

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES
September 22, 2010

The CODI Meeting was called to order by Ernie Martinez, Chairman at 1:39 pm. Introductions were done. Agenda was read and the August Minutes were approved with two corrections: Paul Edwards was excused and Mr. Miller requested that Mr. Martinez removed Mr. Miller's name from consideration when appointing a Chair for the Access Committee. **Attendance:** J. Martinez, J. Miller, J. David, S. Hix, A. Rigerman, S. Kohlenberg, R. Fulton, M. Olivera, D. Valkema, J. Granda and P. Edwards.

Access Committee: Mr. David reported that the committee discussed goals for the committee. He said that Ms. Hix would like to speak about park access later in the meeting. The Committee is in support of Miami Garden's Ordinance to set up a committee similar to CODI. The Access Meetings will be held every 2nd Thursday from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the Center for Independent Living, 6660 Biscayne Blvd., Miami, FL 33138.

Outreach/Education: Mr. David reported that the committee met yesterday and at the committee meeting they talk about employment and transportation. They also talked about the need to be educated on ADA violations and about the man who died after he was thrown from his unsecured wheelchair while traveling on STS. Dates for the meetings will be advertized on a month to month basis.

Transportation Committee: Ms. Valkema reported that Mr. Legra will instruct ATS reservationist to treat Election Day as a medical appointment ride. That means that pick up is flexible – can call to get an earlier or later pick up. in case the process takes longer or possibly a shorter time at the polls. It was asked how this will be announced to the public. She stated that people could request audio tapes of the Selection Committee meetings by contacting Mr. Wiggins from Procurement. She also said that anyone can request minutes from her committee meetings. Also discussed at the meeting was the County's No-Show Policy. The Transportation Committee would be having their meetings on the first Monday of the month from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. It was announced by Martha Cox from Transit that Mr. Legra was moved to Bus Operations and Mr. William Velez would be Acting Chief of Para-Transit. Ms. Hix said that there are still English language issues with the Para-Transit drivers. A question was asked of Ms. Valkema about the status of the RFP for Para-Transit; she said she had no further information since last month.

Housing Committee: Mr. Fulton reported that his committee was looking at enforcement and housing for very low income. Set-Asides were discussed. Ilene Hyams said that Mr. Rodriguez would be looking into this subject and would come back to the committee with information on how to proceed with this issue. There was discussion about a letter which was going to be developed. Mr. Martinez challenged the committee to think about other strategies besides writing letters; he suggested speaking to the Commissioners that oversee Housing. There was discussion as to how to proceed and finally the Chairman suggested that the issue go back to the committee to develop a plan. The next meeting will be October 6 at 1:00 pm at the ADA Office. Mr. Fulton said that the committee needs help and encouraged people to join the committee. A member of the audience asked who the members of the committee were. Much discussion followed. Mr. Fulton said he would address that at the next Housing Meeting.

Old Business: Mr. Martinez asked Mr. Edwards if there was an Employment Meeting. Mr. Edwards said that he only just found out that he was appointed as an acting chair and asked to be appointed as the chair so he might be able to move forward and call meetings. He asked why there was an acting chair for employment but all other committees had chairs that had been appointed. Mr. Martinez said that he was not ready to make the appointment at the meeting. **Motion was made by Mr. Edwards and seconded by Denise Valkema to have the issue of Chairman of the Employment Committee go through the nominating process.** There was some discussion and Ilene Hyams gave some historical information about Mr. Edwards; saying that a number of years ago Mr. Edwards was instrumental in helping the County hire and retain employees with disabilities. A report was written by a task force which included Mr. Edwards giving recommendations to the County; many of the recommendation that were made, which preceded the passage of the ADA, have been incorporated into the County's employment policies. One recommendation was to establish a reasonable accommodation fund. There was more discussion but the motion was never brought to a vote.

New Business: Mr. Martinez appointed Pedro Rodriguez and Sandra Hix as Co-Chairs to the Membership/Nominating Committee. Also on that committee are Dr. Kohlenberg and Marie Schmidt.

