

**HUMAN RELATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
JANUARY 26, 2011 MINUTES**

The Human Relations Advisory Board of the City of Mesa met in a regular Human Relations Advisory Board Meeting January 26, 2011, 6:00 p.m. in the Upper Level, City Council Chambers, 57 E. First Street.

MEMBERS PRESENT

James May, Chair
Rory Gilbert, Vice Chair
Ana Cadillo
Stacey Dillon
Denise Heap
Frank Johnson
Wayne Manske
Lela Hinds-Peterson

MEMBERS ABSENT

Terry Benelli
Hong Chartrand
Orchidia Peterson

STAFF PRESENT

Mary Berumen
Brandy Howard
Karen Stegenga

GUESTS

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Mr. May welcomed the board and presenters.

2. Approval of minutes from the December 1, 2010 board meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Heap to approve the December 1, 2010, Human Relations Advisory Board (HRAB) minutes with the correction of Police Lieutenant Deanna Cantrell. Mr. Manske seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Items from Citizens Present.

Mr. Daniel Martinez, representing the East Valley Patriots for American Values, expressed their concern over the States negative stance on immigration. Mr. Martinez asked the board to review and discuss the Utah Compact. Ms. Berumen mentioned that the East Valley Patriots for American Values is scheduled to speak to the board at the February 23, 2011 meeting.

4. Hear a presentation from Carol Ketcherside from Valley Metro regarding the new In-person assessment/travel training program for ADA applicant or eligible person.

Mr. Mike James, Transit Services Director for Valley Metro, introduced Ms. Carol Ketcherside, Planning Manager, and Mr. Scott Wisner, Customer Service Manager. Mr. James explained that Mayor Smith challenged Valley Metro to come up with innovative ways to provide transportation services within Mesa and the region.

Ms. Ketcherside and Mr. Wisner gave a brief presentation on the ADA Eligibility Determination Program, the ADA Bus and Rail Pass, and gave an update on the new Valley Metro Mobility Center.

Ms. Ketcherside explained the ADA requirements/certifications for using ADA Dial-a-Ride service and how the ADA Eligibility Determination Program will affect ADA Dial-a-Ride users. She also gave details on how the ADA Eligibility Determination Program will determine if users are able to utilize fixed bus routes and/or light rail or if they are unable to ride fixed routes to their destinations. The ADA Bus and Rail Pass will allow users to ride fixed and rail routes free of use instead relying on Dial-a-Ride.

Mr. Wisner gave a brief overview of the Valley Metro Mobility Center, including the services that the Center will provide and its accommodations for those with disabilities.

Mr. James encouraged the board and Mesa residents to call Valley Metro (602) 253-5000, to speak with an employee to assist in trip planning. This would alleviate having to walk or wait for transit; calling would also help in determining a quicker route.

Ms. Gilbert expressed her concern about the manner in which ADA certification is being conducted. Ms. Ketcherside addressed Ms. Gilbert's concern and ensured her that those concerns were also shared by the Stake Holders Group; Valley Metro has taken the Stake Holders concerns and feedback to reshape the ADA Eligibility Determination Program. Determining eligibility will ensure that those who significantly need ADA services are receiving the best services Valley Metro can provide and those who are determined disabled by a medical profession but can ride a fixed route

or light rail service can do so without taking away from those with more significant needs. Ms. Ketcherside informed the board that the certification will show Valley Metro where improvements can be made for disabled users who are able to maneuver on fixed routes or rail routes but have difficulty doing so; improvements can then be made so that those routes can be utilized instead of Dial-a-Ride. Mr. James explained that the program is not a measurement of a person's disability, it is a program that determines if a person can navigate the transit system independently.

Mr. James informed the board that Easter Seals Society has endorsed that ADA Eligibility Determination Program; almost all the metropolitan cities across the US have implemented this program. In fact, many have started running this program with conditionality, which means if a user is able to ride a fixed or rail route they must do so, the user would not qualify for ADA Dial-a-Ride. Ms. Ketcherside explained Valley Metro is being encouraged to use the program by the Federal Governments Transit Administration and the Easter Seals Society.

Ms. Heap asked if there will be an appeal process and concurred with Ms. Gilbert that Valley Metro will discourage people from applying for ADA Dial-a-Ride. Ms. Ketcheride answered that there is an appeals process that is made up of community members; some with disabilities. Mr. James commented that a neutral third party medical contractor will be determining a person's ADA eligibility. Valley Metro staff will also be able to weigh in on the decision made by the medical contractor.

