



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

Date: Tuesday, February 25, 2025

Time: 10:30 AM – 1 PM

Call to Order Time: 10:52 AM

Meeting Adjourned: 12:56 PM

Opening and Attendance: Attendance recorded. Call to Order. Copies of documents were distributed.

- District 1 Oliver G. Gilbert, III      Damian Gregory P
- District 2 Marliene Bastien      Jackson David      A
- District 3 Keon Hardemon      Marilyn Orozco      P
- District 4 Micky Steinberg      Vacant
- District 5 Eileen Higgins      Eddie Sierra      P
- District 6 Kevin M. Cabrera      Vacant
- District 7 Raquel A. Regalado      Rabbi Yossi Harlig P
- District 8 Danielle Cohen Higgins      Vacant
- District 9 Kionne L. McGhee      Ulrica Garcia      P
- District 10 Anthony Rodriguez      Natalia Wong      P
- District 11 Roberto J. Gonzalez      Katherine Magnoli Chairperson P
- District 12 Juan Carlos Bermudez      Maria Mercedes Villar Secretary  
Treasurer      P
- District 13 René Garcia      Theo Karantsalis Vice Chairperson      P

Miami-Dade County Staff and Members of the Public:

- Heidi Johnson, PIOD, ADA Coordinator
- Jody Cox, PIOD, ADA Projects Administrator
- Brenda Lampon, Office of the Mayor, Senior Advocate
- Anthony Gonzalez, Head Representative, Sunrise Group
- Jorge Batista, Therapeutic Recreation and Inclusion Specialist

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

- Meeting called to order at 10:52 AM, with nine members present.

Quorum achieved.

2. Approval of Minutes and Agenda: Chairman Magnoli asked for motions to approve the CODI minutes for January 2025 and February 2025 agenda. Motions were made and seconded. Both motions passed.

3. Public Comments (Two minutes per person)

- Jorge Batista with therapeutic recreation and inclusion of the park. He is the inclusion specialist. When someone discloses a disability, the recreation manager at that park where they are registering will provide them with the inclusion services. He meets with the client for 45 minutes to an hour to determine which reasonable accommodations are needed. In inclusion programs, they work with kids 6-14. For the exclusive programming, they serve ages 6-22.

4. New Business

A. Disability Etiquette and Sensitivity Training for STS Customer Service Staff

- Kat shared a personal story about bad customer service from STS. She wants disability etiquette training for STS staff. There needs to be a training in sensitivity for all who interact with the public.
- If you don't have people with disabilities involved in the trainings of every organization that deals with people with disabilities, that is very disrespectful. We are the population that these organizations are attempting to serve, and so nothing about us without us. If we are not important enough to include in the training, you're telling us as a customer that you don't care about us. And you can't fix something if you don't know what is not working, so develop an app for riders to report issues. An app is not expensive.
- Chairperson Magnoli wants to write a very simple letter to the County Commissioners requesting the development of an app and sensitivity training for all STS staff. Also, there needs to be changes with more efficient scheduling and routing.
- Heidi Johnson said that there are several issues here. One of the issues is surveys. Surveys only work if they get a lot of folks who participate. Also, what if the data received doesn't reflect the problems that we believe exist? Of course, CODI wants to find out what is the standard training for STS staff and how frequently its offered. But CODI needs to decide if they simply want to review the training materials and provide input

on them or do CODI members want to speak at the trainings. If they want to be regular training presenters, that requires a significant time commitment.

b. Start a Local Campaign Regarding Kindness and Inclusivity: CODI would like to make this a project. Can this be something done in partnership with Miami-Dade schools? Florida House Bill 447 and Senate Bill 540 (Sponsor: State Senator Jay Collins) has been proposed for the 2025 session that disability history and awareness instruction would be included in the curriculum of public schools. It would mandate comprehensive disability history and awareness instruction for Florida students.

c. Conversations with the Office of Mayor on ADA Housing: CODI wants to review in detail the PHCD report, formulate questions and set affordable, accessible housing goals.

d. Zoom Captions and ADA Number for Miami-Dade Courts

- Eddie Sierra shared his personal stories about how it is difficult, even impossible, to communicate with Miami-Dade Courts if one has a hearing impairment. He would like the courts to use Zoom captions during hearings. A motion was made, seconded and passed for CODI to draft talking points on this issue to the ADA Coordinators with the Courts.

## 5. Old Business:

a. Recruitment of New CODI Members: CODI wants to find effective ways to recruit applicants to fill the empty seats.

b. Assistance with Pumping Gas at Stations: How can CODI get gas stations to provide the assistance required by the County ordinance?

c. Letter Supporting the Abolishment of Subminimum Wage for Disabled Workers: The draft letter written by Damian Gregory will go out under Chairperson Magnoli's name.

d. Text to 911: Eddie Sierra reported no updates about this topic.

## Next Scheduled Meeting and Adjournment:

- The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 PM.
- Next meeting: Tuesday, March 25, 2025: 10:30am-1pm, SPCC 18-4