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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

September 14, 2015

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

Staff: Michelle Duprey

Guest: Kurtis Kearney

Absent: Sara Hungerford, Iva Long, Maria Rivera, Paula Pernal (staff)

Meeting called to order at 5:10 p.m.

Minutes

Michelle is working on the preparing the June Minutes and the July Minutes for the next Commission meeting. No vote of the Minutes took place this evening.

Chairperson's Report

Robin has compiled the Annual Report and distributes it at the Commission meeting. She explains the content of the Annual Report to the Commission members. Any edits and the vote shall take place at the next Commission meeting.

Department Report

Michelle discusses the three-day event that she organized for the 25th Anniversary of the ADA back in July. Michelle states that the information disseminated at the events was very useful, but the turnout was so disappointing. Sally mentions that she attended the West Haven dinner for the 25th Anniversary of the ADA. Michelle states that the disability community was upset that there was no state-wide event. "Building A Great Life" is the DD Council's Celebration that is coming up.

Michelle states that there will be a "Housing Roundtable" taking place on Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at St. Ronan Street in New Haven. The discussion is about housing options for people with developmental disabilities.

Michelle states that Yale School of Nursing has started “Operation Healthcare”, which is to educate Yale nursing students to enhance their education about people with developmental and intellectual disabilities. Michelle states that in collaboration with Arc of Connecticut, Yale School of Nursing is looking for family volunteers to teach these individuals. A pamphlet is distributed.

Michelle states that the nominations for Commission Officers and the approval of the 2016 Meeting Schedule is expected to be voted on at the next meeting. She also would like the Commission to consider a section of the New Haven Ordinances which discusses holding community meetings.

Michelle mentions that there is a new Director of Greater New Haven Transit District. Michelle is meeting with her in the near future to discuss complaints.

Old Business

Sally mentions the Commission’s issues that were discussed at the website meeting with Yale New Haven Hospital. Michelle states that she spoke to the Patient Experience Director regarding these concerns. Matthew suggests that the Commission submit a list of concerns to Yale New Haven Hospital. Michelle is working on having a representative from Yale New Haven Hospital attend a Commission meeting to discuss website navigation, patient experience, and room accessibility.

Matthew discusses the Proposed City Ordinance pertaining to landlords not timely repairing broken elevators in buildings that have disabled tenants not living on the first floor. Matthew states that he is going to speak to his Alder and the Alders of surrounding Wards concerning the next steps to take in order to sponsor and submit the proposed ordinance. Kurtis Kearney states that his Alder, Barbara Constantinople, will sponsor this ordinance.

New Business

Robin discusses “WIOA”, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, a federal act passed last year and currently being updated. A flyer is distributed about WIOA. Robin explains that how this act will impact children and youth. Robin states that there will be workshops pertaining to Special Education that she plans to attend. Robin suggests that the Commission ask a guest speaker to a meeting to discuss the critical issues.

Michelle asks Jack about an ADA case out of Compton concerning children with trauma and special education. Jack has no knowledge of the case. Several Commission members discuss possibilities of the outcome of the case.

Robin asks for a volunteer to be in charge of the Nominating Committee. Matthew volunteered.

Robin suggests inviting Martha Okafor to an upcoming meeting.

Robin recaps the suggested invitees: Director of Greater New Haven Transit, Yale New Haven Hospital representative, and Martha Okafor.

Other Business

Sally states that she was asked to be an Ambassador for Long Wharf Theatre, which basically means that she is inviting people in her individual neighborhood that wouldn't ordinarily go to the theatre and attend a play and meet the actors. Robin & Sally mention that this could make the Arts more inclusive. Robin states that Long Wharf is applying for a grant for accessible transportation to the theatre, and is repairing their parking lot.

Public Comment/Announcements

None.

Matthew made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Jenifer seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 6:32 p.m.