

The Tacoma Commission on Disabilities
Annual Retreat
November 4, 2017
Fleet Conference Center

Present:

Todd Holloway, Roxanne Miles, Luke Byram, James Williams, Anthony Caldwell, Lori Allison, Shaw Sander, and Rebecca Parsons

Facilitator:

Sheely Mauck

Staff:

Lucas Smiraldo and Ann Martin

History

The Commission on Disabilities has developed several priorities based on previous retreats that were taken into consideration at the 2017 retreat. Several years ago, the Commission sought to have a stronger relationship between City Departments by developing a liaison model in which Commissioners would meet with various city departments and bring perspectives of the disability community into future planning. While those liaison positions still exist, several are more active than others and some committees linked to those topics do not meet regularly.

In 2016 the Commission established an ambitious list of projects which were subsequently grouped under several main headings. These heading topics were visited by the commission at their monthly meetings for regular updates. At the 2017 retreat, the Commissioners considered all of this history and projects still in progress such as the initiative to establish a Closed Captioning Resolution and the ongoing efforts to secure a dedicated taxi services for disabled residents in Tacoma.

After introductions, the Commissioners were engaged in three reflection and planning activities over the next five hours. They included:

- **PART 1: REFLECTIONS ON PRIORITIES FROM 2016 RETREAT**
- **PART 2: ESTABLISHING THREE PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD**
- **PART 3 DEVELOPING SMART GOAL SHEETS AND TASKS BASED ON SELECTED PRIORITIES**

Here were the groupings and priorities from the 2016 Retreat*:

**(See Addendum for detailed listing of 2016 action planning document.)*

Commission Action Items

Develop a relationship with OEHR to improve Commission effectiveness and influence, creating a best practice model for other cities	#2, #3, #9, #11, #12, #18, #23	Lucas - ODHR
Monitor Strategic Plan – Tacoma 2025 and foster social equity for persons with disabilities, including employment, housing and more mental health services	#7, #8, #13, #20	Lucas - ODHR
Support the completion and implementation of the ADA Transition Plan		Sandy - HR

Tasks/Projects – With established leader and ad-hoc committee

Closed Captioning	#4	Devin

Liaison – Joining, Supporting and Advising City-led initiatives or functions

Accessible Taxi – Licensing Dept	#6, #19	Krystal
Employment	#14, #15, #17	Sheryl?
Public Works	#22	
Website/IT	#24, #27	
City of Destiny Awards	#5	
Anti-Stigma	#10, #16	JoAnn

- **PART 1: REFLECTIONS ON PRIORITIES FROM 2016 RETREAT**

Commissioners reflected on the two collective priorities from the 2016 retreat (This included numerous topics under each umbrella) and shared comments on what went well along with the challenges and concerns.

Based on this work, the commissioners set four priorities for 2018 which created the topics for an action plan for the coming year.

The two reflection categories were:

I. MONITOR STRATEGIC PLAN AND FOSTER SOCIAL EQUITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

II. DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH OEHR TO IMPROVE COMMISSION EFFECTIVENESS

The brainstorm and discussions led to the following reflections by the Commissioners:

I. MONITOR STRATEGIC PLAN AND FOSTER SOCIAL EQUITY FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Going well:

- Better access to OEHR
- Plan completed, shared with community, discussion opened with many City departments and staff during process
- Linked our awards with City of Destiny awards because of Luke

Challenges:

- Not enough emphasis on disability in OEHR report
- No clear measures being reported out (complaints, program impacts on different populations.
- Still don't know who is advancing the plan and our role to help move Human Service goals
- Communications/Progress has stopped without city accountability to act/do regarding what strategic plan
- Still a complaint driven system and not seeing movement
- Community doesn't know enough about the strategic plan or the Commission. Need to raise awareness.
- Communication committee disbanded.
- Mandate quarterly updates to us.

