



**JOHN DeSTEFANO, JR.**  
*Mayor*

**COMMISSION ON DISABILITIES**  
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**MARIA ELENA ALVAREZ**  
*Chairperson*

**Commission on Disabilities Minutes**  
**March 13, 2006**

Present: Dana Canevari, Marjorie Eichler, David Hicks, Stan Kontogiannis, Linda Reeder, Matthew Ranelli, Robin Tousey-Ayers

Absent: Maria Elena Alvarez, Chris Getlein, Elaine Quinn

Staff: Michelle Duprey

Dana Canevari opened the meeting. The minutes for February 2006 were reviewed. Linda Reeder had a suggestion for revision regarding the website on the last page of the minutes. David Hicks recorded the changes. Linda Reeder made a motion to accept the minutes as amended, Stan Kontogiannis seconded the motion which was unanimously approved.

Chairman's Report

No report

Department Report

Michelle Duprey passed out an updated Commission list. She has been working on the Department Annual Budget which was approved by the Mayor. There will be a public hearing on the budget on March 28, at 6:00 p.m.

Michelle Duprey announced that the Department was not chosen as a recipient of the Accessible America award, but that we would reapply next year.

The Department sponsored a Tax Workshop for persons with disabilities last week. Although there was a small turnout the information was excellent. The presenter was Marty Lagualt.

Michelle Duprey met with the Executive Director of the Center for Disability Rights and is considering collaborating with them for an event for Disability Awareness Day, which is on July 26<sup>th</sup>. She said she is looking for ideas for an event. A meeting was set to discuss ideas with him.

Old Business

- Housing

Linda Reeder had written a letter to HUD, and had received a response, which was shared with the Commission. She stated that there were two noteworthy points in HUD's response. One was the observation that the Commission's letter lacked evidence documenting the need to increase the mandatory accessible housing level to 10%. The second was the issue of whether HUD needed to comply with the State Building Code, which requires a 10% set-aside. Linda Reeder had followed up by drafting a letter to Chris Laux,

attaching to it the response letter from HUD. The letter asked if HUD needed to comply with the State Building Code level of 10% accessible housing. The Commission reviewed the draft letter to Mr. Laux. The consensus, after some discussion, was 1) to collect relevant data documenting the need for a 10% set aside, and 2) to send Linda Reeder's letter to Chris Laux, and when the Commission has received Mr. Laux's response, to attach it to a new letter detailing the documentation evidence back to HUD.

A motion was made by Matt Ranelli to send the letter to Chris Laux, which was seconded by David Hicks and was unanimously approved.

- Designated Parking

Stan Kontogiannis is still gathering information and will update at the next meeting. Michelle Duprey reported on a similar note that she found an opinion written by the State's Attorney General that a public establishment which doesn't have accessible parking, or is not compliant with accessible parking requirements, can be issued a police citation.

- City Plan-Affordable Housing

Matt Ranelli reported on this issue, which stemmed from a planned development in the Ninth Square, on Crown Street, which had been abandoned by the developer in favor of a more lucrative building. Matt Ranelli volunteered to find a contact person within the City to express the Commission's concerns about the continued need for affordable housing in downtown New Haven. Matt suggested that Wendy Clark would be the contact person from City Planning. As Elaine Quinn had originally brought this issue to the attention of the Commission, and as she was not in attendance, the commissioners decided to table the discussion until Elaine Quinn was present.

- Legislative Issues

Michelle Duprey reported that the MS Society is not proposing a bill for which it is seeking the Commission support, but rather a line item that will be considered by the Appropriations Committee. The line item is funding to support a pilot project for people under 65 who have a disability and need care management services in order to utilize the PCA Medicaid Waiver. It was decided that the Commissioners support the pilot in concept, but they need additional information from the MS Society. David Hicks offered to call a contact person and obtain more information. A motion was made to authorize David Hicks to contact the MS Society for additional information. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Michelle distributed legislative agendas from the Office of Protection and Advocacy, the Connecticut Association on Aging, and the Long Term Care Advisory Council. Michelle Duprey stated the most pressing agenda item on the Long Term Care Advisory Council's agenda is to obtain funding for an analysis of the long term care needs of Connecticut citizens, thus allowing for adequate planning of long term care funding levels.

- Emergency Preparedness Committee

Linda Reeder passed out a draft letter that is to be sent to (city Chief Administrative Officer) John Buturla regarding suggested changes to the Emergency Preparedness Voluntary Survey. Also at issue was the need for a volunteer to serve on the committee. There was discussion about the cover letter as well as a suggestion by Michelle Duprey to include in the letter the name of the volunteer. Joe Stanford has offered to serve on the Committee. A motion was made to by David Hicks to send the letter as revised including the contact information for Joe Stanford in the letter. The motion was seconded by Dana Canevari and unanimously approved.

## New Business

Michelle Duprey reported on the Moving to Work funding that the HANH has. Their designation as an MTW expires in 2007. Mr. Jim Miller, Ex. Director of HANH, spelled out his intentions for the use of these funds: to provide whatever support is deemed needed to address the needs of public housing residents. As far as Mainstream Housing Vouchers, HANH does not have any of these vouchers, because of inadequate lease up rates. It was decided to invite Mr. Miller to a future Commission meeting.

A draft of what the Commission may want to post on the City's website was distributed. The current brochure is not appropriately formatted nor is the information current. After review of the draft there were some suggestions. David Hicks agreed to work some more on the draft with input from the Commission and present it at the next meeting.

Michelle Duprey said that Robin Tousey-Ayers asked her to clarify that The Department of Services for Persons with Disabilities has no jurisdiction over the New Haven Board of Education, which has its own ADA Coordinator. Robin Tousey-Ayers discussed a case and difficulties in this case involving a student with a short term disability attending Hooker School. Marjorie Eichler added some information regarding her experiences with Hooker School. The parent may be invited as a member of the public to address the Commission.

There were no further agenda items. A motion was made to adjourn, which was seconded, and so moved. The meeting adjourned.