***Minutes of the Meeting of the Mayor’s Disability Council***

*Tuesday, October 1, 2024; 3:00PM Mayor’s Conference Rm*

**~Members Present:** Jose Morales,Natalie Alden,Barbara Brown, Alexis Gonzalez, Teona Haugabook, Ron McCauley, Dan O’Connor, Ray Pringle, Anida Pollo & Stephanie Young

**~Ad Hoc Members Present:** Megan Hyman (Brooks Rehab), Christopher Bedgood (JTA), Mia Johnson (JTA), Liz Michael (JTA), Jim Neddo (MV), Tonja Ferrell (Public Library) & Gonza Gonzague (VR)

**~Staff Members Present:** Kara Tucker, Lois Smokes, Matthew Jackson & Tereese Goodloe

**~Public Guest Present:** Tina & Dan (Jax Tours),Corey (disabled citizen), Gina (student intern – Brooks Rehab), Caleb (disabled citizen)

Meeting started at 3:00 pm by Chair Jose Morales and opened with…

* **Welcome and Introduction**
  + total 9 members present (Quorum), 7 Ad Hoc members present, and 4 Staff members present.
* **Pledge of Allegiance**
  + All in attendance
* **Parliamentarian** 
  + Read by Ray Pringle
* **Vote to Approve Minutes** 
  + MOVED BY: Ray Pringle, TO APPROVE MINUTES FROM: September 3, 2024. SECOND BY: Teona Haugabook.
* **Public Comment** (speaker cards-none)
* **Presenter** 
  + Alex Alston, Director of Sports & Entertainment
    - Plan to be a little more regular at MC meetings and in making sure we’re addressing the needs of the community in all aspects
    - Just received the list of questions this morning
      * + Sent to the Event & Operations Team to work on as soon as got them to work on.
        + Should have feedback to share via email in the next week or so.
        + States that he thinks there’s more dialog to be had, not only with himself but with JSO, JFRD and how they attack each one of their events and make sure the events are accessible.
        + Difficult to have a “one size fits all solution”, our events change locations, in-doors/outdoors so a lot of different variables to consider
        + Look at some of the answers to the questions in a lens of, it could be one question answered in 5 or 10 different ways based on the needs of the event.
        + Ask that you have an open mind when we do respond
      * *“Under promise and over deliver”* statesis one of the things he harps on with his team.
      * Commitment to always take it back and do what we can and make sure we’re involving the right people to help arrive at solutions.
      * Any event 500 or more must come through our office for permitting even though we might not be the organizer.
      * Our Permitting Processing System about to go through a transition to a new platform, questions posed are important timing wise because we can make sure we’re implementing those questions into the new system so that if it’s something that’s not being captured now we can make sure it’s put in there as something we need to take into account.

**Discussion:**

**Jose Morales** – statement to Alex, “what we bring up to you is going to be something that other groups have the same type of inquiries”

**Natalie Alden** - all the questions received have been compiled over multiple years from different people who have come to our meetings.

**Jose Morales** - asked what we can do or how can we support all 3 Sports & Entertainment, JSO, JTA to help tackle the entry and exit points at events when using ShareRide or ParaTransit

**Alex Alston** – Good news, we’re about to get a new stadium, our office, ASM, JTA are all at the table in the design planning

**Teona Haugabook** – questioned ticket prices and why charged more for accessible seats? **Alex replied**, *you should not be charged more, its illegal, If you are charged more, go to the source where you bought the ticket and find out why its higher.*

**Ray Pringle** – asked when it comes to big events is there someone that goes through to make sure everything is the way it should be set up with the accessibility where people with wheelchairs have a safe place to get in and out and when they’re waiting for the bus or transportation? **Alex replied**, *being in the Venue management for a long time I can’t tell you there is one person that goes through to map out a accessibility access to get all the way up to the seats, I don’t think that exist, I do think they take it into account to make sure things are operable and accessible but if there is a step that needs to be taken, I’m happy to talk to ASM about it*

**Kara Tucker** states for some of the “city stuff” Mack will go to make sure accessible.

**Natalie Alden** and others joined in a discussion about accessible parking, accessible terrain, accessible and safe travel paths.