- Formal request to learn who is responsible for strategic goals not being met.
- Propose our own strategic goal actions/tasks to city proactively and get feedback on goals.
- Share state of plan with other advocacy groups so that can get involved and realize COD can help.
- Further develop resource list for OEHR's use
- Captions in public facilities
- ADA enforcement
- Commissioner assignments to liaison with city departments
 - a) No structure to ensure these continue
 - b) Some departments are responsive but others aren't (no system, dependent on individuals)
 - c) Roles aren't defined
 - What committee does
 - Who leads it
 - What is city liaison's role?
 - What is city department role?

II. DEVELOP RELATIONSHIPS WITH OEHR TO IMPROVE COMMISSION EFFECTIVENESS

What is going well

- Lucas keeping the commission up to date. Ease of access to him. Replies quickly.
- Working together to nominate people with disabilities for city of Destiny Awards
- Working together to plan paid internships for people with disabilities
- Lori is providing a report on city website accessibility
- Good communication with Lucas/OEHR. He now has greater knowledge and sensitivity.
- Conduit to others in City of Tacoma
- Forwarding emails to all of us.
- Feel like we are able to educate and influence equity agenda/break down old walls.

Challenges

- Accessible taxi service
- Closed captioning in public facilities
- Commission hasn't heard from OEHR on employment concerns
- Still need to be able to reach more departments/issues address better through OEHR
- Still not an ideal meeting location for accessibility (parking, bus, wifi. Doors, routes, size CART)

- Difficulty scheduling speakers, advancing agenda on priority issues
- Bit strong enough collaboration with the county on joint issues
- Stronger follow up role with city personnel including:
 - a. ADA Transition Plan
 - b. Parking
 - c. Closed Captioning

OEHR look for committees/projects to add commissioners to

Can we add a disclaimer? “no discussion or decision on emails so can share some information that need not be restricted (ie. An article)

Work with OEHR on recruitment and marketing plan to reach broader audience on equity issues

- **PART 2: ESTABLISHING THREE PRIORITIES MOVING FORWARD**

Based on the Commissioners brainstorms, reflections and input, the Retreat Facilitator, Sheely Mauck, and OEHR staff, Lucas Smiraldo, grouped the responses into four main topic areas including an “open” category that a variety of concerns. They priority areas were:

- ✓ **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS/PARTNERSHIP BUILDING**
- ✓ **INTERNAL COMMISSION EFFECTIVENESS**
- ✓ **LIAISON (BOTH TO COMMISSION AND COMMISSION TO CITY DEPARTMENT’S ROLE)**
- ✓ **OPEN CATEGORY**

- **PART 3 DEVELOPING SMART GOAL SHEETS AND TASKS BASED ON SELECTED PRIORITIES**

The Commissioners built their measurable SMART Plans under these topic areas. Those plans reflect beginning steps and will be reviewed and refined based on further discussion and input from Commissioners (including those absent from the retreat) and OEHR staff and leadership.

The initial goals and supporting tasks are documented below:

1. EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS/PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

SMART PLAN

GOAL

- Review policies regarding disabilities in the city of Tacoma/Pierce County by October of 2018. Seek data/information around City of Tacoma facilities, website and websites of state and federal governments.
- Primary Commissioner Responsible for Goal: TBD
- Secondary Commissioner Responsible: Lori Allison

Tasks:

- Generate contract list (i.e. United Way, City of Tacoma, Pierce County Leader)
- Provide monthly report to Commission.

GOAL

Reach out to Public/External Agencies and neighborhood communities. Inform and education about services offered. Reach out through other agencies including non-profits and neighborhood groups about services offered.

Tasks

Research and locate responsible agencies and policies on line. Support: Anthony on monthly basis.

2. INTERNAL COMMISSION EFFECTIVENESS

SMART PLAN

Goal:

- A. Strategize a platform to communicate with each other that is compliant with public access

Primary Commissioner Responsible: Todd

Secondary Commissioner Responsible: Rebecca Parson

Tasks:

Determine what platform is universally accessible and acceptable by the the OEHR. We support google groups.

