



TONI N. HARP
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COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
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ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

City Hall 4th Floor Conference Room

June 8, 2015

Present: Jenifer Blemings, Sally Esposito, Sara Hungerford, Iva Long, Tricia Palluzzi, Matthew Ranelli, Maria Rivera, Lisa Spruill, Robin Tousey-Ayers, and Jack Tsai

Staff: Michelle Duprey and Paula Pernal

Meeting called to order at 5:32 p.m.

Agenda

Sally moved to amend Agenda to include guest speaker, Attorney Alice Rosenthal. Sara seconded. Unanimously approved.

Guest Speaker

Attorney Alice Rosenthal from The Center for Children's Advocacy at Yale New Haven Hospital ("YNHH") is a guest speaker at the meeting. Attorney Rosenthal runs Medical Legal Partnership Project ("MLPP") at YNHH-Children's Hospital, which is fully funded for three (3) years by YNHH through grants from foundations and individual donors.

The concept of MLP began in 1993 by Barry Zuckerman, a pediatrician in Boston Medical Center. The MLP provides on-site legal advocacy in a healthcare setting for low-income families. There is no charge for the service. Attorney Rosenthal is part of the healthcare team to help doctors, nurses, social workers, and administrative staff understand all the other issues that impact the health of the pediatric patients. There are 300 MLP sites nationwide that provide legal advocacy in a lot of different specialties.

Attorney Alice Rosenthal assists physicians compose letters for pediatric patients with disabilities; assists patients obtain special education services; and, represents patients at SSI appeal hearings.

The MLP for pediatrics connected to YNHH include:

Poverty law

Housing & Access

SSI Appeals

Education Law

General Disability Advocacy

Teen Legal Rights

Utility Clinics & Budget Counseling

April Minutes

Iva moved to approve and Tricia seconded. Maria, Lisa, and Jack abstained from voting because they were not present at the April meeting. Unanimously approved.

May Minutes

Lisa moved to approve and Sally seconded. Sara, Iva, and Maria abstained from voting because they were not present at the May meeting. Unanimously approved.

Chairperson's Report

Robin attended the Hamden Commission on Disabilities. They report to the Hamden Director of Disabilities and meet in the Miller Library. There is no parking fee. Mark Dupont sits on the Hamden Commission on Disabilities. The Hamden Commission on Disabilities are more active in the community. They have a small budget or bank account which is managed through their Disability Department. They sponsor an annual dance for adults with disabilities. It has grown into 100 attendees from various surrounding towns and it has generated their own funds.

Department Report

The ADA Celebration was discussed. Michelle is waiting to solidify activities and events for the ADA Celebration in July.

The Department Budget was passed.

Robin and Michelle are participating in the ADA Think Tank sponsored by Yale University Interdisciplinary Bio-Ethics Center. Through grant funds, the participations of the ADA Think Tank try to figure out how to help students transition to college in a successful way, and how to get healthcare providers trained and up-to-speed on how to serve adults with disabilities with chronic illnesses.

Old Business

There was a discussion of the upcoming meeting with YNHH. It was decided that the meeting with YNHH shall take place on Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 5:15 p.m. at YNHH-exact location TBD. Jenifer will not be able to attend.

Sally is requesting that YNHH provide 10 minute overview of how to access YNHH website.

There was a discussion about the lack of transparency at YNHH. It is difficult to know who is in charge of purchasing durable goods for patients with disabilities. There is no mechanism in place to match rooms in YNHH with patients with mobility disabilities. Most of the accessible rooms are located in Smilow. YNHH should be aware of its legal obligations to patients with disabilities and to families of patients with disabilities.

Robin stated that the Commission should be prepared for the meeting with YNHH. Tricia has a copy of the floor plan for the geriatric unit.

There is one accessible room for every 25 rooms on the geriatric unit at YNHH. The accessible needs patients are not going to be placed with accessible need room and specialized trained staff.

The Agenda with YNHH shall include:

1. Architectural Details
2. Accessing Communications
3. Proper Use of Budget to Purchase Correct % of Equipment for Patients with Disabilities
4. Employment for People with Disabilities
5. Staff Training on Disability Sensitivity

Michelle provided status of the ADA Celebration in July. Sally mentioned that her contact at Long Wharf Theatre is willing to participate during the ADA Celebration and offered space at the Theatre. Robin suggested using this contact at a later date.

The next meeting is July 14, 2015 at YNNH.

New Business

None.

Other Business

None.

Public Comment/Announcements

None.

Sally made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Sara seconded the motion. Unanimously approved at 6:59 p.m.