**Dan O’Connor** – questioned if Alex is responsible for signage, as far as drop off locations or directional signs? **Alex replied**, *our events that we operate and manage, we do create all the signage for, those typical events like Jazz Fest, World of Nations, GA/FL so we’ll definitely be as diligent as we can and make sure we’re clear with where to go, how to get there, all those things.*

* **Presenter**
  + Betina “Tina” Sauvage, CEO Jax Tours
    - Background: Local resident over 40 years, a local Anthropologist and Historian, also A Visit Jax Ambassador
    - Culinary and History Tour of Downtown Jax
    - Mission is supporting locals
    - Wheelchair accessible/ASL interprets available
    - Part of the tour is about the Evolution of Jacksonville
    - 2 options – food tour or history tour
      * Looking to have tours available for the disabled community for free

**Dan O’Connor** – commented, “I like Free, I like History, and I like Food!” and asked if the tour was focused in Downtown, Riverside, Avondale, what kind of history, asked for a little more detail on the tours. **Tina referenced the Jax Tours brochure and replies**, *this is our Reflection Tour, focus is Downtown because there’s not a lot of foot traffic downtown but there’s a lot of businesses that suffer on the weekends, so we’ve partnered with these businesses to help bring that traffic to them. If we do just the History Tour without the food, we can do that any day, any time but it is Downtown for now. We will be opening more tours in different areas. I took about 6 months to do all the research for the downtown tours, like to be as factual for the tours so the information provided has been double-checked. But for right now it is Downtown only, we start at Morton’s by the Hyatt and then we go down to James Weldon Johnson Park, Sweet Pete’s, the Main Library, down Laura Street and end back at the Hyatt.*

* **Announcements:**
  + **Lois Smokes Birthday, September 25th**
  + **November Meeting:** Tuesday**,** November 5this Election Day, change meeting date?
    - After discussion, *Motion received to change* ***November******meeting*** *to* ***Monday, November 4th*** *by Ray Pringle, 2nd by Jose Morales.*
  + **Disabled Services** – Chief Kara Tucker
    - Holon Focus Group, flyer attached, RSVP’s already sent in
      * + *Update: vehicle has not arrived yet, so it’s cancelled, shorter time so maybe we can still go.*
    - Disability Employment Awareness Month & White Cane Safety Day (Walk for Awareness):
      * + The Walk is October 19th at Art Museum Dr.
        + starts with registration and networking at 9am
        + walk will begin at 10am, cookout at 11am,
        + starts at CIL, ends at Division of Blind Services,
        + CIL is doing the accommodation request,
        + multiple agencies supporting:

