

CITY OF COMMERCE
SPECIAL NEEDS COMMISSION
MINUTES FOR MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 21, 2018, 6:30 P. M.
City Council Chambers

Call to Order

Chairperson Bojorquez called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Flag Salute and Invocation

Commissioner Bojorquez and Commissioner Cisneros

Roll Call

Commissioners Present: Bojorquez; Cisneros; Madrigal; Lozano-Gonzalez; Villa

Commissioners Not Present: None

Staff Present: Liaison Moyra Garcia; Senior Office Specialist, Liz Chavez

Staff Not Present: None

Public Comment

None

SCHEDULED MATTERS

1. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Cisneros motioned to approve the minutes of the meeting held October 17, 2018. Commissioner Madrigal seconded the motion. Motion passed.

2. Parks & Recreation Department

Adolfo Marquez, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation attended the meeting to hear concerns and requests from the Commissioners. He stated that 5 request were brought to his attention, one being the stadium elevator at Veterans Park. He mentioned that he talked to staff and requested that they should all have access to the key and know to operate it. The second item was having a special section set up for movie night for Special Needs patrons. Commissioner Madrigal stated that it would be easier for those who are hard of hearing to be up closer so they could see the subtitles. Mr. Marquez asked the Commissioners if they were asking to have a section reserved, and the Commissioners suggested that a certain area off to the side or in the middle would be sufficient. Mr. Marquez said he wants to make sure that they can accommodate those in need. Commissioner Bojorquez mentioned if there was a number they could call for anyone who needs to be accommodated so that Parks and Recreation could make preparations before the event.

Commissioner Cisneros stated that calling Parks and Recreation beforehand would eliminate any confusion for Special Needs. Mr. Marquez stated that he would reach out to Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez to see what her concerns are, so that Parks and Recreation could look into designating a certain area. Although movie nights are on a first come first serve basis, they definitely want the Special Needs patrons to be able to see the subtitles. Another concern Mr. Marquez brought up was issuing headphones at all events and not just certain ones, for instance, Liaison Garcia mentioned that at the Halloween haunted house they did provide headphones because it was loud for some individuals, and not only Special Needs individuals. Mr. Marquez mentioned that at the bottom of their event flyers it does state that if anyone has a special request they can contact Parks and Recreation. The Department does try their best to fulfill any request for someone who needs to be accommodated. A request from Commissioner Bojorquez was to see if the one on one swimming program for Special Needs could be extended beyond the ending period. Mr. Marquez said that he would explore the possibility as long as they had space and would get back to the Commission at the January meeting in 2019. Another request was to eliminate the age limit of 18 for only Special Needs individuals who live in Commerce, or are taken care of by grandparents who live in Commerce. Commissioner Villa stated that right now a grandparent can get a resident card but only until the grandchild reaches the age of 18, then they are no longer allowed to. She would like to see the age limit removed so they can still get a resident card for their grandchild as long as they can show proof that they are disabled. Mr. Marquez stated that as of now the age limit of 18 applies to everyone, but this issue can be explored further. Mr. Marquez said that he would forward the resident card policy to Liaison Garcia in January so that the Special Needs Commission could take a look at it and come up with ideas and make suggestions to the wording on the policy. Mr. Marquez asked Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez to share her concerns about movie night. She stated that at one of the movie nights Parks and Recreation staff didn't have the subtitles available and they couldn't make the adjustments to get the subtitles going. Liaison Garcia mentioned that Parks and Recreation staff took care of the problem and since then it has been working properly. Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez suggested to have a small section near the front for the hard of hearing or anyone who needs to be closer to the screen to have a good view of the subtitles. Mr. Marquez mentioned that maybe staff can set an area aside and make an announcement before showing the movie or adding a sign. Another issue was for someone to train staff for the Adaptive Swim Program. Liaison Garcia mentioned that she and the Aquatics Manager met with Chase Cartstenson to discuss a plan of action on training staff, and as of yet they have not heard back from him. Commissioner Bojorquez mentioned that every week during swimming lessons there is always a different instructor and suggested that maybe the city could bring in an experienced instructor with credentials, or train one of the parks staff to work with special needs children only, just so that there could be a consistency with the same instructor. Mr. Marquez agreed and said he would

