

**CALIFORNIA COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ACCESS  
FULL COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES**

**January 22, 2020**

**Call to Order**

Chair Guy Leemhuis welcomed everyone and called the meeting of the California Commission on Disability Access (CCDA or Commission) to order at 10:02 a.m. at the Cal PIA, 2125 19<sup>th</sup> Street, Sacramento, 95818.

The off-site meeting locations were 7121 Magnolia Avenue, Suite G, Riverside, 92504; and 9601 Ridgeway Court, San Diego, 92123.

**Roll Call**

Staff Member Morrell called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Commissioners Present:

Guy Leemhuis, Chair (via teleconference)  
Douglas Wiele, Vice Chair  
Tiffany Allen (via teleconference)  
Xavier Becerra, Attorney General, represented by Anthony Seferian  
Ida Clair, Acting State Architect  
Chris Downey  
Jim Frazier, Assembly Member represented by Trevor Nelson  
Brian Holloway  
Tom Lackey, Assembly Member (via teleconference)

Scott Lillibridge  
Michael Paravagna

Commissioners Absent:

Karla Prieto  
Melissa Hurtado, Senator

Staff Present:

Angela Jemmott, Executive Director  
Jonette Banzon, Legal Counsel  
Dave Chung, Data and Research Analyst  
Joshua Morrell, Staff Services Analyst

Also Present:

Curt Child, Disability Rights California  
Vienalyn Tankiamco, Department of Rehabilitation  
Daryn Harpaz, ZenythGroup, LLC (via teleconference)  
Gary Renslo, Department of General Services (DGS)  
Corrina Roy, Office of Legislative Affairs, DGS (via teleconference)

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Leemhuis led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**California Commission on Disability Access  
Full Commission  
January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

**Housekeeping Items**

Chair Leemhuis reviewed the meeting protocols.

**2. Approval of Meeting Minutes (October 23, 2019) – Action**

**Motion:** Commissioner Downey moved to approve the October 23, 2019, California Commission on Disability Access Full Commission Meeting Minutes as presented. Commissioner Lillibridge seconded. Motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**3. Comments from the Public on Issues Not on this Agenda**

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

**4. Legislative Bill Tracking – Update and Discussion**

**a. No Current Bill Assignments.**

Corrina Roy, Legislative Consultant, Office of Administrative Affairs, DGS, confirmed that Assembly Bill (AB) 999 disability access: statutory damages: small businesses: technical violations, by Assembly Member Patterson, will not move forward this year. She stated there are no new bills to discuss.

Questions and Discussion

Commissioner Paravagna stated it has come to his attention that there is a bill that would be of interest to the disability community having to do with housing for homeless individuals. He asked Commissioner Downey for additional details.

Commissioner Downey stated Senate Bill (SB) 50 by Senator Wiener is for multi-family, high-density housing, located at public transit hubs. This bill will be of interest to the disability community because multi-family housing developments in a higher density provide accessible housing and environments that would not normally be present in typical suburban development.

Commissioner Downey stated, for independent living for the blind and visually impaired, it is vital to be located adjacent to public transit and, to the extent that high-density is not achieved currently at many of those locations, the idea of encouraging development plans and legislation would be beneficial to the blind and visually impaired community and to the disability community in general for affordable housing with accessibility built in adjacent to public transit. SB 50 is worth tracking.

Corrina Roy stated the DGS is tracking this bill but, since it is a housing issue, it is primarily being tracked under the Real Estate Services Division.

Commissioner Downey asked if it would be appropriate for this Commission to track SB 50, since it is specifically a benefit to the disability community.

**California Commission on Disability Access  
Full Commission  
January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Clair also asked to add the Division of the State Architect (DSA) as a secondary office because there are specific accessibility requirements, depending on the entities involved.

Corrina Roy stated she will add both the Commission and the DSA as sub-offices to track SB 50, even though the primary office will continue to be the Real Estate Services Division.

**Action Items**

- Corrina Roy is to add the Commission and the DSA as sub-offices to track SB 50.

