

Ford Performing Arts Center, Studio A  
Public Meeting Minutes  
November 20, 2003

PRESENT

Commissioners  
Nancy Bower  
Claudia Damian  
Gary Filiak  
Mary Hodak  
Cheryl Kreger  
Cathy McAdam  
Mona Ramouni  
Dale Swanson  
Sonya Tishler

City Staff  
ADA Coordinator:  
Susan Fitzmaurice  
Recreation: Denise Toepfer

Guests (3)

Excused

Kim Hetrick  
Jane Thomas

CALL TO ORDER  
2:06 PM

ROLL CALL

MEETING MINUTES

Motion to approve minutes by Dale, seconded by Nancy, unanimous approval.

RECREATION

Denise Toepfer encouraged us to have a DAD again. Encouraged more Dearborn specific vendors and hands on activities.

EXECUTIVE UPDATE

ADA Coordinator Susan Fitzmaurice went into detail about the new accounting procedures for Commissions funds - specifically that we now have a operating funds budget for the commission and a special project fund. If all bills for DAD are now received we have approximately a \$1,000 balance in our new special projects fund. A final accounting will be ready in January.

She discussed the cause of delay in many city projects. City Hall construction should begin January 5th. She described her efforts to get quotes for Braille and

Arabic translation.

## CHAIR REPORT

Cathy McAdam reviewed the report that follows adding that any letters we want to send regarding political decision need to be sent to mark Guido first.

- a.. Congratulations to all for a great Disability Awareness Day.
- b. Disability Mentoring Day. The recreation dept , public works, photography, city cable, and our police department all mentored students with disabilities on October 15th. Special thanks to Jim Opferman from Dearborn's vocational assessment program and michelle Laconis from the Ford Motor Company. One high school student went to a special event at the Ford Motor Company along with college students.
- c. Legal issues: Susan and I met with bob Hedges, and Kurt Giberson re: the inclusion of ADA compliance language when developing contracts with vendors of products and services. Although Wade Amusements may not return, we agreed these changes were necessary.
- d. Community Outreach: I've been giving more thought to Robin's comments that we are seen as "doers." Although it feels good to get such recognition, we simply can't "do it all" or even afford to be seen as "doing it all." So the question is how ot make the best of our existing community alliances, and other city commissions to move our agenda forward. When we start our strategic plan, keep asking is someone else already doing this, what unique role should we play, and why.
- e. Voting: HAVA funding has been approved. We need to be very proactive in insisting on accessible voting. The city clerk's office did view the voting machines and this would be a good time to ask for additional meetings to examine all aspects of voting access and we may want to include representation from the League of Women Voters. If we agree this is a priority when developing our strategic plan, I would like to take on this with continued input from the access committee.

## ACCESS REPRESENTATIVE

- a. Interested in forming a coalition to find sources of funding for mental health services and for developmentally disabled population in Dearborn.  
Now mainly funded by state Mental Health funds.
- b. Need to develop a campaign to educate people about how to get help.
- c. ACCESS does provide translation services.

## PUBLIC MEMBER COMMENTS

- a. Rear entrance to Bryant library has crumbling wall that impedes path to accessible entrance.

## RECREATION MEETING

a. The recreation meeting results were discussed. Minutes follow.

MOTION: I make a motion to use the barrier-free funds to purchase the railings for the stairs at the south end of the PAC. By Dale Swanson, seconded by Cheryl Kreger, unanimous approval.

b. A letter was received from Eric Peterson asking us to assist in the purchase of the ramp used at DAD. It was agreed that we would pay for it in full. (Letter from peterson follow Recreation meeting minutes)

MOTION: I motion that the barrier -free funds be used to purchase the ramp for recreation as long as it is agreed that it will be used by all city services. By Mary Hodak, seconded by Dale Swanson, unanimous approval.

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### Recreation Meeting Minutes 10/30/03

Present: Eric Peterson, Rick Osborn, Mark Manas, Bob Creamer,  
Susan Fitzmaurice, Cathy McAdam, Christian Mageli

We reviewed the recommendations and clarified additional information summarized below.

1. Recommendation: Handrails placed on at least one side of the stepped walkway leading from the parking lot to the PAC.

\*Solution: Rec department will determine an aesthetic and safe railing to be paid for through barrier free funds.

