

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUE

June 13, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McNally, Chairperson, at 1:45 pm. Introductions were done. One item was added to the agenda: Mr. Wood speaking on access issues. The minutes from the May and March meeting were approved with two corrections: March: shadow performance is a mirror performance that can use several interpreters at once – May the word tool is corrected to toll. Mr. Miller made the motion and Ms. Larrieu seconded the motion.

Chairperson's Report: Ms. McNally has attended a variety of meetings: Riders- VOAID – AASPD. She and Denise Valkema attended training with the Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security. She also has been asked to be on the selection committee for RFP#450 – bus benches.

Employment Committee: Damian Gregory reported that Greg Elden is the 8th intern that has started at Miami-Dade County. Mr. Gregory asked Mr. Miller, an Intern, how his experience has been. Mr. Miller indicated that he has been very busy and waiting for an accommodation that ERD has purchased. Ilene Hyams also mentioned that Mr. Elden is also waiting for accommodations.

Access- Transportation Committee: Denise Valkema was not present; there is an item under Old Business that will be discussed.

Membership Committee: Marie Schmidt was not present but Elizabeth McNally gave the report. There was a membership meeting and it was the suggestion of the committee that Tesla Waidner's name be submitted to Commissioner Edmonson, District 3 (she will not be able to vote on any item concerning Paratransit) and Manoel Olivera's name to be presented to Commissioner Rolle in District 2.

MOTION: Made by John Miller and seconded by Marilyn Larrieu to recommend to Commissioner Edmonson, District 3, the name of Tesla Waidner and to recommend to Commissioner Rolle, District 2 , the name of Manoel Olivera. Motion passed. Ms. McNally encouraged everyone to see if they know anyone in Commissioner Seijas district that would be interested in participating in CODI.

Old Business: Ms. McNally spoke about the Access/Transportation new initiative concerning unavailability of assessable parking. She requested that the members vote to see if there is a consensus that the committee should continue their work. Ilene Hyams read the minutes from the accessible parking meeting. Discussion followed.

Motion made by John Miller and seconded by Marilyn Larrieu to encourage Access/Transportation the committee to continue studying this issue. Motion passed.

New Business:

Fred Shield and Carlos Delgado from Transit spoke about the Miami-Dade Transit buses. Mr. Shield reported that prior to the PTP small buses were used in residential areas however Transit soon learned that there were not as large cost savings as using larger buses. Transit had planned to buy three hundred 32 foot Optima buses but many new routes and feeder lines were in place the 32 foot buses were not as practical. Also because they were 99 inches wide rather than the larger buses which are 102 inches some wheelchair users found the smaller buses harder to maneuver. The good news is that they will only take possession of 75 Optima buses not all 300. Me. Gregory asked Mr. Shield why CODI's recommendations of a 102" bus were not taken. . Mr. Shield said his department had always recommended a larger bus with a low floor to be used by Transit but during the selection phase the recommendation to buy the smaller ones came from a selection committee made up of many non-transit people. He gave out a proposed bus procurement plan; he stressed it is only a plan and it depends on monies available. Proposed 2008 – 61 42 foot buses and 23- 60 foot buses total fleet of 979 by 2009 29 42 foot buses and 27 60 foot buses for a fleet of 1006.

Mr. Wood made a comment concerning Miami-Dade's policy of tie down. He said he preferred to ride in Broward since they give him the option of being tied down or not. He thought that the Transit administration treats riders with

disabilities as children. Mr. Wood asked about having seat belts on the three side seats that flip up which are designated for people with disabilities and the elderly. Mr. Shield indicated that he would take back to Transit that suggestion.

Mr. Shields spoke about trying to retire the Blue Bird buses which have rear door lifts; they are not due to retire until 2009 but Miami-Dade would like to see if they can be retired earlier based on mileage.

Ms. Maud Gonzalez spoke about the proposed rule making on transportation vehicles -CFR 49-Part 38; she gave out a packet and asked if CODI would like to have a change to comment on the proposed changes. She will come back next month to hear some of CODI's comments. The comments will be sent to the Access board.

Mr. Gregory made a comment on the PTP – people with disabilities were encouraged to participate and he would like to see people with disabilities participating at all levels and that would include selection committees.

Michael Amador-Gill, Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security, made a presentation on being preparation for various emergencies. This is the start of hurricane season and he stressed the need for people to prepare. He wanted everyone who thinks they might have greater needs because of their disability to register. So far only 2,000 people have register for the special need shelters. A power point presentation was presented. He sited several areas: preparing a family plan, emergency supplies, what to do with pets, generator safety, solid waste preparation, and registering with special needs register.

Mr. Wood said that after a storm there is a real problem for people with disabilities to get around because sidewalks often have debris. The Solid Waste department uses the sidewalks to get the trash off the street. He said that he was told that Miami Dade can't touch the debris until they get their money from FEMA. He wants to know what can be done about this.

Ms. McNally said that she would like to see a second list that OEM keeps which would be a list of people with disabilities that choose to stay at home but need some help after an emergency. She fears that if a person with a disability is not affiliated with an agency they would not get the help they need.

Ilene Hyams asked about efforts to ensure that people who are Deaf are getting the information they need.

Mr. Wood asked to speak. He will be speaking as an individual not as President of the Florida Paraplegic Association. He read a prepared statement highlighting all the access issues he has with the area around his home and business. Many of these access issues centered around parking, sidewalks, access in Title III business (Public Accommodations). He said that he has reported many of these violations to Miami Dade's code enforcement (Team Metro) but nothing is done. He is angry that many of the parking lots are re-striped or re-paved and they are not done properly. He feels that some ordinances need to be written to correct these issues. He said that he is now working with Commissioner Sorenson, District 8, to draft an ordinance concerning cars that park on the sidewalk blocking access. Ms. McNally suggested that when the ordinance was ready to come back to CODI because CODI might like to support the ordinance.

Mr. Martinez, ADA Coordinator from Public Works, reported that he has gone out with Mr. Wood to see what violations there are that Public Works has jurisdiction over and what they can correct. Mr. Wood sited a curb cut he wanted so he could cross to Publix rather than go to 136 street to cross however Mr. Martinez said that it was dangerous to put a curb cut there since the road curves and a driver would not see a person crossing or a person crossing would not see an approaching car.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Announcements:

CITT Committee Meeting- June 14 at 2:00pm – conference room on the 10th floor

“U R KNOT AONE” Cookout and Health Fair June 16 10:00 -2:00 North Dade Health Center – 16555 NW 25 Avenue 305-576-5001 *42

Talking Books Library 30th Anniversary - Main Library Auditorium 101 West Flagler Street June 16 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm -305-751-8687

Family Expo: The Children’s Trust June 30 – Jul 1 10am-6pm at Arnold Hall Miami –Dade County Fair and Expo grounds 305-421-6522

Community Resource Information Fair: VA Medical Center – 2nd floor – July 10th 10am-1pm

Disability Unity Day – CIL #11 Tropical Park 7900 SW 40 street 10:00-3:00pm July 20th – 305-751-8025 RSVP