



Special Annual Meeting Minutes

City of Los Angeles Commission on Disability

Thursday, August 21, 2025

1:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

California Community Foundation
Joan Palevsky Center for the Future of Los Angeles
717 W. Temple St., Los Angeles 90012
Room 226

Zoom Video Conference

Commissioners Present

Akiko Tagawa, President
Myrna Cabanban, Vice President
Jorge E. Acevedo, Commissioner
Robert Bitonte, Commissioner
Iran Hopkins, Commissioner
Alisa Schlesinger, Commissioner
Robert Williams, Commissioner
Vacant, 9th Commission Position

Commissioners Absent

Mary Grace A. Barrios, Commissioner

City Staff Present

Stephen David Simon, Executive Director, Department on Disability

Alison Everett, Assistant Executive Director, Department on Disability

Heather Aubry, Assistant City Attorney, City Attorney's Office

Kayvon Wroten, Department on Disability

Salina Goytia, Department on Disability

Peter Soto, Department on Disability

Matan Koch, Department on Disability

Ashley Rodriguez, Department on Disability

Ricky Rosales, Department on Disability

Lourdes Sinibaldi, Department on Disability

Ian Thompson, Department on Disability

Item One (1) - Request for Remote Participation Option Pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(e)(2)(a)

Action Taken: There were no Commission members attending the Commission on Disability meeting remotely. No action required by the Commission on Disability.

Item Two (2) - Multiple Agenda Item Public Comment

Public comment was provided on the following topics applicable to the Commission's scope of work:

- Public Comment was made by various parties regarding Scientology:
 - Their negative philosophy about persons living with disabilities.
 - Inaccessible public parking even with placards at the Scientology Center on L. Ron Hubbard Way.
 - Public right of way barriers.
 - The permits issued to this organization.
 - Damage caused by the organization through unfair labor practices.

- Public comment was made regarding the Commission's new public comment procedure, specifically the preference that public comment be allowed after each item. Also mentioned was displeasure with the Board of Public Works' public comment procedure.

- Public comment was made about the City of Los Angeles' budget, fraud, and lack of transparency.
- Public comment was made regarding the Metro system and the elevators, specifically their need to be operable at all times.

Commissioner Bitonte inquired if discussion on the new public comment procedure could be had, with council advising that a discussion with the DOD GM or AGM be had for further information on the new policy.

No action taken, information purposes only.

Item Three (3) - Approval of the Regular Meeting Minutes

Executive Director Simon noted that a new, streamlined version of the minutes will be implemented for the August minutes for approval at the September meeting.

The Commission reviewed the July 2025 regular meeting minutes.

Action Taken: Commissioner Hopkins moved, and Commissioner Williams seconded, the motion to approve the minutes of the July 2025 regular meeting as amended. The motion passed.

Item Four (4) - Review and Approval of the Commission on Disability FY 2024-2025 Report of Accomplishments

The Commission reviewed the Commission on Disability FY 2024-2025 Report of Accomplishments.

Action Taken: Commissioner Williams moved and Commissioner Bitonte seconded the motion to approve the Commission on Disability FY 2024-2025 Report of Accomplishments. The motion passed.

**Item Five (5) - Presentation by the Department on Disability (DOD)
about its Divisions, Services, and Annual Work Plan**

Department on Disability staff presented on the Department's mission, services, staffing, Fiscal Year 2024-2025 accomplishments, and Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Work Plan. Questions and comments from the Commissioners followed.

Commissioner Bitonte asked how many applications for CORE were completed by the department and how many were not completed because of insufficient resources.

Lourdes Sinibaldi responded that denials are strictly under the purview of the Department of Water and Power and provided an overview of the process between DWP, DOA, and DOD. She spotlighted that the denial decision is not under the control of the DOD and offered to provide further data on the process and possible reasons for denials. She also highlighted some alternative approaches by other service providers.

Commissioner Bitonte noted the need and use of well tracked metrics.

Executive Director Stephen David Simon spoke to the increased metric tracking and the soon to be available greater data.

No action taken, information purposes only.

