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COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES  
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ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS  
Chairperson

## **Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes**

City Hall 2nd Meeting Room II

**April 11, 2016**

Present: Jenifer Blemings Sally Esposito, Sara Hungerford, Kurtis Kearney, Iva Long, Tricia Palluzzi, Matthew Ranelli, Lisa Spruill-Stevenson and Robin Tousey-Ayers

Staff: Michelle Duprey

Absent: Maria Rivera, Jack Tsai and Paula Pernal

Meeting called to order at 5:21 p.m.

### **Minutes**

The Commission members reviewed the March Minutes. Robin stated that where the word Epic is noted in the March Minutes, it should be capitalized. Robin also mentioned that on the last page where it stated that "Sally stated that she was invited to be on an Advisory Committee", it should read, "Sally stated that her and Tricia were invited to be on a New Haven Board of Education Parent Advisory Committee". Robin mentioned that the date on the March Minutes is incorrect – it should read March 14 instead of February 14. Sally moved to approve the March Minutes and Tricia seconded. The March Minutes were approved as amended.

### **Chairperson's Report**

Robin stated that she is pleased that each Commission member is focusing on a project and that the Commission is moving into other arenas such as the Board of Education to make itself known.

### **Department Report**

Michelle stated that she presented her budget to the Finance Committee. She stated that she has requested a new staff person in her budget.

### **Old Business**

Robin summarizes the meeting with Yale New Haven Hospital ("YNHH") last month for those Commission members that were not present. She mentions that Dr. Morris, known as the "Bed Czar" at YNHH decides the bed allocation based upon certain diagnoses and certain situations. Robin stated that Dr. Morris did ask the Commission to come back and meet with

the YNHH Admission staff. She said that the Commission should decide how to approach this meeting. Michelle reminded Robin that YNHH was willing to listen to suggestions from the Commission of other categories for registration and patient information in its EPIC system. Robin stated that the Commission learned a lot about bariatrics because it is a big money-maker right now. She stated that YNHH is converting spaces to accommodate bariatric patients to include extra support, size and structure. Sally stated that YNHH is willing to return to discuss its website and to gather data on their accessible beds. Robin stated that YNHH did discuss about tagging medical records & charts with the use of an image on the banner to identify individuals with a disability. Robin stated that she will email Stuart about the task of the Commission sitting in during training with the registration staff. Sally asked about parking for YNHH. Matthew suggested to Robin that she should include in her email to Stuart a request for a breakdown by floor of the beds that are fully accessible, partially accessible, and not accessible, as per the YNHH meeting. Michelle mentioned that the bathroom doors in the rooms swing both ways. She will follow-up with Stuart concerning this issue.

Tricia stated that the elevator ordinance amendment will be heard in May. Sally asked the other Commission members if they knew how the matter ended up before the City Plan Commission. Tricia stated that she asked Alder Sal DeCola and he did not know. Matthew stated that it is common for this to occur during the process of committee assignment. Matthew stated that City Plan approved the ordinance amendment. Sally stated that Alder Ernie Santiago stated that the organization that represents the building owners have been notified. He was not aware if this group meets in City Hall. Alder Santiago would like to meet and discuss the ordinance amendment with the writer – Matthew Ranelli. Robin asked the other Commission members who is best person to communicate about this matter. Robin asked if it is Chris Plass or Al Lucas. Matt suggested Al Lucas, Director of Legislative Services. Sally and Matt will monitor the agendas for the Board of Alders.

### **New Business**

Sally stated that she received an email from the community engagement person that has facilitated the Commission with free tickets as Ambassadors to the Long Wharf Theatre. She has said that there is an open-caption opportunity for audiences who are deaf or hard of hearing. She is looking into the application process but one of the most important things is for community support. She asked if the Commission would support this technology at the Theatre. Sally would like to obtain more information and prepare a letter on behalf of the Commission. Matt moved to authorized you to proceed with obtaining more information and writing a letter of support from the Commission. Tricia second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sally has tickets for the next performance at the Long Wharf Theater on Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

Robin mentioned that the Commission might meet in the community library. Sally stated that she contacted the library and the Commission would have to meet during the hours that the library is open. Matt suggested having the Commission meeting coincide with the monthly

neighborhood meeting. Robin stated that before the Commission makes these changes, it must have an agenda. Sally suggested having a Commission meeting open to the public with an abbreviated schedule and then perhaps 45 minutes for questions for the public. Michelle suggested that the Commission should have topics for discussion. Sally mentioned that a notice should be sent out to the neighborhoods notifying them of the public meeting and a Spanish translator should be present. Robin stated that the Commission should have the public Commission meeting take place in the fall. Sally stated that this would be one of the regular meetings but open it up to public comment. Michelle suggested September or October meeting. Matt mentioned that September would be better. Sally stated that it would have to take place on a Thursday night – September 15, 2016. Sally stated that the Commission will know more

### **Other Business**

Matt stated that the State of Connecticut is not replacing interpreters as the positions become vacant. Matt stated that it is down 12 interpreter positions since last year.

Robin handed out an article concerning the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities for the State of CT. She stated that the article stated that this office could lose its federal funding if it does not privatize.

Sara mentioned that she will get in touch with the students that are working on the transportation app for persons with disabilities.

### **Public Comment/Announcements**

Next meeting shall take place on May 9, 2016.

Kurtis made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Iva seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 7:00 p.m.