

FORD PERFORMING ARTS CENTER, STUDIO A
PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES
May 23, 2002

COMMISSIONERS COMMISSIONERS

ATTENDING:

Christian L. Mageli (via conference phone)
M. Cathy McAdam
Claudia Damian
Kim Bretton Hetrick
Gary B. Filiak
Mary Hodak
Jad K. Jadallah
Dale Swanson
Ryan McGraw (arrived 2:14pm)
Dr. Cheryl Kreger

ABSENT:

Jane Thomas

STAFF ATTENDING:

Kurt Giberson, City Liaison
Denise Toefper
Julie LaBenne, Recording Secretary

Call to order

Vice Chair McAdam called the meeting to order at 2:04 pm. Julie LaBenne took roll call.

Approval of November Minutes

Additions and deletions withstanding to the March minutes as follows;
Ann Lyming is a hard of hearing Specialist, not a Detroit Police Officer.
Insert missing header for Mary Hodak's Commissioner Report, including that the refurbish cell phones are available to seniors and the disabled for emergency calls.

Language changes from 'Disabled persons' to 'persons with disabilities'.

Denise Toefper added to the guest list.

Correct the 'Golf Challenge Event' to the 'Wheel Chair Basketball Tournament' in the Disabled Sports Presentation.

The meeting minutes for March 21, 2002 were approved as corrected and motioned by C. McAdam, also motioned by M. Thomas and seconded by C.

Damian. Vote: Unanimous.

Approval of the Agenda

Motion to accept by K. Hetrick and seconded by J. Jadallah. Vote: Unanimous

Executive City updates

Kurt Giberson's presentation to the Outer Drive Kiwanis focused on the Commission for Disability Concerns. Doug Feldkamp presented the MIS dept.'s involvement with Commissioner Damian on TTY improvement at the City of Dearborn. Approximately 40 members attended this meeting.

Braille Business Cards update: Kurt Giberson will contact Linda O'Conner, he is confident that they have been ordered. He requested information/updates from Commissioners Swanson, Kreger, and McGraw.

Homecoming update: Kurt Giberson wants the Commission booth on the lower level, instead of in the Art Fair Area at the top of a hill. Chair Mageli wants to be in the Vendors' Tent, or in the Chamber of Commerce Booth Area just before the bridge (high traffic area). Kurt Giberson suggested one tent with two displays shared with the Chamber of Commerce could be good. Commissioner Filiak spoke with Erik Peterson regarding a booth at the Activities Tent near the Food Tent, located across the bridge and left. It would include an asphalt surround, and plastic flooring has been requested. The next Homecoming meeting is Monday June 3rd at 2:00pm. Kurt would like to check into this himself. Chair Mageli expressed his appreciation for their coordinated efforts.

ADA Coordinator update includes; recommendations by the Executive Committee forwarded to Heather VanPoucker in Human Resources, and coordination with K. Hetrick & C. McAdam to get Commission input on the interviewing process.

Chair Report

Chair Mageli started by thanking the Commissioners for their input at the meeting with the State Disability Concerns Commission. Jerry Mutty reported that the state commission was "knocked out" by the Ford Community & Performing Arts facilities. He is recommending that the Dearborn commission be a model for the rest of the state. Vice Chair McAdam announced that thank you letters to elected officials and participants in April's meeting are complete.

Chair Mageli's recent illness (high fever, severe shakes) put him in the emergency room at Fairlane. His original diagnosis of pneumonia and sent to a Ford hospital downtown. He was finally found to have a severe infection of a

decubitus wound. Despite his need for specialized equipment and regular nursing care, he did not receive the care needed for his condition. He finds that poor response of the hospital to the needs of people with disabilities is not only frequent, it is the norm. He did not get appropriate care until he secured his release, and his family took over his care. Protocol for patients with special needs is vitally important.

He may be out for several months, and requests support for Commissioners Hetrick and McAdam, as they fill in for him.

Gary Rumtruck was referred to Russ from the Kenny Mobility Center to address support in building ramps in the Dearborn area.

Vice Chair Report

Vice Chair McAdam referred to her Handout, starting with congratulations to the Commission & especially Chair Mageli for the April meeting.