**5. CCDA Executive Director Report– Update and Discussion**

**a. Administrative and Operational**

Executive Director Jemmott stated the governor has approved the Commission's proposal for an increase of \$700,000 to the Commission's budget in the 2020-21 fiscal year for a total of \$1.6 million. The proposal still requires approval from the Legislature. She reviewed the budget highlights support document for July through September of 2019, which was included in the meeting packet.

Executive Director Jemmott stated the Marketing and Outreach Analyst staff position is currently open and staff continues to recruit volunteers for the data collection project, as the pre-database project information is not part of the automation system. She stated there are still approximately 1,600 images of information that must be inputted manually.

Executive Director Jemmott stated including the data information in this year's Annual Report to the Legislature has been a challenge. Although the automation system launched on December 3, 2019, the rest of the data must be manually collected and aggregated with the automated data. This is part of the delay, along with the DGS approval process. The report is expected to be completed in March of 2020.

Questions and Discussion

Commissioner Lillibridge stated, based on the spending rate for the reported quarter, the Commission needs a budget of \$2.3 million. He asked if the first quarter expenses were frontloaded.

Executive Director Jemmott stated there were items that were offset such as the database project, which was covered by DGS support, and were not included. She also noted that a one-time cost of approximately \$13,000 was required for transitioning the 2013 imaging for the caseloads.

Chair Leemhuis stated the budget will be better seen at the next meeting. The additional funds add one staff person to the Commission and allow outreach and community building activities. It is difficult to say what the existing budget is because, as part of the transition under the DGS, they had requirements that the Commission

**California Commission on Disability Access  
Full Commission  
January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

had not budgeted for. The proposed budget should not leave the Commission with a deficit.

Commissioner Lillibridge suggested to continue monitoring the budget as the year progresses.

CCDA Database Project Overview

Executive Director Jemmott asked staff to present on the CCDA Database Project.

Dave Chung, Data and Research Analyst, CCDA, provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of the background and current status of the CCDA Database Project and showed screenshots of the online submission forms. He stated the Online Submission Portal was launched in December of 2019 and is currently available on the website. To date, 23 law firms and 34 different users have registered. In the first month after the launch, 164 pre-litigation letters and complaints were submitted through the Online Submission Portal.

Public Inquiries

Executive Director Jemmott asked staff to present on the types of questions received by staff.

Joshua Morrell, Staff Services Analyst, CCDA, reviewed the Public Inquiries Received by CCDA document, which was included in the meeting packet, including Public Records Act (PRA) requests, number of public inquiries received by month and by type, and the nature of the inquiries received from January 1 through December 31, 2019.

**b. Partnering and Outreach Efforts**

Executive Director Jemmott stated staff has received many invitations to participate in various opportunities for outreach in 2019, either as a presenter, a part of a panel, or an attendee, and CCDA documents have been requested for events. She shared a list of the upcoming events where she has been invited to speak.

**Action Items**

- No action items.

**California Commission on Disability Access  
Full Commission  
January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

**6. 2020 CCDA Meeting Calendar – Update and Action**

Executive Director Jemmott reviewed the proposed 2020 meeting calendar, including dates and locations, which was included in the meeting packet.

**Motion:** Commissioner Paravagna moved to approve the CCDA 2020 Meeting Calendar as presented. Vice Chair Wiele seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**7. Creation of Bylaws Workgroup – Update and Discussion**

Chair Leemhuis stated the CCDA Bylaws have not been reviewed since 2014. He appointed Commissioner Holloway as chair of the Bylaws Workgroup that will soon be created.

Commissioner Holloway accepted the appointment of chair of the Bylaws Workgroup.

**8. Results of ADA Coordination Survey – Update and Discussion**

Executive Director Jemmott provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of the previous Strategic Plan Goal 6, methodology, questions and responses, number of participants, and recommendations of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordination Survey Results.