2. Recommendation: Have one of the doors closest to the lap pool on the glass wall between the weight equipment and the pool be available for entry by people with disabilities.

\*Answer: The State of Michigan Health Department requires that all pool users must shower before using any aquatic facility. Since, the showers are located in the locker rooms, the distance would not be reduced by allowing access through the concourse door near the guard station. Also, leaving this door unlocked for disability access presents a security issue

3. Recommendation: Placement of benches near the all three PAC entrances, and near the wet rooms.

\*Solution: Presently there are benches at each of the FCPAC entrances. the theater and recreation entrances have benches located inside and outside of the building. The Recreation Department will secure one or two benches for the hallway near the Wet Rooms. (Staff will physically secure benches to prevent moving them)

4. Clarification needed: Is there a wheelchair available for patrons to use to

bring someone from the outside of the building to the inside and to the locker rooms, pools or other areas?

\*Answer: 4 at main area one in senior area, (2 more coming. Agreed we need to publicize and have in view for large events)

5. Recommendation: Develop a policy for disability discounts for people who have limited incomes, similar to senior discounts.

\*Solution: Individuals or families with limited income can apply for discounted pass holder rates at the FCPAC. Each application is received by the Recreation Administration and then forwarded to the Dearborn Recreation Commission to be evaluated. (Agreed we need to publicize, Rec department will be working out language.)

6. Recommendation: Additional lighting is needed on the theater steps (or hand held lighting) for people with limited vision.

\*Comment: Although lighting is to code it may be problematic for some. There is no easy solution to this one. Flashlights are available and it is only a problem when patrons are late.

7. Clarification needed: The accessible level for wheelchair users and the disabled seems to only have seating in the more costly areas of the theater. Is the charge for disabled seating less or equal to the costs for this more expensive seating location?

\*Answer: Seating is available at all price levels and will be more prominently noted.

8. Recommendation: Braille signage throughout the PAC and on exercise equipment.

\*Solution: ADA guidelines were presented and law clarified our signing department has the capacity to put Braille on signs. There is limited signage e.g. on bathrooms and more will be done to comply using barrier free funds as needed. Braille of equipment can be started with a dyno tape labeler.

9. Recommendation: Have a flyer that details all the accessible features of the PAC. (Pools, weight equipment, locker rooms, etc.) and its programs, including the fact that a wheel chair user may have the greatest ease using the family changing room - even if they are alone or with someone of the same sex because of its configuration.

\*Solution: Rec staff will develop a flyer consulting the ADA coordinator and clearly appreciate the need to better advertise accessibility.

We also discussed accessible parking nearer the building at the south entrance which needs to be cleared by fire and safety and will be followed up by the recreation department.

Letter from Eric Peterson

I was wondering if the Disabilities Commission would be willing to assist the

Recreation Department with the purchase of an aluminum wheelchair ramp w/handrails. As you are aware, we recently hosted the Disabilities Commission Conference here at the Ford Community and Performing Arts Center.

The Wright & Filippis company was generous enough to supply an aluminum wheelchair ramp for the event. Greg Orner (Director of Recreation) spoke to the dealer rep. at the event about donating this ramp to the City of Dearborn. The dealer rep. was unable to donate the wheelchair ramp outright, however, the Wright & Filippis company is willing to sell it to the City of Dearborn at their cost (a savings of \$673.00).

At the discounted price, the wheelchair ramp will cost \$930.00. As we discussed in our meeting, the Recreation Department is not funded for unplanned expenditures at this time. Your assistance in purchasing this item or sharing the cost \*\*\*\*\*

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

Dale Swanson reported that his report was already covered.

From all information we've gathered from vendors, participants and city employees, it was a huge success. We had 500 to 600 participants. We had 52 vendors and of the vendor evaluations we received, all but one was positive (MS Society). Though few, participant evaluations were also very positive. Some workshops were well attended, some not. Evaluations were very positive. The guest speakers were well received. We received a tremendous amount of press for the event, both before and after.

Thank yous have been sent to our sponsors, city employees who helped so much to make this a success, guest speakers, Bess Bonier, our volunteers and workshop presenters.

The PR committee wishes to thank each and everyone of you for a job well done!

