



ADA Advisory Committee
Thursday, September 26, 2024 @ 3:00 PM
Evanston Public Library / Zoom

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Members present: Murphy Monroe, Jack Kleisner, Julia Pantoga, Adrienne Allen, Jim Johnson, Mark Karlin

Guests: Carlos Hranicka, Fred Wittenberg, Alice Eakes, John Kapetan, Alex Harrison, Patrick Hughes

Staff present: Caroline McCraw (Digital Services Specialist), Lara Biggs (Capital Planning and Engineering Bureau Chief), Audrey Thompson (Director of Parks & Recreation), Lauren Ruiz (Inclusion & Accessibility Division Manager)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The July 25 minutes were approved by Jack Kleisner and Julia Pantoga.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments.

4. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

Guest speakers

- Evanston website accessibility: overview of upcoming project and group discussion. See discussion questions provided in meeting packet.
 - Top concerns related to website accessibility included:
 - The vast number of PDFs included on the City website. Specialized, expensive equipment is needed for screen readers to access these so they are inaccessible for many with low vision/who are blind.
 - Requests were made to include individuals with disabilities in testing for accessibility
 - Being able to identify what accommodations you need for the website and adjusting these settings/toolkits needed for users
 - Accessibility for people who do not use keyboards

- "Memory reminders" to aide users in remembering steps or where they are in the process when using the website
- Caroline mentioned the City's priority over making current info accessible first and the difference between communicating and storage
- A visitor suggested a social event to bring together the disability community and the coordinators of the website to ensure experiences are shared and connections are made
- A member noted that many seniors do not access the website or are unfamiliar with various tools used related to technology. Ensuring other communication systems are in place for this population was requested.
- A visitor suggested checking in with other municipalities about their website accessibility, digital services, finding a prototype and the best in class standards were discussed.
- Caroline plans to visit with the Committee again in about 6 months when the City's process is further along. Communication will continue via the ADA Coordinator and engagement with all who are interested.
- Evanston's capital improvement program: ADA budget/questions. See memo provided in meeting packet. See attached presentation from Lara. The Committee expressed the importance of their involvement in Capital Improvement Projects, need involvement from the disability community as early as possible in the processes.
- Evanston dog beach updates/questions. See memo provided in meeting packet. See attached presentation from Lara. Lara estimated that the dog beach would be rebid this winter.

Review of new inquiries/grievances: these updates were postponed to the next meeting due to timing.

- Fountain Square flower pot placement
- Sidewalk blocked at 1400 Greenleaf
- Lack of accessible parking at 1426 Oak Street
- Sand barrier by South Blvd Beach
- Unsafe platforms during construction by Jewel on Chicago Ave
- Feedback about Evanston's role in ensuring accessibility at special events

Other items

- Upcoming events:
 - Emergency Preparedness Fair Sept. 28 at Robert Crown Community Center
- Community resources:
 - Sharing is Caring: see flyer included with meeting packet. Support group run by residents with disabilities, they are putting together a list of topics to be covered and speakers to invite.
 - Evanston ADA/Disability Services resource: Service Animals pamphlet: this update was postponed until the next meeting.
- Next meeting: October 24 at **Levy Senior Center, Locust Room**

5. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE

- A member shared information about an upcoming presentation she was leading about travelling with a disability.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:46 PM.