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To: Supervisor Nora Vargas, Chairwoman
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Supervisor Joel Anderson
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From: Dr. Karolyn Smith, Chair, Committee for Persons with Disabilities

Annual Report of the San Diego County Committee for Persons with Disabilities

Article III.n. of the San Diego County Code of Administrative Ordinances established the San Diego County Committee for Persons with Disabilities as a community advisory group to promote the policy of and to provide an open forum for discussion and action for the County of San Diego to assure the self-determination of persons with disabilities; provide persons with disabilities with the resources and educational services necessary to enable them to achieve their fullest potential; and to provide them with an equal opportunity to participate fully in the social and economic benefits of our society.

The Committee has the responsibility to:

- Study and evaluate County Charter provisions, ordinances, policies and proposed policies, to determine their implication for persons with disabilities.
- Study areas of concern as they pertain to the lives and needs of persons with disabilities. These may include, but are not limited to coordination of Client Support Systems, Health, Education, Employment, Recreation, Housing, Transportation and Architectural Barriers Safety Related Matters.
- Conduct workshops for County personnel and community groups.
- Participate in the conduct of public hearings dealing with matters related to persons with disabilities.
- Utilize County resources and facilities to accumulate information for the purpose of furthering the objectives of this Committee.
- Prepare and disseminate information of matters related to discrimination and prejudice.
- Formulate programs or legislation to promote and insure independence, equal rights and opportunities for all persons with disabilities.
- Provide liaison and assistance to County or citizen groups interested in the problems facing persons with disabilities.
- Initiate application for grants from all levels of government and private sources for carrying out the purposes of the Committee.
- Serve as the County's advisory committee of Section 503 and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and related rehabilitation matters.

Please find attached the Annual Report of the San Diego County Committee for Persons with Disabilities for the fiscal year from July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 in accordance with SEC. 84.85. ANNUAL REPORTS of ARTICLE III.n. in the San Diego County Code of Administrative Ordinances.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Committee Chair or Vice Chair.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dr. Karolyn Smith
Chair, Committee for Persons with Disabilities
karolynsmith@hotmail.com

San Diego County Committee for Persons with Disabilities Annual Report to County of San Diego Board of Supervisors

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Introduction

Article III of the San Diego County Code of Administrative Ordinances states that the Committee for Persons with Disabilities (CPD), a Board of Supervisors-appointed community advisory group, exists to assure the self determination of persons with disabilities; provide persons with disabilities with the resources and educational services necessary to enable them to achieve their fullest potential; and to provide them with an equal opportunity to participate fully in the social and economic benefits to our society.

Department Presentations to the Committee

Sheriff's ADA Unit Overview

Speaker: Sheriff Wiesner - 24+years of service with Sheriffs.

ADA Unit consists of a staff of five. The unit is tasked with the oversight of policies, procedures and trainings for the department. Sheriff Wiesner is the point of contact for the unit.

Blue Envelope Program

Speaker: Lt. Nathan Rowley, Sheriff's Department

Speaker presented to the committee on the new Blue Envelope Program on behalf of the Sheriff's Department, including the new PSA video and examples of free products used in the program.

- The committee recommended that the department partner with the VA to expand this program and understand additional areas of opportunity with the veteran population.
- The committee asked for more information on access to ASL interpreters for deputies in the field, the ADA Unit from the Sheriff's department explained their current interpreter contracts and efforts to increase access.
- The committee made recommendations regarding marketing materials to carefully consider their use of dogs in order to promote service animal awareness and familiarity.

Facility Security and Signage

Speakers: Paul Bonanno, Sheriff's Department and Boutros Chihwaro, Facilities

At the County Administrative Center, the Sheriff's Deputies experienced an influx of individuals bringing pets (not service animals) into the building to conduct business. To address this, they researched signage to communicate with the public. County Communications created a new sign to present to the Committee for input, this sign will be used at County properties.

Committee Recommendations:

- Add the word "Pet" at the beginning of the note at the bottom in reference to leash laws
- Use "Service Animals" rather than "Assistance Animals"
- Sheriff Deputies should become familiar with the new Court Services policy as a standard
 - o Deputy Weissner explained that the new policy is through the State of California and is different than County policies
- Change "inoculations" to "rabies"
- Confirm font and sizing for easy reading

Options to Streamline Housing

Speaker: Sara Thornburgh, Planning and Development Services

Speaker presented on the Streamlining Affordable and Attainable Housing services as directed by the Board of Supervisors. There are three program designs, today they are focused on the Senior and Assisted Living Housing program for the unincorporated areas and are seeking input from the committee.

Committee feedback:

- Consider fire and flood insurance costs and requirements in east county/unincorporated areas
- Consider egress access for evacuation routes for both humans and livestock
- Combine affordable and accessible for all programs
- This program is geared towards seniors, consider incorporating younger adults living with disabilities as well
- Will there be a separate program for disabled veterans or how will that population be included.

IHSS Provider Information

Guest Speakers: Julie Lara and Wendy Contreras, In Home Support Services (IHSS)

Speaker presented an overview of the IHSS program: mission, services, eligibility, clients, application process, etc. as well as the accommodation process during intake and those are recorded in the client's file for future providers.

