



Miami-Dade County

Commission on Disability Issues (CODI)
Stephen P. Clark Center (SPCC)
111 N.W. 1st Street, Miami, Florida 33128
18th Floor, Conference Room 18-4

	Date:	Wednesday, May 28, 2014	
	Time:	1:30 – 4:00 p.m. est.	
	Call to Order Time:	1:43 p.m. est.	
	Meeting Adjourned:	4:01 p.m. est.	
I.	Opening and Attendance: Attendance recorded. Call to Order. Copies of documents were distributed		
	District 1 Commissioner Jordan	Damian Gregory 1 st Vice Chair, Employment Committee Chair	On Conference call Present
	District 2 Commissioner Monestime	Jackson David Housing Committee Chair	Present
	District 3 Commissioner Edmonson	Jose Granda Access Committee Chair	Present
	District 4 Commissioner Heyman	Earl Oaks Housing Committee Chair	Present
	District 5 Commissioner Barreiro	Jose (Ernie) Martinez CODI Chairman	Present
	District 6 Commissioner Sosa	Pedro Rodriguez	Present
	District 7 Commissioner Suarez	Harry Horgan Outreach/Education Chair	Present
	District 8 Commissioner Bell	Jesus Garcia CODI Secretary and Transportation Committee Chair	Excused Absence
	District 9 Commissioner Moss	Ronald Fulton 2 nd Vice Chair	Present
	District 10 Commissioner Souto	Vacant Appointment
	District 11 Commissioner suppoto	Vacant Appointment
	District 12 Commissioner Diaz	Marilyn Larrieu Housing Committee Co-Chair	Present
	District 13 Commission Bovo	Alan Rigerman	Present
	Miami-Dade County Staff Present	Dianne Steinberg ISD, Recording Secretary Heidi Johnson-Wright ISD, ADA Coordinator Skarlex Alorda ISD, ADA Office Support Specialist II Penelope Townsley , Supervisor of Elections, Miami-Dade County Elections Department Julio Martinez PWWM, ADA Coordinator William Velez , Chief Bus Operations Paratransit Operations, MDT	Present Present Present Present Present Present

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II.	Approval of Agenda	Chairman Martinez requested a motion to approve the agenda for May 28, 2014 Harry Horgan made the motion; Jackson David seconded it. Motion passed unanimously. MOTION: A motion was made to amend the agenda to include Penny Townsley, Supervisor of Elections. Ron Fulton made the motion; Jose Granda seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.
III.	Approval of CODI Minutes	Chairman Martinez requested a motion to approve the April 23, 2014 CODI meeting minutes. Motion made by Allen Rigerman and Ron Fulton seconded it. Motion passed unanimously.
IV.	Open Comments	3 minutes each speaker (Advance Notice Preferred) No public comments at this time
		1. Pedestrian Crossings - Alan Rigerman Alan Rigerman raised the issue of a pedestrian school crossing located at Citrus Grove Middle School at Miami Gardens, Florida and motor vehicle drivers not allowing the children to utilize the crosswalk. Additionally, Mr. Rigerman suggested that during the next Board of County Commissioners (BCC) legislative session, a resolution be proposed related to pedestrian crossings and motorists being prohibited from approaching within 3 feet of a pedestrian or bicyclist.
		2. ADA Office Updates - Heidi Johnson-Wright Ms. Johnson-Wright introduced Skarlex Alorda, the recently hired ISD, ADA Office Support Specialist. Ms. Alorda will be assuming the CODI administrative support duties currently being provided by Dianne Steinberg, ISD Recording Secretary and by Ms. Johnson-Wright. Ms. Johnson-Wright added that Ms. Alorda will be the administrative liaison for all e-mail correspondence previously forwarded from Ms. Johnson-Wright to the CODI Board members. Additionally, Ms. Johnson-Wright introduced Michelle Molina, a graduate student completing her urban fellowship/internship with the ISD, ADA Office. Ms. Molina will be assisting during the next two months in developing a system/database related to issues concerning the disability community.
		3. MDT, Paratransit, Special Transportation System (STS) Issues Ronald Fulton said that at the May 20, 2014 BCC Commissions meeting, Mr. David New presented concerns regarding Special Transportation Service (STS). Commissioner Rebeca Sosa recommended these issues should be reviewed at the Transportation and Aviation Committee which is chaired by Commissioner Dennis Moss. Ms. Johnson-Wright stated that the ADA Office has not been contacted by Mr. New regarding this matter. Chairman Martinez cautioned CODI that Mr. New was not currently in attendance to comment on his concerns and the discussion should be deferred. Bill Velez said that STS will be responding to Mr. New's concerns related to STS safety, scheduling and technology devices. He added that Paratransit immediately removes from service any vehicle experiencing safety issues.

