

Draft MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUES
October 28, 2009

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Damian Gregory at 1:40 pm. Introductions were done. Agenda and minutes for September 2009 were accepted.

Attendance: R. Fulton, D. Gregory, J. Martinez, J. Granda, A. Rigerman, D. Valkema, M. Olivera, S. Kohlenberg, and J. David.

Chairperson's Report: Damian Gregory reported that he was pleased that more people attended the Riders meeting this month and at least for now, Transit plans on continuing to have meetings every month through December. The next Riders meeting will be November 10th at 6 pm. He also reported that he expects the RFP for para-transit to go to the Commissioners in two weeks.

Chairman spoke at the Commission meeting concerning the urging of the State to postpone the use of paper receipts for IvoTronic users from 2012 to 2016. Two Commissioners voted to defer the vote but the item was passed. Chairman interrupted his report to allow Paul Edwards to address CODI. Mr. Edwards said he was concerned at how this item was handled by the County. Mr. Gregory said he was displeased that the item didn't go to CODI and that there was very little notice that the item would appear on the agenda of the County Commission. He also said that if the IvoTronic was felt not to be good to use without the use of a paper receipt then why are people with disabilities expected to use the IvoTronics without a paper receipt? Aren't their votes as important, he said. There are millions of dollars at the State level for use by Counties for voting expenses but so far the State hasn't released the money. The Chairman relinquished his gavel to Mr. Martinez so the Chairman could speak. He explained what he thought were the issues surrounding the vote and his personal opinion. He regained his gavel and more discussion followed.

Chairman reported that he would like to invite the Marlin's consultants to the next meeting of CODI if there has been any substantial progress to the ballpark. He also spoke about the Disability event that was held at Miami Beach. He thought the shadowing exercise at the event went well and encouraged CODI to sponsor a similar event with the County Commissioners next disability awareness month which is in October.

Transportation Committee: Denise Valkema reported that Transit has put the announcement of the Riders meeting on the para-transit hold line. She asked for feedback on the bus demonstration. Some felt the easy card tap area was too high but it was said that only in that type of bus was the driver's seat higher which made the tap area higher. Ron Fulton had a complaint concerning the turning radius in that particular bus. He also reported a lack of announcements near the north campus. Denise Valkema said that she will follow up with Harry Rackard, who said he would ride the bus with her to see some of the problems that seem to be continuing without getting resolved.

Housing Committee: Mr. Fulton brought up the subject of visitability. Mr. Howe from the ADA Office explained that there are three factors to visitability: zero step entry, wide doors, and ½ bath which can be either made accessible or adaptable. Of course, these are very general accessibility ideas and communities can do more. It was reported that the Office of ADA Coordination was just beginning to study visitability as an initiative. Also it was a 2009 initiative for the Governor's Commission on Disability.

New Business:

Airport consultants came to CODI to give a presentation on improvements to the access routes from the curb at the terminals to the parking garages. Both ground floor and concourse floor (2nd floor) will be done. In all, 25 access routes will be improved. Lighting also will be added over the ground floor access routes (cross walks). There was discussion on the use of tactile warnings and it was said that although the warnings can be uncomfortable for a person using a wheelchair for a person who is blind it is a matter of life or death. There was discussion on the white cross walk strips and it was suggested to the consultants that they might look into reducing the thickness of them so people using wheelchairs and other devices might not have discomfort going over them. Signage was also brought up and the consultant said he would take back their ideas to the Airport. It was mentioned that the Airport has an access committee which meets 4 times a year on the third Wednesday of the month. Chairman encouraged anyone interested to attend the meetings.

Chairman and CODI agreed to combine November and December meetings and have one either on the first or second Wednesday in December.

Chairman said that he would appoint a nominating committee to bring a slate of officers to the December meeting. He asked for CODI members to volunteer for this assignment.

Old Business:

Motion made by Denise Valkema and seconded by Jose Martinez to write a letter to the Commissioners expressing its great displeasure that the Commission urges the State to postpone until 2016 receipts for people with disabilities who use the Ivotronic voting machine. Further more it sends a shocking message that votes of people with disabilities are less important than anyone else's vote. Motion passed. Ron Fulton made a motion to make a resolution as part of the letter it was seconded by Jose Martinez and it was passed. (CODI has no authority to write a resolution). Chairman suggested that the letter go to the Intergovernmental Affairs which is the County's lobbyists. (The legislative package has already gone to Tallahassee – also they are not the decision makers as to what goes into the legislative package) (ADA's recommendation is for people to write to their own state legislators). Chairman assigned the writing of the letter to the Access Chairman but will take ownership of this assignment to be sure that it will get done.

Ilene Hyams discussed the changes in the CODI Bylaws. **Motion was made by Alan Rigerman and seconded by Ron Fulton to approve the revised CODI Bylaws. Motion passed unanimously.**

ADA Office: Heidi Johnson-Wright, the Director of the office of ADA Coordination, reported they are finalizing the accessible parking report. The office hopes that the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners will approve the sending of the report to the State and urge the State to use the recommendations in the report to revise the placard system. Ms. Johnson-Wright said that the placard initiative will be a 2 year process involving lobbying the State Legislature.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:05pm.