

FORD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, STUDIO A
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 21, 2002

COMMISSIONERS ATTENDING: :

Christian L. Mageli
M. Cathy McAdam
Claudia Damian
Kim Bretton Hetrick
Gary B. Filiak
Mary Hodak
Dale Swanson
Ryan McGraw (arrived 3:35)
Dr. Cheryl Kreger (arrived 2:15)

Jad Jadallah (excused)
Jane Thomas (excused)

STAFF ATTENDING:

Kurt Giberson, City Liaison
Bob Ziolkowski
Julie LaBenne, Recording Secretary

GUESTS::

Vivian Parker
Michael D. Paul
Abduallah Almawri
Tommy Meadows
Charles Steadman
Robert Robleski
Kevin G. Mitchell
Ray Roberson
Denise Toepfer

Call to order

Commissioner Mageli called the meeting to order at 2:05pm. Ms. LaBenne took roll call.

Denise Toepfer the Wellness Fitness supervisor for the Community and Performing Arts Center welcomed the Commission to their facilities. Chair Mageli introduced Kathy Buda the City of Dearborn City Clerk.

Executive City update

Kurt Giberson distributed reports of voting precinct accessibility (attached). Kathy Buda explained how her office obtained and compiled the information. The commission though pleased with the report, quickly came to a discussion regarding 'acceptable' tension (by lbs.) required to open non-automatic doors. Kathy Buda announced the Poll training course includes videotape on Accessibility & Sensitivity provided by The Secretary of State office. She thanked the Commission for addressing these issues and help acquiring the resources that make Poll training in Dearborn more proactive.

Kurt Giberson announced a citywide mailing via The Back Fence included a survey on disability concerns. The Public Information department created a full color insert to explain how the Commission invites the community to contact them. This insert was designed to address concerns of persons with disabilities and/or their caregivers with a return by mail section. In one (1) week Kurt Giberson's office has received eighteen (18) responses. Follow up will include copies of the responses for the commissioners and time for more responses to arrive.

Kurt Giberson has a quote from the printer for the forty thousand (40,000) survey/brochures that would be included with the mailing of City water bills. The \$1,400 – 1,800 dollars needed is not in our budget this year. Vice Chair McAdam asked whether an Arabic translation would help reach more of the community. Kurt Giberson agreed and suggested that future-mailing ideas will be founded by the response to his recent survey.

Kurt Giberson has forwarded to Human Resource/Personnel and Finance departments the request for a Part-time ADA Coordinator. The objective is to fill the position in the next month.

Approval of January Minutes

Corrections withstanding for the January minutes. The meeting minutes for January 21, 2002 were approved as corrected and motioned by C. McAdam & seconded by C. Mageli. Vote: Unanimous

Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was changed by Dale Swanson adding #9.5 (Visitability). Motion to accept as amended motioned by C. McAdam & seconded by K. Hetrick. Vote: Unanimous

Chair Report

Chair Mageli publicly thanked our new commissioners and asked them to

familiarize themselves with the By-laws & chain of command.

Chair Mageli recently attended a dinner at the Dearborn Outer drive Kiwanis Club. Doug Feldcamp invited him to address their members. He was well received and discovered they helped build an accessibility ramp on Grindley Park.

Chair Mageli thanked the Commissioners and Bob Ziolkowski for their efforts at the City of Dearborn Sensitivity training classes. He announced the next meeting in April would be a chance for the City and Commission to truly shine. The State of Michigan Commission on Disability Concerns will visit on April 19, 2002 from 10am to 3pm for annual training. State Commissioner Chair Lillian Kramer wants the twenty-one (21) State Commissioners to see what we have done for Dearborn. She hopes they may start a similar Commission in their own hometowns.

Chair Mageli was contacted by the Dearborn Hills Golf Club at Telegraph & Michigan Avenue to speak with them about an A.D.A question. He discovered they have an accessible golf cart available that has never been used, a simple lack of knowledge of resources that our PR committee can fix. Vice Chair McAdam suggested taking a picture. Chair Mageli explained the question they raised; why do they need an accessible Port-a-john costing them three (3) times as much to rent? When they have accessible facilities already? Dearborn Hills has agreed to keep it because 'What you do for one, you must do for others'.

Chair Mageli announced all future meetings would be on the third (3rd) Thursday from 2-5pm of each month starting in May. He would like to book the Studio A at the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center for these meetings.

Chair Mageli would like to help out with another Disability sensitivity training for the Mayor and City Council. Kathy Buda asked to be present also.