Committee feedback:

- Veterans receiving disability benefits are precluded from IHSS program because the disability income raises them above the IHSS income limits. How can they overcome that gap? (Income limits are based on Medi-Cal requirements and the County cannot supersede this).
- How can non-IHSS individuals, such as Veterans, access the Public Authority registry to find providers? At this time, it is only available to IHSS clients.
- How can a client receive a phone call following an application if a phone call was requested rather than a letter. This is a request that can be indicated on the paper application or during a phone intake.
- How is client-specific information documented and shared with the next provider?
 - o It is supposed to be documented by the social worker and new case documents should be reviewed by providers.

Disaster Relief for People with Disabilities

Guest Speaker: Daniel Vasquez, Office of Emergency Services

Speaker presented on a Board Letter requesting a report on current and future capabilities and response of Emergency Services. He reviewed the request from the board, the outreach strategy, focus areas and a draft timeline of activities.

Committee feedback:

- Individuals in rural areas are excluded from some County programs based on index maps, the committee recommends that the OES partner with community planning groups in the rural areas.
- Keep an eye on legacy systems in rural areas to update to more modern systems.
- Provide phone numbers in addition to email contacts for the survey.
- Include day of the week when providing timelines.
- Make survey accessible through phone in addition to online.
- Share information with other stakeholders with resources.
- In the future, keep links open for those in need of resources to track need beyond just meeting FEMA numbers.

- Outreach with community locations such as libraries, VA, American Legion, events, community centers, voting centers, etc.
- Craft exemptions for funding opportunities for those with extraordinary/different circumstances.
- Utilize Facebook pages of the community planning groups to help communicate with rural populations.

Speaker from the **Sheriff's Department** provided an update related to CPAP machine accessibility and organizational updates to the department.

Live Well Conference and School Summit 2024

Guest Speaker: Susana Marfil, LiveWell San Diego

Speaker presented an overview of the Conference in November and options for the committee to participate. The committee will not officially host a session this year, but individual members are invited to submit proposals (i.e. a panel to discuss impact of partnerships the Committee has made, what does accommodation look like). The Committee could host a Connection Hub table or provide input to the LiveWell team on accessibility.

District Attorney's Office

Guest Speaker: Marla Kingkade, District Attorney's Office

Speaker came to discuss future collaboration with the committee on training topics for training. The committee is working on a list of invisible disabilities that they will share once complete and agreed to participate in training opportunities, including videos to share their experiences. The committee recommended that the DA Office partner with San Diego County CERT to be connected with the hearing-impaired community.

Annual Report on Accessibility Enhancements

Guest Speaker: Todd Hood, Ethics, Compliance and Labor Standards

The Board of Supervisors directed the County CAO to develop an annual report on Accessibility Enhancements. Speaker presented an overview of the draft report in review for approval.

Areas Addressed by the Committee

- Updates to the Administrative Code - Boards, Commissions and Committees (BCC)
Feedback from the committee on term limits:
 - o An accommodation allowing committee members with disabilities to attend virtually (web/teleconference) would be key to enhance recruitment, retention and participation.
 - o Support for committee member term limits is split between Committee members.
- SB 43 implementation
- Committee recommended that they send a letter to the BOS that indicates their role as an advisory committee for persons with disabilities, of the recent identified need for better coordination among all the County departments, programs and services that support people with disabilities, particularly those with behavioral health disabilities in order to enhance more effective coordination and collaboration among all the county departments, programs and community-based organizations.
- Follow up items after the District Attorney presentation in May 2023
 - o Ad campaign follow up and the changing of the pictures on the SD Elder and Adult blueprint to include a person with a service animal and a picture of a veteran
- Training for Sheriff and Police Departments so they are better able to respond to persons with disabilities
- Collaborate on communication, training and identification tools
- Committee bylaws were drafted for approval by the committee and Board of Supervisors

Activities Completed/Committee Participation

- Community Outreach - Live Well Advance Conference - November 1, 2023
- Point in Time Count - Thursday January 25, 2024
- Focus Group on Housing Blueprint - November 17, 2023
- Mandatory Ethics Training (various)
- Hosted a table at the County's Ethics Awareness Fair - March 28, 2024
- Committee member joined the County of San Diego's Behavioral Health Advisory Board
 - o Added a monthly agenda item for updates from the advisory board.
- Letter of Support for Brother Benno's Community enhancement grant application
- Letter of acknowledgment to Sheriff Martinez
- Certificate of appreciation to Rickeena Boyd-Kamei
 - o Service Recognition for completed terms with the committee
- Elected new Chair and Vice Chair
- Established 2024 priorities: Behavioral Health Services, legislation around SB-43 and CARE Court, and continuing collaboration with District Attorney and Sheriff's Department
- Recommendation for County to ensure third party contractors and partners comply with the ADA, have a dedicated ADA Coordinator and a process to request a reasonable modification
 - o This recommendation will be discussed with Department of Purchasing and Contracting for additional information and a potential presentation.
- Recommendation to keep term limits for the Committee for Persons with Disabilities