## BREAK

## EDUCATION/ EMPLOYMENT

Next time we do awards we need to get more nominations. Will also be looking for workshop and speaker suggestions. (minutes for two meeting since last commission meeting follow.)

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Minutes - Education/Employment 10/2/03 - 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mary Hodak, Cathy McAdam, Nancy Bower, Dale Swanson, Cheryl Kreger

1. DAD Workshop Logistics -
  - a. A.V. Equipment final requests (Cathy)
  - b. Parking Issues (Dale)
  - c. Signage and easels (Cheryl)
2. Volunteer Prep for DAD (Mary)
  - a. 6 Volunteers from AAUW - 3 additional needed for 2 hour blocks at entrances, kitchen and Commission booth
  - b. 6 Volunteers from GFWC in 3 hour blocks to be at Registration Desk
  - c. Students - 12 High School students (six in a.m. & six in p.m.) to be in parking lots, assist with attendees, and runners, etc.
  - d. Orientation at 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. - Mary, Kim & Dale
  - e. Susan will coordinate I.D.s, etc.
3. Speaking request -

Kiwanis Club is requesting a speaker from the Commission to discuss our mission on a Wednesday in November at 6:00 p.m. - Cathy will do the engagement on Nov.12, 2003.
4. Evaluations for workshops, vendors and overall program
  - a. Separate evaluations for Workshops, Speakers, and Vendors to be color coded
  - b. There will be two signers available for all events
  - c. Request all presenters to use microphones for those using hearing devices
  - d. Susan to obtain plastic bags to be given out at registration
  - e. Cheryl will send flyers home to all Special Ed. students next week
  - f. Cookies (300), Muffins (300), coffee, tea served all day
5. Next Meeting - Monday, November 10, 2003 at 6:00 p.m. in the Lobby of the Dearborn Public Schools Administration Building

Minutes - Education/Employment 11/10/03 - 6:00 p.m.

Present: Mary Hodak, Cathy McAdam, Nancy Bower, Dale Swanson, Cheryl Kreger

1. We reviewed evaluations from workshops that were available for employment, vsa, cil, and aarp.
  - a. In general evaluations were very positive.

b. Attendance averaged from 15 to 20 people with only 4 at the AARP session. We discussed concerns about bringing in speakers without a guaranteed audience.

2. Discussed options for future events:

a. Preregistration, not sure of logistics

b. Clarify intended audience

c. Have sign in sheets at the workshop to better capture attendance

3. General overview

a. Noted Sison manner residents came but limited senior attendance (still suspect problem with disability label.)

Ann Senoga suggested we use her to promote events.

b. GFW suggested putting registration table on opposite wall to better view both west and south doors, and display banner. May also be helpful to have more student (runners)

c. Recommend either closing down all activity, or having keynote speaker in the theater.

d. Consider maps

4. Next meeting January

12\*\*\*\*\*

## ACCESS

Claudia Damian discussed Kevin Mitchell's desire to create of hub of recreation organizations. The Adaptive Sports Board seems to already serve this role. Dale is going to ask Kevin Mitchell if he will serve as our contact on the board.

Claudia reiterated that Jeffrey Mrowka is concerned that people with disabilities need help in order to maintain themselves independently in a crisis. Maintaining TTY contact during blackouts will have to be pursued. (Access Committee minutes follow.)

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Access Committee Meeting: October 7, 2003

Emergency Preparedness and the Disabled in Dearborn and Developing a Board/Commission Relationship for the Integration of the Disabled into Recreational Programs. Notes by: Claudia Damian, Commissioner and Chair-Access Committee. Also present: Gary Filiak, Commissioner; Kevin Mitchell, Public Member; Lt. Jeff M 7, rowka, City of Dearborn Emergency Preparetor.

We began the meeting with Kevin Mitchell, Gary and I agreeing that we did not want to reinvent the wheel by proposing a separate recreational program in

the City of Dearborn. Instead, with Kevin Mitchell's connections and volunteer work in recreational programs with the disabled, parents and other volunteers, it seems more reasonable to INCLUDE Dearborn residents (disabled and able-bodied) in the mainstream of programs that all ready exist. Kevin felt confident that the Dearborn area (parks and facilities) and services could be a "showcase example" for all of the sports programs, for the disabled, which all ready exist in this State. Dearborn could also serve as the HUB for centering the programs, sending out information, administrative meetings, gatherings of volunteers (parents, interested persons, sports celebrities), educational programs with Dearborn schools, and hosting activities. Dearborn has the parks, recreational facilities, personnel, parking areas, equipment, and accessibility to families and individuals from all over the State.