Chair Mageli was contacted by Don Strand of the City clerk's office. Mr. Strand performed a site review at the precinct locations. Chair Mageli was concerned with one aspect that affects both persons with disabilities and seniors. The pull tension on entry doors (found in the last column of the attached report) was surprisingly high at some precincts. Vice Chair McAdam asked what actual tension level is recommended? Kurt Giberson responded that a call to the A.D.A technical representatives revealed that though interior doors do have a 5 lbs. Regulation, no regulation exist for exterior doors. The reasons are related to uncontrollable factors like weight of exterior grade doors, wind, temperature, action outside the building & interior ventilation causing suction. Commissioner

Swanson recommended a 10 lbs. Limit and Kurt Giberson felt that was possible with qualified door maintenance persons.

Vice Chair Report

Vice Chair McAdam welcomed the new Commissioners and would like to thank the former Commissioners for a year of hard work. She reminded the Commission of their primary commitment to represent the whole community with strong support for all disabilities. Vice Chair McAdam proposed the motion for Thank you letters to former commissioners & seconded by C. Mageli. Vote: Unanimous

Vice Chair McAdam distributed flyers for the Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan's 8th Annual Living without Limitations Expo & Job Fair to be held at the Cobo Conference Center on Friday, May 3rd.

Vice Chair McAdam spoke with a man who contacted City of Dearborn's Human Resources Dept about employment, after visiting our Website. She redirected him to the Expo & Job Fair.

Vice Chair McAdam will be attending a Conference in April by the National Business & Disabilities Council.

As a final announcement, Ara (her leader dog) is planning retirement in San Diego. A new dog will be training in May/June. Chair Mageli suggested a retirement party.?

Sensitivity Training Follow-up/Comments

Bob Ziolkowski distributed a report on the ADA sensitivity training and reviewed the highlights. The format that was used; lecture, movie, commissioner panel, and technical support exhibition proved very powerful. Attendance by city employees was nearly three (3) times the original sign up list. The report (attached) shows a breakdown of participants by city department, the largest group being the Fire Dept. and Building & Safety. (Applause)

Information included in this report should help with future training seminars, with hope that they become part of the city's new hire program. Evaluations by the individual department heads felt the training was worthwhile and should be presented again. Bob Ziolkowski thanked the commission for their through and passionate participation, setting the pace for future training seminars from Human Resources.

Commissioner Kim Hetrick and Vice Chair McAdam were stopped by a city

employee on their way in today, expressing thanks for an enlightening experience. Chair Mageli thanked the commissioners for participating and truly making the training format work so well.

Disabled Sports Presentation

Kevin Mitchell, President of Michigan Adaptive Sports addressed upcoming activities in the state of Michigan for persons with physical challenges/disabilities. Wright & Fillipis and Oakwood Health Systems is sponsoring a Wheelchair Basketball Tournament on April 18, 2002. This event will take place in Dearborn at the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center. The game will be for fun and awareness, with booths set up for information. Kevin Mitchell welcomed the Commission on Disability Concerns to join in the event. This winter the Michigan Adaptive Sports Snow Skiing Program serviced over 300 clients. This phenomenal event for paras, amputees, quads, and blind persons included instruction from Professional Ski Association of America (PSAA) Personnel. Oakland County Parks & Recreation will hold this summer's expanding Water Skiing program on Pontiac Lake. They also offer Clinics for Hand Cycling, Kayaking, and Sailing. The Sports Spectacular to be held September 10-14, 2002 will include Water Skiing, Hand Cycling, Kayaking, Sailing, and Fishing at Camp Dearborn. The facilities provide a family orientated event. A video taped for the Disabilities Today Show hosted by Roger McCarver, showing the first Sports Spectacular, was viewed by the Commission & Guest.

Mitchell announced a new group; Michigan Sports and Recreation Coalition created to pool together resources from all the adaptive sport organizations around the State. He distributed their informational flyers for the Michigan Adaptive Golf Season, a Wheelchair Basketball Clinic, and the Adaptive Sports Bowl now in progress.

April Training for the State

Chair Mageli has a meeting today with Kurt Giberson & Community Center Admin to assure a smooth running event. He feels signage is a major issue to discuss. Commissioners may be contacted later to discuss their special needs, if any, for this meeting. Finding hotels to recommend with adequate accessibility may require site reviews. Chair Mageli reminded the commission that this is not a public event, it is for State of Michigan ADA training purposes. Robin Jones will come in the afternoon to help show what our commission has done for Dearborn's disabled community. Hopefully we can cause a trickle down effect.

Special Ed. Article Discussion/Comments

Commission Kim Hetrick referred to the March, front-page article in the Detroit Newspaper. The news story covered Special Education in Michigan and

suggested that Special Education funding detracts from funding for other forms of education. They also suggest the funds are wasted because they are not used properly. Commissioner Hetrick fears that further misconceptions may occur and that our Commission needs to support Special Education through PR. We should express that everyone's education is the key.

