



Miami-Dade County

**Minutes**

**Commission on Disability Issues (CODI)**

*Stephen P. Clark Center (SPCC)*

*111 N.W. 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami, Florida 33128*

*21<sup>st</sup> Floor, Conference Room C*

	<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday, October 24, 2012	
	<b>Time:</b>	1:30– 4:00 p.m. est.	
	<b>Call to Order Time:</b>	1:55 p.m. est.	
	<b>Meeting Adjourned:</b>	4:05 p.m. est.	
<b>I.</b>	<b><u>Opening and Attendance:</u></b> Attendance recorded. Call to Order. Copies of documents were distributed		
	District 1 <b>Commissioner Jordan</b>	<b>John Miller</b> 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice Chair	<b>Absent</b>
	District 2 <b>Commissioner Monestime</b>	<b>Jackson David</b> Access Committee Chair	Excused Absence
	District 3 <b>Commissioner Edmonson</b>	<b>Jose Granda</b>	Present
	District 4 <b>Commissioner Heyman</b>	<b>Earl Oaks</b> Employment Committee Chair	Excused Absence
	District 5 <b>Commissioner Barreiro</b>	<b>Jose (Ernie) Martinez</b> CODI Chairman	Present
	District 6 <b>Commissioner Sosa</b>	<b>Pedro Rodriguez</b> Housing Committee Co-Chair	<b>Absent</b>
	District 7 <b>Commissioner Suarez</b>	<b>Harry Horgan</b> Outreach/Education Chair	Excused Absence
	District 8 <b>Commissioner Bell</b>	<b>Jesus Garcia</b> CODI Secretary and Transportation Committee Chair	Excused Absence
	District 9 <b>Commissioner Moss</b>	<b>Ronald Fulton</b> 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair	Present 2:11
	District 10 <b>Commissioner Souto</b>	<b>Dr. Sam Kohlenberg</b> Membership Committee Chair	Excused Absence
	District 11 <b>Commissioner Martinez</b>	<b>Denise Valkema</b>	Present 2:00
	District 12 <b>Commissioner Diaz</b>	<b>Marilyn Larrieu</b> Housing Committee Co-Chair	Present
	District 13 <b>Commission Bovo</b>	<b>Alan Rigerman</b>	Present
	<b>Miami-Dade County Staff Present</b>	<b>Dianne Steinberg</b> ISD, Administrative & Business Services Division Recording Secretary  <b>Heidi Johnson-Wright</b> ISD, ADA Coordinator	Present   Present

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		<p><b>Lynnette Chiverton</b> MDT Operations Division Coordinator</p>	<p>Present</p>
<p><b>II.</b></p>	<p><b>Approval of Agenda</b></p>	<p>CODI Chairman Ernie Martinez made a motion to approve the 10/24/12 agenda, but there was no quorum.</p>	
	<p><b>Approval of CODI Minutes</b></p>	<p>There was no quorum at this meeting therefore previous meeting minutes were not approved during this session.</p>	
<p><b>III.</b></p>	<p><b>Opening Comments</b></p>	<p>Julie Ann Liberty spoke to CODI regarding the State of Florida Unemployment Insurance Skills Readiness Evaluation administered to anyone applying for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Ms. Liberty was concerned that it could be used as a means of discouraging applicants who had not completed their education.</p> <p>Tim Werner, Advocacy Committee Chair for the Paralyzed Veterans of America, Florida Association advised of the recent changes of the State of Florida Unemployment Insurance Program to a Re-employment Program, implemented under Governor Scott, a program for getting people back to work. He added that the Skills Readiness Evaluation, a literacy test, is available in over 30 languages and consists of math, reading comprehension, and other subjects. It consists of four questions, with no time limit and the use of a calculator is permitted. Alan Rigerman inquired about how people with learning disabilities such as dyslexia are accommodated.</p> <p>Jose Granda noted that people in the deaf community are required to provide a letter with a doctor’s signature as proof of disability entitlement. Additionally, some in the community apply for Social Security Insurance and Unemployment Insurance benefits simultaneously.</p> <p>Chairman Martinez advised that this item will be reviewed by the CODI Access Committee because although it is a State of Florida issue, it affects the County workforce. ISD ADA Coordinator Heidi Johnson-Wright clarified that this is a State of Florida regulated program and that Miami-Dade County does not have jurisdiction over such programs.</p>	
<p><b>IV.</b></p>	<p><b>Information Items</b></p>	<p><i>3 minutes each speaker (Advance Notice Preferred)</i> <i>No public comments at this time</i></p> <p><b>A. June McMahon, President, Florida Association of the Deaf (FAD)</b></p> <p>Ms. McMahon made a presentation to CODI. She has lived in Florida for 10 years, is on the Board of Directors of Gallaudet University of Washington DC and is involved in many organizations in support of the deaf community. She attended Gallaudet University in Washington then resided in Connecticut for 30 years, working for the American School for the Deaf as a teacher and associate principal. Since moving to Florida nine years ago she has taught deaf and hard of hearing children in Broward and Palm Beach County, retiring three years ago. Ms. McMahon now volunteers on behalf of the deaf</p>	

community.