Responsible: Lucas Support Todd/Commission

Assign the existing orientation policy for ethics to new members prior to using publication, accessible documents.

Responsible: Todd Support: Rebecca

Goal:

- B. We will plan meetings 1 or more months in advance. Lucas will find out if we can use public comment-able Google docs to draft agendas and Todd will continue to take the lead in agenda planning. We will start using the new method in January of 2018. The commission will vote on the new agenda planning method at its December 2017 meeting,**

Primary Commissioner Responsible: Todd

Secondary Commissioner Responsible: Rebecca

Tasks:

- Lucas to ask Media/Communications if Commission can plan meetings using Google Docs that the public can comment on, but only commissioners and Lucas can edit.
- Commission to vote on the new agenda planning method
- Commission to start planning 2018 agenda using new method. Lucas will send Google doc to commissioners.

3. LIAISON (BOTH TO COMMISSION AND COMMISSION TO CITY DEPARTMENT'S ROLE)

SMART PLAN

- A. Goal: Commission Liaison role—more information flow internally and goal updates.**

Tasks:

- Follow up on COD goals—previous work, and changes—further developments.
- Define community liaison report goals—what's needed, what info needs disseminating.
- Develop metrics for goal monitoring.
- Define what statistics are relevant.

- B. Define roles of commissioners and liaisons along with Commissioner and chair with OEHR**

Primary Commissioner Responsible: TBD

Secondary Commissioner James Williams

Tasks

- Review job descriptions and lines of authority and communications and define relations with other departments and agencies.
- Contact person for public comments and complaints
- Develop and arrange leadership training for commissioners eg. Public speaking, group leading and report writing.

4. OPEN CATEGORY

SMART PLAN

GOAL

- **To actively intervene by taking action in citizen issues involving outside agencies brought to the attention of the Commission.**
- Primary Commissioner Responsible for Goal: Chair Holloway
- Secondary Commissioner Responsible: Vice Chair Miles

Tasks:

- Review bylaws and protocol/procedure on writing letters
- Determine individual/group to write letter and determine/research proper enforcement agency
- Bring letter to commission and authorize chair to sign and send.
- Update brochure and draft letter to enforcement agency about commission purpose, support
- Send/deliver brochure/letter to agencies
- Schedule meeting/talk with licensing about educational tool and when can be distributed.
- Develop educational tool (check list)

GOAL

- **For the Commission to ensure the fulfillment of the City's ADA Transition Plan by monitoring annual improvements toward full compliance with plan.**

Tasks:

- Contact HR/Sandy to schedule section by section review dates and flowchart of who is responsible for each task in the plan
- Annual updates on improvements made to the commission to commence each April (Make part of annual program before commission)

Conclusion: The Commissioners adjourned at 3 PM after a brief reflection and will continue to refine their plan and priorities at the next Commission meeting

Addendum 1: Detailed Action Plan from 2016 Retreat

Question#	Future - 2025	Current	Action Planning
#1	Persons with disabilities are less isolated, people feel empowered.	Less isolated – Orgs helping but many service gaps. Partners café just beginning. Some efforts to roll back efforts. Stagnation.	Connect better with our service providers (partners café, etc. COD, CFI, Transportation).
#2	Affordability & accessibility: COT seen as #1 in the USA.	COD has people w/ diff. disabilities. Better. We are expanding.	Explore relationship (marriage) with OEHR & Human Rights Commission and COD (Build strong partnership)
#3	COD composed of people with different kinds of disabilities.	COD has people w/ diff. disabilities. Good start. More alignment.	Look at "Best Practices"/on CODs from other jurisdictions. Application of programs and priority topics/focus areas.
#4	Full acknowledge of COD as a partner with OEHR; the strengths they bring	Acknowledge of COD as partner with OEHR/ Self Advocacy. We now can refer for support more effectively. Resources are well represented in commission.	Make decision on closed captioning policy.
#5	Persons with disabilities know/ implement self-advocacy.	Acknowledge of COD as partner with OEHR/ Self Advocacy. We now can refer for support more effectively. Resources are well represented in commission.	City events + recognition committee: City of Destiny Awards
#6	Transportation - accessible taxi.		Accessible transportation/one TAXI (Pierce Transit efforts) (uber?)
#7	COD part of the city reaching the Tacoma 2025 goals (An all inclusive city)		Research laws on housing --> for persons with disabilities/accessible apartments. (eg. Vacant for 3 months + who is on the waiting list)