Kevin also wanted to promote sports for disabled persons by inviting athletes who are disabled and medal winners, to enhance self-esteem, let parents and students know what is possible to achieve, and help organize activities, Claudia suggested he contact Dr. Cheryl Kreger, Assistant Superintendent of the Dearborn Public Schools, and tell sate his ideas. The Dearborn Public Schools would serve as a meeting point for parents, students and other volunteers; a center for information distribution; a place for planning activities and trips; and arranging transportation.

Kevin stated that he was going to meet with Mayor Guido on October 16th. I suggested he put all of his ideas down on paper and give the Committee/Commission a copy. We could present all of this information at the next Commission meeting on November 20th. I asked Kevin to let me know about the meeting with the Mayor and what things would be possible to commit to in Dearborn. Claudia told Kevin that the Dearborn Commission on Disability Concerns would like to have a representative be a prominent member on the Board of persons who would oversee all of the planning and administration of these programs. Claudia also suggested that all Board and sports related information be placed on our Commission web site for further distribution into the community. At the Commission meeting on November 20th, Claudia will be asking someone from the Commission to volunteer as a Board member to participate in the Michigan Disability Sports program for Dearborn and the State. Claudia will suggest a person should have an interest in becoming involved with this program because of a family member who would participate or s/he would be a participant or volunteer.

Kevin also suggested in the future that a Commission member(s) attend the Leader Dog dinner and conference held in Dearborn and that flyers be distributed to the physicians and practices which serve children and adults who

have disabilities such as Dr. Susan Young (Waterworks, Pediatric Orthopedics) and ENTs (Ear, Nose and Throat) and Dearborn Orthopedics. Claudia placed DAD flyers with Dr. Susan Young's office, Dearborn Orthopedics and a few ENTs in Dearborn. Kevin should make a list of places where future flyers could be distributed to reach our market.

Next, Lt. Jeff Mrowka spoke to Gary and I about Emergency Preparedness for the Disabled and Senior Citizens in Dearborn. We discussed the recent blackout and the problems we had getting the necessary information about what had happened, what services were available in the City of Dearborn, and how anyone who needed help (short of needing paramedical assistance and an ambulance ride to the ER) could get aid. Claudia did not know about dry ice being available at the PAC. Gary said that information was on the radio WJBK and WJR. Jeff stated he would also like to have information put out on HFCC's radio station. Jeff stated one of the major problems was getting information out to the public, especially residents, since City employees were contacting radio and television stations to have information about Dearborn broadcast. But the television station telephone lines were busy, people were difficult to contact, and the stations had their own agenda for broadcasting information to the public. Claudia stated she did not hear anything about Dearborn until AFTER her power (west side) came on. If CDTV had been broadcasting, it would have been useless to the deaf and hard of hearing since they do not use closed captioning; but that was a general problem with all the local stations. (Claudia's husband had used an inverter connected to a car battery and the TV to get information). Claudia also stated she had the only working telephone in the neighborhood and people were coming over to contact their relatives.

Jeff also discussed the need to coordinate efforts and routines with Dearborn's Housing Director, Mr. Floyd Addison in such emergencies. Also to utilize city facilities, presently and in the future, for warming and cooling centers, for seniors, people with small children and for the disabled. It was a relatively good thing this past blackout occurred during warm weather or there may have been some serious injuries or deaths. There is also a need to coordinate efforts in the private sectors to serve, not only patrons of private enterprises, but also the general public if the need demands it.

We also discussed the possibility of the Dearborn Emergency Preparedness program having a list for service made available to the public. This list would be a voluntary sign up with name, address and phone number. We discussed a priority system of persons to be allowed on the list as: those individuals or families who are on medical equipment to maintain their lives e.g. persons on oxygen, kidney dialysis, children on feeding tubes, the bedridden, etc. Then

persons who have no support system in place such as seniors who have no family in the immediate area, disabled persons who cannot easily leave their homes, persons who need assistance for daily activities (eating, dressing, getting into wheelchairs), and those who are in independent living situations (developmentally disabled or disabled persons).