		<p>Ron Fulton said that Mr. New also raised STS driver English proficiency issues. He added that PTRD has confirmed a study is being conducted to determine the necessary proficiency level. Mr. Velez explained that PTRD currently requires a Grade 3 proficiency level for licensure of STS drivers.</p> <p>Chairman Martinez stated that the next CODI meeting will include discussions on the issue of PTRD language proficiency levels and Joe Mora, PTRD, William Velez, Paratransit and David New will be invited to provide information to the Board.</p>
	<p>Information Items</p>	<p>Committee Reporting</p>
		<p>1. <u>Outreach and Education Committee (Harry Horgan, Chairman)</u></p> <p>Harry Horgan provided an update on the upcoming 24th Anniversary ADA Event scheduled for Thursday, July 24, 2014 at Miami-Dade College at the Wolfson Campus, Chapman Room #3210. The celebration will commence at 9:00 a.m. and continue through 11:30 a.m.</p> <p>Mr. Horgan said the CODI Outreach and Education Committee met prior to this meeting with Miami-Dade College staff to organize the ADA event. The theme of the ADA event is comprised of five elements: technology, education, recreation, communication and community. A panel discussion with leaders in these sectors will begin at 10:00 a.m. The focus of the event will be to improve independence and quality of life among the disabled community.</p> <p>Chairman Martinez will be the Master of Ceremony. The Outreach Committee is hopeful of acquiring a broadcast announcer to be the moderator of the event. Mayor Gimenez, Miami-Dade County and Mayor Regalado, City of Miami will also be attending.</p> <p>Miami-Dade College will be highlighted for their leadership as one of the most accessible colleges in the United States. Community outreach will be provided by organizations such as “Waving Hands” which has a resource center for children in the deaf community; the Brain and Spinal Cord Program administered by the State of Florida, the Association of Agencies (AOA), and Goodwill Industries.</p> <p>Mr. Horgan will be attending the World Disabled Sailing Championships in Halifax, Nova Scotia in August 2014. As part of this Shake-a-Leg trip, Mr. Horgan will be situated in New York Harbor on a 60 foot catamaran boat specifically designed for people with disabilities on this same day as the ADA event.</p> <p>It is anticipated that these two events will be televised on social media with the focus on Ellis Island in New York Harbor and the Freedom Tower in Miami. The emphasis will be on the access that was provided to immigrants arriving in the United States in hope of realizing the “American Dream” and access which is essential today for people with disabilities to be empowered with those same opportunities.</p>

2. **Access Committee: (Jose Granda, Chairman)**

a) **Election Polling Stations & Restroom Accessibility - Penny Townsley, Supervisor of Elections, Elections Department, Miami-Dade County**

Penny Townsley, Miami-Dade Supervisor of Elections, thanked CODI for including her on the agenda today. Ms. Townsley addressed CODI on the issue of the use of restroom facilities by voters at polling stations. She stated that incorrect information was provided at a University of Miami meeting and advanced through the County Attorney's Office to the Elections Department. The incorrect information indicated that the Elections Department had no authority over the accessibility of some polling places, i.e. private facilities, and subsequently had adopted a policy to prohibit the public from utilizing restrooms situated at polling stations. She clarified that this has never been a policy of her department nor would this practice be tolerated. She reiterated that all voters are entitled to have access to restroom facilities at polling stations on Election Day. She said that the Elections Department to date has not received any complaints from voters regarding availability of restrooms.

Ms. Townsley added that Federal and State law requires that the Election Department ensure that all polling station facilities are ADA compliant as specifically related to access to the polling room and access to the election ballot. The Elections Department is fully ADA compliant at all polling facilities.

However, Ms. Townsley explained that the Election Department does not have authority over ADA compliance at polling sites located in churches and schools. The majority of these facilities are privately owned and governed by federal regulations. Some of the newly built churches in the County are ADA compliant; however, some of the older churches are not. The restrooms in these facilities are accessible for all voters. Whether the restrooms are ADA compliant is dependent on the individual facilities.