She attended the Cultural Diversity Meeting in Washington D.C. with Commissioner Hetrick. (Materials available from CIRRIE conference see Kim Hetrick's report)

Vice Chair McAdam spoke to Bob Ziolkowski regarding training for Mayor's Council, City Council, & City Clerk and he requested more help from the Commission. He recommends a 3-5 minute report to City Council on current training and citizen activities. Vice Chair McAdam wants to make sure that they are invited to training and other Commission activities. Bob suggests we call the various offices and find out who might attend, and what time frame would work best for them. Also she inquired about setting up TTY training with Commissioner Damian.

Vice Chair McAdam attended the National Business and Disability Council meeting in Orlando, Florida. She was pleasantly surprised by Home Depot's program for recruiting people with disabilities, across the spectrum. They also did a presentation on safety issues since 9/11, and included the website in her handout.

Descriptive video update: Descriptive video is now available on ABC/Channel 7, but other channels are not following suit. The law is now in force, but Cable is not responding to her letters.

Library Access update: Vice Chair McAdam did a presentation on computer accessibility at the Vision 2000 Expo in Detroit. Tara Gnau a representative from Dearborn libraries attended also. Vice Chair McAdam volunteered herself to help implement our libraries and Commissioner Damian's input is requested.

List serve through Michigan Disability Civil Rights Commission is available for people who want to be kept abreast of state progress on Visitability. Dale Swanson says that a website is also available.

Vice Chair McAdam announced that today is Commissioner Hetrick's birthday (best wishes from around the whole room) ?

Survey response and Follow up

Commissioner Swanson stated 50+ responses have been received from the Back Fence survey. Volunteers are requested to help follow up on responders' questions. Chair Mageli wants the Executive Committee to review and distribute them to the appropriate Committee. Commissioner Swanson felt the majority of the surveys will require a simple form letter response.

Homecoming update

Commissioner Filiak contacted Joan D'Arcy, Chairman of the Board for the Christian Science Church. They will supply 32 additional parking spaces for wheelchair users at the top of the hill. Also special slots for persons with disabilities would be available with large signage in the main lot. Commissioner Filiak will attend the June 3rd Homecoming meeting for more updates. SMART Bus service with accessibility will be available to the Art Fair; schedules will be posted at pick-up points. We'll advertise availability in the Homecoming pamphlet and on CDTV. Vice Chair McAdam would like to have an alternative format (Braille or large print) pamphlet this year. She will look into the cost and time restraints.

ADA Coordinator position update

Vice Chair McAdam felt this subject was sufficiently covered in the Executive City updates.

Visitability discussion

Vice Chair McAdam expressed concern for the size of this issue. She wants more information and organization before any presentation is considered. Commissioner Swanson took responsibility for most of the presentation. He distributed a chart/report comparing Visitability features adopted by several cities. Atlanta was the first in 1992, all newly constructed single family homes and apartments must have a no-step entrance, 32" wide doors, 36" route through the dwelling; and receptacles/switches at wheelchair height. Austin Texas (1998), Urbana Illinois (2000); and Irving California recently created a voluntary program where homebuilders are encouraged to offer a Visitability package. Tucson & Pima County, AZ have Visitability ordinances for new construction. Naperville, IL has a program under review. Several other communities are

joining in the process of developing programs to ensure new housing or apartments are visitable. Chair Mageli requests that Commissioners Swanson and Hetrick work with the Access Committee on this topic.

Naperville's problem is that homes are Victorian style, and there are flood-plain issues that affect local approval. Kurt Giberson stated that no permits are being issued for building in flood-plain areas in Dearborn. Currently there are about 400 homes already built in within the 100 yr. flood elevation area and these homes cannot have basements. He suggests that a core group from the Commission approach the Mayor and the Building & Safety Director to discuss Visitability.

Chair Mageli expects some problems from builders/developers. Vice Chair McAdam would like input from persons who worked on Visitability in these communities. Commissioner Hetrick suggested contacting builders' organizations regarding their findings "after the fact" in communities that have implemented Visitability.

The Access Committee will handle preparations related to Visitability and work with Kurt Giberson to contact the Mayor and Building & Safety Director.