Commissioner Paravagna, Chair of the Legislative Committee, summarized the background of the ADA Coordination Survey process. He stated there is a consistent request from ADA Coordinators for assistance in improving efficiency. He shared options discussed at the last Legislative Committee meeting related to the upcoming Strategic Plan Goal 4, to explore the development of a state-level ADA reference center/guide:

- Create an issue memo listing advantages and disadvantages to be presented to the Legislature.
- Seek input from the United States Department of Justice (DOJ).
- Meet with the CCDA legislative members to discuss partnerships with entities that would be active about problem-solving on this issue.
  - Plan steps forward as a coalition of those partnerships.
- Create an ADA Office of Compliance.
- Create an ADA Resource Center, which could be housed online.
- Improve continuity by providing resources.
- Make toolkits available. Many can be downloaded from the DOJ website.
  - Models of ADA coordination.
  - Models of ADA Notices of Compliance and ADA grievance procedures.

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

- Models for developing, monitoring, and implementing transition plans.
- Models for developing, monitoring, and implementing self-evaluation.

Commissioner Paravagna asked Commissioner Lillibridge if he had anything to add from the recent Legislative Committee meeting.

Commissioner Lillibridge stated the response rate was low but, from individuals that did respond, it was quite evident that they were in a position that was out of their depth. Training was consistently requested throughout the responses to the survey.

Commissioner Paravagna asked for feedback from Commissioners.

Questions and Discussion

Commissioner Holloway stated Commissioners are being hard on themselves. He stated a 5 to 7 percent response is a decent response rate for general surveys. The 26 percent response rate from ADA Coordinators is great.

Commissioner Holloway stated the survey was thorough and he liked the follow-up of who answered, why they answered, what their authority was, and what their skill level and experience were. He noted that this usually does not come with most surveys.

Commissioner Downey stated the hope was that ADA Coordinators would be interested and engaged in this issue. Although the lack of responses was disappointing, there was good information in the responses received. It is notable that the state relies on state ADA Coordinators to lead compliance with the ADA, when ADA Coordinators do not know where to go, how to find answers, or how to find each other. It is astounding that it has gotten to this point without more organization, information, and structure.

Commissioner Downey stated anything the Commission can do to reach out to, educate, and help organize ADA Coordinators would be helpful and could provide a good model for the rest of the country on how to effectively educate and organize ADA Coordinators.

Commissioner Paravagna stated, in informal discussions with a representative from the DOJ approximately two years ago, he learned that there was not an effective system in any state that could be used as a model at that time.

Commissioner Clair stated she was pleased with the thoroughness of the survey questions. It is important that every state agency has a transition plan, that they address it adequately, and that they take it seriously and issues can be resolved to keep from being in a reactive state. She stated it is evident from the responses that the participants were unsure of their role.

Commissioner Clair stated the part that is missing from Survey Question 3 is the proactive measure of looking at programs, services, and activities, establishing a transition plan, and making everything accessible to keep from getting to the grievance procedure part. Creating a state-level office begins to alleviate the responsibility from individual departments, which should not be the case because each department has its

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

own programs, services, and activities and should be able to address them directly. She suggested that the Commission work on the support component to provide tools and skills because the only way to raise the awareness level of ADA Coordinators is with training.

Commissioner Paravagna agreed that it is not feasible for a statewide office to do the work itself. The missions are too specialized and too diverse. He stated his vision of a statewide ADA reference center would be to cover the resources for the basic structure. However, there can be a standard grievance system and other foundational items such as an outline for a self-evaluation for consistency or a standardized Notice of Compliance specialized to the department.

Commissioner Clair asked how the statewide ADA reference center will be resourced.

Commissioner Paravagna agreed that the resource issue is unresolved. The resource question will become clear as the deliverable is defined. The next step is how to move forward to sharpen that image. He suggested that the Legislative Committee have those discussions to sharpen the image and bring it back to the full Commission at a future meeting.

Commissioner Clair stated part of the main focus of the Commission is to address the business community with constant and consistent education. She suggested getting support for the ADA reference center prior to executing it to better understand where the resources will come from.

**Action Items**

- The Legislative Commission is to further discuss this issue and bring recommendations to the full Commission.

**9. Draft 2020-2024 CCDA Strategic Plan – Update, Discussion, and Action**

Executive Director Jemmott reviewed the 2020-2024 Final Draft Strategic Plan, which was included in the meeting packet.

