



TONI N. HARP
Mayor

COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES
CITY OF NEW HAVEN
165 CHURCH STREET
NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06510
(203) 946-7833 - VOICE (203) 946-8582 - TTY/TDD
(203) 946-8587 - FAX



ROBIN TOUSEY-AYERS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Meeting Minutes

City Hall 4th Floor Conference Room

December 9, 2013

Present: Jenifer Blemings, Cecile Brodsky, Matthew Ranelli, Maria Rivera, Robin Tousey-Ayers and Jack Tsai

Staff: Michelle Duprey, Paula Pernal

Absent: Christopher Hicks

Meeting called to order at 5:24 p.m.

Matthew Ranelli present via telephone.

Minutes

Robin stated that she had edited the minutes since the last mailing. She asked Commission members if they had any changes to the November minutes as edited. No one responded.

Jack made a motion to accept the November minutes.

Jenifer seconded the motion.

November minutes are approved unanimously.

Chairman's Report

Robin stated that she has nothing to report this month. She stated that she will commence a discussion with the other Commission members in order to amend the criteria for a quorum in the By-Laws under "Old Business".

She also stated that she has been busy attending neighborhood meetings with the current/new alderpersons and requesting suggestions for individuals to consider as candidates to invite to join the Commission to

enhance representation from as many of the New Haven districts as possible.

Department Report

Michelle stated that her budget is due on Friday, December 13, 2013 and it will be a zero increase, except for maybe a slight increase of \$250 for preparation related to the ADA Anniversary. Michelle stated that she anticipates an increase in next the budget for next fiscal year for printing materials for the Commission.

Michelle stated that she met with the incoming Mayor's Transition team and they had a lot of questions concerning the Commission. Michelle stated that she told the Transition team about the Commission's efforts about the Job's Pipeline. Michelle mentioned that the alders did not seem knowledgeable about the Job's Pipeline. She suggested that the Commission bring this issue to the table again in the near future. Michelle stated that she also discussed the mission and demographics of the Commission with the Transition team. Michelle stated that the Transition team asked her about recruitment. She talked about her department work. The Transition team asked if Michelle's department should be folded into another department. Michelle informed the Transition team that there would be labor issues among other issues.

Michelle stated that her first six months of 2014 will be consumed with conducting compliance training with the Department of Justice for City of New Haven departments limited to ADA accommodations. Michelle stated this training is a result of a settlement agreement from a lawsuit. She mentioned she intentionally delayed the training until the new administration was appointed. Michelle stated that to date, she has completed the New Haven Police Department. Robin asked Michelle if the other Commission members could assist her in any way. Several Commission members shared their interest in participating in the trainings to increase their awareness of the content and how the audience responds. Michelle said that she did not require any specific assistance at this time but people are welcome to join her at the trainings.

Old Business

Robin asks the Commission members to review Article IV, Section 6 Organization in the By-Laws concerning the quorum. Jenifer asked if the Commission needs to define what is active and what is not active. Robin answered in the affirmative and added that the Commission should add language concerning leave of absence. Jenifer and Michelle both agreed that the By-Laws are established but not defined. Michelle stated that the Commission must include the active member and inactive member definitions in Article, IV, Section 1 as follows:

“Active Member: An active Commissioner is an individual appointed and approved by the Board of Aldermen of the City of New Haven and participates in person or via electronic communication in regular Commission meetings and other Commission activities.”

“Inactive Member: An inactive Commissioner is an active Commissioner who requests a defined temporary leave of absence from the Commission and receives approval for said defined leave by the Chair. The inactive Commissioner can request a defined extension of their temporary leave of absence from the Chair of the Commission.”

Jenifer stated that she had attempted to reach out to Marylou, as the official contact from the Commission to the International Festival of Arts & Ideas, but has not heard back from her as of this date.

New Business

Robin asked Michelle when it would be best for the Commission to plan for a reception for the Board of Aldermen given the changes occurring on the Board January 1st. Michelle suggested the end of February or beginning of March. This reception will be for about thirty minutes prior to a Board meeting and consist of a presentation of the work of the Commission. Michelle also suggested inquiring about a Mayor’s Proclamation to recognize the work of outgoing Commission Chair David Hicks to be presented at the reception.

Michelle mentioned the mandatory semi-annual Freedom of Information (FOI) training conducted by Kathleen Foster from the Office of Corporation Counsel. She will inquire as to having the Commission receive FOI training at a future meeting.

Robin stated that she also distributed Article II Commission on Disabilities from the Code of Ordinances to all the Commission members.

Robin asked the Commission members to think about what they expect to accomplish on the Commission.

Other Business

Robin asked each Commission member to speak about themselves, professionally and/or personally.

Public Comment/Announcements

None

Robin made a motion to adjourn meeting.

Cecile seconded the motion.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 6:35 p.m.