

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUE

December 12, 2007

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McNally, Chairperson, at 1:35 pm. Introductions were done. The agenda was accepted and the minutes for October 2007 were approved with no corrections.

Chairperson's Report: Ms. McNally has attended a variety of meetings: She attended the STS Oversight Committee. She spoke about two issues which were brought up: the possibility of extending the STS contract for another two years and the accessibility issue at the Clark Center which makes it difficult for some STS riders to find their way through the lobby to the security check. There will be further discussion at the next STS meeting concerning the extension. The ADA Office was asked to work with the building manager at the Clark Center to work out a solution to the security problem. She attended the Governor's Commission on Disability teleconference on transportation. There were several areas of interest coming out of that teleconference: a more regional approach to Transportation Disadvantaged and for Para-transit with a statewide data base being set up which would issue a state ID that could be used throughout the State; vouchers to people with visually impairments so they could locate their own transportation; placard and accessible parking. There are several more teleconferences scheduled and she expects to attend. She will contact the Chair of the committee and provide more accurate information on the transportation in Miami-Dade County. She also attended the Miami-Dade Assistive Technology Partner's meeting. They will have a conference in May and she will have flyers of the event at CODI's next meeting in January. Ms. McNally wasn't able to attend the AASPD meeting but Ilene Hyams reported that the committee is finalizing a disaster preparedness pamphlet for people with disabilities so they will have pertinent information before and after a storm. A discussion followed on security polices and practices in the County. Dr. Kohlenberg said that he feels that the security officers in the Clark Center need more training because they do a very cursory exam when they check him and never go below his knees with their wane. Mr. Wood said that he thought all the security should be taken away; although cameras aren't suppose to be allowed in certain government buildings, security officers have failed to take away his camera.

Nominating Committee: Dr. Kohlenberg presented the nominating committee's slate for 2008-2010. He was the Chairman and Denise Valkema and Ronald Fulton were committee members. The slate is:

Chairperson: Elizabeth (Betty) McNally

1st Vice Chair: Damian Gregory

2nd Vice Chair: Marie (Val) Schmidt

Secretary: Ronald Fulton

Ms. McNally reminded those present that at the January meeting other nominations will be accepted from the floor. The election will take place in January 2008.

Access- Transportation Committee: Denise Valkema reported that the letter going to the Governor concerning placards will go out very soon. Mr. Wood asked Ms. Valkema if she has seen the letter dated December 12 to the Honorable Dorrin D. Rolle and Members of the BCC Transit Committee from George Burgess. Ms. Valkema hadn't seen the letter since it was not yet distributed to the ADA staff and only was available at the 2:00 pm meeting of the BCC Transportation meeting. The letter outlined the assessment of the 136 and 52 bus routes and the remedy that will be taken to fix any violations of the ADA.

Old Business:

The Office of ADA Coordination was able to provide the plans for South Dade Government Center because their office is still working on the project. Mr. Wood was asked to explain his position to CODI concerning South Dade Government Center. He explained what he wanted was to have multiple accesses and wants multiple parking sites instead of a long line of accessibility parking. Thus is all on the east side of the building. He also feels that this all will lead to having the elevator taken away so people with disabilities will have a harder time accessing the building. There was discussion between Mr. Wood and those present. The Office of ADA read their position statement and it was further said that the old elevator was a freight elevator and that

was taken out but two new elevators have been provided. During the discussion Mr. Wood shouted and Ms. McNally said that if he wanted to continue he would have to refrain from yelling. Mr. Martinez from CODI said that discussion wasn't productive and if Mr. Wood felt that this configuration at South Dade Government Center was wrong then he could go to court. The discussion ceased on this topic. Ilene Hyams brought up the Fire Administration building. She reported that in order to obtain building plans a person will have to pay for the reproduction of the plans and also fill out a form for the Police stating the reason plans are requested. This process is part of the security procedure after 911.