Ms. Berumen asked about Valley Metro's outreach and education process. Ms. Ketcherside explained that Valley Metro staff is out in the community talking to residents, groups, and boards about the ADA Eligibility Determination Program. A Webinar will take place on Valley Metro's Web page, staff is also reaching out to social service agencies, medical professionals, and anyone who reaches out to the disabled community. Mr. James explained travel training will take place for users who are able to ride a fixed or rail route. Training will educate users where and how to catch those modes of transportation in a controlled setting that allows the user to practice multiple times getting on or off the vehicle and how to use the kiosk. Valley Metro staff can also visit the user if needed to assist in planning their trip from their doorway to the fixed or rail route.

Mr. Wisner explained that there is evidence that users like to have more flexibility over their transportation instead of being solely dependent on Dial-a-Ride, he explained that in September 2010 more alternative ride trips were logged then Dial-a-Ride trips.

Mr. James explained that this change is the first step to regionalize the paratransit system in the Valley, currently there are seven different paratransit operators in Maricopa County; in order for someone to travel from Glendale to Mesa it would take at least three vehicle transfers and a minimum of three hours to arrive. He further explained that in order to create a regional paratransit (much like East Valley Dial-a-Ride) system Valley Metro had to first change its processes in determining ADA eligibility.

Mr. May thanked Valley Metro for their presentation on the ADA Eligibility Determination Program. He acknowledged that the board will be watching how the program will impact Mesa residents. Ms. Gilbert expressed her opinion on knowing about this program sooner, perhaps the board could have lead a discussion with Mesa residents regarding the proposed changes. She proposed that Mr. James share any upcoming news or changes and to have a presentation on the impacts, results and conclusions this program is having after a few months. Mr. James invited the board to the Valley Metro Mobility Center Open House on Wednesday, February 23, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. (4600 E. Washington, Phoenix).

- 5. Discuss and provide direction on the scope, goals and objectives of the Ad Hoc Project Teams.

Ms. Berumen explained that quorum for the Ad Hoc teams has been difficult to attain as of late. She proposed that the board assign board members to Ad Hoc teams at tonight's meeting. Any board member can attend an Ad Hoc meeting but one must be a member of the team to vote on agenda items.

Community and Education

Rory Gilbert
Denise Heap
Frank Johnson
Wayne Manske

Outreach and Communication

James May

Disabilities and Veterans

Denise Heap
Frank Johnson

Mr. May asked the board to inform staff which Ad Hoc Team they would like to serve on by end of business Monday, January 31.

6. Hear an update, discuss and provide direction on items presented by the:

a. Ad Hoc Community and Education Project Team

- Give an update on the creation of an anti-harassment, non-discrimination ordinance for the City of Mesa

Ms. Heap reported that the team has not made any progress on the ordinance but has a tentative date to hear a presentation by Bill Strauss from the Arizona Anti Defamation League.

- Give an update on best practices for community response to hate crimes and assessing Mesa's response

1. Panel presentation on current status of hate crimes on March 23, 2010

Ms. Gilbert reported that the team has reviewed possible questions for the panel to discuss. Ms. Heap reported that she was able to find someone willing to tape the event.

Ms. Gilbert asked about funding and explained that the Healing Racism organization has a fund with the Maricopa Foundation.

2. Healing Communities: A Day-Long Exploration of Perspectives' to be held Saturday, March 26, 2011, 8am – 4pm, is an event designed to create opportunities for safe and civil conversations about differences within the community.

Ms. Gilbert reported that the HRAB members will be table leaders.

- Give an update on creating and implementing a way to honor Mesa veterans returning from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars

Mr. May reported to the board that a draft letter was created and inserted in the board packets for review.

- Review letter submitted to the Mayor and Council on the recommendation of the Human Relations Advisory Board on honoring Mesa veterans.

Mr. May asked for input from the board on any changes or corrections. Mr. May is prepared to sign when slight revisions are made.

b. Ad Hoc Marketing Strategies Project Team

- Give an update on the progress made on logo, brochure, and Web

Ms. Howard reported that the team would like to have input on the brochure. Mr. May asked if a standard font and font size can be decided. Ms. Howard also reported that the team would like to add links to the HRAB Web page. She reported that the Public Information Office does not want to veer from the brand already established for the City and therefore the board cannot create a logo.

Ms. Berumen reported that business cards cannot be purchased for the board according to the Mayor's Office. Ms. Howard informed the board that there was discussion about having a generic Diversity Office business card, listing the Diversity Office phone number and email address. The board agreed that a generic business card would be very helpful.

- Give an update on the progress made on updating and adding to the emerging community list.

No updates were given.

7. Discuss and provide direction on board and committee meeting attendance.

Agenda items was discussed and addressed in agenda item number five.

