



## **COMMISSION ON DISABILITY**

### **MINUTES**

Wednesday, February 1, 2017, 1:00 P.M.  
Los Angeles City Hall Board of Public Works  
200 North Spring Street, Room 350, Los Angeles, California 90012

#### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Robert Bitonte  
Theresa de Vera  
Alisa Schlesinger  
Betty Wilson  
David Wolf  
Iran Hopkins  
Richard Rothenberg

#### **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Norma Lopez (resigned)  
Robert Williams (excused)

#### **DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY:**

Angela Kaufman, ADA Compliance Officer  
Richard Pope, ADA Coordinator

#### **OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:**

#### **GUESTS:**

Steve Goby, L.A. Managed Care

### **ITEM NO. (1): Approval of the Regular Commission Meeting Minutes.**

President Bitonte called the meeting to order at 1:17 p.m. Roll call was conducted, and a quorum of the commissioners was present.

Action Taken: The Commission approved the January meeting minutes.

### **ITEM NO. (2): Public Comment**

Public Comment Received.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

### **ITEM NO. (3): Opioid Abuse and Pain Management**

Steve Goby, Associate General Counsel, L.A. Care, discussed his organization's protocol for addressing members' complaints as required by law. L.A. Care Health Plan is an agency created by statute to provide Medi-Cal/Medicare managed care in Los Angeles County, which has nearly two million Medi-Cal members.

When members submit a complaint about obtaining medication, the L.A. Care's general counsel is called upon. The general counsel is required to receive and resolve grievances and has recently noted an increase of grievances about prescription jobs.

Complaints are sent to the clinical medical directors who work with clinicians and ferret out the requests that are legitimate and those that are not. They work with the Public Health Department and are also guided by restrictions on certain prescriptions, especially opioids. But they work with members to resolve issues, especially for legitimate requests. Many cases of members have indications of drug diversion or abuse for cases that he's seen. Physicians sometimes enter into a patient contract and if broken the

physicians stop providing the prescriptions because of abuse or visits to multiple physicians for more prescription and their abuse.

There are entities that monitor opioid distribution to health providers and are obligated to manage this issue. But it's very difficult to do so for pharmacy and others.

Steve Goby recommends working with the health plans, and with the County because of uninsured or with Health Net, who is a competitor.

He recommends working with pain managers would be helpful, and use of a system to ferret out abuse, and general education to contractor network about the existing guidelines on addressing this issue, and help educate the community about the grievance and appeal process that uses an independent review.

Mr. Goby also agreed with commissioners about having in place educational outreach to avoid needing to address the grievance or complaint process.

## **ITEM NO. (4): Commission's Establishment of Sub-Committees.**

### Financial Resources Sub-Committee

- Chairperson – President Robert Bitonte
- Committee Member – Commissioner Alisa Schlesinger

### Housing Sub-Committee

- Chairperson – Commissioner Robert Williams
- Committee Member – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President David Wolf

#### Outreach Sub-Committee

- Chairperson – President Robert Bitonte
- Committee Member – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President Iran Hopkins
- Committee Member – Commissioner Alisa Schlesinger

Commissioner Betty Wilson moved to establish a sub-committee titled “Opioid Needs for the Disabled”. Commissioner Rothenberg will co-chair the sub-committee and seconded the motion. But no one was elected as the Chair.

Commissioner Wolf reported that the Housing Sub-Committee will provide next month.

Commissioner Bitonte reported that the Outreach Sub-Committee had met with Access Services to discuss broadcasting messages between the disabled community and the COD.

The City Attorney indicated that identifying the sub-committees and expressing them in the minutes were action enough, so the Commission had no need to vote on these ad-hoc committees.

#### **ITEM NO. (5): Staff Support**

President Bitonte recommended the Commissioners to review the letter, and its two attachments.

Commissioner Wilson moved that the Commission approve the letter.

Commissioner de Vera requested that we change attachment 1 to “Policies Addressed” instead of “Public Hearings”

The letter was deferred until March 1, 2017, because of concerns about a close-up line.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

### **ITEM NO. (6): Speaker's Card**

The Commission reviewed the mock-up of the speaker's card. Commissioner Schlesinger proposed changes that President Bitonte annotated on the speaker's card and gave to DOD to revise. The recommendation was to defer action until next meeting. Also check with City Attorney and City Council, in order to avoid conflict.

Action Taken

### **ITEM NO. (7): Emergency Management**

Rick Pope presented that on January 24 there was a kickoff for DAFN (Disability and Functional Needs) where 51 participants from community based organizations, county and city government was present. It was an attempt to go to stakeholders in emergency management, in order to ensure that they are included in the Los Angeles emergency preparedness plans.

DAFN recognizes that there might be a conflict between City and County governments going after the same resources, requiring the parties to address this issue.

Mr. Pope also discussed emergency preparedness and the recent rainstorms. The recent rainstorms, and the anti-Trump protests, required the EOC to be activated and address mudslides that result in 31,000 customers being without electricity.

Department on Disability is working with other departments, like Department of Ageing, on overlapping issues when confronted with emergency preparedness.

We are working with other organizations to identify "off-site" locations that we can use during emergencies.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

**ITEM NO. (8): Grants to the City**

The Commission entertained the letter to the Mayor that transmits the recommendation in the approved motion. The Commission modified the letter to include the City Council, whenever the Mayor's Office was referenced.

Commissioner Wilson moved, and Commissioner Wolf seconded to vote on the motion. The motion was approved.

Action Taken

**ITEM NO. (9): Social Security Administration's Outreach to the Homeless**

President Bitonte discussed his intent to invite social security administration to discuss outreach to the homeless.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

**ITEM NO. (10): Executive Director's Report**

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

**ITEM NO. (10): New Business and Announcements**

Commissioner Wilson had a concern that there was no accessibility to the African-American Celebration through sign language interpreters today, February 1, 2017.

So the Department and Commission must work with departments to ensure that the flyers have accessible and reasonable accommodation language.

Commissioner Wilson recommend that we someone reach out to immigrants, legal or otherwise.

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Commissioner de Vera spoke from the podium requesting that the Commission deals with substantive issues faced by people with disabilities. People with disabilities are living with fear, because the new administration is seeking to end the Affordable Care Act, so the Commission should submit recommendation, opposing the end of Affordable Care Act.

Commissioner Rothenberg recommends making the City of Los Angeles a safe harbor and encouraging the Mayor to be opposed to barring entry to the country based on religion.

John Rodriguez recommended that the Commission invite LAX to discuss what has happened with the ban. The President agreed and directed Mr. Rodriguez to contact LAX about discuss this topic with the Commission. Mr. Rodriguez will submit a request to LAX' Access Board to arrange for a representative to attend.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

### **ITEM NO. (11): Adjournment**

MEETING ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 3:04 P.M.