The possible use of portable restrooms being provided at polling places was discussed. Ms. Townsley said the sheer number of portables that would be needed would be challenging to assemble, but the County is researching this possibility. Although restroom access is not a requirement in the carrying out of an election, the priority of the Elections Department is to ensure that no voter has to wait in line for an extended period of time. "Waiting in Proxy," a policy which allows a surrogate to stand in line for the disabled voter, is currently in available.

Due to the complexity of the issue, Ms. Townsley consulted with agencies including the State of Florida, the County Attorney's Office and the DOJ to establish a policy on the matter of extended wait times in voting lines at polling places for elderly residents and disabled individuals. Consequently, the Election Department will be introducing a new early voting policy. Voters will be able to schedule an appointment for early voting a month prior to the start of early voting and will conclude at the end of the first week of early voting. A declaration form must be completed by all participants. The new early voting policy is as follows:

The Miami-Dade County Elections Department is implementing a policy for early voting whereby voters, who require assistance i.e. elderly residents and disabled individuals, will be permitted to call the Elections Department and schedule their appointment and to select a date, time and location at a

		<p><i>Polling Station most convenient for them.</i></p> <p>Ms. Townsley said that the Elections Department has simulated the voting process and determined that it should not take longer than (15) fifteen minutes to complete when utilizing this “appointment process”, which is available for the duration of Early Voting only. The Elections Department is also developing a policy that is the similar to the “<i>Waiting in Proxy</i>” for use on Election Day.</p> <p>The Election Department is required to provide bilingual Interpreters at all polling places. Ms. Townsley added that State law identifies schools as facilities that must be made available for use as polling places and also must be situated within specific geographic and political boundaries. However, due to the Jessica Lunsford Act, many schools are reluctant to allow voting at their facilities. In addition, the County based on the demographics of the area. Additionally, alternate parking locations have been identified for poll workers in order to provide more parking spaces for voters.</p> <p>Ms. Townsley said that in order to reduce voter fraud in assisted living facilities and nursing homes, Election Department provided training for facility administrators/staff in addition to educational credits.</p> <p>She recommended voters examine the sample ballot ahead of time and added that every voter should also take responsibility and not allow anyone access to their ballot.</p>
		<p>b) Hurricane Preparedness and Hurricane Evacuation Centers (HECs)</p> <p>Jose Granda raised concerns regarding the follow-up issues raised by CODI at the February 26, 2014 CODI meeting which included discussions with Office of Emergency Management (OEM) staff regarding hurricane preparedness matters affecting the disabled community. It was suggested that OEM staff be invited to the June 12, 2014 Access Committee meeting.</p> <p>Mr. Granda inquired about the availability of Hurricane Evacuation Centers (HEC) accessible to the deaf community. Ms. Johnson-Wright explained that there are numerous HECs available throughout the County during emergencies, all of which are accessible, but that exact locations are not determined or mobilized prior to the emergency/hurricane.</p> <p>A discussion ensued regarding certified and volunteer ASL Sign Language Interpreters being provided during an emergency. Ms. Johnson-Wright stated that the ADA Office previously examined the issue of providing qualified volunteer interpreters in emergency situations but it was determined to be infeasible. However, all HECs are equipped with basic communication signs/picture boards on display for an occupant’s initial stay which is typically about eight hours.</p> <p>Although, Miami-Dade County does not assign ASL sign language interpreters to Evacuation Centers throughout the emergency, in the event that a disabled individual requires a prolonged stay at a post-storm shelter, ASL interpreters are provided upon request.</p> <p>Ms. Johnson-Wright said that the Office of Emergency Management is outstanding at providing information through multiple sources to the community</p>

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		<p>also utilizing i.e. newspapers, and electronic, verbal and written announcements. She added that the OEM online Hurricane Preparedness video requires no updates, as hurricane preparedness procedures have not changed Countywide this year. She added that there is no additional funding available for the production of a new hurricane preparedness video.</p> <p>Jackson David stated that Office of Emergency Management staff should review CODI's concerns beforehand and subsequently attend a CODI Board meeting to address these issues.</p>
		<p>3. <u>CODI Nominating Committee: CODI Chairman Appointment - Chairman Martinez</u></p> <p>Chairman Martinez advised CODI that his term serving as the CODI Chairman will expire in June 2014. He added that his term may be extended briefly in order to transition to a newly elected CODI Chairman.</p>
	Adjournment:	Meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.
	Next CODI Meeting:	The next CODI meeting will be June 25, 2014