Vice Chair McAdam received a letter from Commissioner Hetrick in regards to the article. She felt it was truly well done and gave 'kudos' to his speed, beating the Education Sub-committee to the punch. Vice Chair McAdam agreed that we should support Special Education individually and as a whole.

Commissioner Kreger agreed saying, the response of a Commission because it is outside of the school system would be a powerful thing. She sees two (2) possible factors that could have lead to this article; 1. Backlash from the Federal IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities for Education Act) which is perceived as an advocacy piece or 2. Federal funding is tightening and people are becoming territorial. Fortunately, federal laws guarantee that we educate all children and reviews performance. She expressed whole hearted support for any educational funding.

Chair Mageli made a motion to write a rebuttal to the article & seconded by C. McAdam. Vote Unanimous.

Visitability Discussion

Commissioner Swanson started by saying that educating ourselves will be essential when approaching any City body of Government with the 'Visitability' idea. In Naperville, & Puma County, Arizona both passed ordinances where all new houses in their communities will have accessible interiors.

Chair Mageli wrote & received correspondence from Naperville about 'Visitability'. A copy of the new ordinance includes 36in. Doors, reinforced bathroom walls, all switches lowered, and all sockets higher. The program was named Visitability because a person with any mobility problem should be able to visit the homes family & friends.

Public Comments

Vivian Parker responded to the Special Education article since she has two (2) children in the programs. She believes it all comes down to the Derant lawsuit issues. In Inkster schools she fought to have the funding separated so that it would not get 'lost in the mix'. She requested that copies of our rebuttal get forwarded to our State & Federal Representatives. Hoping they will have a more educated/informed vote in the future.

Commissioner Kreger commented that the Durant lawsuit issues, in regard to funding, plays a large part of the problem. Special Education has always been under-funded and new state laws have shifted funding further than the original law intended.

Chair Mageli also pointed out that money sent to Lansing for Special Education was rerouted for general use. Durant lawsuit was filed because money was not getting to the school system.

Vice Chair McAdam motioned that copies of the rebuttal letter are sent to State & Federal Representatives, & seconded by C. Damian. Vote Unanimous.

Michael Paul thanked the Commission for all their efforts and support. He hopes Detroit will have a Commission some day.

Abdullah Alkawri thanked the Commission for working to increase the quality of life for persons with disabilities in the community.

Ray Roberson of the National Federation of the Blind brought information on Transportation to the Commission. He went before the City of Detroit's Advisory Commission to address transportation problems that have been going on for years.

A transition plan needs to be set in place to correct the following:

1. Reliable & timely public transportation for revitalization
2. Chair lifts in working order
3. Clean fixed route buses
4. Sensitivity training for bus personnel
5. Goals/liason to work with disabled community, also with the senior population
6. Funds raised are used to sensitize employees & general public
7. Request that the City Council & Mayor's office take another look at the fare structure to restore fare rates based on income for disabled & elderly persons
8. Need for an emergency phone number after 4pm
9. Current bus route information is needed in alternative formats (i.e., Braille)
10. Adequate signage & maintenance of signs at bus stops.

Vice Chair McAdam thanked Mr. Roberson for the helpful information to be used by the Access Committee who will address transportation issues.

Commissioner Filiak asked Mr. Roberson how he felt about the accessibility of

the Community Center. He explained that time restrictions forced him to hire a cab, but next time he will use public transportation.

Denise Toepfer employee of the Ford Community & Performing Arts Center recognized Camille Gibson who is a physical therapist here. She works with the disabled adult program, which has applied for the Windman Fund Grant. We hope to have a summer camp to offer recreation, field trips, and crafts for disabled adults.

Denise Toepfer is looking to obtain more fitness equipment with accessibility to wheelchairs for the Community Center. A picture in the new brochure proudly shows the current equipment being used. Recently, she and Commissioner Filiak visited the Rehabilitation Center of Michigan to look at various equipments to purchase. Creating a station of wheel chair accessible machines by utilizing funds left over from opening the Fitness center is her goal. Chair Mageli asked if the 4-in-1 machine is available? She answered that is the type of equipment that is being considered. Chair Mageli requested that more emphasis on wheel chair accessible equipment be placed in the next quarterly brochure for the fitness center. Other suggestions included 'go ball' for the blind and larger print for mailings. Discussions followed involving the cost of membership for non-residents or insurance paid physical therapy training and use of brochure photos on our website.

Kurt Giberson followed up on Lacey's car wash alarm for Ray Roberson. He called them and they were unaware it wasn't functioning. Lacey's has ordered the part to repair the alarm this week and promised to call when it is complete.

Sub-Committee Reports

Independent Living/accessibility Committee Jane Thomas – Chair Mageli spoke in Commissioner Thomas' absence. She hopes to address transportation and visitability at the May meeting.

