

**WEST HOLLYWOOD
DISABILITIES ADVISORY BOARD
MINUTES
OCTOBER 24, 2004**

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Cherner called the meeting to order at 6:37 pm.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Norman Cherner, Jordan Chinich, Debra Chodash, Phyllis Coto, Bryan Dahlgren, Suzanne Dietrich, Joel Ring, and Ann Semonco

ALSO PRESENT: Staff Liaisons Leslie Isenberg, Daphne Dennis and Kim Patterson

4. WELCOME BY MAYOR JOHN DURAN:

Mayor Duran thanked the DAB for pursuing the initiation of closed captioning, an example of the goals that the Board is tasked to achieve.

5. PERFORMANCE BY THE HI-TOPS:

The Speech and Language Development Center's performing group, The Hi-Tops, presented three numbers to an appreciative audience.

6. APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda of October 27, 2004 was approved.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The minutes of the September 22, 2004 meeting were approved.

8. OPENING REMARKS OF BOARD CHAIR:

Chairperson Cherner welcomed the audience, both in the auditorium and those watching on TV, and thanked the Board for their contributions during the past year.

9. BOARD MEMBER INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS:

Each member of the Board introduced themselves and stated their goals and interests.

10.AWARDS PRESENTATIONS:

Disability Awareness Month awards were given to Deyanire Villachica, Trader Joe's, and Good Neighbors.

11.SPECIAL PRESENTATION:

Sandy Eisenberg was presented with a commendation from the City Council.

12. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Yola Dore, former DAB member, encouraged the audience to vote in the upcoming elections.

Michael Arrigo, former DAB member, addressed the Board about a new PBS show entitled "Disabilities Today". He encouraged members to call their local PBS station and encourage them to air the show locally.

13. DISABILITY SPECIALIST COMMENTS:

Inna Khariton, (formerly Ms. Epshteyn), Disability Specialist, outlined the services that her office provides to the disabled who are between 18 & 60 years old: information and referral, case management, counseling, and advocacy with entitlement programs. She also coordinates a social club for the disabled. Her office hours are Monday-Thursday 8:30 am – 5 pm and Friday 8:30 am – 3:30 pm.

NEW BUSINESS:

14. CITY OF HOPE'S POSITIVE IMAGE PROGRAM:

Janine McDonough, Founder and Director of Positive Image, described the City of Hope program that she established to enhance the quality of life for cancer survivors. They provide hair replacement, skin care, and other invaluable services free of charge for both men and women.

15. COUNTY REGISTRAR'S OFFICE:

Eleanor Wright, Election Assistant for Voters with Special Needs for the County Registrar's Office, explained the various services that are provided to disabled voters, including absentee ballots, permanent absentee ballots, ink-a-vote, and touch screen voting. She also distributed the "Voting is Your Right" pamphlet.

16. ITEMS FROM STAFF:

- A. NEW DISABILITIES BROCHURE:** Ms. Isenberg announced the publication of the new Disabilities brochure that lists the various services provided to the City's disabled community.

- B. REPORT ON DISABILITY MENTORING DAY:** Ms. Isenberg reported on the City's participation in National Disability Mentoring Day, and introduced two mentees who reported on the successful day. Ms. Semonco also reported on her experience as a mentor at a local elementary school.

17. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Mr. Aguado acknowledged the hidden disabilities in the community, including learning and emotional, that need to continue to be addressed.

Ms. Coto spoke about Project Return: the Next Step, an organization for mental health consumers, of which she is the current president. She also would like to see a newsletter for the disabled community.

Mr. Chinich thanked all who came to the DAB meeting.

Ms. Chodash described how her life has changed since learning about the DAB on TV and subsequently joining the Board.

Mr. Ring inquired about the number of participants at this year's Mentoring Day. Ms. Isenberg indicated that there were only three participants, in part because previous school participation wasn't possible this year, but she stressed there was definitely quality over quantity. Mr. Ring also stated that the new brochure looks fabulous, and suggested that the next edition include Life Alert, the medical alert program at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, as well as to cross-

reference recreational activities for the disabled from the City's Recreation brochure.

Ms. Dietrich gave a special thanks to Janine McDonough who helped her immensely, to former DAB members Yola Dore and Michael Arrigo, and to the City staff.

Mr. Dahlgren spoke about the annual congress of the Boards and Commissions he recently attended. He said he learned a great deal about the work of the City's Boards and Commissions and hoped that tonight's meeting helped provide information as to the important work of the Disabilities Advisory Board.

Vice-Chair Semonco encouraged people who have complaints about life in West Hollywood to bring them to their meetings, and if people have complaints about government to vote.

Chairperson Cherner announced the Telephone Access Program of the California Public Utilities Company which provides special phones for the disabled free of charge through their Burbank office. He looks forward to working together with the DAB in the coming year.

18. PUBLIC COMMENT:

There was no additional public comment.

19. ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Cherner adjourned the Disabilities Advisory Board meeting at 8:37 p.m. The November meeting will be held a week earlier than usual due to the Thanksgiving holiday weekend. The November meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 17 at 6:30 p.m. in the Rent Stabilization Division Conference Room on the first floor of City Hall.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wm C", is located at the bottom of the page.

Norman Cherner,
CHAIRPERSON