#8	COD seen as an active participant in removing the unemployment rate & the stigma of mental illness.	System change: on verge of change. Aligning behavioral health and employment resources.	Tacoma 2025 --> Human Services initiatives: COD get involved with City's existing initiatives with an eye on persons with disabilities. (eg. NCS Dept) "Baking" together. (eg. New proposed youth drop in venter homelss shelter)
#9	Not only a role model, but known for constantly looking for best practices.	Best practices: Already doing this locally but not in state.	Dec, 2016 - Tool to share.
#10	Recognize people for their ABILITIES (not their disabilities). We have a culture that recognizes abilities. (language & orientation)	Abilities: As commission doing well but need to build more equity lens. Equal access. Not best language. Lots of derogatory terms.	Make recreation more accessible/ Tacoma parks
#11	Single office in the City completely dedicated to accessibility issues within City Hall - In next 10 years, the COD is working with city on risk management, budget to fund these positions. One staff member in each dept focused on issues for persons with disabilities. The COD is part of an INTEGRATED SYSTEM. A different way of how the city is doing business. A "compliance team" - centralized to help navigate.	Single office: At just 1%, far to go, not budgeted, look at models, embrace with OEHR more, mobilize within existing model in our City, City Manager has stronger model cc consistency.	
#12	COD in cooperation w/ OEHR would be actively involved & viewed as a part of the OEHR framework (completely aligned) SEE VIDEO: 2 persons have disabilities that are not visible. Reached full goal of inclusion	OEHR: Much potential if we activate OEHR goals	

#13	The City has accomplished 2025 goals: housing, employment & income. Inequalities have been resolved		
#14	Eliminate barriers with employment (eg. Driver license not needed)	Eliminate barriers: 40% there, good intent but City just realizing the challenges, City not sure how to make these changes, people need more education about issues.	
#15	NEOGOV (for jobs): better platform to more easily adjust & be upgraded for persons with disabilities.	NEOGOV: Doesn't integrate with screen readers, not good alignment.	
#16	Continue to educate, advice: community/public is more accepting of persons w/disabilities		
#17	Ergonomic/physical therapy on the job + psychiatry recognize importance	Some in place but work still needs to be done.	
#18	Changed/ improved function between commission + city	Recognized but not fully implemented.	
#19	People with disability barriers w/ transportation does not exist ie., affordable, accessible (taxi)	2 grants + 1/10 of 1% of sales tax – moving in the direction	
#20	Expansion of mental health services	Study completed, major needs identified, lack of human resources + finance.	
#21	Part of sales tax diverted (appropriate funding) for programs related to disability	Currently for taxis, needs to be expanded to other programs.	
#22	Sidewalks accessible/ infrastructure accessible	Implementing sidewalk infrastructure but work still needs to be done	
#23	Role model for other cities	Follow cities up north (eastside) ie. Issaquah, Redmond	

#24	All website/media supports people w/disabilities, ie. Images, closed caption, etc. Plain talk ADA 508 compliance	Proposal drafted for closed-caption, website is accessible + application process improved. More improvements needed	
#25	More availability for accessible housing	Some, but needs improvement. Non-disabled have access to assessable housing that they don't need, impeding people w/ disabilities to have access	
#26	Closer relationship (robust system in place); w/organizations regarding disability	Currently connections w/ DOL, CFI but needs more thru ie. Disabilities Rights of WA, NW ADA Center, JAN	
#27	Software	Accommodations documentation currently hard copy – not online program w/ a robust interactive process.	