Vice Chair Wiele announced that Chair Leemhuis was called away and that he would chair the rest of today's meeting.

**Questions and Discussion**

Vice Chair Wiele asked for clarification on why some of the text in the goal language is underlined.

Executive Director Jemmott stated the underlined text is the language that was approved at the last full Commission meeting.

Commissioner Paravagna referred to the Objectives/Strategies section under Goal 4 and made the following suggestions:

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

- Strike the word “all” under Objective 1 so it will read “study state-level existing offices and programs ...”
- Strike Objective 2 in its entirety, making Objective 3 a new Objective 2, the text remaining unchanged.
- Add a new Objective 3 “to interact with stakeholders and partners to identify the most effective strategies for improving support to state of California ADA Coordinators.”

Commissioner Clair stated the need to define the level of effort in balance to other efforts that the Commission is doing. She suggested changing Commissioner Paravagna’s language for Objective 3 to “identify the support of those individuals who can support the CCDA in this endeavor,” to garner a level of support so this effort is not just driven by the CCDA.

Commissioner Paravagna agreed with Commissioner Clair’s language for Objective 3.

Jonette Banzon, Legal Counsel, asked about the scope of Goal 4 because the Commission’s jurisdiction has to do with the built environment. The issue is the information will be added to ADA forms compliance and ADA website compliance. This is beyond the built environments that the Commission has been tasked to do.

Commissioner Paravagna stated it incorporates the built environment in that it incorporates the format for the transition plan. Self-evaluation also touches on built environments because it talks about construction policies. He acknowledged that it is a stretch, but questioned how to cut pieces away and still do the work of the Commission when they are linked together.

Commissioner Clair stated she proposed the language to Objective 3 to get the support to do this because it is outside of the Commission’s authority. Understanding that there is a need, the Commission can strive to garner support and maybe bring it into the Commission’s authority so the Commission can perhaps get the resources.

Commissioner Paravagna agreed that collaborating with the Legislature and other partners is the next step. The other part of the support is, as the Commission does this study, to learn what legislators would be looking for to begin to resolve the problems being uncovered.

Executive Director Jemmott suggested adding “and identify appropriate resources to implement this research effort” to Commissioner Paravagna’s original suggestion for Objective 3 so it would read “to interact with stakeholders and partners to identify the most effective strategies for improving support to state of California ADA Coordinators and identify appropriate resources to implement this research effort.”

Commissioner Clair stated the need to clarify that it is not only about resources but support, so it will read “to interact with stakeholders and partners to identify the most effective strategies for improving support to state of California ADA Coordinators and identify appropriate resources and support to implement this research effort.”



**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Banzon stated this would fall under Government Code Section 14985.5(b)(3), which states "providing information as requested by the Legislature on disability access issues and compliance." She stated this activist goal would need to be presented and approved by the Legislature.

Commissioner Paravagna stated it might be worth discussing that with the Commission's legislative partners to see if something can be facilitated to address this important area.

Ms. Banzon agreed with that goal.

Commissioner Clair encouraged balancing the work that needs to be done with exploration of ways to take it further with appropriate support.

Vice Chair Wiele stated this is an issue that needs to be addressed. He stated Goal 4 begins with the word "explore." He stated maybe the exploring would be to first go to the Legislature and ask them to ask the Commission to look into this. He stated he was reluctant to act on this goal today.

Commissioner Paravagna stated he agreed with Vice Chair Wiele. The exploration concept is also important. The issue is what to do with this problem that is affecting Californians with disabilities in a pervasive manner. Another issue, which has not been discussed, is ensuring that the Commission stays relevant. It would be shortsighted to pretend that the ADA is not a moving target. It has markedly changed over the years, such as website access and electronic communication. It is naive to see the Commission as an access organization without looking at program access. If the Commission cannot stay relevant within its current authority, discussions need to begin with legislators to broaden the Commission's authority.

Vice Chair Wiele agreed that the Commission needs to be relevant and about advising the Legislature on issues that need to be addressed, but stated the Commission also must be true to its purpose. He was reluctant to go outside of the Commission's mandated task.

Commissioner Paravagna stated this is why the authority issue needs to be addressed.

