

COMMITTEE ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Friday, February 2, 2007, 10:30 a.m.
Kona Mayor's Office Conference Room

PRESENT: Lawrence Scadden, Chair; Laura Tobosa, Secretary; Denise Cowdrey, James Souza, Ronald Wagner-Wright

EXCUSED: Michael Gleason, Vice-Chair; Jack Matsui, Jean Navarro, Ted Yamanaka

GUESTS: Malina Dravis-Tucker, Interpreter; Susan Golden, JoAnn Sato, Teri Spinola-Campbell, ADA Coordinator (Equal Opportunity Officer); Dr. Sandra Wagner-Wright

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:40 a.m. An introduction of committee members, staff, and guests was made.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

D. Cowdrey made a motion to accept the minutes of January 5, 2007. L. Tobosa seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ISSUES

None.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The treasurer's report was reviewed.

L. Tobosa made a motion to accept the treasurer's report as submitted. D. Cowdrey seconded the motion. The motion was passed.

CORRESPONDENCE

A. Letter from Mayor H. Kim to Council Chairman Pete Hoffmann and Members of the County Council appointing Jean Navarro and Ronald Wagner-Wright to MCPD

B. Letter from MCPD to Mayor H. Kim regarding Concrete Change

C. Letter from Mayor H. Kim to MCPD in response to the Concrete Change letter

T. Spinola-Campbell mentioned that Disability Rights Hawaii invited Councilmember Bob Jacobson to the meeting because the county building code is by county ordinance. Therefore, the county council would have some say whether this issue would proceed. Perhaps MCPD should consider inviting B. Jacobson to the meeting.

After some discussion, MCPD suggested inviting Bruce McClure, Director of the Department of Public Works; Chris Cholas, Disability Rights Hawaii; and Councilmember B. Jacobson to the March meeting. MCPD will ask C. Cholas to bring the video on concrete change to the meeting.

COMMUNITY LIAISON REPORTS

A. EDUCATION/PUBLIC AWARENESS LIAISON – M. GLEASON

No report.

B. RECREATION LIAISON – L. SCADDEN

No report.

C. TRANSPORTATION LIAISON – D. COWDREY

No report. D. Cowdrey reported that she will be meeting with T. Brown next week Tuesday so she should have some information for the next meeting.

D. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS LIAISON – L. SCADDEN

L. Scadden reported that he did not speak to Troy Kindred, Civil Defense Administrator, this month. Obviously after the earthquake, there is a lot more interest in this county on civil defense awareness emergency preparedness. It appears that T. Kindred is now much more aware of the need to include people with disabilities in the planning and all the activity. However, L. Scadden has not heard about T. Kindred asking someone to attend one of their meetings. MCPD will continue to follow up.

S. Golden reported that this past Monday, FEMA called because they are doing a survey on what people thought about their response. One of the things she told the FEMA surveyor was the building where she lives, basically anybody who lives there full time, submitted a request. However, she is the only person who didn't get a grant and she raised the issue with the surveyor that it may have been discrimination because she uses a wheelchair. The only way to follow up with FEMA is by calling their toll free number.

J. Souza reported that yesterday at approximately 11:45 a.m. he thought he heard a civil defense siren. The siren is suppose to inform people to go to their TV or radio to determine what is going on. But, he has no way to know what is going on by TV or radio. What is he supposed to do?

L. Scadden said he didn't hear any sirens and he usually can hear four sirens from his home on the first day of each month when the sirens are tested. He wondered if they were working in Kona. MCPD has discussed this issue with T. Kindred as well as the state and federal level on what can be done to make sure people who are deaf get the same type of warning. It supposed to be something that is being worked on and there have been ideas discussed with the State Civil Defense personnel on getting that information out to pagers, cell phones, and various ways. But, obviously it has not been implemented.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. VOLUNTEER PARKING VIOLATION ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM UPDATE – SGT. D. VERIATO

Sergeant D. Veriato submitted program statistics for the Volunteer Disabled Parking Enforcement Program for October to December 2006 and a summary of 2005 and 2006 statistics which was distributed to MCPD members.

L. Scadden reported that the only thing he was confused about the report is tying the statistics to six people's badge numbers. Are there six trained volunteers now in the County?