Mr. Martinez asked if anyone had a status report. Ilene Hyams reported that the second stairwell of the Clark Center would be pressurized but she didn't have any information on the other County Buildings. The pressurization would help if there ever was a fire-it would keep smoke from coming into the stairwells. Mr. Edwards was thinking that the stairwells were incorporated into the area of rescue. **A motion was made by Paul Edwards and seconded by John Miller to recommend to the County that there needs to be proper signage. The Motion passed 8 to 5.** There was general discussion about safety issues in the Clark Center as well as other tall buildings concerning the safe rescue of people with disabilities. It was asked that the Building Manager of the Clark Center be asked to come to the next Access Meeting.

Mr. Martinez asked if anyone had requested attendance through the phone. Ms. Hyams said that one person had made the request the day before and she was not able to secure the equipment in time for the meeting. Mr. Martinez asked if Ms. Hyams will send him those requests in the future. Ms. Hyams indicated she would if time allowed. Mr. Jackson said he would bring it up in the next Access Meeting.

Sabrina Bowan from the University of Miami was invited to speak about her program called South Florida Military Access Portals for Supports and Services. This organization helps military families with disabled children to access needed services.

Sandra Hix spoke about access at County Parks. She asked who signs off on accessibility items when there are special event at the parks. Ms. Binhack from Parks & Recreation spoke. She said that a permit was needed when an organization had a special event. They are given a packet of information which includes a site plan and an affidavit must be signed saying that they have complied with the County's requirements. Ms. Binhack and the Director sign off on special event affidavit. The Park Manager inspects the site before the event and often she also sees the set up. After the event is over, the Park Manager must review the event and state any problems. This is reviewed the next time the organization requests a permit. Mr. Rigerman said that at Palm Beach North Park they are having outdoor movies and asked her if she has seen their site plan. Ms. Binhack took down the information because she didn't know of the event. Ilene Hyams mentioned that Parks had come to CODI to review the packet and CODI had added language to include more information about people with visual limitations. Ms. Binhack responded to a question from Mr. Fulton, she explained the increase of Mobi Mats at Haulover Beach. Mr. Edwards asked if CODI could recognize Ms. Binhack's efforts over the years to make the Parks and Parks' programs accessible to people with disabilities. **A Motion was made by Ron Fulton and seconded by Paul Edwards asking the CODI Chairman to write a letter to the Director of Parks and Recreation commending Ms. Binhack. Motion passed unanimously.**

Mr. Martinez asked Ms. Hyams about the Marlins Baseball presentation in October. Ms. Hyams said that CODI had directed her not to have them come during a CODI Meeting so they are scheduled to come October 27 from 11:00 am to 12:30 pm, that meeting will be held on the 22nd floor. This isn't a CODI Meeting per say but CODI members as well as the public are invited. The next CODI Meeting will be October 27 from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm at the Clark Center on the 22nd floor.

Mr. Martinez brought up Transit and Election issues. Mr. Edwards said he could postpone the discussion on elections because of time restraints. Mr. Martinez asked about same day trips. It was said that it was not a requirement under the ADA but the County has always done same day trips for emergencies as a courtesy to the riders. Mr. Martinez asked if there was a written policy but no-one knew for sure. Mr. Martinez asked if it was advertized that the County would treat Election Day rides as doctor's appointments so there was flexibility in the pick-up time. Denise Valkema said that the County must approve all same day trips, so it probably is in the contract. Mr. Martinez recommended that same day trips- vouchers and transportation for victims of domestic violence. Mr. Miller said that the last issue was brought up in the last Transportation Meeting. It was decided that more information was needed and a call needed to be placed with Human Services to see how a non-disabled victim of domestic violence was transported. Ilene Hyams said it is very important to know more about the woman who was involved in a domestic violence incident who later said that a para-transit driver was telling people about her situation. Drivers are trained concerning their need for confidentiality and if this is a true situation the driver must be reprimanded or dismissed. Ms. Valkema stressed the need for people to approach her with transit concerns so she can develop an agenda and ask appropriate staff to attend the meetings.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm.