Municipality of Anchorage
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT ADVISORY COMMISSION

SUMMARY MEETING MINUTES

September 12, 2013

I Call to Order

A regular meeting of the ADA Advisory Commission was called to order by the Chair, David Ziemer, at 1:02 p.m. on Thursday, September 12, 2013 in the 4th floor conference room at 825 L Street, Department of Health and Human Services.

II Roll Call

Roll call was conducted by Chair Ziemer as follows; a quorum in attendance.

MEMBERS PRESENT	MEMBERS ABSENT	GUESTS
Commissioners • David Ziemer, Chair • Christine King • Lynne Koral • Lindsay Davison • Holli Yancey **Municipal Staff** • Kristin Troxell, DHHS • Belinda Davis, ERC • Susan Shiffer, DPT • Ken Takakuwa, DHHS • Marie Lavigne, DHHS	**Commissioners** • David Barton • Leroy Reid **Municipal Staff** None	• Jack Runser

III Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as written, motion to approve by Ms. Koral, seconded by Ms. King.

IV Approval of Minutes

The June 13, 2013, July 11, 2013 and August 8, 2013 minutes were approved as written, motion to approve by Ms. King, seconded by Ms. Yancey.

V Public Comments

None

VI Guest

Jack Runser – Jack is an intern at Access Alaska and came to the meeting to discuss a bad experience that he had with taxi cabs in Anchorage, AK. He is also interested in the ADA

Commission and has expressed interest in learning more about the commission. Jack's experience was shared by an ASL translator, a summary of Jack's story is as follows:

Jack wanted to use a taxi service for transportation to an appointment so he contacted the taxi dispatch office and requested service, informing the dispatch at the time he was deaf. The taxi arrived at the requested address and when Jack approached the driver, the driver requested he sit in the back seat. The driver then spoke to Jack and asked where he wanted to go. Jack gestured that he couldn't hear/speak and wrote down the address where he wanted to go. The taxi driver continued talking and asking where he would like to go, when Jack did not respond verbally with the address, the driver got animated and loud. Jack continued to try to communicate in writing that he could not hear/talk and needed to write but both parties became frustrated and started arguing. The driver requested that Jack get out of the taxi and Jack refused. The taxi driver then threatened to call the police but did not actually place the call. The driver then got out of the driver seat opened the door to the back seat and pulled Jack out of the car by his leg and dropped him on the ground. Jack lost his glasses in the struggle, got up and knocked on the window gesturing that he lost his glasses. The driver understood, located the glasses and gave them to Jack. Jack reported the incident to the police but because there were no witnesses there was no action taken.

Ms. King asked if this was an isolated event or if Jack has experienced other issues when using taxi cabs in Anchorage. Jack responded that this was the first time that he had a problem but he knows other people that have had similar experiences. Ms. King questioned if there was a literacy or cultural barrier, was it possible that the taxi driver could not read/write the English language. Jack responded and stated that it did not matter because the behavior was not acceptable however he thinks that it is possible that the driver could not understand the written address. However, the driver did understand other things that Jack was trying to communicate. Jack has discussed his story with a legal professional but they did not want to take on the case due to the circumstances. He has also filed a complaint and is waiting to hear the outcome, Jack was not sure what agency he had filed the complaint with. Ms. King suggested that this would be a situation that the Alaska Deaf Community and the Alaska Mobility Coalition should both be aware of. She voiced that when a deaf person requests for a cab it would be helpful if the dispatch office could request a taxi driver that can read and write English at a proficient level so that they can communicate with their customer. Jack is recommending that taxi drivers be required to attend training that will assist them with communicating with individuals with disabilities. Ms. Shiffer stated that the Alaska Mobility Coalition has been in contact with her and requested her input/assistance in developing sensitivity to disabilities program to be part of the required driver training. Ms. Koral agrees that drivers and dispatch companies need additional training. Ms. Lavigne suggested the Commission research best practices for the disabled when using public transportation and use the research as input when designing the training for both riders and drivers. This information could also be beneficial for People Mover and AnchorRides drivers as well.

Mr. Ziemer suggested the ADA Commission write a statement addressed to the Mayor and the Assembly expressing the concern the group has with Jack's experience as an example and recommending that they as the policy makers for the community make sure that these concerns are addressed in future policies. Ms. Davison made a motion to approve a statement be submitted outlining Jack's story and Ms. King seconded. The Commission will draft a letter to be submitted.

The ADA Commission will be requesting an appearance to present a report at the October 22, 2013 Assembly meeting and suggested that Jack present his story at that time. DHHS staff will request an interpreter to be present at the Assembly meeting to translate for Jack.

VII Municipal Reports

Susan Shiffer, Department of Public Transportation – The changes to the PeopleMover schedules went into effect on August 19th. Ms. Shiffer provided new schedules, route maps and videos on how to ride the bus. AnchorRides is still working towards implementing their new policies based on best practices but they are not in effect yet.

Marie Lavigne, Department of Health & Human Services – Introduced herself as the new DHHS liaison staff to the Commission. Her position (formerly filled by Lynda Meyer) oversees Senior and Emergency Outreach Services, including the Aging and Disability Resource Center. Her office is located on the 2nd Floor at DHHS, 825 L Street. She provided her contact information to Commissioners.

VIII Updates from Chair

Report to Assembly - October 22, 2013 – The Assembly Meeting will start at 5:00 pm. Mr. Ziemer will work with Mr. Barton on drafting the report/presentation highlighting the ADA Commissions accomplishments over the past year. Ms. King would like to encourage all commissioners to attend the meeting. Mr. Ziemer will submit the request for Assembly Appearance.

IX Old Business

AK Deaf Community

- They are still working on the Disaster Preparedness Video Production however the contact that they were working with at UAA is no employed by at UAA so they are trying to establish a new contact to help with production. They are partnering with Alaska Vocational and taking on a statewide approach to the project. Ms. Shiffer will distribute a September newsletter from Easter Seals that has some information related to emergency preparedness. Ms. King suggested contacting the King Career Center to see if their video production section would like to assist with this project.

Service Animals

- The August training was cancelled however they will reschedule and communicate the new dates when available. Lynne Koral just got appointed to a national legislative committee on service animals. Florida has one of the better service animal laws. Ms. Koral will be researching these laws and can share that information at a later date.

DHHS RV Trailer

- Remove this topic from future meeting agendas. The ADA Commission has provided their recommendations to the MOA and they will be taken into consideration.

X New Business

Paragraph 4, Parking lots – No Updates.

ADA Commission Meeting Time – Discussion about reoccurring meeting times. Mr. Barton has not been able to attend the meetings recently as this is not a good meeting time for his schedule. Mr. Ziemer requested that commissioners email their availability to Ms. Troxell and we can then discuss alternative meeting times.

XI Good of the Order

- Disaster Preparedness Video Project – Discussed under Old Business AK Deaf Community, commissioners are trying to locate a production company to assist with this project at low or no cost.

- Local Emergency Planning Committee – Mr. Barton has been meeting with the MOA Office of Emergency Management on public awareness activities for disaster preparedness and disaster registry. The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) has crafted their registry "messaging", the public awareness activities will begin at the statewide preparedness conference in early October. Mr. Barton and Michelle Torres of the MOA OEM will be conducting direct awareness presentations to audiences focusing on senior & disability oriented support groups and associations. They will also be conducting monthly presentations open to the general public on disaster preparedness topics at Access Alaska starting in November.

XII Announcements

No Announcements

XIII Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:18 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting will be on Thursday, October 10, 2013 at 1:00 pm in the 4th floor conference room, at the Department of Health and Human Services located at 825 L Street.