B. UPDATE FROM DCAB – C. FLEMING/N. OLESEN/C. TOWNSEND

The February report from C. Townsend, Program and Policy Unit Coordinator of DCAB, was distributed to MCPD members.

C. ADA COORDINATOR'S REPORT – T. SPINOLA-CAMPBELL

T. Spinola-Campbell provided her report as the ADA Coordinator for January 2007. ADA Coordinator's report attached.

J. Souza said the big island deaf community is still not satisfied with the county police. Three years ago he requested police to meet with the deaf community to try to understand each other and hopefully build trust in each other. Sergeant D. Veriato was among the officers at the police function. It still didn't work, they continued to have problems with them. Also, at other times, he and some interpreters urged police to set up an emergency service to be able to contact interpreters. But they haven't done anything since. After the December MCPD meeting in Hilo, Major J. Enanoria emailed him and informed him that an officer at the accident site was going to interview him with an interpreter at a later date. He emailed back to J. Enanoria and said why wait until after the fact? They already sent the accident report to his insurance and they had not interviewed him and it didn't make sense. J. Enanoria also promised to set up emergency service to contact interpreters. J. Souza asked M. Dravis-Tucker if she heard from the police regarding the emergency interpreter service and she told MCPD she heard nothing about this.

T. Spinola-Campbell responded that she and Major J. Enanoria are working on it and she suggested a meeting as well and Major J. Enanoria was very responsive.

R. Wagner-Wright said he would like to ask T. Spinola-Campbell and MCPD if it's possible to get involved in giving ADA awareness about blindness and seeing-eye guide dogs. He has found gross discrimination on this island. He has encountered many incidents where someone has come up to him and say "are you blind?" Some will say "you can't bring that dog in here." There was another incident at a Hilo restaurant where he was denied entry because of his dog. He explained the law from the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) and he was still refused entry. The police came down after 20 minutes and he showed them a piece of paper that says he is totally blind, he has a seeing-eye guide dog, and according to the HRS he should not be discriminated. The police responded by saying that this piece of paper does not tell you that you can eat at this restaurant. The police have no knowledge whatsoever of the law regarding a seeing-eye guide dog. The police officer had to come to his house and asked him to print out the HRS and the ADA statute. The police officer asked if there is some way that maybe they could both come to a compromise. As a result, nothing happened and the State of Hawaii has a statute of limitation for six months. Therefore, nobody took any action against the proprietor of the restaurant who made him feel totally embarrassed and feel so small in front of everybody else. Even though this situation happened a year ago, no one from the police department contacted him.

R. Wagner-Wright requested to be involved in the ADA training because the only way to get over the ignorance of the law is by education. J. Souza agreed there is a problem here and it's wrong.

T. Spinola-Campbell responded that she conducts four hours of training on the ADA with the new police recruits. She spends time and tells them how important it is to know the ADA. She also tells them about the different titles and how important to know about Title III, specifically using examples of a blind person going to a restaurant with a service animal and he/she is refused entrance and the police can be called to the scene. If the police recruit knows the law, then they can easily resolve the dispute and tell the owner that they are required to let the person in with their service animal as long as that animal is under the control of their handler and not disruptive and save the owner from a lawsuit. Secondly, the Department of Justice has new videos out just for police and what is required under the ADA. The video has eight parts on police situations with people with disabilities. Major J. Enanoria asked her that whenever she gets complaints to follow up with him directly. If anyone has particular incidents, email them to T. Spinola-Campbell and she will follow up with Major J. Enanoria and they will pursue it. If you're dealing with private businesses, people should contact Disability Rights Hawaii. Complaints can also be filed with the Department of Justice.

S. Wagner-Wright mentioned that the police officer who came to their house said this is the first time he has ever heard about it and his supervisor did not know anything about ADA law or access. This is the reason why the police officer came to them to get that information. R. Wagner-Wright added that the police officer had new recruits with them and the new recruits said they had no training. He felt something is going wrong some where.

D. PARKS AND RECREATION REPORT – A. MITCHENER

No report.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ISSUES

None.

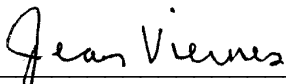
ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting will be held on Friday, March 2, 2007, at 10:30 a.m. in the Hilo Lagoon Centre, Department of Liquor Control conference room.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:39 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



JEAN VIERNES, STAFF SECRETARY