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DAVID HICKS
Chairperson

Commission on Disabilities Minutes
August 8, 2008

Present: Chris Getlein, David Hicks, Matthew Ranelli, Linda Reeder, Heiwa Salovitz,
Delma Skinner, Robin Tousey-Ayers

Absent: Dana Canevari, Stan Kontogiannis, Elaine Quinn

Staff: Michelle Duprey, Kristin Barber

David Hicks opened the meeting. A quorum could not be established at this point.

Kristin Barber from the Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities presented the Department's effort since the last meeting of the Transportation Committee, a subcommittee of the Commission on Disabilities. Although that Committee has not been meeting, there has been much progress made through the Department's efforts.

Kristin Barber explained that after several meetings with Lee Grannis (Clean Cities Coordinator for the New Haven area) and Bill Scalzi (owner of Metro Taxi), that it made sense now to initiate use of wheelchair accessible cabs using New Freedom Initiative federal funding. These vehicles would be powered by gasoline. The grant funds will be using Greater New Haven Transit District as a fiduciary as suggested by Mike Sanders of the CT DOT. There would be two vehicles converted to become wheelchair accessible cabs and some money for cab vouchers. She also reported that Metro Cab would be a better selection than Yellow Cab, to pursue additional federal funding through Clean Cities to support the "Standard Cab" using compressed natural gas as an alternative fuel source. She will keep the Commission updated on progress but didn't see it necessary for the Transportation Committee to continue to meet as the Department's efforts have sustained the momentum to get the project up and running.

Chairman's Report

David Hicks reported that the Spokebenders event on the Green had been well attended and received positive press coverage from the New Haven Independent. He said the Spokebenders enjoyed themselves too, and are interested in holding a league game in New Haven in January. David Hicks said he would contact Wilbur Cross High School, where one of the Spokebenders (Josh Levine) recently graduated, to help organize the event.

Department Report

Michelle Duprey reported on the event, sponsored by the Department of Justice, at which she was a featured speaker. The event, which focused on improving the treatment of people with disabilities in hospital and other medical situations, was successful and very well attended (at the Omni Hotel in New Haven). Participants included representatives from Yale/New Haven Hospital and members of numerous disability

groups around the state. In addition, while visiting area restaurants, DOJ representatives noticed some accessibility violations and will be following up on them.

Old Business

Delma Skinner asked for clarification regarding her role in updating the information on the Commission website and where to find it online. Upon receiving clarification, she said she would put something together for the next meeting. There was some discussion about how hard it is to find the Commission website, since it can be reached from the Department website but not from the Boards and Commissions website.

New Business

No new business

Other Business

Michelle Duprey reported on the ADA Amendment Act. She said it had gone into Committee in early September and there was an audio conference coming up in which one person on phone, or anybody in her office, could attend. She briefly explained the Bill and some of its recent changes. She will send out an e-mail with links regarding this bill.

Elaine Quinn sent an e-mail that she was speaking with Karen Dubois Walter will be talk about Shartenburg site and don't know how they are addressing accessibility. Michelle Duprey has been going to the site planning meetings and talked about some of the features. Linda Reeder offered her help understand the architectural drawings.

The meeting adjourned.