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

*Tuesday, August 6, 2024; 3:00PM Mayor’s Conference Rm*

**~Members Present:** Jose Morales,Natalie Alden,Barbara Brown, Teona Haugabook, Ronald McCauley, Dan O’Connor, Anida Pollo, Denise Torres & Stephanie Young

**~Ad Hoc Members Present:** Gonza Gonzague (VR), Mark Poirier (JTA), Donovan Calicker (JTA), Arun Kalavakolamu (JTA), Ken Middleton (JTA), Jim Neddo (MV), Lou Anne Hasty (CareerSource), Rebecca Scissors (DCPS)& Amy Valentine (DCPS)

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

**~Public Guest Present:** Fred Jones (Haskell), Liz Peak (JTA), Patrick Moor (Haskell), Eric Haston (JTA), Steve Gaudet (citizen), John Nooney (citizen – speaker card)

Meeting started at 3:05 pm by Chair Jose Morales and opened with…

* **Pledge of Allegiance –** All in attendance
* **Welcome and Introduction** total 9 members present (Quorum), 13 Ad Hoc members present, and 4 Staff members present.
* **Parliamentarian** –
* **Approval of Minutes (May) –** motioned to approved by Ray Pringle, 2nd by Teona Haugabook, no further discussion, minutes for May moved to approved.
* **Public Comment** – Marcia Winnard said, “In John chapter 8 verse 32, Jesus says you should know the truth and the truth shall make you free.”
  + Bill #334, so called the Hate Crime Bill, not enforceable
  + 2nd amendment – addresses free speech – she states this is a direct attack against it (free speech) and she read a piece from the Bill
  + She states that the name “Hate Crime Bill” is accurate because it will do nothing but foster hate
  + She’s urging Council Members to stifle this & destroy this Bill
* **Presenter –** Ken Middleton – Questions sent to JTA:
  + - * 1. **Is there an overall plan for the city of Jacksonville that incorporates accessible sidewalks, accessible bus stops, audible signs, audible signals and other accessibility devices for pedestrians?** There is an on-going effort to make sure all bus stops are compliant; we are about 75% - almost 80% there! Theres still some bus stops we’re still working onhowever any new bus stop that we build is ADA compliant. According to JTA’s Move 2027 Plan, JTA will construct new bus stops and install connecting first and last mile sidewalks in community hubs where there is a need for connectivity.

1. *Question asked by Natalie Alden: What does that mean when you say mile? Does that mean it goes a mile one way and the other?*

***Donovan Calicker:*** *The first mile, last mile in relation to ReadyRide is to assist with getting you from the front door to a bus stop*

1. *Question asked by Jose Morales: ADA Compliant does not mean bench or shelter, right?* ***Ken Middleton:*** *Correct! I don’t have the exact numbers in terms of what justifies a shelter vs a bench, I do know its depending on numbers, you may see some stops that just has a sign typically if you don’t see a shelter or a bench you know the Rydership is not as high as other places where you see benches and shelters.*
2. *Question asked by Natalie Alden: How far out do you go from the bus stop before it will be Public Works responsibility?* ***Ken Middleton:*** *I don’t have that number but I would be happy to get that and report back.*
   * + - 1. **How do these entities work together to prevent duplication of services and to ensure that there are no sidewalks that go to nowhere and bus stops with no access or crosswalks that are not safe for people with disabilities?** *I know JTA holds monthly meetings with the City of Jacksonville, JEA, the Mayor’s Disability Council, Jacksonville Transportation Advisory Committee to talk about these issues so that we identify those areas, then we will work closely with the proper agency to make sure we address that, we have gotten calls in the pass maybe dealing with a sidewalk & maybe it wasn’t JTA’s but the City of Jacksonville or maybe FDOT so we kind of coordinate, at the end of the day, we want to ensure that all our sidewalks or bus stops or all of our roads whether its JTA’s responsibility or not, to be sure that everything is ADA Compliant and accessible.*
         2. **What is the best way to alert these entities of priority areas that need to be addressed due to accessibility issues?** *As mentioned before our monthly and joint agency meetings are held with the city of Jacksonville & JEA to coordinate work and raise awareness to JTA priority items. Quarterly meetings are also held with FDOT to do the same thing.*
         3. **Any information from these entities (FDOT, COJ, JEA, MDC, JTEC) about the safety of round-abouts for pedestrians with disabilities would be greatly appreciated.** *We are working closely with the City of Jacksonville. Haskell is here, we have a task work order with Haskell about Vision Zero as far as the safety initiative.* ***Jose Morales:*** *meeting with Vision Zero and the City, pretty much working on the progression to eliminate pedestrian fatalities; the goal is to get to the point where there is no pedestrian fatalities or accidents. The City and JTA are working together on slowing speeds in different areas of town, they’re targeting the major areas where they’ve seen the most amounts of accidents, they are trying to get all perspectives at the table to go over different routes including round-abouts to figure out what is the best alternatives, the best ways to get pedestrians, cyclist, and vehicles to not have accidents with each other.* ***Fred Jones:*** *Vision Zero is a philosophy that originated in Sweden about 20 years ago. Compared to the rest of the World particularly Europe were doing awful, it’s a public health crisis in terms of traffic fatalities, you see it in the news every day. So, the whole idea is to do what we can, do a series of safety improvements, engineering, design, enforcement, education to come up with a plan to drastically reduce this and hopefully get to zero, that’s a big lofty goal but the idea is to work together and come up with a plan. It’s not specifically targeted to round-abouts, yes it arguable that round-abouts are not the best for pedestrians and cyclists but in our case we’re looking at everything and trying to come up with a set of solutions, a lot of this comes down to engineering, its all about speed, that’s what we’re trying to do, speed management.*
         4. ***Status on the Awning at the Paratransit pick-up and drop-off at the JTA Hub?*** *Theres 2 drop-off sites here at the JRTC, one is the ADA drop-off, which is the one that we primarily use, that does not have a awning. The one that’s closes to Bay Street across from the Prime Osborn, does have an awning, that is what we call a Kiss & Ride. I think the question here is the awning for the main drop-off, the ADA drop-off. JTA did look into that, there never was an agreement when we go to JRTC they ask that we put an awning there but JTA did look into it and it is not cost effective, we were looking at based on the diameter we were given from JTEC in terms of what they would like to see, it was about 5 million dollars*