Vice Chair Wiele agreed. He referred to the note at the top of Goal 4, highlighted in yellow, that says "hold for review," and questioned that this remains a clearly identified action item on the agenda. He asked about the meaning of the term "hold for review."

Executive Director Jemmott stated the underlined text was adopted, identified, reviewed, and agreed to at the last full Commission meeting. The hold was the fact that the only goal that was not accepted at the last full Commission meeting was Goal 4. It was held for review. That review did occur – Commissioners Clair and Paravagna, along with the Executive Director, met and discussed this in more detail. The consensus was to present it to the Board as a goal for the CCDA.

Executive Director Jemmott stated she has presented the survey to two out of the three CCDA legislative Commissioners and received no resistance from them that this is

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

something they are not interested in, and yet they have not shared that they are interested in putting it into a bill. She agreed with the language proposed for Objective 3, and stated, if legislative support has not been identified after the period of one year, the item will be considered concluded.

Vice Chair Wiele questioned how the Commission can use the resources given to it within its budget to explore issues outside of the mandated legislative authority.

Commissioner Paravagna suggested making the first step to secure the authority.

Commissioner Clair agreed. She stated it is important to recognize who has the technical expertise to provide this information. She cautioned, if this task is given to the CCDA, that there will be scrutiny on the work it has already done. The CCDA needs to clearly identify if it wants to be the organization to be charged with this and for the authority to do it, so that, when it asks for the authority to explore or to be that group, the Commission is prepared for what the Legislature brings back to it.

Commissioner Paravagna stated all he is looking for is the ability to explore and recommend. He suggested that the Commission can identify the problem and hopefully become a vehicle to suggest solutions.

Vice Chair Wiele asked Ms. Banzon so reread the legislation that speaks to the request of the Legislature as opposed to will of the Commission.

Ms. Banzon reread Government Code Section 14985.5(b)(1) through (3).

Vice Chair Wiele asked what it would take to get the Legislature to ask the Commission something. He asked if the Code speaks to one legislator or a formal request from the Legislature. He also asked what it would take to get, for the Commission's benefit, a legal opinion as to what to do with this and where the boundaries are. He stated he was uncomfortable taking action on this Goal 4 today.

Ms. Banzon stated Legislature is stated with a capital L, meaning the full body.

Executive Director Jemmott stated staff has explored another need – website accessibility – without waiting for Legislature to mandate the Commission to do it. It will be discussed later in today's agenda. She stated staff will eventually have information to deliver to the Legislature on the issue.

Executive Director Jemmott stated the Commission just learned that the organizational structure of state ADA Coordinators is unsure, unfamiliar, and unprepared for the job. She stated Goal 4 is only meant for exploration on the issue. There is a need to take this to a higher level with entities that are in authority and are responsible for doing it, such as the DOJ and DGS. She stated she understands the Commission must wait for authority, but she stated the Commission must gather enough data to present the need to the Legislature. Goal 4 was meant to take the results of the survey to the next level.

Commissioner Paravagna stated, before the Commission can look at this, it needs to look at its relevancy and authority.

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Holloway stated the need has been made clear. The next step is to locate legislators who may want to carry a bill. Then the Commission can seek permission so it can work to address the need.

Commissioner Clair stated the survey identified the need for an education of the ADA Coordinator constituency group. More of the data should be aligned to the problem of the lawsuits that have happened. The survey has only identified a problem in education of ADA Coordinators but has not identified a problem in state government delivering access. There are documented cases in the form of lawsuits. That information needs to be pooled in order to make a compelling case, unless the only problem is that the ADA workforce lacks education. If that is the case, that problem needs to be defined specifically.

Commissioner Paravagna moved to approve the strategic plan with the exception of Goal 4, which would be tabled until the Commission's authority to address Goal 4 is clarified.

Executive Director Jemmott asked what Commissioner Paravagna meant by the word "clarify."

Commissioner Paravagna stated it is to obtain an understanding about whether the Commission has or can obtain the authority to address the goal, with the understanding that the Commission would not address it without authority in place.

Commissioner Lillibridge asked who has the final say as to whether the goals the Commission establish are within the mission statement.

