



Annual Internal Review

This report covers the time period of 1/1/2013 to 12/31/2013

Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities

The Board/Commission mission statement (per the City Code) is:

The purpose of the committee is to encourage, assist, and enable persons with disabilities to participate in the social and economic life of the City, achieve maximum personal independence, become gainfully employed, and use and enjoy fully all public and private facilities available within the community.

- 1. Describe the board's actions supporting their mission during the previous calendar year. Address all elements of the board's mission statement as provided in the relevant sections of the City Code.**

2013 Accomplishments

Employment Awards & Recognition - October 28, 2013

The Committee hosted the 34th Austin Employment Awards at the Crowne Plaza Austin, drawing over 150 attendees. Attendees were honored with keynote speaker Barbara J. Madrigal, assistant commissioner for the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services - Division for Blind Services. Council member Laura Morrison presented a Disability Employment proclamation on behalf of Mayor Leffingwell. The Awards Program was an exciting evening for all attendees. The award winners were as follows:

- Tom Chepey-Entrepreneurship Award;
- The Rocking Tomato-Small Employer of the Year Award;
- Randalls on Balcones Drive-Medium Employer of the Year Award;
- HEB Store #7 at Wells Branch-Large Employer of the Year Award;
- Clifton Career Development School-Distinguished Service Award;
- Lisa Aguirre-Employee of the Year Award;
- Denise Sonleitner-Martha Arbuckle Award;
- Sam Ortega and Charlie Pearce/*The Daily Texan*- Media Award.

Business of Work Job Readiness Seminar April 08, 2013 Totaling 85 participants

The event was held at the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center. Partners included: Workforce Solutions – Capital Area, Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, Mary Lee Foundation, and the Social Security Administration. The seminar is geared toward providing job readiness training to job seekers with disabilities, preparing them for the City of Austin Career Fair, in partnership with Goodwill Industries, and subsequent employment.

Access Awards August 8, 2013 Presented by Mayor Lee Leffingwell

The purpose of this award is to recognize Austin businesses for their welcoming attitude and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. This year there were six winners and two honorable mentions, out of a total of ten nominated businesses. Commissioner Tanya Winters made the presentations with Mayor Leffingwell. Mayor Leffingwell also presented the ADA Anniversary proclamation.

White Cane Day Oct 15, 2013 Republic Square Park; Over 500 attendees

Mayor Lee Leffingwell presented the proclamation in an event at City Hall Plaza. Starting with a march down Congress Avenue and ending with a day of festivities including music, food, and a rock climbing wall at Republic Square Park, this event highlights the independence of persons who are blind or visually impaired. **The 2013 White Cane Day celebration had the largest attendance of any previous Austin celebration with 548 attendees.**

Disability Mentoring Day (DMD) Oct 16, 2013 at Goodwill Industries Community Center

Mayor Pro Tem Sheryl Cole presented this year's DMD proclamation at the Goodwill Community Center during the celebratory luncheon. This year DMD celebrated its 11th anniversary by drawing almost 90 student participants. A panel of successfully employed youth provided insight to mentees. This event offers career exploration opportunities to youth with disabilities in high school and college, by providing options to job shadow with professionals in a career they wish to pursue.

Affordable Care Act Presentation to the City of Austin – November 12, 2013

This event served a dual purpose: first, to draw further attention to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and its' implications and second, to address any effect the ACA may have on people with disabilities. Part of this event in the City Hall Chamber was geared towards providing education and information material on the ACA. Meanwhile, other rooms within City Hall were available to meet with our partners to either enroll into the ACA or to obtain more information.

This event could not have been accomplished without the help of several key partners including: Central Health, Center for Public Policy Priorities, Beyond Today, Get Covered America, CommUnityCare, Lone Star Circle of Care, Foundation Communities, Latino HealthCare Forum, Austin Travis County Re-entry Roundtable, Cognosante and SRA International. Additional supportive information was provided by NAMI Austin and The Austin Clubhouse.

Barton Springs Pool ADA Improvements

Committee members provided testimony and education to the Parks Board, Friends of Barton Springs and city staff on accessibility improvements leading to the pool area from both the north and south side. In addition, members' recommendations impacted design of ramps; their suggestions made it to the current plan. The project is nearing final completion; the Committee will continue to provide input as needed.

ADA Accessible Pier

Committee members continue to provide support to CORE Health and the Parks Dept. working on an accessible fishing pier at Lady Bird Lake.

Imagine Austin

Committee members attended Imagine Austin, a comprehensive initiative to shape Austin's growth until 2030. The committee represented interests of the disability community concentrating in the areas of planning for housing and transportation.

ADA Access and Sidewalk Task Force

Committee members participated in these community meetings to discuss and make recommendations about the built environment and projects targeting accessibility improvements in the Public Works Department.

Emergency Preparedness

AMCPD Commissioner Ron Lucey continues to serve on the Texas Disability Task Force on Emergency Management representing all local Texas Mayor's Committees. Commissioner Lucey currently chairs the Taskforce until March 2014. He routinely reports on progress and results to the Committee.

Transportation

During several presentations by Capital Metro, the Committee offered feedback on their Metro Access service. The result was a postponement of rate changes arising from a Capital Metro Fare Restructuring proposal. The Committee continues to work together with Capital Metro to make improvements.

Election Study Group

Committee member Ron Lucey participated in reviewing plans for new voting centers, voicing concerns of importance to the disability community. Additionally, the group reviewed a proposal to develop a new accessible voting system. Contributions include providing Travis County with model accessibility contract language for the expected request for proposals and gathering stakeholder letters of support to Commissioners Court for the new accessible voting system. Commissioners participated in a community-wide meeting with the Travis County Clerk as part of an overall marketing campaign to **Get Out the Vote.**

Visitability Requirements in City Code

Committee members attended meetings with Board of Realtors and City staff to discuss inclusion of visitability requirements into City Code. The Committee submitted a recommendation in support to the City Council. Additionally, each commissioner reached out to their respective council members for sponsorship.

