



JOHN DeSTEFANO, JR.
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

Promoting
 **Accessibility**
In New Haven

DAVID HICKS
Chairperson

Approved

Commission on Disabilities Minutes
December 13, 2010

Present: Jason Gomez, David Hicks, Elaine Quinn, Linda Reeder,
Robin Tousey-Ayers

Absent: Dana Canevari, Matthew Ranelli,

Staff: Michelle Duprey

The meeting was brought to order and the October 2010 minutes were reviewed. Elaine Quinn and Linda Reeder abstained from voting on the minutes. Jason Gomez moved to accept the minutes as written and David Hicks seconded the motion which was unanimously passed. NOTE: In order to save on postage, the minutes and agenda will be distributed by e-mail in the future.

Chairman's report

In October 2010, David Hicks stated he believes he brought up the point at the last meeting, about what defines a disability for the purpose of the Handicapped parking placards. After the meeting he saw Representative Toni Harp in City Hall, and she suggested that he talk with Representative Betsy Ritter about this issue. David Hicks explained that he is interested in revising the eligibility criteria, specifically the one that states "cannot walk 200 feet without stopping to rest" because it may allow for physicians to certify some people who would otherwise not qualify as having an irreversible disability.

David Hicks reported he e-mailed Betsy Ritter who was interested in the discussion and thought it would be more interesting to see how nearby states handle this definition.

David Hicks then reported on how other states handled this issue and discovered that in fact New Hampshire and Rhode Island have rewritten the regulations and removed that particular criterion. He put information together for these states that don't use it, along with the four states that have changed the distance to less than 200 feet. He sent the information to Representative Ritter and copied Rick Lopes (assistant to Senator DeFranzo).

On another note, David Hicks mentioned that Matt Ranelli had alerted him that the Office of Legislative Research (OLR) had recently published a report regarding the

idea of putting a picture ID on the placards, James McGaughey, Executive Director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy (OPA) made a statement that perhaps most in the disability community would support the use of picture ID on the placards if it would reduce abuse of the placards. David Hicks thought it he would like to approach OPA on both the 200 feet criteria and the picture on the placards to see if he could gain their support on the position.

There was a very lengthy discussion regarding the issue of the 200 feet distance. Linda Reeder suggested that a conversation with a Physical Therapist about the distance issue. There was further discussion about the various states on this issue might be informative. There was more discussion about a distance, i.e. perhaps limit it to 75 feet. In the end, it was decided to wait and speak with Doctor Cohen, the guest speaker in January, who is a physician that David Hicks is partnering with to educate physicians on this issue.

Department report

Michelle Duprey reported she had been working on the 2011 budget for the Department. She perceives there will be a difficult financial picture ahead.

Michelle Duprey also explained the developments around the press campaign for the wheelchair accessible taxis this past October. She also reported on the need for support during an upcoming hearing at DOT, which is to expand the territory and number of medallions for both Metro Taxi and Yellow Cab. She has been working with SILC and Stan Kosloski on getting the information out to various disability and elderly groups that would benefit from having 140 universal access cabs in CT.

Old Business

Elect Officers

A slate consisting of Robin Tousey-Ayers for Secretary, Dana Canevari for Vice Chairman, and David Hicks as Chairman was presented to the Commission. There was a motion for the Secretary to cast one vote, which was moved unanimously.

L eave of absence-By Law revision
No progress

New Business

None

Other business

None

Public Comments

Elaine Quinn reported that NAMI now has a new affiliate which is NAMI-Elm City. The election of boards and officers is taking place and the organization has been almost a year in the making. There is no home base and the meetings have been taking place in the library. The next meeting will be on January 29th, 2010.

David Hicks talked about the letter he received from the Housing Authority of the City of New Haven.

Michelle Duprey talked about a video that was made that celebrated the 20th anniversary of the ADA. She said it was available for the Commission to view. It was decided to view the video sometime in the new year.

Elaine Quinn spurred on a discussion about recruiting more Commissioners. Michelle Duprey relayed the information that the Department sent out quite an extensive mailing however it did not yield much interest. It was decided that it would be worthwhile for the Commissioners to reach out to people who they know for referrals.

Linda Reeder made a motion to adjourn, that was seconded by Jason Gomez. The meeting adjourned.