidewalks in Fields and Dunning through the Safe Walk funding. I believe it was close to a half a million dollars.

Fanning asked when identifying the priorities for sidewalks is it based on usage, citizen complaints or what.

Russell stated usage and we would take into consideration any kind of complaints or hazardous type of environment. If we are forcing people into the streets due to the sidewalks then we need to fix them. Harper has given me four areas he has identified. Does anyone else have any.

Fanning stated the sidewalk that runs north and south on 27th Street.

Whisenhunt stated currently we have a design to reconstruction 27th from just north of the J intersection all the way to Lee Blvd. It will have curb ramps and a 5' sidewalk.

Harper stated you need to start at E.

Russell stated for this project the funding is already in place. We are not saying the rest will not be done but for this particular area the funding has already been identified.

Fanning asked will it eventually go up to DHS.

Whisenhunt stated this project does not cover DHS. That is an area that gets a lot of pedestrian traffic and I think this is an area the Committee should add to the list.

Harper stated the sidewalk on LC Helm needs to go all the way to 38th Street.

Whisenhunt stated that was built by Cameron.

Russell asked did we decide on which Tuesday we would meet.

Fanning stated no.

Russell stated let's do the last Tuesday of the month at 2:30 p.m. Please take a look at the matrix before we meet again. I would like to get through Map 6 discussing each line item and setting priorities. Also make a list of the high traffic areas.

B. Review and Discuss Open Meeting Act, take action if necessary

2. Comments/Discussion

None

3. Adjournment

There being no further business meeting adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

Motion by Kesler, **Second** by Harper, to adjourn. **Aye:** Kesler; Russell; Fanning; Harper. **Nay:** None. **Motion Passed.**