

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUE

September 12, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McNally, Chairperson, at 1:40 pm. Introductions were done. The agenda was accepted. The minutes from the June and July meeting were approved.

Chairperson's Report: Ms. McNally has attended a variety of meetings: Riders- VOAID – AASPD and CIL. She and Denise Valkema attended the Transportation Disadvantage Conference in Orlando where they discussed with vendors the quietness of the Hybrid cars; the coloring of flooring in vans and the affect on service animals; and accessibility of software. She had written a letter to the Mayor concerning the funding of the Equal Opportunity Board. She had worked with the office of ADA Coordination in response to Mr. Wood's complaints and worked with AASPD concerning the available resources in the case of an emergency evacuation.

A presentation was made to Clara Gantes who will be leaving Miami to take an executive Director's position in South Carolina. A framed certificate of appreciation was given to her for all her hard working on support of people who are Deaf.

Employment Committee: Damian Gregory was absent due to illness but he asked that an item be brought forward. The item is to support the continuation of funding of the ADA Coordinator position within the Employee Relations department. Ilene Hyams read the prepared resolution to CODI. There was some discussion and it was suggested that the resolution include the idea that lawsuits are more likely to be adverted if this position continues.

MOTION: Made by Marilyn Larrieu and seconded by Jose Martinez to urge the County to continue to fund the ADA Coordination position within ERD. Motion passed.

Housing Committee: Ronald Fulton had asked the Office of ADA Coordination to find out about two housing issues. A general discussion followed.

MOTION: Made by Ronald Fulton and seconded by Jose Martinez for CODI to request that the Mayor schedule a public meeting on housing where the Mayor, HUD, and the Housing Agency would all participate. Motion passed.

Access- Transportation Committee: Elizabeth McNally reported for Denise Valkema. The committee is still doing research on how to better manage the disabled parking placard program. The committee had met with the Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security to discuss various questions so they could be incorporated into OEM&HS presentation to CODI. Ilene Hyams reported that she will be on the selection committee for the RFP for functional assessments. Ms. McNally had a few comments on feeder systems and hoped that the County wouldn't be going in that direction.

Membership Committee: Marie Schmidt reported that there was a membership meeting where Jose Granda's application was discussed and it was recommended that his application go to the full board for approval.

MOTION: Made by Marie Schmidt and seconded by Jose Martinez to recommend to Commissioner Carlos A. Gimenez, District 7, the name of Jose Granda. Motion passed.

Old Business:

Elizabeth McNally went over the recommendations on changes to the Bylaws. She suggested that CODI not address the one change to the Ordinance at this time. After some discussion a motion was made.

MOTION: Made by Jose Martinez and seconded by Marie Schmidt to accept all the changes to the CODI Bylaws. Motion passed.

New Business:

Mirtha Martinez from the Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security made a presentation to CODI and then took questions. She address items such as: why there is a special needs register, three types of shelters and numbers of each, what a person could expect when they go to various shelters, how is transportation coordinated, last minute caller, families staying together, and issues after a storm. She reported that by 2009 there should be full electricity at the two special needs shelters that would allow air conditioning and people who need continual oxygen

or people who use power chairs to go to those shelters. She talked about how EOM is set up during and after an emergency and the special needs mail box that she mans. She answered a variety of questions and brought with her a list of grocery stores that have their own generators and should be open after a storm passes. Jose Granda from Deaf Service Bureau brought up the issue of 311. I person who is Deaf can't use the 311 but needs to call the full 10 digit number. Ms. Martinez advised CODI that two oxygen kits have been ordered and hopefully be here before this hurricane season is over. These kits are used for people who use intermitted oxygen. She will look into a recommendation to OEM-HS for DEA personal to be used to pick up and deliver food to people who can't make it to the distribution centers. Her office will continue to work with CODI and the Office of ADA Coordination to address issues affecting people with disabilities before-during – after any emergencies. Discussion followed.

Rene Casellas reported to CODI that a small part of the new South Terminal has opened up. There were a few ADA issues but all issues are in the process of being addressed. Since CODI had a quorum, he asked if CODI would take a vote on whether they would support the Airport in their plan to change disabled parking. They would provide three free hours of meet and greet to everyone with disabled parking identification but after that everyone except cars with Florida Toll Exemption ID and cars with specialized equipment would be expected to pay for parking. There was some discussion. Mr. Wood said that he has some Commission support for an ordinance that would prohibit employees from parking in the public parking garages. He would also like to reduce the time a vehicle can park for free from 60 days to 30 days. A motion was made to table the discussion until more information was presented to CODI. Ilene Hyams suggested that both the Airport and Mr. Wood send their information to her and she would provide the information to CODI for the next meeting.

Mr. Wood, representing the Florida Paraplegic Association, spoke to CODI about the east parking lot at South Dade Government Center. Ilene Hyams had a portion of the site plans to show but Mr. Wood indicated that he would like CODI to see the entire site plan. Mr. Wood felt that the positioning of the parking was illegal and much too far for a person who uses a wheelchair to travel. He felt that instead of one long row of spaces the County should have used two areas. Mr. Wood asked that the discussion be tabled until a complete site plan is provided.

Mr. Dubin, representing the Center for Independence, spoke about the County's obligations in the event there is an emergency evacuation. Mr. Dubin is a former Department of Justice litigator. He presented a number of issues that he believes should be addressed by the Office of Emergency Management & Homeland Security and the County. He had email the County a series of questions that Ilene Hyams said she would provide to CODI after the County answers those questions and sends them to Mr. Dubin. He had a number of issues such as: what types of services and supplies are available at the general population shelters; how the Red Cross and the County train on disability issues; and is the County involving the disabled community in their planning? He believes that the only cross disability organization is the Center for Independent Living and asked the County to work with them. He was concerned that the special needs shelters didn't have accessible beds and were not air conditioned. He feels that the County hasn't followed the DOJ's July 26th guidance on emergency evacuation and indicated that, although it is guidance not technical assistance, he feels that the guidance should be followed and that any entities in contract with the County have responsible to follow those guidelines also. Over the last 18 months he had met with the Office of ADA as well as OEM& HS but he requested that CODI set up a meeting with the Mayor, Director of OEM and Director of the Office of ADA so he could ask them questions. Since the meeting had become very lengthy, there was no longer a quorum so no action was taken.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 p.m.