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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

**October 17, 2016**

Present: Jenifer Blemings, Sally Esposito, Kurtis Kearney, Benjamin Nadolsky, Tricia Palluzzi, Matthew Ranelli, Robin Tousey-Ayers and Jack Tsai

Staff: Paula Pernal

Absent: Iva Long, Michelle Duprey and Maria Rivera

Guest: Billy Wong

Meeting called to order at 5:27 p.m.

All the Commissioners introduced themselves.

### **Minutes**

Robin stated that there are no official Minutes for the September 2016 since it was actually a Community Forum at the Fair Haven Library. Robin thanked Sally Esposito for organizing the event and Benjamin Nadolsky for taking notes. Robin would like to make it an annual event for the Commission. Sally suggested getting out the information about the event earlier.

### **Chairperson's Report**

Robin stated that she & Ben are attending a conference on Friday, October 21, 2016 sponsored by the Yale University Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics entitled, "Closing the Gap: Revisiting Health & Employment for Disabilities". Robin stated that this one-day conference is intended to facilitate conversations about issues of healthcare and employment disparities for people with disabilities. Michelle Duprey and Melissa Marshal are speakers at the conference. Robin explained that Yale University Interdisciplinary Center for Bioethics deals with healthcare & bioethics issues and look at issues of transitioning students from high school through college. She stated that there are two (2) physicians on the Committee.

Robin stated that legislation was passed allowing practioners to bill for a tele medical service as of January 1, 2016.

Robin stated that she attended a meeting at the Connecticut Job Corp office in Hartford today. She said that this is now a public partnership. Jenifer stated that any 17-year-old youth may attend the Job Corp. for job training. Robin suggested having the New Haven Job Corp. office attend a future Commission meeting.

### **Department Report**

None – Michelle is away.

### **Old Business**

Robin stated that the Community Forum at the Fair Haven Library in September was part of the Commission's Community Needs Assessment.

Sally stated that she checked the Yale New Haven Hospital website again in preparation for tonight's meeting and did locate an anonymous box in which to check-off regarding accessibility. Upon checking-off this box, Sally stated that she received an email to contact the main number for further information. Sally stated that the search terms are very different than that of those on the website of Massachusetts General Hospital. Sally suggested inviting the folks from Yale Hospital back to a future Commission meeting. Matt stated that Yale has not responded to the issue of bed management or room distribution. Robin and Tricia also stated Yale mentioned that they would update the EPIC software system. Matt stated that Robin should add the issue of handicapped spaces for vans in the garage & valet parking for persons with disabilities. Robin stated that she would touch base with Michelle. Sally suggested that the Commission invite the folks from Yale New Haven Hospital to a later meeting.

Sally stated that the Elevator Ordinance Amendment has not yet been codified. Matt & Sally review and interpret the language of the Elevator Ordinance Amendment. Matt stated that the Elevator Ordinance Amendment was issued within the Equal Opportunities Ordinance. After speak to Alder Salvatore DeCola, Sally suggests forming a small sub-committee to meet with other City departments such as LCI, Fair Rent & the Fire Marshall to discuss creating an enforcement ordinance. Matt suggests having a meeting with LCI & the Fire Department and maybe New Haven Legal Aid. Robin stated that the Board of Alders wanted to put a noticeable fine on the violations. Tricia raised the issues of notifying tenant associations/groups or creating press releases in order to get the word out to the community. Sally stated that she will contact LCI and Tricia stated that she will contact the Fire Marshal, the new Fire Chief and Alder Sal DeCola. The sub-committee, which consists of Sally, Tricia, Matt & Ben, agreed that they would invite LCI, Fair Rent & the Fire Marshall/Fire Department to the November and/or December meetings.

Kurtis stated that the issue of the sidewalks near Bella Vista & Rte. 80 in New Haven have not yet been resolved. Sally mentioned that the State of Connecticut as well as the City of New Haven should get involved. Kurtis said that Michelle, the State Representative Robert W. Megna and others were present a few years back when the news were on the site doing a story of the lack of sidewalks in that area. Robin stated that this issue should be revisited.

Sally suggested that the Commission should invite Doug Hausladen, Director of Traffic, Transportation & Parking. Robin also stated that the lack of accessible egress at the New Haven Train Station should be mentioned to Mr. Hausladen.

Robin stated that the 211 Info website has a translation feature at the bottom that translates the content only in several different languages.

### **New Business**

A review of The Commission on Disabilities Schedule for 2017 is conducted. Jenifer stated that April 10, 2017 is the first night of Passover. Matt made a motion to change the April 2017 Commission Meeting to April 3, 2017. Sally seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Robin asked Matt to Chair the Nominations for the 2017 Elections of Officers. Matt accepted. Robin stated that the following positions are: Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Secretary & Treasurer.

### **Other Business**

Robin stated that the Commission needs to recruit new members from all districts. Kurtis suggested the Democracy School & Housing Authority.

### **Public Comment/Announcements**

Next meeting shall take place on November 14, 2016.

Jenifer made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Sally seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 6:40 p.m.