*Discussion: Natalie states on several occasions when JTA came to MDC meetings, we specifically asked about the awning and were told that JTA would do it because the disabled population needs it more than the general population.* ***Natalie questioned****, do people with disabilities not get the same equal treatment because it’s not cost effective?* ***Ken Middleton replied****, the Kiss & Ride does have the awning and that’s what he talked about at previous MDC meetings, the ADA drop-off, out front by the Café does not but the Kiss & Ride is for inclement weather so you can get dropped off there.*

* **Announcements:**
  + **Disabled Services** – Chief Kara Tucker
    - Jax Ready Fest – May 10 & 11- well attended, sign-language interpreter was there for both days, will continue next year
* Working on rescheduling the Town Hall
* COJ Career Fair – June 18th additional tables for Division of Blind Services & CIL, Career Source will be there to help with applications, these are directly for City Jobs.
  + - ADA Week – July 20th – July 26th
      * 1. Saturday, 07/20 Sharks Game, tickets still available
        2. ADA & IT Symposium, July 23rd at UNF (will have flyer by end of the week)
        3. Open up registration by the end of the week
    - Disability Expo – July 25th
      * 1. vendor spaces closed
        2. Mayor confirmed, 9:30am – 9:45am to do the ADA Symposium
        3. Monday, July 22, 3pm-6pm WeVote in Atrium and something in the park as well. Want to make a flyer to promote the event – will set up a planning meeting
        4. Wednesday load in for all vendor’s and networking event at Intuition for all the vendor’s
* No MDC meeting in July
* **Parking Enforcement (DPEP)** –
  + How the Trust fund gets funded
  + working with Public Affairs on the flyers, should have by end of the week
  + Getting ready to do a class in regard to recruitment for new members

\*Jose request that we get stat report/numbers back each month

* **Old Business:** Attendance -
  + Reminder - only 3 un-excused absences, make sure if you have an absence, it’s excused.
  + After 3 unexcused absences - sending letters.
  + If you’re excused but can’t make it to most of the meetings (55% - 60%), think about leaving for a little and rejoining when you’re able to make it.
  + Met with JTAC trying to create a forum to go out in the community
    - Russ Davis (Chair of JTAC) – Jacksonville Transportation Advisory Committee -been around for 20-25 years, Citizens Advisory Committee that advise JTA in topics related to transportation for the disabled community in Jacksonville. Mission to educate the community on what’s available; identify concerns and issues with the system; and to report back to JTA and work with them in partnership to resolve issues. May meeting, talked about a Public Forum-opportunity for MDC and JTAC to get out in the community, go to community centers, libraries, or wherever we can get the public to come in and introduce the 2 organizations (MDC & JTAC) and let them know what we’re doing.

Meetings: 2nd Monday of each month, 4pm at JRTC.

Dan suggests Inviting Drivers to the meeting

* **New Business:** Service Coins –
  + Postponed to August meeting
  + Alexis sent out some samples, we will, from the staff side, look and see what we can purchase from our side. Be thinking about the wording and terminology.
  + Reminder – service coins will be given to people who actively worked on the Council and left
* **Subcommittee Reports/update (5 minutes)**
  + **LEAPSC Subcommittee – Natalie Alden**
    - *No meeting – nothing to report per Vice Chair – Ron McCauley*
  + **Employment Subcommittee** – **Stephanie Young**
    - * Guest-Cheya Thousand & Aleta Turner with SCORE & Greg Grant (JSEB)
      * Bridge opportunity for Entrepreneurs who have a disability with the resources from SCORE and JSEB
      * Greg requesting 5 -10 individuals (existing pipeline) looking to start their own business to test program
* Application/qualification process
* Statistics to see viability of program
* Not just individuals with disabilities but for all small businesses
* Employment Subcommittee to provide a list of resources that can aid small businesses in their creation
  + - * Approved May Minutes
      * Discussion on reviving 20 in 20 program
        1. Potential pledge card
        2. Why hire individuals with disabilities
        3. FIS Assessment
        4. Will bring back to August meeting
* Employment committee website
  + **Healthcare & Adaptive Sports** – **Ray Pringle**
    - 5-6 Topics regarding access planning
      * 1. Barriers – find access
        2. Best practices – in other cities;