New Business:

Ms. McNally introduced Phares Poliard from Elections to update CODI on the voting machines. He reported that for the January 2008 elections the Ivotronics will still be used however after that all machines in Miami-Dade County will use Optical Scan which is a paper-base system. But that system will not be accessible for people with vision impairments. By 2012 there is a mandate to make all machines have a paper-trail and also accessible. Discussion followed. Ms. McNally asked if Election knew about the Automark which is State certified, accessible, and provides a paper trail. The Automark is an upgrade of the Ivotronic system. He wasn't aware of that machine and didn't know if Elections had considered this machine. Ms. McNally thought it was discriminatory that sighted people would have the ability for paper-trail in 2008 and that people with visual impairments would have to wait until 2012. Jose Granda asked if a person who is blind and deaf could take another person with them to help them vote. Mr. Poliard said that a person could have someone help them; if the person is someone they know then a form must be filled out but if the person asked election staff to help them then a form isn't needed but two people are required to provide the help. Mr. Granda also mentioned that in some states they provide the Deaf community with a DVD in sign language explaining how to access the voting machine. Mr. Gregory echoed Ms. McNally's statement about not having equal treatment. There was discussion on provisional votes and it was clarified that the processes are different so the Ivotronics can be used both for regular voting and for provisional voting for people with access issues.

MOTION made by Damian Gregory and seconded by Denise Valkema to write to the Director of Elections expressing CODI's displeasure that people with disabilities will have to wait until 2012 to have accessible voting machines that produce a paper trail while other people will have that paper trail feature in 2008 and to ask if they considered the use of the Automark system which seems to be available now and able to provide the above mentioned features. The MOTION was passed unanimously.

Ms. Heidi Johnson-Wright spoke about the new strategic management tool used by the County. The system is called ActiveStrategy Enterprise (ASE) Software. This better tracks and manages projects and leads to more accountability based on their yearly goals. She went over some of the design projects: removal of accessibility barriers in 39 polling places, several Correctional projects, and several projects for Human Services. She also mentioned the special project to update our knowledge base in 311 after the review of 100 citizens' inquires concerning disability issues. The office will use the information to develop a more responsive system for citizens asking for technical assistance. Ilene Hyams gave a brief overview of her objectives and initiatives which mostly deal with training and support to CODI. She also indicated some of the committees that she and Ms. Johnson-Wright are involved with: Courthouse Accessibility Committee, Disability Independence Group, Association of Agencies Serving People with Disabilities, Taxi Advisory Board, Tri Rail Advisory Board, STS Oversight Task Force.

Ms. Johnson-Wright updated CODI on the revision of the Municipal Parking Fine Reimbursement Program. One of the projects that she has been working on since she came to the County is the simplification of the Municipal Parking Fine Reimbursement Program. The resolution has to be updated and brought to the BCC, this revision could allow the municipalities to sign an affidavit that would indicate that they will be using the monies the way it was intended. Once the revised resolution is passed by the BCC, the ADA office will publicize this to the municipalities so hopefully this will encourage more municipalities to apply for their

money and this should lead to greater enforcement. Ms. Johnson-Wright hopes that CODI can serve as a model to the municipalities that want to start advisory boards.

Ms. McNally mentioned that at the Retreat an item was brought up about the difficulty some people had with the bathroom doors. Some discussion followed. There was discussion about a motion to request that the bathrooms on the 18th floor of the Clark Center have electronic doors installed for easier access by people with disabilities. After more discussion the issue was tabled and CODI asked the Office of ADA Coordination to look into why 2 doors are required and if windows could be put in the doors so a person who is deaf would not be hit by a door they didn't hear was opening.

Ilene Hyams read the goals set at the November 2007 retreat. Ronald Fulton asked that CODI write to the Director of Housing and ask why Miami Dade Housing doesn't have any preferences when they determine their programs. Damian Gregory asked that CODI add evacuation out of high rises be added to the goals. He is especially interested in the evacuation of the Clark Center for people with disabilities. Ms. McNally requested that the reform of the Outreach Committee be included in the Goals and finally Damian Gregory asked that a goal be added that would help CODI members' better strategies way that they may better communicate with their Commissioners.

David Naiditch mentioned that he was trying to get a copy of the inter-local agreement between City of Miami Beach and the County to provide STS services for police emergencies. Ms. McNally suggested that he call Bruce Libhaber the attorney for the Miami-Dade Transit.

Rene Cassellas from the Miami International Airport was at the meeting. There was a question to him about where a Para-Transit vehicle may park in order to wait for an ATA rider. It was stated by a CODI member that Taxis have a line why can't STS vehicles? It was suggested that the STS vehicles might be able to park in the cell phone waiting area. He was going to discuss this further and bring this issue up at the next Airport Access meeting in January.

Announcements were read. Ilene Hyams mentioned that the Miami Dade Fire Rescue will participate in a special holiday celebration for 600 physically and mentally challenged students from Miami-Dade County Schools. Ms. McNally suggested that CODI writes a thank you for their involvement with children who are disabled.

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