Ms. Banzon stated the Commission has the ability to determine its goals; however, those goals must be within the parameters of what the Legislature has tasked the Commission to do, which is under Government Code Section 14985.5. The Legislature has the ultimate say.

Vice Chair Wiele stated the Commission has a representative from the Office of the Attorney General, legislators, and counsel for the DGS, and it is being cautioned that Goal 4 may be outside of the boundaries. It is for the Commission to be judicious in interpreting that message.

**Motion:** Commissioner Paravagna moved to approve the strategic plan with the exception of Goal 4, which will be tabled until the Commission's authority to address Goal 4 is clarified. Commissioner Holloway seconded. Motion carried unanimously with no abstentions.

**Action Items**

- No action items.

**Lunch Break**

**California Commission on Disability Access  
Full Commission  
January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

Vice Chair Wiele welcomed everyone back to the afternoon session of the CCDA. He asked staff to call roll.

**Roll Call**

Staff Member Morrell called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

Commissioners Present:

Guy Leemhuis, Chair (via  
teleconference)  
Douglas Wiele, Vice Chair  
Tiffany Allen (via teleconference)  
Xavier Becerra, Attorney General,  
represented by Anthony Seferian  
Ida Clair, Acting State Architect  
Chris Downey  
Brian Holloway  
Scott Lillibridge  
Michael Paravagna

Commissioners Absent:

Karla Prieto  
Melissa Hurtado, Senator  
Jim Frazier, Assembly Member  
Tom Lackey, Assembly Member

Staff Present:

Angela Jemmott, Executive Director  
Jonette Banzon, Legal Counsel  
Dave Chung, Data and Research Analyst  
Joshua Morrell, Staff Services Analyst

**10. Panel Presentation on Website Accessibility – Update and Discussion**

**Presenters:**

- Curt Child, Director of Legislation, Disability Rights California
- Daryn Harpaz, Founder and CEO, ZenythGroup, LLC
- Vienalyn Tankiamco, Chief, Disability Access Services, Department of Rehabilitation
- Gary Renslo, Chief Information Officer, Enterprise Technology Solutions, DGS

Executive Director Jemmott stated the Commission will hear a panel presentation on the growing issue of website accessibility. She introduced the members of the panel.

**a. Disability Rights California**

Curt Child, Director of Legislation, Disability Rights California, provided an overview of the importance of website accessibility, the confusion of what accessibility and compliance means, and recent laws on website accessibility. He stated the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) is a widely-adopted standard that is enforced by the DOJ and is a standard by which compliance can be measured.

Mr. Child stated Disability Rights California is concerned about the substantial number of documents that are being pulled off of websites due to noncompliance. He stated

**California Commission on Disability Access  
Full Commission  
January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

removing historical documents from websites is extreme, especially if there is not a tracking system in place to ensure public access to those documents.

**b. Zenyth Group, LLC**

Daryn Harpaz, Founder and CEO, ZenythGroup, LLC, provided an overview, with a slide presentation, of civil rights legislation, common accessibility issues, website accessibility lawsuits, and why accessibility matters. He reviewed the ZenythGroup Web Accessibility Standards, which was included in the meeting pack.

**c. Disability Access Services, Department of Rehabilitation**

Vienalyn Tankiamco, Chief, Disability Access Services, Department of Rehabilitation (DOR), echoed the comments of the previous speakers. She stated digital technology has dramatically changed the way state government does business, which means that programs, activities, and services provided by the state to the general public need to be accessible. She noted that this not only means the website but the content of what is posted on the website.

Ms. Tankiamco stated Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act is the standard that state entity websites need to meet. She stated state entities are required to recertify the accessibility of their websites and web content every two years. She stated the DOR developed the State of California's Web Accessibility Toolkit, a resource for state government designed to help determine website and website accessibility compliance. She provided a federal and state resource guide in the meeting packet.

**d. Department of General Services**

Gary Renslo, Chief Information Officer, Enterprise Technology Solutions, DGS, stated the DGS implemented a new website in February of 2019. He provided an overview of the DGS's process to achieve full website accessibility.