VR

DBS

CIL

Foundation Fighting Blindness

FSCJ – Vision Education Center

NFB

Florida Council of the Blind

JCB

* National Vision Awareness Month also
  + Vision Connection was Sept 28
  + Mayor’s Disability Council Meeting – Oct 1
  + Deaf Social – Oct 4
  + Deadline to register 2024 General Election – Oct 7
  + National Federation for the Blind State Convention (volunteers needed) – Oct 11-13
  + JTAC Meeting at LaVilla Center – Oct 14
  + MDC & JTAC Town Hall - Oct 15, 3:30-6pm, waiting to hear back from JTA to see who will attend
  + The Walk will officially be on Oct 19th there will be free food and CM Carlucci will be there
  + Assistive Technology Open House – Oct 22
    - Dinner with Bill – Friday, Oct. 25th at The Arc Village, starts at 5:30pm, we do have at table
    - Disability Employment Awareness Month:
      * + Proclamation for both Disability Employment Awareness and White Cane Awareness
        + Recorded Proclamations with the Mayor - trying to do something a little bit different this month with multiple events
        + After Oct 22
    - Peanut Butter Challenge – to fight hunger, all peanut butter donations go to local food pantries
    - Will start interviewing for Office Hamilton’s position soon.
  + **MDC** – Jose Morales
    - Received email from Lisa Parlapiano resigning from the Board
    - Received email from Denise Torres, asked to step down, Jose states he asked her to stay
* **Thank You –** given by Jose to Natalie Alden and Kara Tucker for their presentation(s) at the Police Academy.
* **Board Elections –** Reminder; November is elections so be on the lookout for nominations.
* **Health Forum –** Dan questioned regarding – Jose will talk about in Access to Health & Wellbeing/Adaptive Sports & Recreation Subcommittee Report.
* **Old Business:**
* **New Business:**
* **Subcommittee Reports/update (5 minutes)**
  + **LEAPSC Subcommittee – Natalie Alden**
    - A lot had to be tabled, however, will have our OGC person October 7
    - Duval Delegation – between Nov 6 – Dec 6 as Kara stated
    - If anything specific anyone feels we should be putting on our agenda, please email it
    - List of DCPS Transition Nights, if your agency wants to participate, register using contact information on the list
      * How to use AIRA App draft document:
        + Rack Cards created
        + Will share digital copy
      * Art Museum Dr: did get through city council
        + Next Step - Meet with Steve
      * Discussed putting together a calendar for next year
      * Financial Freedom Conference will start working on for next year
      * Discussion on new laws came into effect today, the plan for Homelessness
        + Whatever the City plan on this we will make sure the disabled homeless are not being left out
  + **Employment Subcommittee** – **Stephanie Young**
    - * Entrepreneurship Program – reviewed documents:
        + 8-week program course curriculum.

Request 2 tracks: 8 weeks & 16 weeks

* + - * + Concept Brief.

Request application screening tool

Question: how would this affect their benefits?

* + - * Disability Employment Awareness Month:
        + Announce Entrepreneurship Program at a City Venue.
        + Hoping program can grow into a national program.
      * Pledge Card:
        + Need ULR that house the Pledge Card
        + To PIO for approval.
        + Why Hire 1-page document (Natalie working on) to go with Pledge Card.
        + 6-question survey (Jose to create).
        + 1-page resource page on how employers can become accessible or more accessible.
      * Jax ADA website:
        + Employment Award can’t find on website.
        + Looking at/review to send feedback/edits to Kara.
        + Kara to pass feedback/edits on to get taken care of.
      * Future Agenda items:
        + Mentoring Day - Tabeling until January.
        + Panel Presentation & educational videos – Tabeling until January for further discussion.
        + Kara working with JSEB on Ch. 126 Ordinance to add Disability to that list of people that are served.
  + **Access to Health & Wellbeing/Adaptive Sports** – **Jose Morales for** **Ray Pringle**
    - Didn’t have quorum
    - Topics on Hospital & Medical Facilities Accommodations
      * + Working on accommodations issues
        + Support from City Council & Mayor’s office
      * Town Hall possibly November/December, waiting on Healthcare Symposium:
        + We don’t want to be left out of symposium.
        + Want to make sure we are the main players.
* We talked about Sunny Acres
* 2 updates just in per Kara:
  + Organizational meeting (Duval Delegation) scheduled between November 6 – December 6
  + Holon Tour for Friday, the vehicle has not arrived yet so its been cancelled.
* **Ad Hoc Reports**
  + **Career Source – Lou Anne Hasty (not present)**
  + **Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) – Rebecca Scissors (not present)**
  + **JSO – Lt. Michael Nguyen (not present)**
  + **Library/Talking Books – Tonja Ferrell** 
    - Getting a new integrated Library Systems,
      * + Some website services not available until Oct 10
* Just Introduced Books by Mail–on hold until Oct 10
* Limited on Talking Books, service has not stopped
* Still answering customer service call
* Issues with post office where people are not receiving books, working with post office on
  + **Transportation – Mia Johnson (JTA)** 
    - Mia will report back next month regarding Dan’s question about JTA hiring another Traveling Trainer.
    - Stats for September:
      * + On Time Performance (OTP) –