Claudia stated some people do not see themselves as disabled or needing anyone's assistance. Some are reluctant to put themselves on any type of list for services to the disabled or dependent. Some people may initially want to be on the list and later change their minds. Some may be afraid of their employer having access to this list and knowing what type of disability they have since many disabilities are "invisible" such as MS, epilepsy, hearing loss, HIV-AIDS, or cancer. Questions which arose: who will maintain the list; who screens the people who sign up on the list; what type of information will be on the list, who will have access to the list, can persons take their names off the list and what is done with the information once it is removed, and, with the new medical/health privacy act and the powers of the police to get medical information on people without consent, how is the City held responsible for the proper keeping and use of this information? Jeff said he would have to run all of these questions by Legal before even attempting to put such a list idea before the public. Claudia showed Jeff and Gary a form that the Novi Police/Dispatch use to keep information on volunteer sign-ups.

We agreed there is a lot to look at in order to prepare our community for an emergency, to respond to an emergency whether people are asked to leave an area or to remain inside their homes or apartments, how to evacuate seniors and the disabled, how to promote the information that is already on the City's web site, and to include information on Emergency Preparedness for the disabled, not only for residents but also for emergency personnel

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## STRATEGIC PLAN

First decision - set aside meeting, abandon a regular meeting, uninterrupted time during meeting. Special meeting February 19th 1-4.

Second decision - Involve outsiders? Yes.

Every committee will meet before meeting. Look at accomplishments. what is left undone - do not set specific goals. Consider rewriting committee mission statement.

MOTION: I motion that we work on a strategic plan as a commission. By Dale Swanson, seconded by Claudia Damian, unanimous approval.

## NEW BUSINESS

Mona Ramouni discussed her contact with a person in the community who is a certified Arabic translator who would translate our documents for free.

Claudia Damian discussed the need for real-time captioning at DAD and similar events. (Report follows)

DAD Pathways to Possibilities: Suggestions: Next time have someone doing real time captioning for all speakers. Hire a court recorder for the event: a local court person or a student?

Translation of information into Arabic; large print versions, too.

After the event: the evaluation forms: where do people turn them in? I told them to the front table. Should specify that next time or have a box to have people put the forms in as they leave.

People and vendors were impressed. Said this was an excellent display of the diverse disabled community and Dearborn had thought of the disabled community. Most were impressed with the PAC. Hosts were very polite and understanding. Most needs were met. Need for more available food and drinks: some people felt they needed more than cookies. Maybe non-sweets, too.

I will meet with Peggy Drake and Reggie Alvarado of the Dearborn Heights Commission and we have set a date to sit down and speak about their TTY/911 system and how improvements should be made. I strongly suggested besides the Chief of Police and the Fire Chief, they should include the Director of Communications/Dispatch Center. We will discuss Dearborn's system and I will give them Paul Klink's number.

911/TTY calls: As of 11-07-03 there is a new listing of 6 calls. 3 successful calls; 3 failures. 50% failure rate for this testing period. I will continue to inform Paul Klink of any further problems. The Dispatchers have been working to correct these problems and I am sure this will improve.

Uniphones: Has Susan established a training tree program with the various city departments yet? I have tried to call some of the departments and have not had success. Maybe do a reminder follow-up letter on using the Uniphones. Also establishing a training tree program for the various departments in the City so employees can practice their Uniphone skills.

Polling Places: At Haigh, no rulers, magnifying glass, etc. were out on display anywhere. The signage for the Voting area was not displayed where we could see it. No voting table or booth for disabled voters was set up.

I had sent the Commission the article about the problems with the Diebold voting machines that were at the DAD Event. We may have to bring such issues to the City Clerk's attention prior to any purchase of these types of voting machines.

Susan Fitzmaurice announced her election to the OMCIL board.

## ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Let's Adjourn. By Dale Swanson, seconded by Sonya Tishler, unanimous approval.

Reminders: December 2 PR Meeting, January 12 - Education Meeting, December 8 Access Meeting.