



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

November 9, 2015

Present: Jenifer Blemings, Sally Esposito, Kurtis Kearney, Tricia Palluzzi, Lisa Spruill-Stevenson, Iva Long, Jack Tsai and Robin Tousey-Ayers

Staff: Michelle Duprey and Paula Pernal

Proposed Member: Benjamin Nadolsky

Absent: Sara Hungerford, Matthew Ranelli and Maria Rivera

Guest: Alder Ernie Santiago, Ward 15

Speaker: Annie Harper, PhD Associate Research Scientist in Department of Psychiatry at Yale University

Meeting called to order at 5:19 p.m.

Introductions were done.

Guest

Alder Ernie Santiago from Ward 15 attended Commission meeting to discuss the Elevator Ordinance with the Commission. Alder Santiago stated that Al Lucas in Legislative Services indicated to him that the Commission needs to wait until the new Board of Alders are sworn in and establish the Committees for the New Year—by the end of January or beginning of February. Alder Santiago stated that the Ordinance that Matt submitted will be finalized. He also informed the Commission that the Association of Landlords may oppose the Ordinance. Alder Santiago stated that he will update the Commission. He also expressed an interest in attending future Commission meetings.

Speaker

Annie Harper, PhD Associate Research Scientist in the Department of Psychiatry at Yale University and primarily works at Connecticut Mental Health Center (“CMHC”) to develop interventions to help patients at CMHC do better with their money. Annie states that people who struggle with mental illness and have money problems really only have two options: (1)

just deal with it, or (2) someone else controls their money for them through a conservator or a representative payee. CMHC is looking for an alternative for these people. Annie attended Commission meeting to discuss her work with the City grant "Municipal Financial Empowerment Initiative" to target re-entry from incarceration and homelessness populations. The City of New Haven in support with the Cities for Empowerment Zone would develop a range of services to help this population through (1) financial literacy training; (2) access to income through benefits counseling; and, (3) ensure services to meet needs. The grant is \$20,000 for six (6) months. The team from the Foundation came to visit two (2) weeks ago and spoke at the advisory board. A Mayoral Financial Empowerment Commission was created to discuss the long term goals. Rick Kaiser is assigned to this Project.

Annie stated that even though the grant does not specifically target the disabled population; it really does overlap and include it. Robin & Michelle offered Annie statistics and information concerning the disabled community and financial literacy.

Minutes

Sally moved to approve the October Minutes and Tricia seconded. Unanimously approved.

Chairperson's Report

Robin stated that the Commission members should take on an issue of choice and bring it to the meetings.

Department Report

Michelle stated that she was out of work one month ago today due to a broken hip and she is just beginning to get caught up on her work.

Michelle mentioned that the FY 2016-2017 Budget will be provided to all City departments within the next few weeks. Michelle intends to include a staff position in her budget position to perform work such as developing and administering grants. The Commission discussed possible tasks and responsibilities for the staff position. The development of (1) community preparedness for natural disasters and (2) emergency plans for the disability community was discussed.

Old Business

1. Election of Officers-Robin stated that the Commission needs to have the Election of Officers. Michelle stated that the slate is Chairperson is Robin, Vice Chair is Tricia, and Secretary is Matt. A vote was taken. Sally moved to approve the Slate and Iva seconded. Unanimously approved.
2. Long Wharf-Sally stated that Curtis, Tricia and their guests attended the last performance at the Long Wharf Theatre. Sally will continue to notify Commission members of other performances.
3. YNHH-Robin stated that a meeting took place with YNHH in July. Michelle stated that there is a meeting this Wednesday evening. Michelle invited Stuart Warner, but he was not available for this meeting, to discuss bed management and YNHH website. Michelle

will follow-up with YNHH and invite Mr. Warner to the January Commission meeting to discuss bed management and table the website topic to the future meeting.

4. Veterans Presentation to Wilbur Cross Students-Jack had to leave the meeting early, so Robin stated that she will contact Wilbur Cross about the veteran presentation.

New Business

See Speaker above.

Other Business

None.

Public Comment/Announcements

Next meeting shall take place on December 21, 2015 on **Second Floor in Meeting Room II.**

Jenifer made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Kurtis seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 6:57 p.m.