



Pinellas County

Staff Report

File #: 17-309A, Version: 1

Subject:

Ordinance amending Chapter 70 of the County Code relating to Human Relations to create an advisory board for persons with disabilities.

Recommended Action:

Following a public hearing, adopt an ordinance amending Chapter 70 of the County Code relating to Human Relations to create an advisory board for persons with disabilities.

Strategic Plan:

Deliver First Class Services to the Public and Our Customers.

5.1 Maximize partner relationships and public outreach

Summary:

Chapter 70 of the Pinellas County Code prohibits certain forms of discrimination throughout Pinellas County, including discrimination against persons with disabilities, and vests enforcement authority with the Office of Human Rights.

Adoption of the proposed ordinance would create an advisory board to the Board of County Commissioners to help identify issues of accessibility to county facilities, programs and services, as well as potential issues of discrimination impacting persons with disabilities.

The Board of County Commissioners would appoint a majority of the membership of the advisory board (seven (7) of the thirteen (13) members), while organizations which assist and advocate for persons with disabilities, such as the boards of directors of the Disability Achievement Center, the Boley Center, Florida Gulf Coast Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc., would appoint the remainder.

The proposed advisory board would be county-wide, however municipalities would not be precluded from creating similar advisory boards for their jurisdiction. Staff would ensure working relations with municipalities and similar advisory boards within Pinellas County where such boards exist, or may later be created.

Multiple jurisdictions throughout Florida have similar advisory boards, including Hillsborough, Alachua, Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties, and the cities of St. Petersburg, Dunedin, Tampa, and Jacksonville. In these jurisdictions, the advisory boards also review plans for future public facilities to ensure accessibility issues are addressed, and are consulted with as part of community outreach activity mandated for receipt of state or federal funds, such as Community Development Block Grants.

Additionally, the Mayors' Council of Pinellas County, Inc., unanimously voted to support creation of such a county-wide advisory board at its meeting on February 4, 2016, while the Disability Achievement Center has lead in advocating for creation of this board.

Background Information:

Chapter 70 of the County Code prohibits certain forms of discrimination throughout Pinellas County, including discrimination against persons with disabilities, and vests enforcement authority with the Pinellas County Office of Human Rights.

The Board of County Commissioners authorized a public hearing to be held regarding this proposed ordinance at its February 21, 2017 Regular Meeting.

Fiscal Impact:

The Board of County Commissioners has allocated funds to the Office of Human Rights' Fiscal Year 2016-17 budget for administration of Chapter 70. Costs associated with creation of the proposed advisory board would be borne through funding already in place. No additional funding is requested or anticipated.

Should the proposed ordinance pass, future revenues may be possible, but are not being considered at present.

Staff Member Responsible:

Paul Valenti, Director, Human Rights

Partners:

Mayors' Council of Pinellas County
Disability Achievement Center
Providing Advocacy and Recognizing Capabilities (PARC)
Florida Gulf Coast Paralyzed Veterans of America
Boley Centers
Family Network on Disabilities
Area Agency on Aging of Pasco-Pinellas, Inc.

Attachments:

Memorandum from Director of Human Rights
Proposed Ordinance
Letter from Mayors' Council of Pinellas County, Inc.
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