

MINUTES
COMMISSION ON DISABILITY ISSUE

July 23, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Elizabeth McNally, Chairperson, at 1:35 pm. Introductions were done. The agenda and the minutes were accepted.

Chairperson's Report: Ms. McNally reported that she attended the National Federation of the Blind convention in Dallas. She also attended an STS Oversight Taskforce meeting where Commissioner Rolle requested the meeting be adjourned so he would study the issues more carefully. He scheduled a follow-up meeting on August 12th where the same agenda will be addressed. Ms. McNally also expects to attend the ADA Celebration event sponsored by the Center for Independent Living.

Old Business: Ilene Hyams read the email she received from Lieutenant Naranjo concerning County Ordinance 30-292 –stopping, standing, or parking in specific places. He said the Legal Bureau has distributed to all the officers last month explaining this ordinance and how to enforce it. She also addressed the 18th floor water fountains: there are two and one is accessible. Mr. Wood asked that there be signage at the inaccessible fountain indicating where the accessible fountain is located. The Office of ADA has asked Transit to relocate the STS Drop off Sign outside the building to make it compliant. Ms. Hyams also addressed whether the South Miami High School has an accessible bathroom. She spoke with Auguste Nichleau the Director of Division Facilities ADA Compliance who told her that there was access to an accessible bathroom and even a accessible shower. She also reminded those present that Miami Dade Housing still is accepting applications for Public and Section 8 housing. Jose Granda had an announcement – There will be a roundtable discussion as part of a regular scheduled Florida Coordinating Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing quarterly meeting on August 7 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm at the Embassy Suites, Miami Airport. One can access the meeting by conference call. Call Ilene Hyams for details.

New Business: Ms. McNally said members to call Ms. Hyams if they would be available for the August CODI meeting, She and the Vice Chair will be out of town.

There were some questions raised about para-transit. Ms. McNally gave some historical background about the program. Ms. Kane, Manager of Para-transit, was present to answer questions that were brought up. Ms. Kane reported that the ¾ mile buffer information has now been overlaid onto the Trapeze system. People who have a subscription are still able to make the trip even if they are outside the range but riders without subscriptions are having trips denied if they are outside or going outside the ¾ mile range. She said that she didn't need to get Commission approval or to have brought this issue to CODI since it has always been their policy but up until now there wasn't the technology that would let them know when a trip would fall outside the ¾ area of service. They did get a directive from a Commissioner to stop service to Broward and only provide the one trip to STS users that one can make on fix route from Miami Dade County to a Broward location. Transit will go before the Commission in order to get authorization for rules governing para-transit guidelines. Damian Gregory felt that there wasn't proper notification concerning the change in complying with the ¾ of a mile area. Ms. Kane gave some statistics as to the raise in rider-ship and cost. Some specific trip denials were brought up by various people; people that had come to rely on the service for many years. She said that twice last month the daily riders were 8,000 trips in one day. For 1.6% boarding of all transit rides it cost 12.11% of budget. Dr. Kohlenberg asked Ms. Kane about where para-transit gets its budget; he was told that some comes out of the general funds, which is experiencing a shortage. Ms. Kane also said that if urban development boundaries expand then their area of service will also expand. She also said that the uses of companion seats are up to 25% and they can only charge what a rider will pay. By ADA requirements, Personal Care Attendant ride free but they may charge for companions. Ms. McNally complained that doctors are either not doing or are charging a fee to fill out para-transit applications. Ms. Kane said that it is imperative that they receive documentation of a disability and she would suggest the rider contact the Dade County Medical Association to report this problem.

The meeting was moved to the lobby of the building so CODI members could get a demonstration of the new smart card system.

