



TONI N. HARP
Mayor

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
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ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

City Hall 2nd Meeting Room II

December 21, 2015

Present: Sally Esposito, Kurtis Kearney, Tricia Palluzzi, Iva Long, Matthew Ranelli, Jack Tsai and Robin Tousey-Ayers

Staff: Michelle Duprey

Proposed Member: Benjamin Nadolsky

Absent: Jenifer Blemings, Sara Hungerford, Lisa Spruill-Stevenson, Maria Rivera and Paula Pernal (staff)

Meeting called to order at 5:15 p.m.

Minutes

Sally moved to approve the November Minutes and Iva seconded. Robin states that there are various typos in the November Minutes that should be corrected as follows: the word "that" which needs to be removed; the word "updated" needs to be changed to "update"; and, the acronym for Yale New Haven Hospital "YNNH" needs to be changed to "YNHH". Jack suggested including a statement in the November Minutes that Annie Harper wishes to involve a task force in her work. The November Minutes were approved as amended. Matt and Sara abstain from voting.

Chairperson's Report

Robin stated that each Commission member should be working on an issue of choice and bring it to the meetings. This may be discussed in more detail at the January meeting.

Department Report

Michelle has submitted her budget with an additional position of Assistant Coordinator. She does not know if it will be supported in its entirety.

Michelle discussed the recent emails with YNHH and herself concerning its website and the issue of parking accessibility. Michelle stated that YNHH shall discuss the issue of bed management at the February meeting. A separate meeting shall take place with YNHH concerning its website.

Michelle stated that the Mayoral Inauguration shall take place on January 1, 2016 at Career High School.

Old Business

Robin stated that she met an attorney that specifically works on buildings which are not in compliance with building codes, including unsafe/broken elevators. Robin stated that this attorney welcomed any information concerning particular problem buildings/elevators. This attorney also suggested having a meeting with the City's new building inspector. Matt stated that this attorney advises building code inspectors around the state. He does not feel that the Commission needs her assistance at this point in time. Robin will send the business card of this attorney to Matt and Matt will contact Al Lucas about the status of the ordinance submission.

Robin stated that she has been trying to get in touch with the person at Wilbur Cross to plan the event with the students and the veterans.

Jack stated that Annie Harper is a researcher at YNHH who received a small grant to help patients at CMHC do better with their money. He stated that she is having difficulty partnering with a local bank.

Sally stated that The Long Wharf Theatre has developed a program with disabled veterans allowing them to attend performances.

New Business

Robin suggested that Commission members attend Board of Education meetings in order to build a relationship with the Board. Sally asked Robin if there is a specific list of issues that should be addressed with the Board of Education. Robin & Michelle discussed whether the Commission have jurisdiction over the Board of Education. Michelle stated that the Board of Education Special Education Director (Tiffany Jackson) handles students; the Board of Education Administrator (Will Clark) handles facilities and program access; and, the Board of Education Human Resources Director (Valerie Hudson-Brown) handles employment.

Michelle discussed homelessness and shelters in New Haven with the Commission members. She stated that the Commission should focus on community forums in order to gather important information from the public. Sally suggested having Commission meetings at each library in the community and devoting about half an hour open to the public. Michelle suggested tapping into the senior centers since 20% of the disabled population are senior citizens.

Other Business

None.

Public Comment/Announcements

Next meeting shall take place on January 11, 2016.

Matthew made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

_____ seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 7:00 p.m.