Education/Employment Committee Cathy McAdam. The committee met twice, on February 20th & March 18th, minutes were distributed. The committee has decided to participate in the Healthy Living Fair in Dearborn on April 10th. Commissioner Hodak has the sign up sheet for two (2) hour slots at our booth. They will have an updated resource list available at that time and freebies with Commission advertising. Through Kurt Giberson's office our posters & banners are being updated with the new logo.

The Sub-Committee and Commissioner Kreger look forward to working together enhancing the B.A.B.E. program. B.A.B.E. teaches disability awareness to

elementary age students.

Public relations/Awards Committee Dale Swanson. – The Web pages, as seen at the January meeting, are up & running. The updates include; 1. Larger font, 2. Alternative format to every picture, and 3. Added accessibility web page. Future updates will include a biography from new Commissioner Cheryl Kreger and pictures of the new Commissioners taken by Commissioner Hetrick. Kurt Giberson will forward a copy of the Annual Report to add to our web page. Once the report has been added, we will purge any old minutes & agendas.

The Commissions CDTV spot runs intermittently on the Dearborn Journal. It includes an interview with Vice Chair McAdam & Commissioner Hetrick, parts of the November meeting, and himself (Commissioner Swanson) at work. Kathy Nelson, Associate Editor at the Dearborn Press & Guide will do an article on the Commission. The interview will be done in a group style.

The Committee will be meeting over the Awards issue. They would like to add Awards the next agenda. Also due to high demand, funds are needed to print more Commission brochures.

Chair Mageli announced that after the April meeting he will have surgery and will require a month of bed rest. Vice Chair McAdam will cover in his absence.

Commissioner Reports

Dr. Cheryl Kreger - Started by thanking everyone and stating she is honored to be on the Commission.

Gary B. Filiak - Homecoming updates; still checking for trip hazards and working with the City of Dearborn Engineering Department to correct them. Our new station will be at the top of the hill this year. He hopes to acquire some Plastic pathways from the Recreation Department. Chair Mageli requested an update on our signs for the event.

Dale Swanson - Distributed copies of an article found in Smart Computing magazine, called "Unlimited Access". The article explains several interesting & informative ways of making a Personal Computer more accessible.

Business card design updates; they are well liked with the exception of the City logo is absent. Vice Chair McAdam stated she has a resource for Braille additions to be stamped into the cards. Kurt Giberson felt that all the commissioners should have a Braille format added. A discussion followed.

Kim Bretton Hetrick - Welcomed the new Commissioners.

Claudia Damian - She started with a question for Commissioner Filiak. At Homecoming, will the Police 911 van have the TTY phone available? Kurt Giberson assured her it would. She sent a letter CDTV about closed captioning of local programs. James Brian, Broadcast Media Supervisor, stated that her suggestion would be taken under future consideration. The demonstration for Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) at the Senior Center went well. Most seniors were not aware of ALD's available to them at movies, lectures, and performances. She encouraged the hard of hearing seniors to attend the "Senior Job & Health Fair 2002" on March 14th.

Several City employees approached Commissioner Damian after the sensitivity training, interested in learning to use a TTY system. Possible training through the MIS Department was suggested. Dale Swanson asked if a resource for training is available. Ameritech will, but may charge a fee. He added that Bob Ziolkowski should be contacted instead of MIS.

Liz Kobylack of Self-Help for Hard of Hearing (SHHH) contacted her regarding the possibility of a support group in Dearborn. She directed her to Mary Ellen Randall at the Senior Center.

In December, Ann Liming a Hard of Hearing Specialist invited her to a session of the Division on Deafness (DOD). Several people were chosen to observe and give feed back on training provided to Detroit Police officers on various situations with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people.

Mary Hodak - The 911 TTY phone project update; refurbished cell phones are available for seniors and they are set up to assist only in emergency calls. Hopefully the Sheriff Department will be eligible to receive phones on this program.

The Outreach Program is now available in Dearborn and was advertised through the Senior Center. The Program is for everyone in the community. Complete information found on the Resource list (attached) under 'services'.

The Ethel Louise Armstrong Foundation is offering a Scholarship for a Female Graduate Student with Disabilities. More information is available at www.ela.org.

Ryan McGraw - Started by thanking the commission. He contacted Denise Topher to ask what is available for persons with disabilities at the Community

Center. A weekly gym night, weekly arts & crafts on Saturday, and a monthly dance was offered to him. He would like to see 20 or 30 programs become available. She felt that upcoming Grant money could make more happen. Chair Mageli asked what his suggestions are? Commissioner McGraw offered to supply the Oakland Community Center list of activities, as an example. Vice Chair McAdam added that such a resource would need advertising and community feed back.

A discussion about meeting placement and table set at future meetings followed.

Adjournment

Chair Mageli adjourned the meeting at 4:58pm.