Kara will reach out to ADA Network

* + - * 1. Create/provide a list of facilities already accessible
        2. Town Hall September or October
        3. Create an app/marketing campaign
        4. Policies & accommodations
        5. Create a survey before the Expo
        6. Work with the FIS assessment tool
* **Agency Announcements**
  + *The Arc Jacksonville – Denise Torres*
    - *Connecting the Dots Conference- October 11, 2024, the Schultz Center,*

*will open for vendor sign-on soon*

* + - *Family Café – this Thursday*
  + *Jax Council of the Blind – Barbara Brown*
    - *Hosting the National America Council of the Blind Conference*
      * 1. *July 5th – July 12th*
        2. *Expecting 700 in person & 700 via phone*
        3. *Opportunity for them to use JTA/many have applied to use*

***Mark Poirier (JTA) explains:*** *if they have eligibility at another agency, they get that eligibility level from their agency sent to us and they can have up to 30days as a visitors pass*

* + - * 1. *They were impressed and loved JTA*
* *The National Federation of the Blind – Russ Davis serves on the State Board*
  + *Jacksonville chosen to host the National Federation of the Blind State Convention in October at the South Bank Hotel, October 11th – 13th*
* *Teona Haugabook – will be re-running for Miss Wheelchair Florida in the next month*
* *Ron McCauley - Agency for Persons with Disabilities Providers got an increase in rates, will go in effect in July, good for providers assisting people with disabilities*
* *Challenge Enterprises – Stephanie Young*
  + *Golf Tournament, July 22nd, Flemming Island*
  + *Heritage Singers of Jacksonville, August 18th (singing music about transportation)*
  + *Revealing Abilities Gala October 17th (Literally will be revealing the abilities of all our guest)* 
    - * 1. *All information on website:* [*www.challengeenterprises.org*](http://www.challengeenterprises.org)

*under events tab or call Stephanie Young.*

* *Division of Blind Services – Dan O’Connor*
  + *Florida Rehab Council for the Blind, same day as Disability Expo, July 25th in Orlando*
* **Ad Hoc Reports**
  + **Career Source – Lou Anne Hasty**
    - Looking for vignettes from any type of disability that can be used to train & educate staff
      * 1. Example: working with visually impaired person, you ask what you can do to assist them, instead of just opening the door for them, etc.
        2. In-Service would be great but staff is low reason why looking for vignette
  + **Duval County Public Schools (DCPS) – Rebecca Scissors**
* School is out!
* Hours Monday – Thursday, 7am-5:30pm
* Closed on Friday in summer
  + **JSO- Not present – update by Kara**
* Sgt. Patterson reached out to us
* Requesting we do a training for them at the Academy, end of August 28th, 9-10am
* Kara will reach out to MDC members

* + **Library/Talking Books – Tonja Ferrell (not present)**
  + **Transportation – Mark Poirier (JTA)** 
    - Apologized for any balls dropped, anything fallen through cracks, in process of looking for new assistant, Chris Macklin no longer with JTA
    - Reach out to Kara if you need to contact Mark Poirier
    - Stats for May: 24,948 passengers, slightly up over April but 11% increase over May 2023, on time performance 90%, up 88% from April, appointment time on time performance 95% also up from April, total of 15 valid complaints, top 3 concerns were late and moving violation in ride time which Jim is very well aware of and working on it.
    - 4 compliments all about reservations department even though having issues with phone systems. ConnectionPlus did 14,748 totaling combined 39,732 about 10% over pre covid numbers, 102 drivers for Connect and 168 drivers for ConnectionPlus
    - Phone Issues: Completed design build yesterday, in full build out process right now, should take about 30-40 days, once built out, get it tested then up and running as quickly as possible. Going to a completely new phone system for the Reservations Dept. for Connection and Ready Ride
    - Aira App: Ken Middleton will be here in August and will do a full presentation on the Aira App. It is fully up and running right now and accessible. Free of charge for any accessibility challenges
  + **VR – Gonza Gonzague** – no update
  + **Brooks Rehabilitation – not present**
  + **CIL – Jose Morales** – trying to come up with something for Friday with the signing of ADA. Planning a Braille workshop for people wanting to learn. Have a new pantry with self-care items and food, 1 ticket a month to get any items needed.
  + **Disability Rights Florida – Natalie Alden** – no update
  + **Announcement:** 
    - **Susan Peters – Career Fair this Saturday, 6 – 8pm.**
    - **No meeting in July**
* **Adjourn Meeting**

Chair: Jose Morales

Vice-Chair: Natalie Alden

**Disabled Services Division**

(904) 255-5466