look into this matter further. Commissioner Cisneros asked what other requirements besides CPR/First Aid, is needed for a Swim Instructor. Mr. Marquez stated that it depends on what type of training they are going to assist with. For example, to work with Special Needs children they would be required to have some type of knowledge and experience teaching physical therapy in the water. Commissioner Cisneros asked if it were possible to extend the adapted swim program during the holiday breaks for special needs children and adding more programs. Mr. Marquez said that most of the times during the holiday breaks there is usually a low attendance, but he will explore the issue further. Commissioner Villa suggested on having more activities for special needs children during the holiday breaks. She also suggested having a certain type of sport for these children to participate in as well. Commissioner Madrigal stated that she is happy with Parks and Recreation and her son works well with staff and other children. She also thanked Park staff for being amazing and doing a great job with the children and never pushing them to do something they don't want to do. Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez also stated that her son, who is deaf, was asked by staff to teach him sign-language so that they could be more comfortable when working together. She was very appreciative of that. Mr. Marquez answered all their questions and the Commissioners thanked him for his presentation.

3. Discussion on Modifying the Special Needs Commission Name

Commissioner Cisneros stated that she wasn't too happy with the "Special Needs Commission" title. She had made a suggestion to changing the name maybe to: "Abilities Community Commission." She prefers to use the word abilities rather than disabilities. Commissioner Bojorquez stated that "Special Needs Commission" sounds out of date, but feels that this is name they need so that the community will be aware of what this Commission stands for. Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez stated that changing the name now might confuse the residents. Keeping the name "Special Needs Commission" is a way to educate the community. Commissioner Madrigal stated that everyone is already familiar with who they are and what the Commission does. She also stated that the Community already recognizes them as the Special Needs Commission. Commissioner Villa is ok either way. After discussing the matter Commissioner Bojorquez took a vote to keep the name as Special Needs Commission: Commissioner Madrigal: yay; Commissioner Villa: yay; Commissioner Cisneros: yay; Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez: yay. All in favor. Motion passed.

4. Staff Reports

1. Liaison Garcia reported that the Education Commission that was scheduled for November 13th was cancelled. It was rescheduled for Monday, January 14, 2019. She reminded Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez about her presentation to the Commission.

2. Liaison Garcia asked the Commissioners to go over the added questions on the survey. She asked that the Commissioners to look over the survey to see if they would like to add anything else to it.
3. Liaison Garcia compiled a list of accomplishments that the Commissioners have acquired to date and read them off: Resource Fair at Abilities Walk Event, Quiet area at city events, Subtitles for movie nights at parks, availability of headphones at city events, Adaptive Swim training for staff (approved), Improvement for Adaptive Swim waiting list, transportation to club 21 event, input on Awareness articles and decorations, Advertise Awareness Months in the Commerce Connect, **pending:** Sign Language classes, **pending:** Special Needs Commission Resources on Website, **pending:** Special Needs Survey for the Community, update books for Special Needs in the Library. She expressed her gratitude to the Commission for their accomplishments.
4. Liaison Garcia invited the Commissioners to the Casino Holiday Cheer Party held on Wednesday December 12th at 4:00 p.m., in the Rosewood Park Meeting room.
5. Liaison Garcia asked the Commissioners to look over the copy of the new Resolution that City Council approved for all Commissioners in regards to the chain of command to follow when requesting information. Any questions may be directed to the City Clerk's Office.

5. Commission Reports

Commissioner Villa reported the following:

Commissioner Villa mentioned that the Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony was coming up and wanted to know if the Special Needs Children were going to have a quiet room. Liaison Garcia reported that since the ceremony was only an hour there would not be a quiet room. Liaison Garcia stated that she would request to have headphones for that day.

Commissioner Madrigal had nothing to report

Commissioner Bojorquez reported the following:

Commissioner Bojorquez asked if the December meeting would go dark. Liaison Garcia stated that she would check on that and let the Commissioners know. Commissioner Bojorquez requested to have Support Groups on the Agenda for January.

Commissioner Cisneros reported the following:

Commissioner Cisneros mentioned that she went to the meeting in Downtown to support the Commerce Casino. She stated that there were 125

people who spoke on behalf of Commerce Casino and all other casinos who were also involved.

Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez reported the following:

Commissioner Lozano-Gonzalez stated that her son Ryder is going to offer Sign-Language classes in their home. She also invited the Commissioners to attend. The classes would probably start after December. She will inform the commissioners of the exact date and time at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Chairperson Bojorquez adjourned the meeting at 8:30 p.m.