Work Base Learning Program

Continued support and monitoring of this program providing summer employment for youth with disabilities.

2. **Determine if the board's actions throughout the year comply with the mission statement.**

The Austin Mayor's Committee for People with Disabilities did not conduct any actions that were outside the scope of the mission statement.

3. **List the board's goals and objectives for the new calendar year.**

2014 Goals

Access and Youth Committee: Commissioner Tanya Winters – Chair

Emergency Planning

The Access Committee will work with the City's Homeland Security Emergency Management Department to ensure plans and training includes assistance to persons with disabilities. The Committee will review the city emergency plan, offer recommendations and participate in the development of the training video for emergency responders. September is National Preparedness Month; the committee would like to partner with HSEM to contribute to the public awareness campaign.

ADA Access and Sidewalk Task Force

Access Committee members will continue to participate in this task force and voice concerns of citizens with disabilities and report back to Committee members. The Committee will request an update of the ADA Transition Plan from Public Works Dept. This can be done through a presentation at the monthly meeting.

Access Awards

The purpose of this awards program is to recognize Austin businesses for their accessibility and welcoming attitude towards persons with disabilities in the Spirit of ADA. The Committee will distribute a news release seeking nominations by June 2014. Staff reserved a slot in the City Council meeting for August 7 to present the ADA Anniversary Proclamation and awards to winners.

Transportation

The Access Committee will continue to voice concerns for the transportation needs of persons with disabilities by inviting Capital Metro staff and Metro Access Advisory Committee members to provide updates. Committee members will continue to participate in hearings and meetings related to transportation. Additionally, Committee members will communicate items of interest to their respective Council Members.

Disability Mentoring Day

This coming year, the DMD steering committee will host a DMD Poster contest. At the request of the steering Committee, the ADA Office will work to update the mentor list and

re-design the Mentee application to make it a user-friendly online form. The Steering Committee will work to increase the number of mentors currently participating in the program through outreach campaign. Committee members will promote participation in DMD with staff of Workbase Learning Program. DMD Chair will re-invite Community in Schools and Partners in Education to participate in the DMD Steering Committee.

White Cane Day

The Access Committee reserved Republic Square Park, and committee members will be participating in the planning group for this event. This event highlights the independence of persons who are blind or have low vision with a variety of activities including a march from the Capitol to City Hall for the presentation of the White Cane Day Proclamation by the mayor.

Accessible Parking and Pedestrian Access

The Committee will continue to educate the community on the importance of accessible parking including accessible parking laws and regulations and providing input where necessary. Committee will establish a working relationship and attend meetings of the newly formed Pedestrian Advisory Council.

Parks and Recreation

The Committee will establish an advisory relationship with PARD Inclusion staff receiving regular updates at monthly meetings. This will start with a presentation introducing the program and staff at the February 2014 meeting.

Web Access

Expert committee members will work with City ADA Office staff to improve webpage access focusing on the various forms including the Employment Awards nomination, Business of Work Seminar Registration and the Austin Access Award Nomination.

Employment and Awards Committee Commissioner Ron Lucey- Chair

Employment Awards Program

The Committee will work with the City's Corporate Public Information Office (PIO) and Austin media outlets to provide interview opportunities for past and new employment award winners. The committee will ask the mayor to send a letter to promote the employment of people with disabilities through the national campaign *What Can You Do?* and the 2014 campaign theme from the Department of Labor- Office of Disability Policy. The committee will develop and implement plans to work with the media to generate a community conversation on the employment of people with disabilities during the month of October. The Committee will ask PIO and Channel 6 for their assistance in generating an advertising campaign through print and digital media in support of these efforts.

Business Leadership Network

The Committee will explore re-establishing the Central Texas Business Leadership Network (BLN). The purpose of the BLN is to provide a business-to-business networking opportunity for local businesses to discuss issues related to the full employment of people with disabilities in the local workforce. This group is traditionally driven by employers and would require a business champion. The committee will consider past

award winners for a leader and potential members. The committee's goal is to help establish the BLN and let the group run itself. The Committee will work with these business partners on an ongoing basis to promote the importance /benefits of hiring persons with disabilities.

Business of Work Job Readiness Seminar April 2014

Committee members will work with partner agencies to host this year's Business of Work Job Readiness Seminar. As in the past, the event will be set to coincide with the City of Austin's Community Career Expo – job fair in partnership with Goodwill Industries of Central Texas. This workshop is designed to assist persons with disabilities in improving their job seeking skills, including successfully interviewing for a job, writing an effective resume and dressing for success. Partners include: Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Workforce Solutions - Capital Area, Goodwill Industries of Central Texas, and the Social Security Administration.

Policy Recommendations

The committee has a commissioner representative on the Task Force tasked with developing a plan for the transition of Boards and Commissions during the upcoming 10 - 1 Council.

- Recommend equal number of commission members as new 10-1 Council
- Assist with transition of new committee by retaining some seasoned commissioners.
- Recommend to consider diversity of disability expertise and membership in establishing a new committee.

The Committee is interested in re-establishing the annual meeting with the mayor to brief him on Committee activities and goals and request his input, support and priorities.

The Committee wants to strengthen communication ties with other boards and commissions on areas/topics of mutual interest. Ex: Parks Board, Community Development Board, Urban Transportation Commission and the Pedestrian Advisory Council.