**Item Six (6) - Review and Approval of the Commission on Disability
FY 2025-26 Meeting Calendar**

The Commission reviewed the proposed dates of the Fiscal Year 2025-2026 meeting calendar of the Commission.

Action Taken: Commissioner Williams moved, and Commissioner Bitonte seconded the approval of the FY 2025-26 Meeting Calendar. The motion passed unanimously.

Item Seven (7) - Establish the Commission on Disability FY 2025-2026 Work Plan

The Commission discussed potential items for inclusion in its FY 2025-2026 Work Plan, including objectives, action items, ad hoc committees, and presentations.

The Commission President established and appointed members to the following ad hoc committees:

- Ad Hoc #1 - LA28 Games Support
 - Members:
 - Commissioner Acevedo (Chair), Commissioner Hopkins, President Tagawa
 - Presentations requested:
 - Presentation by Games Mobility Plan (OME)
 - Preliminary objectives/action items:
 - Development of Press Release form
 - Monitoring of the process of naming a street after a Paralympian

- Ad Hoc #2 - Disability Cultural Affairs
 - Members:
 - Vice President Cabanban (Chair), Commissioner Hopkins, Commissioner Williams, President Tagawa
 - Presentations requested:
 - Presentation from the Department of Cultural Affairs
 - Reinvite the body responsible for the LA 2028 Games.
 - Preliminary objectives/action items:
 - Establish an annual Betty Wilson award to recognize persons with disabilities, and their accomplishments.
 - Develop nominations process for recipient
 - Establish a criteria for the award
 - Recommend Atkinson Hyperlegible font to the City
 - Send recommendation to Mayor
 - Recommend the creation of a Paralympic Mural
 - Send recommendation to Mayor

- Ad Hoc #3 - Healthcare and Social Security Access

- Members: Commissioner Bitonte (Chair), Commissioner Schlesinger, Commissioner Williams
- Presentations requested:
 - Presentation from a Healthcare provider to cover the denial process
- Preliminary objectives/action items
 - Re- Adopt the previous policy
 - Create a Letter to the Mayor seeking support
- Ad Hoc #4 - Affordable and Accessible Housing
 - Members: Vice President Cabanban (Chair), President Tagawa, Commissioner Acevedo
 - Presentations requested:
 - Presentation from LAHD
 - Presentation from LAHSA
 - Preliminary objectives/action items
 - Recommend additional funding considerations towards people with Disabilities who are experiencing homelessness.

Commission Hopkins recommends that when we have presentations we seek multiple jurisdictional representatives to provide a more holistic view of any issue.

Action Taken: President Tagawa motioned that the Commission formalize the work plan as written by committees, have committees meet prior to the next COD Meeting, and finalize the work plan by September 8th, 2025. Commissioner Williams seconded the motion for approval. The motion passed.

DOD Staff will distribute the work plan draft by Tuesday, September 2nd, 2025.

Item Eight (8) - Department on Disability Executive Director's Report

The Department on Disability Executive Director, Stephen David Simon, provided the following information as part of his Executive Director's Report:

- Noted a revised process of capturing Department and data and metrics has been implemented, updated information will be made available in the coming months.
- Noted that a new budget letter is expected in the next month including the Mayor's goals and targets for the coming year.
- Noted DOD participated in the following event:

- ADA 35th Anniversary Press Conference on July 25th, hosted by the Mayor's Office. The Mayor signed the [Host City Games Accessibility Commitment](#), which was distributed to all City general managers.
- Noted the changes in the DOD staff supporting the Commission and within the DOD.
- Noted the Olympics and Paralympics for the City of Los Angeles will be treated with equal importance and recognition.

No action taken, information purposes only.

Item Nine (9) - Announcements

Announcements from Commissioners and City staff and requested agenda items for future Commission meetings.

- President Tagawa noted that she will not be present at the September COD Meeting.
- President Tagawa also noted that September 4th is the 2028 Games regional transportation summit.
- Commissioner Hopkins requested that the Commission agendaize a discussion on the changes in the Public Comment procedure.

No action taken, information purposes only.

Item Ten (10) - Adjournment

Action Taken: Commissioner Hopkins moved that we adjourn, and Commissioner Williams seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:59 P.M.