



TONI N. HARP
Mayor

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
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ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

City Hall 4th Floor Conference Room

May 11, 2015

Present: Jenifer Blemings, Sally Esposito, Tricia Palluzzi, Matthew Ranelli, Lisa Spruill, Robin Tousey-Ayers, and Jack Tsai

Staff: Michelle Duprey and Paula Pernal

Absent: Sara Hungerford, Iva Long & Maria Rivera

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

Minutes

April minutes were not made available for review and voting at the meeting.

Chairperson's Report

The Chairperson let the Commission know that they would need to end the meeting early as she had been invited to attend the monthly meeting of the Commission on Disabilities for the Town of Hamden which would start at 7:00pm.

A future guest for the Commission might be Alice Rosenthal from the Center for Children's Advocacy. She is the staff attorney for the Medical-Legal Partnership Project at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Jack noted that he is familiar with Ms. Rosenthal's work to improve the health and welfare of low-income children and their families.

Department Report

An update of department activities was provided.

Michelle shared information on the Yale Interdisciplinary Bioethics Center Disability Group. This group is looking at ways to improve the transition of students with disabilities to college. The group would like to look at methods to educate medical professional how to better serve youth/young adults with disabilities. The original goal of YNHH's Transition Program was to improve the healthcare for adults with disabilities.

The ADA Celebration is in July. Michelle had the following suggestions:

1. 7/21/15 – Connecticut Bar Association to be moderated by John Bower, Labor & Employment Title I for Public – Panel to discuss Employment Issues (Mayor to Kick-Off, 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
2. 7/22/15 – Office of Employment & Protection Title II (OEP & Connecticut Association of Municipal Attorneys)
3. 7/23/15 – Places of Public Accommodation Title III (US Attorneys' Office for CT (Public Access-How do you file a complaint?))
4. 7/24/15 – New Haven Ballet Shared Ability student presentation at City Hall.

The Board of Alder's Finance Committee meeting is May 13, 2015. The full Board of Alders vote on the City Budget on May 26, 2015.

Old Business

A letter from Stephen J. Carbery, Vice President of Facilities Design at YNHH, was distributed to the members concerning scheduling conflicts for a meeting at YNHH. Michelle suggested an alternate date to YNHH of Tuesday, June 23, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. The Commission will discuss the issues of accessibility, equipment and communication at the meeting. The anticipated outcome of the meeting is a stronger commitment from YNHH that they will work to improve accessibility for people with disabilities in the future. The Commission discussed that the geriatric floor at YNHH Saint Raphael Campus currently has one (1) accessible room. Michelle will provide the Commission with a platform for discussion at the meeting with YNHH. Sally would like YNHH to demonstrate to Commission members how people with disabilities navigate through YNHH website to find the services they need. Chairperson will email the Commission regarding the June 23rd meeting which will be an additional meeting to the already scheduled June 8th Commission meeting.

Chairperson stated that next meeting is June 8, 2015 and she will invite Alice Rosenthal. All members should finish planning for the June 23, 2015 meeting with YNHH during the June 8th meeting.

New Business

None.

Other Business

The Chairperson indicated that the Commission should have greater youth and senior representation and requested members to think about possible resources for this.

Michelle reminded the members that October is Disability Awareness Month. Jack will contact the VA to research possible presentations for the high schools.

Public Comment/Announcements

Matt Ranelli shared that he had attended the recent Wilbur Cross High School performance of Fiddler on the Roof. He was very impressed that they had provided accommodations for people with hearing and/or visual impairments which included a sign language interpreter and audio descriptions. He suggested the Commission send a letter congratulating them on this excellent effort by the Wilbur Cross Drama Department.

Jenifer made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tricia seconded the motion. Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 6:30 p.m.