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DAVID HICKS
Chairperson

Approved

Commission on Disabilities Minutes
December 8, 2008

Present: Dana Canevari, David Hicks, Stan Kontogiannis, Elaine Quinn, Matthew Ranelli, Linda Reeder, Heiwa Salovitz, Robin Tousey-Ayers

Absent: Chris Getlein, Delma Skinner

Staff: Michelle Duprey

David Hicks opened the meeting and a quorum could not immediately be established. To avoid discussing issues requiring a vote, David Hicks started with Old Business and talked about the Commission website. Soon another member of the Commission joined the group, a quorum was established, and the discussion changed to a review of the previous meeting's minutes.

Review of Minutes

Dana Canevari moved to approve the November minutes as written. This was seconded by Elaine Quinn. Stan Kontogiannis abstained from voting. The minutes were approved as written.

Chairman's Report

David Hicks talked about the legislative proposal regarding designated accessible parking. The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), in response to the July Commission meeting which was attended by DMV Commissioner Robert Ward, had formed a task force which came up with a draft proposal that included a history of the program and recommendations to the CT State Legislators for reform of the program. David Hicks said that the draft legislation would allow for expiration of permits over the next six years and tightening of the certification process.

David Hicks said that he doesn't know how well this proposal will be received because of state budgetary constraints nor does he know the estimated cost of the proposal. He thinks the cost will be less if they phase in the revisions over the full six years that license renewal for all permit holders would take. He thought he might try to find out if there is a big difference of cost for a three year phase-in vs. six years. David Hicks said the DMV omitted any language regarding the issue of enforcement, which was not surprising since DMV had indicated by letter to the Commission that enforcement was not their responsibility. David Hicks is now trying to find out if Senator DeFronzo (Chair of the Transportation Committee) has been in communication with any police organizations, as he had suggested during the July 2008 meeting, in an attempt to strengthen enforcement of the law.

Elaine Quinn made the point that enforcement would generate some funds. David Hicks stated he tried to make the point that revenue would be available through better enforcement. There was more discussion on this point.

Linda Reeder said that the new Police Chief (Lewis) is interested in quality of life issues so he might be interested in this issue. Stan Kontogiannis suggested that the Commission invite him to a future meeting. Michelle Duprey said she would look into it.

Department Report

Michelle Duprey reported that the annual Department budget is due next week. She expects large cuts for the city budget but did not know how these cuts were going to affect the Department.

Old Business

Commission on Disabilities-Web Page

David Hicks described what was currently on the web page and said he thought there should be a different order to the bulleted "activities" that are listed. He felt that the current order tended to understate what the Commission has been accomplishing. His proposed list of activities added new ones and re-ordered the existing ones. He also wanted to add a section to the page that would elaborate on the terse text of the bulleted points. Linda Reeder suggested that it would be easier if everyone had a copy of the proposed changes to read, and that David Hicks could send this via email for editing and comments from other Commissioners before the next meeting.

Stan Kontogiannis suggested that they keep the activities list more general so that updates won't be needed too frequently. Elaine Quinn reminded everyone that the Commission Bylaws require an Annual Report and perhaps they could use this report to elaborate on the year's activities, rather than having to update the web content every year, i.e. keep the bullets general and then provide a link to the Annual Report. David Hicks pointed out that Kristin Barber had indicated at the previous meeting that updating the website was not a problem. David Hicks asked Stan Kontogiannis if he would work on the list of bulleted points and Stan agreed to review the information and bring suggestions to the next meeting.

Spokebenders

David Hicks reported there has been no movement on this item.

Election of Officers

Robin Tousey Ayers presented a Slate of Officers which was David Hicks as Chairman, Dana Canevari as Vice Chairman, and Linda Reeder as Secretary. All of those individuals accepted the nomination, so the motion was made for the Secretary to cast one ballot for the slate. The motion was unanimously approved.

Community Accessibility

David Hicks inquired of Linda Reeder whether she had contacted anyone from the AIA Building Performance & Regulation committee regarding the proposed effort to give a presentation to the Chamber of Commerce in 2009 on the subject of accessibility requirements of businesses in New Haven. Linda Reeder said that she had and that via email she would provide contact information to David Hicks, who will follow up with the individual.

New Business

At the last Commission meeting Elaine Quinn shared a workbook with David Hicks regarding advocacy for Supportive Housing. David Hicks said it was a very useful workbook and wondered how to share it with other Commissioners. It was decided that the Department would make

arrangements for more workbooks. There was also a brief discussion about Supported Housing which digressed into talking about CMHC, Yale Medical School and DMHAS.

At this point the tape ended and, since all Commission business must be recorded, the meeting was adjourned.