**Sacramento County Disability Advisory Commission (DAC)**

**Meeting Minutes for September 5, 2023**

**Members Present:**, Randy Hicks, Chair; Gene Lozano, Vice Chair; Isabel Arreola, Patty Gainer, Marc Laver, Kathy Sachen, Angela Talent (via Zoom w/ approval).

**Members Absent:** Jeff Gasaway, Ex-Officio; Troy Givans, Ex-Officio; Hang Nguyen, Ex-Officio; Reggie Nelson, LaTasha Richardson (participated via Zoom), Rami Zakaria, Ex-Officio.

**Guests: Richard Skaff, Executive Director, Designing Accessible Communities; Connie Arnold, Consumer Advocate; Kyra Hattix, Consumer Advocate; Sharon Duchessi, Community Advocate; Peter Mendoza, Community Advocate; Jeffery Tardaguila, DAC Physical Access Subcommittee member; Mindy Scates-Gonzales, Dept. of Personnel Services**

**Staff: Cori Stillson, Cheryl Bennett,** Disability Compliance Office (DCO).

**Call to Order and Introductions**

The Chair called the meeting to order with a quorum present. Staff took roll call of members and guests introduced themselves.

**Approval of Members’ Requests to Participate via Zoom**

**There were no requests.**

**Approval of the Minutes**

**The meeting minutes for August 1, 2023 were reviewed and approved as submitted.**

**Public Comments**

**Jeffery Tardaguila announced that October was a “no driving” month to encourage people to use public transit more.**

**Sacramento County In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) – Review Program Materials and Hear Concerns Regarding Consumer Experience**

Richard Skaff explained the basics of the IHSS program. In home caregivers are critical for the daily functioning, health and safety of many people with significant disabilities. is an important component of meeting the Olmstead Supreme Court mandate to provide services in the community and keep people from being forced into institutional settings. The lack of reasonably skilled and reliable caregivers available for hire through IHSS is a major barrier. A major factor is the low wage for IHSS workers, only $16.50 hourly compared to approximately $25 hourly with benefits working in a congregate care facility. He urged the DAC to advocate and organize with other counties to address this important issue.

Connie Arnold explained more details about the IHSS program and the administrative barriers that make it difficult to obtain a caregiver. She spoke about her personal experience as an IHSS consumer in Sacramento County. The unavailability of caregivers has caused her to leave her home and move in with her elderly parents. Covid 19 severely exacerbated the problem as caregivers were often unavailable suddenly due to contracting or being exposed to Covid. The caregiver registry frequently does not have current information about qualified caregivers available to work. The back-up system (BUPS) is virtually useless because it does not result in getting a replacement caregiver the same day. Ms. Arnold asserted that the Sacramento County IHSS Public Authority as the designated administrator of the Caregiver Registry has a duty to ensure a sufficient level of qualified care providers.

DAC members asked questions and discussed next steps. It was agreed that there should be coordination with the IHSS Advisory Committee.

**Chair’s Report**

Randy Hicks deferred his report.

**Ex-Officio Reports**

The Ex-Officio members were not present to report.

**Disability Compliance Office (DCO) Report**

Cheryl Bennett reported on participating in a disaster simulation as the Access and Functional Needs Coordinator (AFN), held in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The scenario was multiple wildfires across the County started by a suspected terrorist organization. Communication, evacuation, sheltering and other response needs were explored. The drill was performed without the online operation system typically used, to practice what might happen during a cyber attack. The AFN role has been moved organizationally from the Executive team to the Planning team which allows more opportunities for input in real time. Gene Lozano asked for an update on the Evacuation Route project. There is still a lack of information available for people who are unable to read the evacuation zone maps. Cheryl Bennett stated there will be more opportunities for input on that topic, and will follow up.

**Programs and Services Access Subcommittee Report**

Angela Talent stated the Subcommittee was still working on the draft letter to the Behavioral Health Services’ crisis response teams.

**Human Services Coordinating Council Report (HSCC)**

Randy Hicks noted that Health Services Director Timothy Lutz was a recent guest. He highlighted justice involved services of his department.

**Homeless Services and Housing Task Force Report**

Randy Hicks provided an overview of the site visit to the Safe Stay site on Florin Road designed as transitional housing for people experiencing chronic homelessness. He and Cheryl Bennett noted that most access features were in place and discussed some possible concerns with program staff. The DAC is invited for a future site visit as the program ramps up.

**Physical Access Subcommittee Report**

Gene Lozano summarized the presentation made by Director Liz Bellas regarding the accessible play area at Gibson Ranch. The final plans were revealed and members gave input on some proposed additional access features. They will be added as funding permits. Marc Laver will forward some additional input.

**Unfinished/New Business**

**There was no unfinished or new business.**

**Community Announcements**

**Members made announcements of interest to the disability community.**

**Proposed Topics for Upcoming Agenda**

**It is anticipated there will be an update from the DCO on the Request for Proposals for a consultant to evaluate the DCO, and the status of implementing the ADA Self Evaluation findings and recommendations.**

**DAC Member Comments**

**There were no additional comments.**

**Adjournment**

**It was moved (Arreola) and seconded (Talent) to adjourn the meeting. Approved unanimously.**