86.3% for pick up

92% for appointment

Ridership Riders– 21,592

Ridership Trips - 19,869

* + - Top 3 Concerns:
      * + Late
        + Booking Errors
        + Didn’t Announce
* Liz Michaels (JTA) gave updates:
  + from Ken Middleton regarding Jose’s question on accessibility walking tours, stating, *the next walking tour will be scheduled once the bus stops have been completed along the Bay Street Corridor.*
  + Liz states, we notice Ms. Kara was informed about the first tour that was held on August 14th, states anticipating the complete of the bus stops along the Bay Street Corridor some time during the 2nd quarter, January – March, of 2025. States, they will keep this council up to date with that information
  + From Donovan Calicker regardingthe questions asked in the September MDC Meeting stating, *the questions from September had been reviewed and addressed, that they have gone back, and they’ve done some follow-up on that information.*
  + Liz states*, so more to come as it relates to your questions in September.*
  + Liz states, *another request for follow-up information from Natalie about the awning at JRTC* states, *Nat Ford, CEO with JTA met with Russ Davis of JTAC and Mr. Ford is committed to exploring the options of putting up an extra awning, JTA will keep this council updated on awning #2*
  + Last update per Liz is that JTA will have representation at the MDC & JTAC Meeting.
  + **MV Transportation** – **Jim Neddo**
    - States just wanted to touch on a couple things about the Key Priorities:
      * + Had some staffing changes during September, late issues may continue through October
        + Changes within the Dispatch Team:

Address awareness

More proactive

* States he personally goes into the New Hire Training class and talk about the importance of announcing ourselves and how we announce ourselves
* We have notes to help guide us if a person has special challenges
  + Natalie suggests some type of visual cue in addition to announcing
  + Dan suggests cue cards with information
  + **VR – Gonza Gonzague** –
    - States at Art Museum location, they hired so many new people to better serve clients.
    - Jose asked Gonza to be in touch with Disabled Services Office late in the month because if we are able to do the announcement on the Entrepreneurship Program through the Employment Subcommittee, we need VR to participate in that
  + **Brooks Rehabilitation – Megan Hyman** 
    - Updates in terms of what Brooks is doing with Adaptive Sports & Recreation and Pediatric Recreation:
      * + Website was updated last year

Find weekly calendar,

Special events,

can register to volunteer

* + - * + Had a great Adaptive Water-Skiing Special Event at Camp Blanding in September – highly well attended event
        + Virtual Ride for MS 150 this coming weekend at the Baldwin Trail
* **Announcement:** Megan states, *thanks to the COJ Grant we received last year, we started a Music Ensemble, we’ve been running that for the past year and continuing with that, starting back in partnership with Jacksonville University, doing an Adaptive Music Ensemble for people with all abilities and disabilities, that will be continuing on Wednesdays.*
  + - Talent Show coming up in November
    - We will have a limb loss day in celebration of amputee awareness, it will be the end of October
    - Shout-out to Gina, she’s a Doctor and an OT Student of the University of Florida and she’s doing a Wonderful Wellness Workshop Series at Happy Brew, one of our local coffee shops that employs people with disabilities
      * Monthly workshop: different pillars of health promotion
* Connecting the Dots in a few weeks
* All our 4 Adaptive Sports activities planned out for all of 2025
* Working with Parks and Recs on how to make our parks more accessible, making recommendations.
  + **CIL – Jose Morales** 
    - Doing a Mobility Walk
    - White Cane Safety Walk
  + **Disability Rights Florida – Natalie Alden** –
    - Hiring for investigator auditor
* **Division of Blind Services – Dan O’Connor**
  + Next Council for the Blind meeting, Thursday, November 7th in Jacksonville.
* **Gateway Community Services – Barbara Brown** 
  + Jacksonville Council of the Blind will have the Annual White Cane Dinner Dance on Friday, October 11th,
  + 7 – 10pm at Ramada Hotel on San Jose Blvd.
* **Challenge Enterprise – Stephanie Young**
  + Annual Fund Raiser Event titled, “Revealing Abilities”
* **Support Services – Ron McCauley**
  + Attended the Deaf & Hard of Hearing Training last month at the Main Library
* **Adjourn Meeting**

Chair: Jose Morales

Vice-Chair: Natalie Alden

**Disabled Services Division**

(904) 255-5466