Special Education Mileage

Vice Chair McAdam raised the question of support for the Special Ed. Mileage issue coming up in August. Kurt Giberson advises that no Commission monies or City resources can be expended to support overtly political activities. We can send the letter drafted by Commissioner Kreger in support of issues, as individuals, but not as "Members of the Commission." In the past, letters that were printed in the local media featuring signatures by the Mayor and various City Commissioners were paid for by private funds. We will look forward to an interpretation by the Ethics Committee regarding use of officials' titles in public statements for support of political issues.

Cheryl Kreger has brought in pamphlets on 10 Points of support for a new vote on Special Education funding.

Public Comments

Denise Toepfer thanked Chair Mageli for his complements to the Recreation Department regarding their help with the April State Disability Commission Training meeting. She distributed flyers advertising Dearborn's Community Art Council performance by "Wild Swan Theater" shows and workshop for adults with disabilities on June 3 and 10, with a performance on June 17th. Also the Visteon sponsored "Music and Movement" Event on August 3rd at Ford Field.

This performance will include “Jam Packed” (with the disabled drummer from Bob Seger’s Silver Bullet Band). She distributed invitations to Dearborn’s annual “Art on the Avenue” on June 1 and 2 on West Village Dr, with a Preview Party from 6 to 8, next Wednesday. Preview Party tickets are \$25.00, and include fun, art, raffles, lots of food and two glasses of wine/champagne.

Gym equipment update: Denise is waiting for response from another facility that has accessible equipment. She and Commissioner Filiak will look at what’s available.

Kurt Giberson called Bill Irving regarding Descriptive Video, and requested that he call Cathy McAdam.

Sub-committee reports

Independent Living/accessibility Committee Jane Thomas – Access Committee has not met. Cathy will follow up on Visitability and Ray Roberson’s transportation issues.

Public relations/Awards Committee Dale Swanson. –distributed the internet version of our article in the Detroit News. Web page has been updated to include new Commissioners Kreger, McGraw, and Swanson. CDTV will air a report on the April meeting with the State Disability Commission, this June on the Dearborn Journal. CDTV will provide us with a tape for those without cable access. The Disabilities Today Show has been contacted by Vice Chair McAdam.

Education/Employment Committee Cathy McAdam. - Shannon Rich will begin coming to the Education committee as a public member. She is a former employee of ICAN, and a Dearborn resident.

Cheryl Kreger reviewed which Disability Awareness Training Programs are being used in the Dearborn schools. We need to explore available programs and, as a Commission/Committee, help implement them. It is a powerful thing to have adults with disabilities in the schools, talking with the kids and showing an interest in them.

Someone from Texas contacted us regarding our sensitivity training at the Recreation Center. They requested information that they could use to duplicate the effort. They were prompted by a voting machine manufacture, and Chair Mageli shared data with them.

Vice Chair McAdam recommended a meeting with the President of the Chamber

of Commerce and the Education Committee, to raise the local business community awareness of Commission activities.

Commissioner Reports

Mary Hodak – Commissioner Hodak: received a thank you letter from Project Healthy Living for our participation. She wrote thank you letters in return, and to the staff members who helped set-up our booth, from the Commission

She contacted Carol Wells, president of the AAUW (American Association of University Women) in Dearborn, hoping she would attend the June meeting to share some things she wrote to the AAUW membership regarding their Disability Action projects. Wells was unaware of the Disability Concerns Commission.

Commissioner Hodak wrote a letter, as a private citizen, to a doctor's office regarding their lack of a wheelchair accessible bathroom. She received a response indicating that they have installed one as a result of her letter.

The plan for 911 emergency cell phones is still in limbo, because of uncertainty on how to distribute them. Leo Welsh will follow up with any changes in the situation.

Commissioner Hodak is looking at day trips offered by the Senior Citizens program that she might wish to attend. She found only one trip, on July 14th that appears to be fully accessible. Bianco Bus Company says that none of their rental busses are accessible; occasionally a "tag-along" accessible van could be used for special cases. Vice Chair McAdam feels that we need to simply tell the Senior Citizen program administrators that people who need accessibility wish to go on a trip. If we are told that there is no way to accommodate us, then we can approach the City Administration with a specific case that needs resolution. Kurt Giberson also suggested contacting Greg Warner, head of the Recreation Dept. The Senior Citizen program needs to clearly advertise which programs are accessible.

