

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUE

March 26, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McNally, Chairperson, at 1:40 pm. Introductions were done. The agenda was accepted with a correction to the agenda: Marie Schmidt rather than Maria Schmidt. Ms. McNally stated that she will take items of the agenda out of order. The minutes for February 2008 were approved.

New Business:

Carmen Moctezuma from the City of Miami's Department of Parks and Recreation presented a new program for people with disabilities. She reported that for 35 years the City has had programs for people who are developmentally disabilities but now they have tennis, basketball, and racing for people who use wheelchairs. They also have bought 4 tandem bikes. A question was asked about accessible beaches; Ms. Moctezuma reported that Virginia Key has an accessible beach with 2 wheelchairs that are able to go in the water. It was also mentioned that Miami Beach and Miami-Dade County both have accessible beaches with specialized equipment. Ms. McNally stated that North Miami Beach has recreation programs for people who are disabled and invited Ms. Moctezuma to their next meeting at the City of North Miami Beach.

Mr. Rigerman spoke about issues centering around disabled parking. He wanted CODI to know that he will be working with Commissioner Seijas' office to get a sticker placed on the baby stroller signs that would indicate that they also can be used by people with disabilities. Ms. Leslie from the Miami-Dade Airport felt that would be a good idea since they also have problems with people with disabilities being harassed for uses those spaces.

Ana Rabosa from the Internal Revenue Service spoke about initiatives that her agency is doing specifically with people with disabilities. They have partnered with the National Disability Institute and Vista volunteers specially trained to do tax preparation for people with disabilities. In 2006 they did 17,000 free tax preparations in Miami-Dade County which was a 330% increase from the year before. They are in 100 US cities and also do financial literacy and asset building. They focus on the Earned Income Credit and help the person use the credit prudently. A question was asked about the 2008 stimulation refund from the Federal government. We were told that the checks will be mailed out in a schedule based on the primaries wage earner's last two digits of their social security number. For an individual who make less than \$75,000 a \$600 check will be sent for individuals making more than \$75,000 a reduced check will be mailed, a married couple with less than \$150,000 will receive \$1,200 and with more than \$125,000 a reduced check will be sent. Children less than 17 years old will receive \$300. People who only receive SSI and no other income will not receive a check. To get a complete overview of this you can call 1800-829-1040. The City of Sweetwater and FIU will sponsor a tax preparation event on March 29th from 10:00 am- 1:00pm at 250 SW 114 Avenue. She encouraged people to call 311 to get more information on events. Pamphlets and information were given out.

Robert Thompson from the Commission on Ethics and Public Trust did training for the CODI board. He covered the Florida Sunshine Law, Florida Public Records Act, and Miami-Dade County Conflict of Interest and Code of Ethics Ordinance. There were questions throughout his training most were answered but for a few he will have to do some research and the get back to CODI later. If anyone would like to have his information in text, please call Ilene Hyams at the ADA Office 305-375-2012.

Old Business

Ms. McNally reported that the County would be going to "Smart Cards" on fix route by 2009 and a letter will be going out to STS riders that they will have to be recertified as part of the "Smart Card" process which will have the cards being used by STS riders by 2010.

Mr. Gregory mentioned that there will be a Taxi cab meeting on April 7 at 2:00 pm at 140 West Flagler Street and a Taxi workshop on April 23 at the Commission chambers from 9:30 – 1:00 pm.

Ilene Hyams read a list of exhibitors who have signed up for the April 9th CODI resource fair. She asked if anyone had any other organizations that should be contacted. Ms. McNally asked those present which hours they would like to man the CODI table: Marie Schmidt and Damian Gregory will do mid morning –Denise Valkema will do 9:00-1:00pm and Ronald Fulton will do noon until 2:00 pm. Sam Kohlenberg has federal jury duty so he isn't sure of his schedule.

Announcements were read.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.