

**MINUTES**  
**COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUE**

**February 14, 2007**

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McNally, Chairperson, at 1:35 pm. Introductions were done. The agenda was approved and the minutes for the January 2007 meeting were approved.

**Chairperson's Report:** Ms. McNally reported that she had attended an ASPD meeting. At that meeting, agencies were encouraged to accept volunteers from the college who are student with disabilities. Miami Dade College has a grant to match students with disabilities in appropriate volunteer positions so that they might gain needed work experience. She and Denise Valkema went to Washington to educate and advocate on blindness issues. One of the initiatives they were advocating for is the creation of a media center for higher education. Every new textbook would be sent to this media center in electronic format and when a student needed the text book in an alternative format, the book could easily be produced. Another initiative involves reforming some of the Social Security rules as it applies to disability benefits. She also attended a Riders meeting. The location of the Riders meeting has changed; the new location is the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor at 2775 SW 74 Avenue (Certification Office). The time and day remains the same: First Tuesday of the month from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

**Employment Committee:** Ilene Hyams reported that she, Damian Gregory, and Bill Collins will meet on Friday to interview people who applied for the County's internship program. Ronald Fulton spoke about the County giving stipend to people with disabilities to encourage more people with disabilities to apply. He mentioned a housing stipend but was not more specific. A question was raised about where the money would come from.

**Access- Transportation Committee:** Denise Valkema reported that Rita Kane, Manager of the Paratransit Operation, had come to local chapter of NFB and the CDTIC meeting. Ms. Kane was interested in concerns of Paratransit riders in using the fix route system. Ilene Hyams mentioned that she had called Mr. Bradley's office about the use of the Busway for Paratransit vehicles. She will continue to work with them concerning the use of the Busway. There was discussion on parking and it was suggested that DSAIL be invited for the next meeting to discuss their parking enforcement program. Ms. Valkema reported that the next RFP for Paratransit would be going out. There was discussion on the need for the preparation to be started by early 2008 so the contract process could be completed by 2010. It was suggested that CODI encourage Transit ton begin the process soon.

**Motion made by Denise Valkema and seconded by Damian Gregory: To encourage the Miami Dade Transit Agency to begin the pre RFP process by early 2008. Motion passes unanimously.**

There was further discussion about public events and STS. Ronald Fulton said that Metro Busses were able to come up to the entrance of the Miami Arena but the STS vehicles were not allowed. Damian Gregory asked if service wasn't supposed to be parallel. It was suggested that the question be brought to the next Riders meeting. Ms. Gantes mentioned a problem she experienced with STS when she had a person who is Blind and Deaf leaving her office. Tesla Waidner, who is the customer service manager for ATS, asked for more information about the incident so she could do a follow up.

**Membership Committee:** Marie Schmidt brought the name of Tesla Waidner to CODI for Commissioner Natacha Seijas seat.

**Motion made by Denise Valkema and seconded by John Miller: To forward the name of Tesla Waidner to Commissioner Natacha Seijas for her approval. The Motion was passed unanimously.**

**Housing Committee:** Mr. Fulton reported that he had met the new Miami Dade Housing Agency Director, Kris Warren. He spoke about the SurTax and the New Freedom Initiative. Ms. Dale Poster-Ellis, Housing Agency, mentioned that a Master Plan for housing was being written with recommendations from CASHA.

**Old Business:** Ilene Hyams reported that the invitations for the Resource Fair have gone out and there has

been a good response so far. The event will be April 11 from 9am to 3pm in the lobby of the Clark Building. Ms. McNally mentioned that the date had been changed to encourage more people to come since the kids are still in school and it is easier for some people to travel in cooler weather. Daniel Holder mentioned that 114 people applied for the Director's position. After the first round of interviews, Mr. Holder named the three people who were selected as candidates. The final interview will be with the Mayor and the Manger.

**New Business:** Daniel Holder reported on the GIS Side Walk Layer. He said it a computerized, graphical representation that can show such things as curb cuts and sidewalks. For people with disabilities, this would be invaluable to show accessible routes. When Public Works resurfaces a road they are required to put in curb cuts if they are not there. This would help to see where to put them and help them in responding to Access Hotline requests.  
**Motion by Ronald Fulton and seconded by John Miller: To encourage the County to fund the GIS Sidewalk Layer. The Motion passed unanimously.**

Ms. McNally reported that there still Election concerns. With the last election for a strong mayor, she noted some issues that centered on training of election precinct staff. It was suggested that later on in the year, CODI invite a representative of Elections to come to a CODI meeting.

Dr. Sam Kohlenberg reported that he had attended a Homelessness and Poverty Seminar. The seminar was for the entire day and extensively covered these subjects; he was very surprised that not a word was said about people with disabilities. There was some discussion and it was mentioned that in some areas people who are homeless and disabled are pushed towards nursing homes. It was suggested that we invite a member of the Homeless Trust to come to CODI. A question was asked about accessible housing and Daniel Holder explained the Fair Housing Law. For new housing, 4 or more units, the units must be adaptable. Doors are 32 inches and there is turn around for kitchens and bathrooms but you won't find grab bars or roll in showers. 2% of parking must be accessible and the common areas, lobby and rental offices must be accessible.

**Announcements:**

City of North Miami Beach now has an indoor spinning class –for upper and lower body exercise every Saturday and Wednesday at 10:00am.

National Association of ADA Coordinators- April 23-26 305-375-3566

Miami Lighthouse- Fair- February 23, 2007 9am – 12pm

“Getting to Know Your County Government” March 7, 2007 6pm-8pm 305-971-5091

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.