Questions and Discussion

Vice Chair Wiele asked for a practical, layman's perspective on what an inaccessible website looks like.

Ms. Tankiamco suggested turning off the monitor and listening to see if the website can be navigated.

Commissioner Lillibridge asked if there is a screen reader app because turning off the monitor effectively removes the website so there would be no way to listen to it.

Ms. Tankiamco stated iPhones have a built-in screen reader and programs are built into browsers that can be turned on to listen to websites. This is one tool but there are many different ways – for instance, there is a screen reader available to download online.

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Harpaz stated he tells clients to imagine their favorite website, removing the monitor and the mouse and navigating just with the keyboard. The NVDA screen reader is for Windows only. He suggested an industry-standard screen reader called JAWS.

Commissioner Downey asked where business and property owners can go to verify license certifications such as the Certified Access Specialist (CASP) certifications.

Mr. Harpaz stated there are standards in the industry, such as the International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP), that provide certification. He stated it is crucial that non-sighted and visually-impaired individuals test projects; that is the largest requirement that can be brought to the table. He stated the Web Accessibility Specialist (WAS), through the IAAP certification, is the standard that is looked for.

Commissioner Downey asked if there are expectations, standards, or professional ethics involved with website design that the professional will perform in accordance with code and comply with accessibility regulations.

Mr. Harpaz stated there are several competitors who use automated tools, which only provide approximately 40 percent compliance. Their clients believe they are getting an accessible solution but are left at risk and exposure for litigation. Those vendors do not subscribe to an ethical standard. Clients need to do their due diligence on the company to ensure that they are bringing the highest level of standard and compliance. The end-to-end providers that do the auditing and remediation and bring compliance into the equation while they are leveraging the disability community will provide that level of assurance. The majority of accessibility providers are using the free tools and calling it accessible when it is not.

Commissioner Holloway asked about the cost.

Mr. Harpaz stated the cost varies, but an audit can run from two to several thousand dollars depending on the size and complexity. It can then cost another two to tens of thousands of dollars to leverage the results to remediate to code. There is also a risk assessment. It is important to note that integration with a third-party platform can be challenging.

Mr. Child stated it is wise to reach out to entities that can do an audit of the website to help make a determination of what the costs will be.

Commissioner Downey asked if there is a body that serves as a portal that provides guidance for small businesses on website accessibility.

Mr. Renslo stated he was unaware of that.

Commissioner Paravagna stated the Commission talked about the importance of this subject in terms of business owners and government officials, but there is a major importance of this issue, too, with the disability community as they interact with the community. Website accessibility is an important part of access.

**California Commission on Disability Access**  
**Full Commission**  
**January 22, 2020, Meeting Minutes**

Commissioner Downey stated in between the built environment and the website is the elements of web design and technology that are placed in the built environment, particularly information kiosks, visitor management systems, microphones without accessible buttons or indicators, touch screen interfaces for dispatch elevators, and many other technological advances. He asked for feedback on how these may relate to each other.

Ms. Tankiamco stated digital technology interfaces with the physical environment. There are standards with the California Building Code and with Section 508 standards that address this. That is where that kind of information can be found.

Commissioner Clair stated website access is an opportunity to look at what happened with accessibility in the built environment so the Legislature will not need to wait until many lawsuits are filed in order to take action. She stated the Commission has the ability to influence. It is important to be that voice and seek that additional guidance, whether it is the CCDA that is charged or another entity to inform the Legislature that this is a problem that can be solved as opposed to waiting for litigation to happen and then charging someone to do it. She stated the Commission can share the issues seen with the Legislature. It is important to get ahead of it. Then, the Commission can see what the Legislature can do to create that resource, information, and change, whether it is given to the CCDA or another entity.

**Action Items**

- No action items.

**11. Commissioner Community Updates – Comments from Commission Members**

Commissioner Holloway received a call for help from a business associate who has a restaurant. Commissioner Holloway called the CCDA staff with the questions and they were very helpful. He stated this is the kind of thing that businesses need and the CCDA is also providing the help of a simple phone call. He thanked staff for making that easy and helping this restaurateur deal with that challenge.

**12. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.