FAD is a state-wide organization whose Mission Statement is “To promote, protect and preserve the rights and quality of life of Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals in the state of Florida”.

There are 15 affiliated organizations under the umbrella of FAD. Ms. McMahon said that affiliated chapters of FAD include Broward, Palm Beach, Jacksonville, Collier, N. E. Florida, Tampa, St. Petersburg counties. FAD also works with the Florida, Association of Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and Interpreting Agencies throughout the state. They also have representatives on the Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

The FAD website is [www.fadcentral.org](http://www.fadcentral.org). There are different levels of membership throughout the state. People can join as individual members only \$20 a year. Also included is Ezine-sign up, a calendar of all events, a list of the Bylaws, Officers and Board member’s, Deaf Resource list, and links to organizations that are advocates for the Deaf. Individual membership benefits include reduced admission to events, voting privileges during the conference, eligibility to run for office, and a one year free membership to high school seniors to encourage young people to get involved. There are also video blogs posted on the website.

Ms. McMahon discussed the school for the Deaf and Blind in St. Augustine, Florida. She stated that 80 percent of deaf children go to local school, near home, a reversal from the past, when they used to attend schools for the Deaf, located much farther away.

She spoke about the changes in technology. People in the deaf community previously used the TTY but now many have advanced to video phones. They have a video relay service that supports the organization and all its events. FAD has been involved with the following issues:

- **Advocating for Interpreting Services in medical settings:** FAD encourages deaf people to have cards with interpreter services information. In order for some hospitals to provide appropriate interpreters they sometimes bring in VRI (screen with an interpreter). However, if the deaf or hard of hearing person is viewing the VRI from certain positions (lying down), this can present a problem. Appropriate Interpreter Services needs to be available, if needed.
- **Educating the legal field on working with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.** Recently there was a lawyer/interpreter in the Legal Aid Program helping the deaf community in Jacksonville with insurance companies, such as Humana, which were refusing to accept telephone calls through the VRS and would only use a TTY, advising the interpreter they would not speak with the deaf person. In addition, the Council for the Deaf is now handing out a video on how law enforcement officials should handle deaf

		<p>individuals in the process of being placed under arrest.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Attend the Summit on Childhood Deafness</li><li>▪ Attended meetings to advocate for parents who want American Sign Language in their children’s Individual Education Plan</li><li>▪ Attended the Deaf Nation Expo</li><li>▪ Send representatives to the National Association of the Deaf Leadership Conference and the National Association of the Deaf Conference</li><li>▪ Deaf Awareness Week</li><li>▪ Work with the Florida Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf in Emergency training</li><li>▪ Work on legislation that benefit deaf and hard of hearing people</li></ul> <p>A discussion ensued regarding cochlear implants. Ms. McMahon explained that these implants do not make a deaf child magically a child with normal range hearing. She explained that people hear general ambient noise, but can continue to have problems with voices. After working with deaf children for 35 years, she advised that some implants are a success and some recipients need to use sign language.</p> <p>She encouraged people to become a member of FAD, join a committee, volunteer, be an advocate for themselves and other deaf and hard of hearing people in the community, be involved in the local affiliate or organization and support Deaf Service Centers. Ms. McMahon added that continued focus needs to be on the prison system and hospitals.</p> <p>Ms. McMahon stated that FAD is working on the following legislation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Deaf and Hard of Hearing Bill of Rights.</li><li>▪ Telecommunication (TASA) Bill-add wireless to the Florida</li><li>▪ Interpreting Licensure.</li></ul>
		<p><b>B. Miami Dade Transit (MDT)</b></p> <p><b>Para Transit STS Riders Guide</b></p> <p>Chairman Martinez reported that the CODI Transportation Committee completed its review of the STS Riders Guide and it has been approved.</p> <p><b>English Proficiency of STS Drivers</b></p> <p>Ron Fulton inquired how MDT tests STS drivers for proficiency. Lynnette Chiverton, MDT Operations Division Coordinator said that MDT should be advised if English Proficiency is an issue.</p> <p><b>Seven Point Tie-Down System (Orange Belt)</b></p> <p>Chairman Martinez recommended that STS riders should be made aware that the Orange Strap is not mandatory but optional and that signage should be developed for inside the wheel chair vehicles. Ms. Johnson Wright added that there are riders that request to use the</p>

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		<p>Orange Strap.</p> <p>Lynnette Chiverton, MDT Operations Division Coordinator added that the new contract calls for vehicles not older than 6 years. Chairman Martinez stated that new vehicles will be included in the Transportation Committee Agenda. Ms. Chiverton advised that MDT is utilizing TRAPEZE to ensure they are using the vehicles to capacity. MDT is beginning to run reports on clients and cars; they are addressing comments from riders. She advised that the next STS item on the BBC Agenda will come before the Board in November 2012.</p>
		<p><b>Committee Assignments</b></p> <p>Chairman Martinez advised that there is a vacancy for the Chair of the CODI Housing Committee.</p>
		<p><b>Adjournment:</b> Motion was made by CODI Chairman Martinez at 4:05 p.m.</p> <p><b>Next Meeting:</b> Wednesday, November 28, 2012.</p>