



COMMISSION ON DISABILITY

MINUTES

Wednesday, May 8, 2019, 1:00 P.M.

Department on Disability

200 N. Spring Street, Room 350, Los Angeles, California 90012

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Theresa de Vera
Myrna Cabanban
Alisa Schlesinger
Dr. Robert Bitonte
Iran Hopkins
Richard Rothenberg
David Wolf

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Betty Wilson (excused)
Robert Williams (excused)

DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY:

Peter Soto, Management Assistant, Department on Disability

OTHER CITY DEPARTMENTS:

Chris Lee, City Attorney

GUESTS:

Jordan Kough, Executive Director, Disability Rights Legal Center (DRLC)
Stephanie Farhari, Disability Rights Legal Center (DRLC)
Sri Panchalam, attorney, Civil Rights Practice Group, Disability Rights
California (DRC)
Dr. Meredith Goetz, Founder, Special Education Law Clinic

*AUDIO TAPE(S) and CAPTIONING NOTES ARE AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

Morris Milchman and John Irving, Adult Skills Center

ITEM NO. (1): APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

President de Vera called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. The Commission had a quorum.

Action Taken: The Commission approved the April 10, 2019, meeting minutes.

ITEM NO. (2): LEGAL SERVICES AND DISABILITY: PUBLIC RIGHTS IN CALIFORNIA

Presentation from various organizations from the greater Los Angeles area regarding the history, policy and legal realities, and resources available to the public where Disability and self-determination are involved.

- I. Jordan Kough, Executive Director, Disability Rights Legal Center (DRLC) - The DRLC's mission is to champion the civil rights of people with disabilities as well as those affected by cancer and other serious illnesses. By bringing cases to court and winning victories, DRLC helps to protect and expand the rights of people, eliminate discrimination, and other legal barriers. The focus of DRLC is disability rights litigation and being more proactive in the community to enforce the rights of people with disabilities. They have a 24/7 hot line for intakes or to refer them to other people who can help them. They have workshops in education, businesses, school resources, and different resources to support people with disabilities. They partner with a few schools in Southern California, such as the University of La Vern and Loyola Law School. They created a patient handbook with the top 20 most common legal issues from patients and caregivers. They currently work with organizations on issues concerning service animals. They are reaching out to the Commission on Disability to help with more outreach events and getting resources out the community.

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- II. Sri Panchalam, attorney, Civil Rights Practice Group, Disability Rights California (DRC) - The DRC is the largest disability rights group in the nation. Established through federal law to protect and advocate for the rights of people with disabilities. The Civil Rights Practice Group specializes in disability discrimination law, Americans with Disabilities Act, Fair Housing Amendments Act, and litigates complex discrimination cases statewide. They provide counseling advice about an individual's particular situation to services on the administration hearing level, negotiations, letters for accommodations, statewide intake system, and anything else a person with a disability might need. Currently, their advocacy work is centered around people with mental health disabilities and people who are in jails or detentions centers. For more information, they ask people to visit disabilityrights.org.
- III. Dr. Meredith Goetz, Founder, Special Education Law Clinic - Dr. Goetz founded the first Special Education Law Clinic in California in 1996 at Frank D. Lanterman Regional Center in Los Angeles. Their mission is to empower families to advocate for themselves and for their children through educational outreach programs and direct advocacy services. Their mission is also to prepare law students through legal writing skill development in disability law while under supervision of attorneys. Under Dr. Goetz' supervision, law students from UCLA, UCI, USC, Pepperdine, Loyola, UC Hastings, Southwestern, and Whittier Law Schools have provided legal assistance and direct representation for more than 2,000 children over the past 20 years. There are 21 centers in California which serve 225 individuals with or at risk for developmental disabilities and their families. They offer lifelong and supportive services to families including assessment and diagnoses, service coordination by linking families with services, assistance in finding and using community resources, purchasing services identified in an individual plan, early intervention services, and advocacy for the protection of legal, civil, and service rights. When the family identifies a potential special education legal issue, the social workers at the Regional Centers will refer the case over to the law clinic to investigate

and determine a viable legal issue and them intervene and provide advocacy.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

ITEM NO. (3): EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Discussion on items relating to Department activities, metrics, budget, planning, and/or other relevant issues. Presentation is by Peter Soto, Management Assistance, Department on Disability in lieu of Stephen David Simon, Executive Director, Department on Disability. Commission elections will be opening during the month of June for nominations and the election will take place in July. Please email CV, resumes, or any information to share with the Commission to Peter Soto. Special presentation from Morris Milchman and John Irving, Adult Skills Center. The Adult Skill Center is a nonprofit organization which provides individuals with developmental disabilities the instruction, training, and support needed to ensure they achieve their highest level of independence, develop a sense of well-being, and realize their greatest potential. They provide education, job training, and independent living services to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. They have come to the Commission on Disability to seek guidance on how to start working without losing their benefits, different resources, and information on how to get better services for their clients.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

ITEM NO. (4): NEW BUSINESS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Suggested items for the next regular meeting's agenda and announcements from Commissioners, DOD staff, and guests. Commissioner Cabanban requested a follow-up to have the transportation agencies come and report back to the Commission.

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

ITEM NO. (5): PUBLIC COMMENT

No Action Taken, Information Purposes Only.

ITEM NO. (6): ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned

MEETING ADJOURNED AT APPROXIMATELY 2:48 P.M.