Kim Bretton Hetrick – Commissioner Hetrick spoke about his and Vice Chair McAdam's attendance at the CIRRIE Conference on Communication with People of Minority Cultures regarding Disability Issues. He would like to develop avenues of communications for Dearborn residents to access disability resources. They experienced lots of resources, and great ideas. Also they got the opportunity to meet Judy Heumann, who helped write and get the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) passed, who ran into Commissioner Hetrick with her motorized wheelchair! Wonderful conference.

Cathy McAdam – Announcement of the next meeting to be held on June 13,

2002.

Claudia Damian – The TTY phone for emergency 911 calls update; Testing continues every other week, there was a problem but it was due to high winds that day.

Commissioner Damian received a notice from Chris Hunter of the DOD (Division on Deafness) saying Governor Engler announced that DOD has been renamed –DODHH and the Advisory council on the Deaf have been renamed –Council on Deaf & Hard of Hearing. This change will increase communication and cooperation between organizations for the culturally deaf, oral/deaf and HOH (hard of hearing) people.

Commissioner Damian has e-mailed Bob Ziolkowski about the training Dearborn City employees for TTY phone use. She feels more information and time is needed.

MaryAnn Bartles of the Dearborn Libraries received updates to the ‘Red Notebook’.

Commissioner Damian related a story of an acquaintance that came to a Dearborn Police station, as an interpreter, for a deaf student who needed to make a police report. The desk officer did not believe the student making the report was Deaf, and the report was not completed. She would like to see the Division on Deafness training with the Dearborn Police & Courts.

Jad Jadallah – Commissioner Jadallah works with people with disabilities in the Arabic community at ACCESS on a daily basis. Dearborn Public Schools and Social services are making a lot of referrals to him. He feels it’s as though someone said, “If you speak Arabic, and have a disability concern, just call Jad!”

Commissioner Jadallah attended a developmentally disabled persons meeting where Wayne County Board is changing their structure. These changes will affect persons receiving aid through their programs by October 2002.

The new ACCESS building is open. Unfortunately, the entrance ramp had to be rebuilt on the day they opened; the contractor didn’t pay attention to accessibility requirements.

Vice Chair McAdam asked for update on kids being misdiagnosed as disabled, when the real concern is language. Commissioner Jadallah says that this is less of a problem now. Commissioner Kreger added that we have a large number of Dearborn’s special education staff that speaks Arabic and they are cautious

about over-identification and over-diagnosis. They are trying to bring awareness of possible under-diagnosis in the community.

Jad will try to get a representative from ACCESS to attend the June meeting, and talk to us about concerns within the Arabic community.

Dale Swanson – None at this time.

Gary Filiak – Commissioner Filiak also on the VSA (Very Special Arts) Committee wants to commend them for their work, and has offered them support from the Commission.

In the Dearborn Press and Guide's editorial section the points of view column has a letter from Dolores M. Curly a "wheelchair-bound handicap person" regarding their attendance at the Gilbert and Sullivan Operetta. She complained about the lack of wheelchair accessible restroom facilities, and says that the City of Dearborn has neglected appropriate pool facilities for people with disabilities. We need to respond by sending a letter to Greg Warner, the head of Recreation, and the Mayor's office. Kurt Giberson suggested the article be forwarded to Chair Mageli to make recommendations.

Ryan McGraw – Ryan has graduated and has been accepted into Kalamazoo College! (Applause) He will attend the meetings this summer, but then it will be hit or miss.

Dr. Cheryl Kreger – None at this time.

Vice Chair McAdam asked for ideas that would bring more of the public to our meetings. Kurt Giberson suggested using the internet to forward invitations for persons, residents, groups, and organizations that would be interested. Currently we are in the newspaper and we do have a mailing list started. Commissioner Kreger suggested the Cable City Events listing with the wording 'Public Welcome'. Commissioner Jadallah offered to contact the Detroit News employee who publishes Community events.

Adjournment

Vice Chair McAdam adjourned the meeting at 4:32pm.

MICHAEL A. GUIDO MAYOR