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ADA Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, December 13, 2023

1:00 pm, Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Steve Schoenberg, Monique Vopat, Kim Dietrich, Joe Cheray, Michael Byington, Carrie Hageman, & Anthony Fadale. Members Absent: Nicholas Trammell, Wulf Roby, & Bob Nugent,

Staff: Ernestor De La Rosa & ASL Interpreter Doris. Guests: Susan McClacherty & Quinn Cole.

- Welcome & Introductions:
- Approval of Agenda and Minutes: The motion to accept the minutes and approve the agenda was made by Micheal and seconded by Carrie. The motion was passed unanimously.
- New Business:
 - Community ADA: Michael asked if the City of Topeka's ADA Coordinator managed complaints for the Topeka Transit Authority. Ernestor said he was uncertain and would find the answer because the City's Governing Body only sets the mill levy. Michael shared issues regarding the automated stop-calling system that transmits into the buses' PA system. The new buses do not have a stop-calling system because of contractual issues. Michael asked for those buses not to be used until the system is added, but stops are being called manually by the drivers. This causes difficulties for the drivers and passengers if there is no consistency. Michael shared that this does not meet ADA requirements. Ernestor provided the contact information for the best person to speak with regarding ADA complaints with the Topeka Transit Authority and will share that information in a follow-up email.

Anthony said that he would share these concerns with the Topeka Transit Authority Advisory Board, which could potentially answer questions regarding the issue. Ernestor will be included in the emails.
 - ADA Ordinance: Kim shared concerns regarding a private business regarding a complaint about service animals. Kim asked if the City could talk to private businesses and explain ADA requirements about service animals. Carrie agrees with the concerns being an issue and agrees that businesses need to be educated

on best practices for ADA. Michael provided further details regarding federal and state policy and guidance related to service animals. Kim shared that the ADA Coordinator should be able to talk to businesses regarding ADA.

Ernestor has responded to Kim's question/complaint via email. Ernestor shared that the City code for ADA focuses on ensuring the City complies with the ADA; going into private businesses would be outside of his authority under the City code. Joe asked if partnering with local organizations to provide educational information/materials would be a better solution. Ernestor said that is an option and can be considered. Michael shared that the regional Great Plains ADA Center can provide educational materials and assistance related to training. Ernestor will follow up and look for opportunities for training for small businesses in Topeka.

- Old Business:
 - Michael moved to continue to table his motion from the November meeting: “I move that this Council express the position that the replacement of red, yellow, and green traffic signals with RRFBs can potentially reduce accessibility for people with certain types of disabilities.” Wulf seconded the motion and added that the Access Board and other rules may reinforce it. Wulf noted that he would follow up and share the language staff to be shared with the ADA Advisory Council.” Carrie seconded the motion to table this action.

- Public Comment:
 - Ernestor:
 - ADA Complaints: Ernestor provided a year-to-date report on ADA complaints, stating that 25 complaints have been received and tracked. He will also continue his certification for the ADA coordinator role.
 - Grant: The Public Works department did not receive the grant they applied for street improvements; the department will try again in 2024.
 - Presenters for 2024: Ernestor will work on getting presents in meetings for housing related to ADA.
 - Bird Scooters: The presentation has been pushed to 2024. Ernestor shared that the City has made \$2,000 from the franchise fees from Bird Scooters.
 - Joe: Shared that the tree line on the Huntoon overgrowth issue has been addressed. She shares her appreciation.
 - Michael: Shared that the locator tones on some pedestrian stops have been installed. He appreciates the ongoing efforts for accommodations.

- Next meeting- Wednesday, January 10, 2024
- Adjourn – 1:51 pm.