8. Discuss and provide direction on the Regional Human Relations Advisory Board and Committee's Unity Walk to be held on February 5, 2011 at Tempe Town Lake.

Flyers were inserted inside the board packets. Ms. Berumen offered to find accommodations for board members who would like to attend but cannot walk.

9. Discuss and provide direction on the Human Relations Advisory Board's participation in the Community Cinema's Series on January 27, 2011, 6:00 p.m. at the Mesa Arts Center.

Ms. Howard gave a brief update on the Community Cinema Series.

10. Mesa Police Department Report.

- a. Police Forums

Ms. Karen Stegenga, Mesa Police Crime Prevention Officer, informed the board that the Police Forums are going well and are being well attended. She updated the board that the Native American forum recommended training for Police Department staff to better understand Native American culture, history, and communications. The Phoenix Indian Coalition will be conducting the training so that both parties can learn about one another.

The Clergy Forum will meet on Monday, January 31.

The Hispanic Forum will meet on Monday, February 7.

Ms. Heap thanked Ms. Stegenga and the Human Rights Forum for giving the community a place to discuss what occurred at MLK.

- b. Diversity Team

Ms. Stegenga explained that the Mesa Police Department is looking to be more involved with diversity and will work closely with the Diversity Office on community issues and events. Ms. Berumen explained that Lieutenant Deanna Cantrell is looking into how the department is trained on diversity.

- c. Hate Crimes Update

Ms. Stegenga handed out the 2010 Hate Crime Summary that was sent to the FBI. Ms. Stegenga offered to give a more complete explanation of the seven crimes that were reported as Hate/Bias Crimes if needed.

Ms. Hinds-Peterson asked if the report was divided between youth and adult crime. Ms. Stegenga explained that the incidents of Hate Crimes had a more adult tone associated with the crime as opposed to youth but the report does not specify age.

Ms. Gilbert asked if the Police Department is aware of the hate groups that have made Mesa their home base and whether some of those groups have committed hate/bias crimes. Ms. Stegenga stated that yes, the department is well aware of hate groups in Mesa and offered to have a member of the Police Gang Unit present to the board. Ms. Gilbert suggested that the Gang Unit address how many gangs in Mesa are perpetrating hate/bias crimes. Ms. Berumen offered to add the Gang Unit to the April HRAB agenda.

11. Diversity Officer's Report:

- a. Hear an update on the Diversity Office and Neighborhood Outreach Office, Fair Housing and Human Services activities.

Ms. Berumen informed the board that her responsibilities have grown yet again to include the Diversity Office, the Neighborhood Outreach Office, Fair Housing, Human Services Office and now Acting Housing Director.

Ms. Berumen announced that Ms. Brandy Howard will be the main contact for the board.

Ms. Berumen updated the board on Neighborhood Outreach's Building Strong Neighborhoods event that took place on January 18, in District 5.

Ms. Berumen informed the board that Human Services and its Human Services Advisory Board has begun receiving applications from prospective grantees for its ABC Program and General Fund Grants.

Ms. Berumen also explained about the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding processes of the Housing Advisory Board that will take place in the coming month.

Ms. Berumen expressed her excitement about the Police Departments Diversity Team; there are roughly 20 members on the team comprised of every level of law enforcement. She suggested that the board exchange with the Police Diversity Team. Ms. Gilbert agreed with Ms. Berumen's excitement about working with the Police Department.

12. Report on conferences and/or meetings attended.

No reports were given.

13. Scheduling of meetings, future agenda items, and general information.

Ms. Berumen asked the board to approve the HRAB and Ad Hoc calendars, also to decide next month's agenda items.

Mr. May asked about the Utah Compact and if there is research that can be accomplished between now and when the topic is added as an agenda item. Ms. Berumen explained that research can be conducted by one of the Ad Hoc teams. Ms. Heap stated that she had started research on immigration as it relates to the Utah Compact.

Ms. Berumen suggested that the board wait for the Utah Compact to be added to the agenda and to wait for direction from Councilmember Kavanaugh before moving forward with anymore research. Ms. Gilbert asked that the agenda item read so that the board can make a decision on this topic. Ms. Heap stated that at the Ad Hoc Community and Education Project Team meeting it was decided to have the Utah Compact on its next agenda for the Ad Hoc Team. Mr. May suggested that the board do individual research on this topic to familiarize themselves and perhaps bring questions forward to Councilmember Kavanaugh.

14. Adjourn

Mr. May adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:27 p.m.

***The next regular meeting is on February 23, 2011, at 6:00 p.m.
Lower Level, City Council Chambers.***

Submitted By:


Mary Berumen,
Diversity Office Director

